



**Sable River Volunteer Fire Department
Presentation to Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne
December 9, 2019**

The mission statement of the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department is as follows:

“To provide the residents and visitors of our coverage area with the level of service which they expect and are entitled to, from education, fire prevention, fire suppression, medical response and any other call for emergency service. To do so in the most expedient, safe and professional manner possible. To assist and work with our neighboring departments when called upon for mutual aid. To be accountable to our interior and exterior stakeholders.”

The Sable River Volunteer Fire Department was incorporated as a Society in Nova Scotia in 1984. It was established to satisfy the emergency response needs of the community in 1969, making it 50 years old this year. Currently, the Department has approximately twenty dedicated volunteers who have responded to 42 calls for service this year. The Department is housed in an aging school house which is not suitable for its needs, will not house a modern fire truck, and is in a state of disrepair. It is currently borrowing a fire pumper from another Department after having had to retire its pumper-tanker.

For more than a decade, the Fire Chiefs of the Department have stated the need to replace the aging pumper-tanker used by the Department. No progress had been made on the acquisition of a replacement truck, and this past fall, we were forced to retire this 32 year old truck after it was deemed unfit for the road.

In 2018, a Strategic Plan including a complete SWOT analysis (which measures our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was developed by the Board of Directors and the members of the Department. It passed a unanimous vote by the Board, and the Chairman at the time tasked the Fire Chief to implement the plan. Part of that plan which has been labeled “Schedule A”, was to replace the aging truck mentioned above.

In the same document, a need was brought up to update the By-Laws of the Society. Work on those By-Laws was commenced by the Board of Directors. When the amended By-Laws were brought to the community for a vote, there were concerns raised by some of those attending the meetings. Shortly thereafter, a group called the “Concerned Citizens of Sable River”, consisting of six members, was formed and a mediation meeting was set up with the assistance of the MDS.

Out of that meeting came a document which was signed by both the Fire Department and the Concerned Citizens group. The Fire Department attended this meeting and signed the agreement in an attempt to move forward and meet its Mission Statement. As each member of the Fire Department is a volunteer, it did take some time to produce the information asked for in the mediated settlement, however all information, as well as some information which was not asked for, was made available to the Concerned Citizens group. The Fire Department feels that it has met its responsibilities with respect to the mediated agreement. (See letter dated November 10, 2019, labeled "Schedule B").

The By-Laws working group which was struck as a result of the mediation agreement met and what was thought to be a straightforward process to clarify the decision-making process became a tedious one with no attainable end in sight, further delaying our need to replace our out-of-service fire truck.

The Society's finances are in order. This year, the Fire Department retained the services of an accounting firm to complete its year-end financial report. Due to some misunderstanding of where financial items were to be inputted into the register, there was some confusion and questions were raised. These questions have all been answered in cooperation with the Board Treasurer and the accounting firm. (See letter from the Board Treasurer, labeled "Schedule C")

Following the signing of the mediated agreement, the Concerned Citizens group demanded several other documents from the Fire Department, including financial information, a copy of any Standard Operating Guidelines for the Department, as well as information pertaining to the roadworthiness of the retired fire truck. This information was not offered to the Concerned Citizens group, as it was not part of the mediated settlement. Three years of year-end financial statements were however provided, as this information is in the public domain.

The Fire Chief of the Department is the person whom the Firefighters want and have elected unanimously as their leader due to his qualifications, time availability and dedication to the Department, though he has only had a short time to learn how the community operates as he is new to the area.

The Fire Department feels very strongly in the need to work within our Mission Statement and calls upon the MDS to assist in meeting that goal by way of helping to obtain a replacement truck prior to our having to return the truck being borrowed this coming spring.

In conclusion, we have made you aware of the background issues of the mediated agreement, finances, equipment, and the way ahead to continue to work within our Mission Statement.

The Sable River Volunteer Fire Department would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you and to explain our position.

