

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2008**

**CIRCULATED REPORT
FOR AGENDA**

PAGES

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

EMERGENCY PLANNING

2-8 Search & Rescue Contribution Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1552.

PLANNING

9-13 Agricultural Advisory Committee.



HEAD REVIEW	
CAO APPROVAL	
EAP	
COW	✓ JUNE 10 11
JUN 06 2008	
RHD	
BOARD	

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carol Mason
Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: June 2, 2008

FROM: Paul Thorkelsson
General Manager, Development Services

FILE: 3900 20 1552

SUBJECT: Search and Rescue Services – District 68

PURPOSE:

To introduce for first three readings “Southern Community of Nanaimo Search and Rescue Contribution Service Bylaw No. 1552, 2008” and to outline an approach for funding local search and rescue services for District 68. A copy of the proposed Bylaw No. 1552, 2008 is attached to this report.

BACKGROUND:

Nanaimo Search and Rescue (NSAR) is a volunteer organization that provides search and rescue services and operation to the southern communities of the Regional District including Electoral Areas ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, the City of Nanaimo and District of Lantzville. NSAR has for the past number of years been working with the RDN on identifying a suitable location for the organization to construct a purpose built facility to house their equipment and form a base for their operations for training, administration and SAR activities. To date, though at least one suitable property has been identified, the RDN and NSAR have been unable to secure a location for the construction of a new facility. At the present time NSAR equipment, including vehicles and other items of significant value, are stored at various locations including NSAR member’s own residences. This is a less than ideal situation that hampers SAR operational efficiency and will also over time significantly contribute to the untimely deterioration of equipment and operational readiness. Given this current situation it has been a priority of NSAR and staff to locate a suitable home for NSAR as quickly as possible.

In discussion with City of Nanaimo staff and the NSAR membership the under utilized Harewood Fire Hall within the City has been identified as a potential home for NSAR. The City of Nanaimo has confirmed that the portion of the building suitable for NSAR is currently vacant and available for lease at a reasonable rate. The executive of NSAR have reviewed the layout and condition of the existing building and have determined that that the facility would be a suitable location for NSAR operations until such time as a permanent location for a purpose built facility can be identified and secured.

In addition to discussions surrounding the identification of a location for a facility to appropriately house NSAR, staff have also undertaken a review of the opportunity to provide funding support for the SAR function. Currently the RDN provides a small amount of annual funding to support the cost of insurance for the specialized bus vehicle used by NSAR as their field headquarters during SAR operations. In addition, NSAR have benefited from periodic grants-in-aid to support the purchase of specific pieces of equipment. At the present time NSAR does not receive significant ongoing funding support for

operations. Given that the service provided by NSAR serves the larger region in District 68, plays such a valuable and important role in public safety for the residents of District 68, a suitable facility for NSAR has been identified and new lease costs are to be incurred it is proposed that the RDN establish a new service area in District 68 to provide ongoing funding support to NSAR. For the purposes of defining the boundaries of the proposed function, the southern municipalities of Nanaimo and Lantzville along with Electoral Areas ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ have been identified.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Introduce Bylaw No. 1552 for first three readings and proceed with the alternative approval process to receive elector consent.
2. Do not establish a new service area for search and rescue in District 68.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1, if the Board approves the establishment of the Search and Rescue Contribution Service, the bylaw will raise \$30,000 by way of property tax in District 68. The funds would be used to support the leasing of the Harewood Fire Hall facility from the City of Nanaimo. The intention is for the RDN to hold the lease from the City of Nanaimo and sublet the facility to NSAR. The City of Nanaimo has indicated that the facility could be leased from the City for a total of \$24,000 per year on the basis of 2-year lease with option for review and renewal on a bi-annual basis. The remaining \$6,000 would replace the RDN funding for the vehicle insurance currently received by NSAR and provide additional ongoing funding to address other budgetary priorities. The following chart outlines the proposed attribution of taxation based on assessment under the proposed bylaw for the respective communities of District 68:

Areas	Net taxable values	Values for apportionment	Final totals
City of Nanaimo	11,402,157.518	1,406,071,332	\$23,260
District of Lantzville	720,810,592	76,247,574	\$ 1,313
Electoral Area A	957,652,148	106,360,229	\$ 1,834
Electoral Area B	1,225,071,917	125,542,530	\$ 2,095
Electoral Area C	560,903,019	86,995,168	\$ 1,517

The total taxes collected in each participating area represent less than \$0.20/\$100,000 of assessed value of individual properties.

