

## **EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**October 8, 2014 - 5:00 p.m.**  
**Queensborough Firehall**  
**Minutes**

### **VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillor Chuck Puchmayr	- Chair
David Lowe	- St John Ambulance
Amy Van Sickle	- Community Member
Sonny Johal	- Community Member
Pastor Sharon Tidd	- Salvation Army
Cheryl Rogers	- Community Member
Jon Evans	- Community Member

### **VOTING MEMBER REGRETS:**

Doug Templeton	- School Board Representative
Glen Henderson	- School Board Representative
Deirdre McLachlan	- Fraser Health Representative
Mark Hollett	- Community Member
Nathan Blackstock	- BC Ambulance Representative
Captain Robert Pettigrew	- Royal Westminster Regiment

### **STAFF:**

Cory McLaren	- Secretary
Inspector Phil Eastwood	- New Westminster Police Department
Fire Chief Tim Armstrong	- New Westminster Fire & Rescue Services
Deputy Chief John Hatch	- New Westminster Fire & Rescue Services
Wendy Bowyer	- New Westminster Police Department

## **1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

## **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

### **2.1 Received the Minutes of June 11, 2014**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the minutes of the Emergency Advisory Committee meeting held on June 11, 2014 be received and adopted*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Commission voted in favour of the motion.

## **3.0 PRESENTATIONS**

## **4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## **5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### **5.1 Fire Chief Report from Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs Annual Conference. - Fire Chief T. Armstrong**

Tim Armstrong, Fire Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services was in Ottawa at the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs Conference. The Fire Chief reviewed with the committee the Lac Megantic Rail Event and discussed some of the issues that the City faced during the incident such as compatibility/interoperability issues with other Fire Departments equipment such as hose and fittings that were not compatible, contamination of fire trucks involved, the flaring off of man hole covers in the streets, and language barrier issues, as it is primarily French in the area.

There were over 200 agencies involved in the overall response to the Lac Megantic rail incident. Many of the rail cars involved were DOT 111 cars that are currently being regulated out. A challenge this industry faces is the rail cars is that they cannot produce the replacement/upgrades to cars quick enough. The Fire Chief discussed the Emergency Response Assistance Plan (ERAP) that is given to each flammable liquid as it is delivered to by rail. The ERAP provides is a 24/hr phone number that allows for crews to come in and deal with an emergency if warranted. During the incident there was 1 fire station that was located in close proximity to the event and it had to be abandoned.

BC has its own capability and thread system for fittings that would not be compatible with Alberta or the US. There are adapters available. The Fire Chief discussed working will all the local Departments to ensure proper compatibility for hoses, adapters and other fittings.

The Fire Chief also discussed that currently, CN has provided a Foam trailer for response in the area that is being stored in Abbotsford at the Fire Department. Currently we do

have access to it, but we need to get permission from CN to use it. The problem exists as to who will deliver the trailer. The Chair advised that CN has a helicopter put on retainer to move the trailer, but who is going to operate the foam unit?

The Chair, Councillor Puchmayr stated at the most recent Railway Committee meeting, there was a discussion regarding the 18 violations that occurred at Lac Megantic. At the committee meeting they distributed a pie chart, and discussed the infractions and how this will not occur on our local rail system. The Chair at the meeting addressed the rail companies and questioned how this many infractions could have occurred? The Chair attended a meeting in Niagara Falls and the mayor of Lac Megantic commented on the number of inspectors available to the rail industry. Currently there is approximately 1 inspector for approximately 4,000 rail cars in Canada. The Chair questioned how do you inspect rail cars when there are very few inspectors left? There is no independent third party to follow up on the inspections, when rail companies are inspecting their own tracks. The Chair advised, he thinks CN and CP are doing a good job, but there is no one to say that are they doing a good job of operating. The Chair discussed how he is worried about the volume of increased rail traffic in our community, and the lack of oversight from Transport Canada and third parties.

The Fire Chief stated that the Rail Association of Canada primarily supports the short lines like Southern Rail. There are only 2 people for all of Canada that are part of the Rail Association.

In New Westminster we use Class A and B Foam, but carry only a small supply for emergency incidents. The foam is not environmentally friendly and is only used in emergency type situations. The Fire Chief had a meeting with a supplier in Abbotsford and they advised that they do have adequate quantities of foam if needed.

## **5.2 Overview of Lac Megantic Findings – Fire Chief T. Armstrong**

This item was discussed under item 5.1

## **5.3 Hazmat Training Update – Deputy Chief J. Hatch**

Deputy Fire Chief John Hatch discussed there are three levels of hazmat training; an awareness level, operations level and a technicians level. The City of New Westminster Fire & Rescue Services goal will to begin training to a technician's level in the future 2015/2016 with two members trained per shift.

Currently 50% of firefighters are trained at an Operations Level, by the end of November the Department will be 2/3 the way complete. Next year we will begin training to an Technician level. Currently 2 of our training officers attended a chlorine rail car training class, learning how to mitigate a small leak and cap it off. We are introducing a dangerous goods field operations guide to our firefighters; this is specific to New Westminster and the goods that come into the City by rail or truck.

The Fire Chief discussed that in New Westminster in the Southern Rail Yards we have had an anhydrous ammonia leak and a propane leak this year. In the summer there were a number of unknown odour complaints, this is the off-gassing of plastic pellets that are

coming from a manufacturing plant. Southern Rail has been very proactive and reaching out. There are other railways that have incidents that go undetected and they are very guarded.