We would be happy to answer any question that you may have at this time.



Strategic Plan
2018-2023

Schedule A

Open Letter
SRVFD Chief Sisk to SRVFD Board of Directors
July 2018

This past year I was afforded the opportunity to lead the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department. I spent the past year learning the department and working towards acceptance as their leader. I see a great deal of potential from within this department. The members of this department serve the community well. However, there are several areas that require urgent action to continue the standard of service that our residents and visitors deserve and expect.

As the fire service changes and the hazards we face change, so must the fire department evolve. In order to provide comprehensive emergency services to our residents and visitors, the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department must proactively respond to those changes. To accomplish this goal, the following Strategic Planning document was developed with input sought from our members. This report is designed to provide the organization and citizens of the community with a five year planning document capable of being evaluated, reviewed, and refined on an annual basis.

The fire service as a whole continues to change on a daily basis. The dynamic nature of the environments, community demands, staffing issues, and the economic conditions facing local areas require that departments assume a proactive stance in planning short, medium, and long term organizational goals. While I acknowledge our department may not fully achieve all of the stated goals within a five year period, I believe it is important to take the initiative and design a framework that will guide us in our efforts to meet future challenges. Achievement will take the efforts of every member of the department and support from the community leaders, whose input is always welcome.

The major goals identified require urgent action in order for the department to remain functional and operationally capable of its obligations. We require new vehicles and storage as soon as possible to remain operational. The goals identified provide options on the way ahead for vehicle purchase and storage. Our preferred operational option is for a new (or newer used) pumper, a new (or newer used) rescue support vehicle and a new four bay building for vehicle and equipment storage. If the SRVFD Board wishes further analysis of the options, it is recommended that they obtain, quickly, rough order of magnitude (with 25% accuracy and contingency) cost estimates of each of the elements of the options presented (pumper truck, rescue truck, combined pumper/ rescue truck, 2, 3 and 4 bay new building, school house demolition and site restoration). We then insist on proceeding quickly with the combination of ROM costed options that will satisfy the operational need and agreed with the community.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the department, community members, mutual aid partners and government officials for providing me the opportunity to facilitate the development of a document that will guide the future of the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department. As an organization, we stand committed to accepting the challenge of cultivating these strategic goals into reality, enhancing the services we offer our residents and visitors, and meeting our future vision.

Todd A. Sisk, PCP, Fire Chief Sable River Volunteer Fire Department

SRVFD Strategic Planning Process:

Being a new chief, I met with department leadership, department members, community leaders, neighboring fire department executive, and others to explain the task at hand and the work ahead. I asked for input, support and feedback from the members. Data collection began by distributing a partially completed SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) document penned by Chairman Roger Taylor circa 2012 to our operational, front-line rank and file members, with instructions to add their input. The data would give me a perspective from the internal stakeholders of the department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to our organization. The opportunities and threats are external.

The small amount of comment that was received from members on the previous SWOT analysis is compiled into the results below.

A subsequent meeting was held with the operations portion of SRVFD. From this meeting and in combination with the previous strategic plan, the strategic topics were named, and ideas given. This meeting was well attended and candid conversation occurred. Objectives were formulated and the actions to achieve those objectives were also formulated. The results are what follow. These objectives and actions are from the rank and file members, and not necessarily from the author or directors of SRVFD. The source of any written or verbal correspondence relating to these objectives and/or actions will remain confidential, and destroyed once this document is prepared.

Organizational Background:

The Sable River Volunteer Fire Department is a registered non-profit society. Its Board of Directors provides community direction and is responsible for the financial and administrative aspects of the SRVFD. The operational responsibilities are fulfilled by the Firefighter (FF) and Medical First Responder (MFR) volunteers lead by an elected Fire Chief. The department is financed by the Municipality of the District of Shelburne (as one of seven volunteer fire departments in the municipal district), by community fundraising and by various approved grant applications from other agencies. It is a member of the Municipal Fire Advisory Committee and the Regional Mutual Aid and Shelburne County East Emergency Measures Organizations.