This new service and funds raised would take effect in the 2009 budget year. For the intervening period the City of Nanaimo has offered to allow NSAR to begin tenant improvements and occupancy of the facility at no charge through the remaining months of 2008.

Alternative 2

Under Alternative 2 if the Board does not take action to establish the proposed function NSAR will be required to continue their operation and storage of equipment under the current substandard conditions

and staff will continue the search for an appropriate location for NSAR operations

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

The Regional Board is required to approve the Notice of Elector Response Form for the purposes of the alternative approval process. The form is attached to this report for reference. Under the alternative approval process if the Board gives three readings to the bylaw, the bylaw will be submitted to the Inspector of Municipalities for approval and then advertised in local newspapers for two consecutive weeks. Electors who are opposed to the bylaw will have 30 days following the second advertising publication to submit their opposition using the Elector Response Form. For the purposes of alternative assent, the total electors within the proposed service area are 70,470. If 10% or more of this total (7,047) oppose the function then the bylaw may only be adopted through referendum.

It is worth noting the northern communities of the Regional District (District 69 including Parksville, Qualicum Beach and Electoral Areas 'E', 'F', 'G' and 'H') are covered by Arrowsmith Search and Rescue (ASAR). ASAR currently maintains an operation headquarters and base of operations in conjunction with the RDN's Coombs Hilliers Fire Department at Fire Hall #2. Like NSAR, ASAR does not receive ongoing funding support from the Regional District however, it has received grants through the District 69 Grants-in-Aid program over the years and space is provided on RDN lands for its facility. There does exist the potential for a similar contribution service for District 69 to allow the participating communities to provide ongoing financial support to ASAR and staff recommends that discussions begin with the ASAR and the northern communities for the establishment of a similar contribution service for District 69.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS:

Nanaimo Search and Rescue provides an important public safety service to the residents of District 68. Current facilities for storage of equipment, training and operations are less than ideal and considerable time has been dedicated to the identification of more appropriate locations for NSAR. The Harewood Fire Hall in the City of Nanaimo has been identified as such a location and is available for lease by the RDN on behalf of NSAR. A new service to be known as the "Regional District of Nanaimo Search and Rescue Contribution Service" is proposed with an annual budget of \$30,000 to be collected through property taxes in the Electoral Areas 'A', 'B', 'C' and the municipalities of the City of Nanaimo and District of Lantzville. This amount will provide funding support to NSAR for their relocation to the Harewood facility and ongoing operations within the local area.

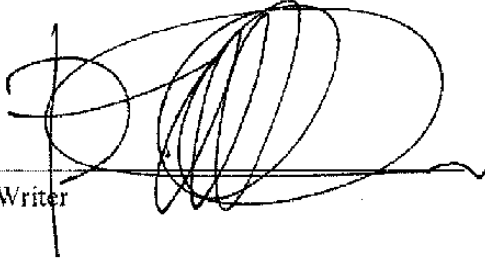
Due to the small cost and broad regional benefit of this service staff recommend obtaining the assent of electors for the participating areas by using the alternative approval process across the entire service area of Nanaimo, Lantzville and Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C'. The Board must approve the attached Elector Response Form which is required to be signed by voters opposed to the initiative.

RECOMMENDATION:


1. That elector assent for the participating areas be obtained by using the alternative approval process for the entire service area.

2. That "Southern Community District of Nanaimo Search and Rescue Contribution Service Bylaw No. 1552, 2008" be introduced for first three readings, forwarded to the Ministry of Community Services for approval and proceed through the alternative approval process to obtain assent of the electors in the Municipalities of Nanaimo and Lantzville and Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C'.
3. That the attached Search and Rescue Contribution Service Electoral Response Form be approved for use with Bylaw 1552.
4. That staff be directed to begin discussions with the Arrowsmith Search and Rescue and the northern communities for the establishment of a similar contribution service for District 69.

Report Writer

A large, highly stylized and somewhat illegible handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a vertical line on the left side.

CAO Concurrence

A smaller, more legible handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'CAW' followed by a flourish.

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

BYLAW NO. 1552

**A BYLAW TO ESTABLISH THE SEARCH AND
RESCUE CONTRIBUTION SERVICE**

WHEREAS under section 796 of the *Local Government Act* a Regional District may operate any service the Board considers necessary or desirable for all or part of the Regional District;

AND WHEREAS the Board of the Regional District of Nanaimo wishes to establish a service for the purpose of providing a contribution to search and rescue;

AND WHEREAS the approval of the Inspector of Municipalities has been obtained under section 801 of the *Local Government Act*;

AND WHEREAS the approval of the electors in the participating area(s) has been obtained under section 801.3 of the *Local Government Act*.