**Jon Evans, Community Member arrived at 5:32 p.m.**

**5.4 Exercise held with Southern Rail ‘Bakken Crude’ Practical Skills and Tabletop - Chief T. Armstrong & Deputy Chief J. Hatch**

Deputy Fire Chief John Hatch reviewed the tabletop and practical skills exercise that was held with Southern Rail on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The Deputy Chief showed a Power point presentation with several photos of the Fire Department applying foam to the area around a rail car that is leaking Bakken crude oil. The Deputy Chief also discussed the processes in the photos taking place and made mention that it was a great training exercise that was held, both sides worked well together. In the future Southern Rail and New Westminster Fire and Rescue will hold further training.

**5.5 Mass Notification/Communication Research – Cory McLaren**

Cory McLaren, Emergency Planning Assistant discussed that we currently have a mass notification system called Rapid Notify, currently the Emergency Planning Assistant has been researching to see if there are any other companies that offer a similar product with varying options. Currently she is looking at Varicom, Everbridge, Rapid Notify and Epact. These companies all have various features that involve engaging the public. Currently the report regarding this research is being prepared and will be submitted to the Fire Chief for review.

**5.6 Union of BC Municipalities Convention – Councillor C. Puchmayr**

The Chair discussed attending the convention; a lot of city committees were active in bringing resolutions forward. The Railway Advisory Committee brought forward the resolution to eliminate the DOT 111 train rail cars, this passed unanimously at the convention. There is currently work being completed by the Minster and the Canadian Federation of Municipalities on this file.

There was a motion from the Emergency Advisory Committee in regards to retro-fitting three storey walk ups and care facilities with sprinklers. This passed unanimously. There were some concerns regarding Build Canada Infrastructure money, the response was to make the Build Canada money larger as it was promised 2 years ago and there still has been no money received.

**5.7 Update: Rail Evacuation Strategy- Fire Chief T. Armstrong**

The Fire Chief would like to engage the Quayside community group in a discussion and or forum in the future. The Chair discussed that a report for council regarding mass notification should be prepared and forwarded in the future.

Inspector Phil Eastwood from New Westminster Police discussed EPACT notification which provides important medical information and or emergency contact information via email. This also provides an area for staff to update their emergency contact information

and will aid in an emergency. This is not a mass notification system; it is a data notification system. EPACT is a Canadian based system, with servers in BC and Toronto.

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **6.1. New Westminster Emergency Management Office**

The Emergency Planning Assistant discussed that receiving an email inviting our committee to view the largest mobile medical clinic in Canada and a simulation will be held at the Justice Institute.

The Emergency Planning Assistant stated that we are currently upgrading and relocating the City's EOC. We are waiting for a printer, and several portable printers to arrive. We will be training our Administration Staff in the Fire Hall next week in the overall setup of the EOC, so that they can set up the EOC if there is activation. The setup is made very simple and easy to activate with provided instructions.

### **6.2 New Westminster Fire Services**

Open House was well attended on Sunday. Save on Foods and the Fire Chief discussed using the store to kick off certain events and discussed creating a made for New Westminster emergency kit and these would be offered in all Save Foods Stores locally.

The Fire Chief discussed the Resource Allocation Plan- BC ambulance has changed their response codes, currently this has created longer than normal wait times for an ambulance. We are experiencing currently 45 minutes to 2 hours wait times for an ambulance. There will be a "1-800" toll free number created that will be given to the Fire Crews and they can bypass dispatch and call a physician who would determine through the triage scale if they would attend the call emerg. This has become highly political and has put strain on some local municipalities Fire Departments. The Chair discussed from January to August there were 42 examples where an ambulance did not show up. So they took a taxi or got a family member to take them to the hospital. This has put a lot of strain on our City's fire service.

New Westminster Police Department now has mandatory CPR/AED training. Currently there is an AED in the Police Station and in each of the Police Supervisor's vehicles.

The Fire Chief discussed that at the conference he attended, there was a speaker who discussed quick response, it does not matter what the shoulder flash says, whether it's a Police Officer, Paramedic or Firefighter when that person arrives on scene the situation tends to de-escalate, this tends to be a cost saving to the health care system overall as a lot of patients, once response personnel will say they will visit their own doctor as opposed to attending the hospital.

The committee discussed the idea of privatizing the ambulance service and how currently the Fire Department is currently having to wait. The Chair discussed the bottle neck of ambulances at the hospital and how ambulance workers that are part-time are paid.

**6.3 Fraser Health Service**  
Not present at this time.

**6.4 New Westminster Police Services**  
October the 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014 is the Great Canadian Shake Out and the police department will be participating with PA system. The Police Department has strapped down workstations and bookcases, and will be promoting earthquake safety within their building. Currently the Police Department are partnering with the Fire Department and currently purchasing 6 sets of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus and 4 next year so that Police officers are equipped for Arson investigations. Inspector Phil Eastwood will be retiring next year and Wendy Bowyer will be taking over the Emergency Planning for the Police Department.

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m. Next meeting January 7, 2014 TBA

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**COUNCILLOR  
CHUCK PUCHMAYR  
CHAIR**

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**CORY MCLAREN  
COMMITTEE SECRETARY**