The Sable River Volunteer Fire Department serves an emergency response district that provides Fire and Medical First Response services to a population of approximately 350 year round residents. They reside in a large geographical area in a rural setting comprised of one major highway, several secondary highways, rural roads, buildings and businesses, large expanses of aged woodlands, coast line, harbours, waterways, lakes, shared multiuse trails and fire roads. These services are provided from one main fire hall centrally located within the response area. The department currently consists of 28 volunteer firefighters, 8 of whom are trained medical first responders.

In the past ten years SRVFD has responded on average each year to approximately 30 incidents including fires (structure/grass/forest), motor vehicle accidents and medical calls. To date (July 2018) the number of incidents is increasing annually.

Organizational Vision:

As members of the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department, we share a vision of creating and maintaining a leading edge organization of highly trained volunteers, dedicated to exceeding our community's expectations for fire and emergency services.

Mission Statement:

To provide the residents and visitors of our coverage area with the level of service which they expect and are entitled to, from education, fire prevention, fire suppression, medical response and any other call for emergency service. To do so in the most expedient, safe and professional manner possible. To assist and work with our neighboring departments when called upon for mutual aid. To be accountable to our interior and exterior stakeholders.

Values:

The members of the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department are community-minded volunteers who commit themselves to a service which demonstrates a caring for their fellow residents, visitors, property and environment while respecting the dignity, privacy and confidentiality of those whom we serve. We strive to be fully trained and equipped to respond to any call at any time.

Municipal Agreement / Commitment:

To provide fire protection service and medical first responder service to the Sable River emergency service district not including internal building operations, search and rescue (other than to assist), HAZMAT, ice / water rescue or high angle / rope rescue. With changing conditions and increasing demands and hazards we should develop, train and equip the department for these additional hazards after which we could then expand the level of service agreement.

SWOT Analysis:**Strengths:**

The Sable River Volunteer Fire Department meets the standards of the Municipal Government Act, a statement of level of service with the Municipality and their service demands.

It has a capable, trained Fire Chief currently supported by 26 volunteer firefighters, officers and medical first responders.

It has most of the required equipment to perform the services which it provides.

It holds regular training sessions for both firefighters and medical first responders.

It is being well managed and is fiscally responsible.

Weaknesses:

The SRVFD is suffering block obsolescence (simultaneous end of useful life) of most of its major infrastructure: two of three vehicles and the fire hall.

The Sable River Volunteer Fire Department is housed in a circa 1950's school house which was retrofitted for its use. It is in a state of disrepair, and is not large enough to house either the current or the anticipated required apparatus for the department.

Its fleet of apparatus is aging. Its main pumper/tanker is 30 years old and in need of regular repairs. Its rescue/equipment van is poorly designed and also in need of regular repairs. Its first-response truck is a newer model, however not well-suited for our use. It should be noted that none of our apparatus meet NFPA 1901 standards, which regulate fire response vehicles, for various reasons.

Although two dry hydrants are maintained in our coverage area, there should be at least one, and possibly two more installed for proper coverage.

Our communications system is not suitable for the geography/distances within our coverage area.

Though we have a good number of volunteers, more training is required for them, and there is a need for new recruits to replace those who we anticipate will retire in the future. We have no level one trained firefighters and are particularly weak at breathing apparatus use. The availability of firefighters to emergency calls is problematic.

Our emergency prevention activities are minimal.

We do not have proper mutual aid agreements in place with our neighboring departments, nor the proper equipment (connectors, adapters, etc.) to work with them should the need arise.

The department has been stagnant for many years, and many of the volunteers had lost interest. There remain many pieces of equipment which should have been retired long ago, and many other pieces that are simply unsafe to use. These items, such as hoses, hand tools, backpack water tanks, etc., should be replaced immediately.