NOW THEREFORE the Board of the Regional District of Nanaimo in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

Citation

1. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as the "Southern Community Search and Rescue Contribution Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1552, 2008".

Service

2. The service established by this bylaw is the Search and Rescue Contribution Service (the "Service") for the purpose of providing a contribution to persons providing search and rescue in the Service Area.

Boundaries

3. The boundaries of the Service Area are the City of Nanaimo, the District of Lantzville and Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C'.

Participating Areas

4. The "Participating Areas" are the City of Nanaimo, the District of Lantzville and Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C'.

Cost Recovery

5. As provided in section 803 of the *Local Government Act*, the annual cost of providing the Service shall be recovered by one or more of the following:
- (a) property value taxes imposed in accordance with Division 4.3 of Part 24 of the *Local Government Act*,
 - (b) revenues raised by other means authorized by the *Local Government Act* or another Act;
 - (c) revenues received by way of agreement, enterprise, gift, grant or otherwise.

Apportionment

6. The costs shall be apportioned among the participants on the basis of the most recent census population.

Maximum Requisition

7. The maximum amount that may be requisitioned under Section 800.1(1)(e)(iii) of the *Local Government Act* for this service shall be:
- (a) the sum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000); or
 - (b) the produce obtained by multiplying the net taxable value of land and improvements within the service area by a property tax value rate of \$.002 cents per thousand dollars of assessment.

Introduced and read three times this ____ day of _____, 2008.

Received the approval of the Inspector of Municipalities this ____ day of _____, 2008.

Received the assent of the electors under section 801.3 of the *Local Government Act* this ____ day of _____, 2008.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 20__.

CHAIRPERSON

SR. MGR., CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION



SEARCH & RESCUE CONTRIBUTION
SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT
BYLAW NO. 1552

*Electorals Areas A, B, C,
City of Nanaimo & District of Lantzville*

ELECTOR RESPONSE FORM

This form is to be used by an Elector opposed to the adoption of "Southern Community Search and Rescue Contribution Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1552, 2008". Adoption of this bylaw will establish a service for the purpose of providing an annual contribution to search and rescue up to the amount of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000).

If more than 7,047 Electors oppose this initiative, the bylaw can only be adopted by a referendum. A copy of the bylaw is attached to this form.

I hereby declare the following:

- ◆ I am a Canadian citizen;
- ◆ I am an individual who is, or will be on _____, 2008, age 18 or older;
- ◆ I have been a resident of British Columbia for at least the past six months;
- ◆ I have been a property owner/resident of property within Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' or 'C' of the Regional District of Nanaimo, the City of Nanaimo or the District of Lantzville for at least the past 30 days;
- ◆ I am not disqualified by the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in an election or am not otherwise disqualified by law.

I, being a person entitled to be registered as an elector within Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' or 'C' of the Regional District of Nanaimo, the City of Nanaimo or the District of Lantzville am hereby opposed to the approval of "Southern Community Search and Rescue Contribution Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1552, 2008".

NAME OF ELECTOR: _____
(Please Print Full Name)

ELECTOR'S STREET ADDRESS: _____

ELECTORAL AREA/CITY/TOWN: _____

SIGNATURE OF ELECTOR: _____

NOTE: This elector response form must be returned to the Regional District of Nanaimo, 6300 Hammond Bay Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9T 6N2 on or before _____, 2008.

Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding statutory holidays.



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Paul Thorkelsson
General Manger of Development Services

DATE: June 4, 2008

FROM: Geoff Garbutt
Manager of Current Planning

FILE: 0360 20 AAC

SUBJECT: RDN Agricultural Advisory Committee

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Board approval to establish the Regional District of Nanaimo Agricultural Advisory Committee and receive a Terms of Reference for this Committee.

BACKGROUND

Over the past number of years, the Regional District of Nanaimo has considered the varied issues of agricultural lands, farming practice, land use policy, economic development and food security during the preparation of Regional Growth Strategy reviews and Official Community Plans. Recently however, the issue of consultation with the local agricultural community and the positive impact that the agricultural sector has come to the forefront both at a local and regional level. Consistently the issues of agricultural land owners, challenges to farming and local food production has been raised during community forums, Regional Growth Strategy reviews and other planning processes.

