

Mayor's Report

SVFD Celebrating its 40th Anniversary

It's hard to believe that 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of the [Sasamat Volunteer Fire Department](#). Today, we have an excellent fire department that is both well-trained and well-equipped — but it wasn't always that way.

Forty years ago, the communities of Anmore and Belcarra were unincorporated rural areas that were part of Electoral Area 'B' of the 'Greater Vancouver Regional District' (GVRD), today known as the 'Metro Vancouver Regional District'. Fire insurance for home owners in the unincorporated areas was very expensive because they were surrounded by forest with no official fire protection — other than the provincial 'Ministry of Forests' — resulting in a fire insurance rating of Class '6', the same as Indian Reservations.

In 1976, Belcarra resident Verna Barrett, the new Director for Electoral Area 'B', recognized that our communities needed fire protection and decided to pursue creation of a volunteer fire department. It took considerable research and political skill to navigate the regulatory hurdles of the day. In September 1976, Verna Barrett established a 'Fire Committee' to investigate the feasibility of establishing a volunteer fire department. The committee consisted of herself and representatives from the 'Belcarra Ratepayers' Association', the 'Woodhaven–Bedwell Bay Property Owners Association', the 'Eaglecrest Farmers Institute' in Anmore, and the loco Townsite.

In October 1976, the GVRD Board gave three readings to a bylaw "to authorize the provision of fire protection services to a specified area within Electoral Area 'B', and further to provide for the acquisition of land and firefighting equipment, and the operation and maintenance of fire protection services". The Inspector of Municipalities approved the bylaw that December, and the GVRD placed advertisements in the local press advertising that a poll would be held on January 22nd, 1977, at the loco Elementary School. The referendum passed with 251 votes in favour (75%) and 84 votes opposed, and on January 26th, 1977, the GVRD Board gave fourth reading of the bylaw.

In May 1977, the first organizational meeting of the SVFD volunteers was held at the loco Community Hall. About 30 volunteers were present and anxious to begin training, and the first of the volunteers started training at the Port Moody fire hall that same month. The volunteer fire fighters incorporated as an association under the 'Society Act', and on February 21st, 1978, the SVFD Board of Trustees appointed John Doerksen (Bedwell Bay) as SVFD Fire Chief with Norm Simpson (Anmore) and Dave Hunter (Belcarra) as Assistant Chiefs. The rest, as they say, is history.

The SVFD fire fighters association will be hosting a [community celebration](#) for all residents of Anmore and Belcarra on **Saturday, July 7th, at 'Spirit park' in Anmore**, located directly behind the Anmore municipal hall. The festivities will start at 3:00 pm and go until 11:00 pm. For kids, there will be a Bouncy Castle, kids versus Fire Department water fight, food trucks and ice cream. For the adults, there will be a 'Moody Ales' beer garden and a live band providing music.

Come and enjoy the day and celebrate an amazing 40 years of community fire protection!

Ralph Drew
Mayor

April 3, 2018



Sasamat Fire Department Personnel & Equipment — September 2017.