Opportunities:

The Sable River Volunteer Fire Department has funding available to replace aging equipment and infrastructure with the assistance of the Municipality and the community.

Training opportunities exist for those firefighters and medical first responders who are able and willing to undergo such training. There is an option to have certification-level training completed in-house by way of appointing a training officer and having them certified through the Nova Scotia Fire School to instruct the members.

There are members of the community who would be good candidates for membership if a recruitment drive were to be done.

There are grants and fundraising opportunities available to finance new equipment to continue and to augment our level of service.

There are opportunities to participate in training and mutual aid practices with neighboring departments.

Threats:

Of most significance is that the fire apparatus and equipment are mostly in a state of disrepair, have and could unexpectedly become unavailable for service.

The aging population and buildings, as well as the inaccessible forested areas in the coverage area may mean more calls for service going forward.

There is a large quantity of hazardous materials being shipped by truck through our service area and the department does not have the means to deal with either a small or large hazmat situation. The nearest hazmat unit is approximately two hours away in Kentville, NS, and our members should be trained to at least the operations-level to mitigate these incidents until a properly equipped team is able to respond.

Access to the shared multiuse trails in the event of an emergency in our area improves access to forested areas but is restricted with the current response apparatus.

There is currently no succession planning or training in place for the senior officers.

The department does not maintain a set of standard operating procedures or guidelines.

Major Goals: (in no priority except that vehicles and their storage should occur ASAP)

To conduct a recruitment drive to augment our number of members.

To renovate, reconfigure or replace the existing fire hall with one suitable for current and future anticipated needs.

To replace the existing pumper/tanker with a new or newer used one.

To replace the equipment van with a new or newer used purpose-built rescue truck.

Alternatively, the SRVFD could combine the pumper/tanker and rescue vehicle into one dual-purpose vehicle.

Establish an adequate number of effectively located dry hydrants in the fire service district. To establish mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments.

To purchase required equipment and upgrade outdated/damaged equipment.

To Create a set of Standard Operating Guidelines for the Department without delay.

To rewrite/update the By-Laws of the SRVF department and Society.

To upgrade our communications system.

To conduct more training sessions, appoint a training officer and have them certified to instruct to certification levels.

To define the members as teams which would include front-line firefighters, medical first responders and support members.

To establish fire prevention / inspection/health teams.

Key Performance Indicators:

Level of service commitments met.

Response to calls is "Fire Hall departure" within eight minutes of notification of an emergency call.

Staffing is at 20 qualified and trained fire fighters, including six breathing apparatus trained personnel, and 8 qualified and trained medical first responders.

New pumper / tanker acquired by April 2020.

Fire Hall refurbished / renovated or replaced by April 2020.

New support vehicle acquired by April 2023.

Financial commitments for SRVFD investments are being met.

Fire prevention program and "health matters" implemented. Reduce service calls by 10% / year.

Volunteer recruiting has stabilized staffing.



November 10, 2019

Sable River Volunteer Fire Department
237 Hwy 3
Sable River, NS B0T 1V0

Ken Smith, Interim CAO, Municipality of the District of Shelburne
Erin Hartley, Director of Corporate Services, Municipality of the District of Shelburne
Penny Smith, Warden, Municipality of the District of Shelburne
Members of Council, Municipality of the District of Shelburne

Re: Mediated agreement between the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department and the "Concerned Citizens of Sable River"

As you are all aware, a mediation meeting was held between the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department (SRVFD) and a group calling themselves the "Sable River Concerned Citizens" (SRCC) on August 27, 2019. This meeting was paid for by the Municipality of the District of Shelburne (MDS), which the SRVFD is thankful for.

While the SRVFD Society does not necessarily recognize that the SRCC act as true representatives of the residents of Sable River, nor is the Society clear as to whether the SRCC has the legal ability to enter into a contract with a not-for-profit corporation, the Society did agree to meet with this group following some unclear information which was distributed through the community surrounding the SRVFD's investigation into pricing and specifications for new capital equipment in an effort to clarify this information.