At the Regular Board Meeting held in April of last year, the Board received a presentation from Mr. Colin Springford and Mr. Peter van Dougen from the Coombs Farmers Institute on behalf of other regional agricultural groups outlining agricultural issues in our area. During this presentation, the delegation provided information on agricultural advisory committees and proposed the formation of an advisory committee for the Regional District of Nanaimo. Following this delegation, the Board directed staff to investigate the possibility of creating an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) and report back to the Board.

In response to this direction, staff have discussed the issue of establishing AAC with provincial ministries and the Agricultural Land Commission. Both agencies are supportive of the creation of an AAC and have pledged support in terms of staff expertise and potential membership on the Committee in either a formal or informal/support role. Staff have consulted with other local governments and Regional Districts to:

- Discuss the role of their Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Review Terms of Reference for Committees
- Establish effectiveness of the Committee Process

Based on this contact, local government staff have indicated that the AAC has been a valuable source of input on a broad spectrum of agriculture related issues. These include input on Official Community Plans, zoning regulation as it relates to agricultural operations, expanded 'non-farm' use in the ALR, parks and trail development, suburban/rural fringe development, water, drainage and groundwater protection and general awareness of agriculture and the impact of agriculture on the local economy.

The role of each AAC is outlined in their individual Terms of Reference and depending on the jurisdiction; the Board or Council may consult with AACs on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) applications and/or development applications, which involve land adjacent to or within the ALR.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the Board approve the creation of the Agricultural Advisory Committee with the attached Terms of Reference.
2. That the Board approve the creation of the Agricultural Advisory Committee with revised Terms of Reference.
3. That the Board not approve the creation of the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the creation of the Agricultural Advisory Committee are minimal. Staff time will be limited to attendance at committee meetings, as well as preparation of materials for internal circulation, minutes and reports to the Board as necessary, and public outreach. One RDN staff person in the Long Range Planning section of Community Planning will coordinate these activities.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE IMPLICATIONS

Input received to date indicates that it is extremely worthwhile to establish an AAC and to this end staff recommends the creation of a Committee which reflects the distribution of agricultural operations in the Region, including local farmers, industry, professional and RDN Board representatives. The AAC would have 10 members which include membership from the regional agricultural organizations, farmers from across the region, local agricultural professionals, an Electoral Area Director from District 69, an Electoral Area Director from District 68 and one municipal Director. In support of the Committee, one RDN staff person from the Long Range Planning section of Community Planning would be assigned and Ministry and ALR staff would be resource members.

The AAC would be directly consulted during the preparation of all long term planning and policy documents in the RDN including, but not limited to: the Regional Growth Strategy, Official Community Plans, Local Area Plans, reviews of RDN Zoning Bylaws, Parks and Trails Master Plans, Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Plans, Liquid Waste Management Plans, Rainwater Management Plans, noxious weed/insect control and other policy documents and, projects referred to the AAC by the Board of the Regional District. Depending on the nature of a land use application, the Board may also wish to refer applications for rezoning for lands in the ALR to the AAC for comment.

Details regarding the roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee are outlined in the attached Terms of Reference.

With respect to land located within the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve, the RDN Board policy on commenting on applications would preclude referrals to the AAC for review and recommendation at this time. In accordance with this policy, applications related to land in the ALR are forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission with a description of applicable Official Community Plan policies, Development Permit Area requirements, zoning regulations and other relevant land use information on the ALR 'Local Government Report' form with no comment or recommendation from the Board on the proposal. Should the Board review the policy, it may be appropriate to refer applications for land in the ALR to the AAC for comment.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

As outlined above, the issue of farmland protection and the promotion of local agriculture has emerged as a significant issue in our region. Although, the majority of the RDN high level policy documents, including the Regional Growth Strategy and Official Community Plans promote the retention of resource lands for agricultural production and limit the subdivision of these lands, local representatives have not had a direct voice or focused input on the range of policy and regulatory documents in the RDN. The creation of an AAC will allow for input and innovation with the goal of increased local food security, increased production on farms in the region and raise the profile of this important economic driver. This committee may facilitate future efforts to manage growth and promote local agriculture according to established principles of sustainability.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

AAC Members should be involved in or have an interest in agriculture in the Region and represent diverse backgrounds, interests and expertise. Members will be selected by the Board through an application process which will include advertisements in local media. Applications must demonstrate the applicant's interest in agriculture, ability to commit the necessary time to the committee.