Following the mediation meeting, a document was drafted and signed by both parties. As detailed below by explanation for each of the items in the agreement as numbered in the document, **the SRVFD considers the mediation complete, and the agreement satisfied. The SRVFD mediation team, as well as the members of the By-Laws working group have been disbanded. Any further discussion on this topic should be directed to the SRVFD through the Board of Directors:**

1. The By-Laws duly passed on June 3, 2019 remain in effect.
 - (a) As there was no register of members in existence prior to June 3, 2019, to the knowledge of the SRVFD, the membership consisted of the Board of Directors listed with the Registry of Joint Stocks of Nova Scotia, and none others.
 - (b) The list to be provided by MDS of the names, addresses and occupations of the residents of SRVFD's fire district, to be used to populate a register of members has not been provided.

2. A working group to draft a new set of By-Laws for the SRVFD prior to the deadline of October 31, 2019 was struck. The SRVFD provided the SRCC with many dates which its members were available to meet for discussion, however the SRCC was only able to gather their members for three meetings prior to the October 31, 2019 deadline. During those three meetings, 35 of 50 items in the SRVFD By-Laws were addressed, amended, or flagged for review. The group was far from preparing a set of draft By-Laws though the SRVFD made every effort to do so.
3. This is a moot point as (a) a new set of By-Laws were not drafted by the deadline, and (b) the Board of Directors of the SRVFD is not empowered to make decisions which could generate financial obligation or debt to the ratepayers of the SRVFD fire district.
4. Though no new By-Laws have been implemented, the SRVFD did follow this agreed-upon item for the one special meeting which was held on September 19, 2019, following the mediation meeting.
5. The SRVFD will, by Friday November 15, 2019, have compiled the documents requested in this agreement item. During the mediation meeting, it was voiced that the By-Laws of the SRVFD (Sec. 45) allowed for the members of the Society to inspect the noted documents at the registered address of the Society on giving seven days' notice. The SRVFD is certainly willing to comply with its By-Laws and allow any member of the Society to inspect its records following the prescribed procedure.
6. Moot point. The By-Laws working group was unable to complete the draft By-Laws and the sections relating to the financial aspects of the Society were not discussed by the group.
7. The SRVFD held a meeting to attempt to rescind the Special Resolution noted on September 19, 2019. This meeting was open and announced to the public per item 4. Turnout for this meeting was poor, and the vote to rescind the special resolution was defeated. Of note, the CAO for MDS has insisted that, even though a proper vote was held, that the Society rescind this Special Resolution somehow. The Societies Act of Nova Scotia requires a Special Resolution be rescinded by Special Resolution, as do the By-Laws of the Society. The Society is governed by "Robert Rules of Order" which does not allow for another vote to be held on a matter already voted on. Therefore, the Society can see no legal way to rescind this Special Resolution.
8. The noted documents have been provided to MDS with instructions to distribute them to the SRCC group.

The SRVFD is very concerned regarding the Letters to the public, news articles, and social media posts from the SRCC group. Much of this information is misleading, untrue, and libelous. This type of action on the part of the SRCC serves to impede progress to finding a solution to the issues which the SRVFD is facing, and the ability of the SRVFD to effectively work with the residents of the fire district to solve

these issues. The goal of the SRVFD is to work with the community to determine how to bring the Fire Department up to the standards which it expects and deserves, with full input and transparency to all stakeholders.

The issues raised by the SRCC group would have been resolved without mediation or not existed at all if the members of that group had chosen to attend meetings of the Society or become active in its mission. It has been suggested many times that the members of the SRCC apply to the current four vacancies on the Board of Directors of the Society, and they have declined. It is the opinion of the SRVFD that the SRCC is not representative of the community and thus distracting the SRVFD from going through the legal process of adequately equipping the Fire Department. The aims of the SRCC seem to vary greatly from those of the SRVFD, who have stated throughout this process that its aims are to be trained and equipped to provide fire and emergency response in a safe and timely manner to the residents and visitors of its fire district, and to fulfil its mandate and obligations to the MDS. The aim of the SRCC seems to be to acquire past records, demand more records and obstruct the By-Law amendment process in order to criticize the SRVFD Society and management. They are not at all looking to the future and not helping the SRVFD move ahead, but rather obstructing this process.

In light of the difficulties which the Sable River and area community is facing in decision making, it is requested that MDS assist the SRVFD in the acquisition of a temporary replacement pumper/tanker apparatus, and in assisting in the implementation of a long-term solution.

Kind Regards,

The executive, Sable River Volunteer Fire Department

(Original letter signed by all five executive of the Society and hand-delivered to CAO Ken Smith)



Sable River Volunteer Fire Department
237 Hwy 3
Sable River, NS
BOT 1W0

Municipality of the District of Shelburne
136 Hammond Street
PO Box 280
Shelburne, NS
BOT 1W0

December 2, 2019

Dear CAO Trudy Payne and Council Members;

First and foremost, I would like it clear that I am a volunteer. I am not, and have never made claims to be, a Management Accountant. The financial information I have presented is to the best of my ability and knowledge at the time. I have learned exponentially since filling the position of treasurer after my predecessor left the Dept suddenly. There was no soft handover, just my being thrust into learning as fast as possible.

With that in mind, I am frustrated and insulted by the accusations and innuendo presented by the self-titled and appointed "Concerned Citizens of Sable River". They do not speak for the majority, though they are speaking loud enough to garner attention.

In response to their presentation questions, some of which had already been explained, however, see below.

1. Directors Meeting May 23, 2019
 - a. Revenues of \$82,168.75 included the GIC's, as explained at that meeting and on the attached papers. I have personally never been in a position to have GIC's and therefore not familiar with how to report same. Asking other departments for insight proved unhelpful as investments are not the norm. Departments are expected to use the funds for ongoing services, not save and let equipment deteriorate.
 - b. Chief Todd Sisk's comment of \$50,000 related to an estimate of how much had been billed out to insurance companies. These amounts were not confirmed as the SRVFD did not know if the invoices would be accepted or not.
 - c. I was unable to attend the October 17th meeting, and as I understand it there was no quorum, no official meeting occurred. Any discussion was information only.
2. Budget Review May 23
 - a. See 1a above.
3. Budget Review May 23
 - a. The discrepancy between the Belliveau Vienotte Ltd. amounts and mine are an issue of allocation. We are working to rectify the issues and will advise when completed.



Sable River Volunteer Fire Department
237 Hwy 3
Sable River, NS
BOT 190

4. Other Income

- a. The insurance refund was my interpretation of the Dept insurance being paid by the Municipality. Looking further down on the spreadsheet, the charge can be seen in the Insurance row, effectively zero-ing out the entry, however, showing that insurance was paid. In future, it will be listed as a note rather than an entry.

5. Repair and Maintenance

- a. See below, the amounts relevant to the vehicles noted.

subtotal	reference	item	description	notes
3,754.66	96 Ford Van	Repairs	electrical, shocks, brakes, etc	*note these were during previous Treasurer tenure
641.12	96 Ford Van	Repairs	electrical, water pump	
555.34	87 GMC	Repairs	alternator	
568.88	87 GMC	MVI & repairs	Alternator/electrical issues	
30.00	96 Ford Van	MVI		
200.00	96 Ford Van	towing		
376.22	96 Ford Van	Repairs	electrical issue	
6,126.22				

- b. The Vehicle entry of \$10,072.00 is, in fact, related to equipment. See 3a above.
c. Purchase of Cube Van: the final cost has not been determined as there are further alterations to be done, all within a max value voted on by the board members.