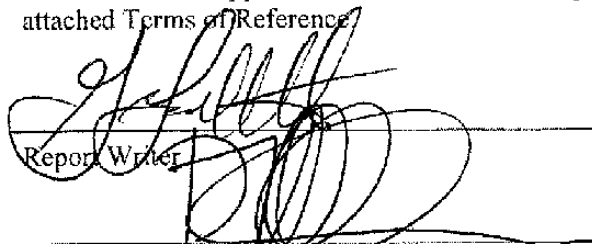
The creation of the AAC would increase the opportunity for public consultation and provide the Board with input from stakeholders and industry professionals who have valuable insight that has the potential to significantly improve agricultural policy, regulations and production on farmlands in our region. In accordance with the Board's public consultation policy, referrals to the AAC would be included into all the consultation plan for all major RDN initiatives and represent a source of input on issues that may periodically arise at the discretion of the RDN Board.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

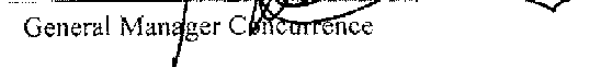
The creation of an Agricultural Advisory Committee will enhance opportunities for input on and raise awareness of issues related to agriculture within the RDN. The AAC has the potential to improve policies, regulations and procedures related to agriculture in our region, protect farmland and help in the promotion of local food production. The AAC will provide representation from a cross section of the agricultural community in the region and address issues of importance to the Regional District Board and residents in the RDN. Given the importance of agricultural issues, significant community interest in an Agricultural Advisory Committee and opportunity for valuable input, staff recommends the creation of an AAC in accordance with the attached Terms of Reference.

RECOMMENDATION


That the Board approve the creation of an Agricultural Advisory Committee in accordance with the attached Terms of Reference.



Report Writer



General Manager Concurrence



CAO Concurrence

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

GOAL

The Agricultural Advisory Committee's goal is to increase awareness of agricultural issues in the Regional District of Nanaimo and provide leadership in the promotion of agriculture as an important economic driver in the region.

MANDATE

The Agricultural Advisory Committee is an advisory committee, created by and reporting to the Board of the Regional District of Nanaimo.

COMMITTEE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

The primary purpose of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is to:

- Provide comments and recommendations to the RDN Board on items including, but not limited to, the Regional Growth Strategy, Official Community Plans, Local Area Plans, reviews of RDN Zoning Bylaws, Parks and Trails Master Plans, Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Plans, Liquid Waste Management Plans, Rainwater Management Plans, noxious weed/insect control referred to the Committee by the Board of the Regional District.
- Promote public awareness of agriculture, its role and economic importance in the community.
- Advocate on behalf of the agricultural community.

MEMBERSHIP

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will consist of 10 members appointed by the Board of the Regional District of Nanaimo representing a diversity of commodity groups/producers, established regional farming organizations and be residents of the Regional District of Nanaimo.

Members shall be involved in or have an interest in agriculture in the Region and represent diverse backgrounds, interests and expertise.

Members will be selected by the Board through an application process. The application process for committee membership will be promoted through advertisements in local media. Applications must demonstrate the applicant's interest in agriculture, ability to commit the necessary time to the committee.

Membership representation will be as follows:

- 2 Members with an interest in agriculture in District 68;
- 2 Members with an interest in agriculture in of District 69;
- 3 Members representing Regional Agricultural Organizations;
- 1 Electoral Area Director from District 68;
- 1 Electoral Area Director from District 69; and
- 1 Municipal Director.

Regional District staff Provincial Ministry staff and Agricultural Land Commission staff shall participate in a non-voting capacity.

TERM

The term of appointment for Community Committee Members is two years. Alternate member appointments will be approved by the Committee as required. No substitute members will be permitted. If a member must resign from the committee, their position will be filled through the application process.

No remuneration for participation on the committee is provided but if committee activities coincide with meal times, meals will be provided.

Committee Members having a priority or pecuniary interest in a matter discussed by or are personally affected by a matter discussed by the Committee must declare an conflict and step aside from the discussion and subsequent vote/motion on that particular matter.

DECISION MAKING

Committee recommendations to the RDN Board will be made by consensus whenever possible. If necessary, votes may be taken and minority reports may be submitted to the Board in addition to the majority opinion.

AAC meetings will be open to the public, however non-AAC members will not have speaking or voting privileges. Delegations that wish to address the committee must seek approval from the committee through a written request. Acceptance of a delegates request to speak to the committee will be at the discretion of the committee.

CHAIRPERSON

The Chair will be one of the RDN Board members appointed to the Committee in order to provide a direct link between the advisory committee and the Board.