I trust this clarification will suffice to substantiate that there are no financial shell games happening within the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department. I will work with Belliveau Veinotte Ltd. to clarify the information and provide an updated set of statements at the next board meeting in January 2020. Any questions are willingly answered when asked in a polite manner. Perhaps if more "Concerned Citizens" had attended meetings all year and offered their assistance and shared experiences to help with the learning curve rather than spouting accusations and anger, these questions could have been answered long ago.

Feel free to email should you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Johan Grundy
Treasurer
Sable River Volunteer Fire Dept

My name is Norma Brown, I was born and raised in Sable River. I may no longer reside in the community but as a property owner I feel I need to share my opinion of the current state of the SRVFD

I was a member of the Sable River Volunteer Fire Department for a number of years as a "Volunteer". I was a Medical First Responder, Firefighter and held the office of secretary for a number of years. I stress that because at the time I quit there had been a board established previously on a suggestion from then Fire Chief Janet Taylor, rest her soul, to help be able to deal with any controversy's between department members.

My experience with the board made me feel like we as volunteers, were always having to defend ourselves for one reason or another. Very stressful. Certain members of the community, the same one(s) that are still causing so much harm against the department started escalating to what it is today.

Not one of these complainers realize the time and dedication that a fire chief has to give.

Janet Taylor was one of those. When she was degraded by these concerned citizens and voted out of the department by a popularity vote. It was at this time I resigned from the Fire Dept. Janet dedicated so much with her time, her money, whatever she needed, to give protection to the community. I was devastated when she was just brushed aside by the whole community and no thanks or appreciation for all she had done. To this day I know she is still "blamed" for different issues within the department. So sad. Shortly after this she ended up moving to Newfoundland where she continued with her volunteer work within Pouch Cove fire department. They greatly appreciated all she did right up till the time she passed away.

Darrel Harlow: a chief that also dedicated so much time and effort.

Jim McKinley: great chief. No one would have pulled all this bullshit on him when he was in office.

Robert Zwicker: Rest In Peace. Not a chief but a very important part to the team. Dedicated and sadly missed because all he gave, especially his time. He felt the wrath of the board before he died.

Todd Sisk: I personally don't know him but the same thing is being done to him. Being fought every step of the way.

FYI one certain former member was let go because he refused to follow a senior officer's orders at a number of calls and tried to bully other members of the department. This is a very serious safety issue so I felt it was dealt with appropriately.

My understanding is that these so called concerned citizens actually went door to door and had meetings just to feed people's minds with all this propaganda just to discredit everything the volunteer fire department is doing against the other community citizens.

Where is it going to stop?

I had heard before that there was/are certain board member(s) that maybe not there any more, that had openly said that they would like to see the department dissolved. Now that's scary.

My daughter Theresa has been there for almost 21 years. I ask her how she can stay there dealing with all this bullshit and she says she's doing it mostly for Janet's memory and she knows in her heart that everything is being done properly and she doesn't want these naysayers to win.

I really can't understand how people can want to cause so much controversy for a volunteer organization. They should be putting all this effort into help build it stronger. Instead of that they are working so hard to break it apart.

I understand there are legal obligations and there has to be accountability. Financial aspect, very important. But why do they have to tell these lies about misappropriation of funds or unaccounted for spending or what ever else is being drummed up to made the current chief look bad. It not only makes the Chief look bad, it also makes all the current dedicated group of volunteers look bad.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter,

Sincerely,

Norma Brown
Former VFF/MFR of SRVFD
Normabrown1@hotmail.com

*A **volunteer fire department (VFD)** is a fire department composed of volunteers who perform fire suppression and other related emergency services for a local jurisdiction. Volunteer and retained firefighters are expected to be on call to respond to emergency calls for long periods of time, and are summoned to the fire station when their services are needed. They are also expected to attend other non-emergency duties as well (training, fundraising, equipment maintenance, etc.).*