



**PARKSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
2022
ANNUAL REPORT**

2022 Annual Report

Parksville Volunteer Fire Department

For the year ended December 31, 2022

Parksville Volunteer Fire Department

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About the PVFD

The Parksville Volunteer Fire Department is staffed by six paid members and up to 44 on-call volunteer firefighters as well as a full-time administrative assistant. Our firefighters are a dedicated and diverse group of highly trained professionals, women and men, most of whom volunteer their service.

Mission Statement: The Parksville Volunteer Fire Department strives to protect and support the community by providing outstanding service in the areas of fire suppression, emergency response, member training, fire prevention, public education and charitable community service (2014).

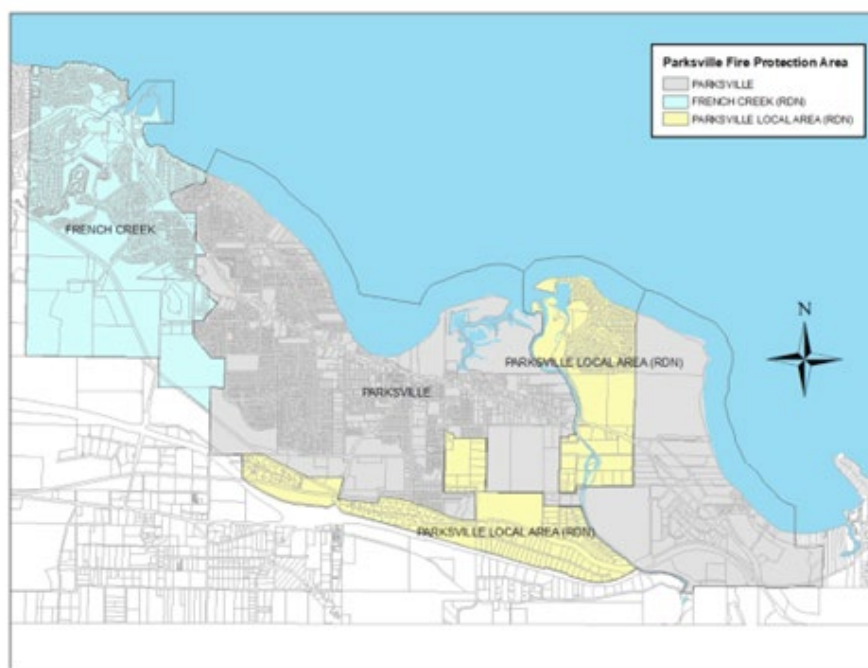
Departmental Values: Integrity and Service

Vision: Commitment to the betterment of the community through dedication and sacrifice and through actions and behaviours which exemplify core beliefs and values. Choose what is right over what is convenient and comfortable.

Motto: Pride • Courage • Passion • Teamwork

Service Area

The Parksville Fire Rescue Protection Area consists of the City of Parksville, and the French Creek and Parksville Local Service Areas of the Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Area "G" where service is delivered via contract. Reciprocal service is also provided to our neighbouring partner fire rescue agencies via our regional mutual and automatic aid agreements.



Message from the Fire Chief

It is my privilege to present the annual report of fire rescue activities for the Parksville Volunteer Fire Department in 2022.

Throughout the year, the department encountered substantial challenges and responded to an increased operational demand, recording a 14% rise – equivalent to 79 additional calls for service compared to the prior year. The team managed multiple significant incidents, among them were a 32-hour hazardous materials response, a 22-hour structure fire, and an aviation-related emergency.

Our commitment to rigorous training was unwavering, with curriculum encompassing NFPA and BC standards, Emergency Medical Assist First Responder licensing, and other essential competencies. These ongoing efforts ensure our personnel remain fully prepared to deliver effective service.

During 2022, seven new volunteer on-call members joined our ranks, two bringing previous experience, while seven members departed—including five who relocated, one of whom transitioned into a career firefighter role in the Okanagan. Additionally, three team members were promoted to Sr. Firefighter, and our recruitment and retention strategies advanced through the formation of a dedicated working group and renewed focus on volunteer on-call benefits.

Strategically, we renewed our five-year Fire Services Agreement (2022-2026) with the RDN, securing an average annual contribution of \$854,531. Fleet renewal progressed with the deployment of Rescue 45, our new rescue truck, and reassignment of the former rescue pumper to reserve status.

Our members, a highly skilled and dedicated group of professionals, continually delivered fire rescue and community support services under increasing demands. They represent an invaluable asset to Parksville. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to our members, council, and the broader community. Together, we are fostering a resilient and responsive fire service for Parksville.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Norris
Fire Chief

Highlights and Achievements

Training - Volunteer members are committed to maintaining a high level of proficiency in their field. In 2022, members completed **8383** person hours of training over **487** training sessions to build and maintain the necessary skills to be effective in their roles.

Fire prevention - Activities include public fire and life safety education, fire and life safety inspections of all public occupancies, fire cause determination investigations, and building plan reviews. The following are the notable fire prevention benchmarks for 2022:

- **50** public education events, equalling **798** person hours and reaching hundreds of citizens.
- **36** reportable fire incidents, these incidents resulted in one injury and one fatality
- **673** fire safety inspections completed in public occupancies and **56** inspection follow ups.
- **25** development plan reviews completed.

Community Engagement - Department members facilitated and participated in the following notable community engagement events:

- A regular booth at the Tuesday night market on Craig St., with a focus on fire safety and recruiting of Volunteer On-call Members.
- Booth at the Parksville Spring Home show.
- Hosted 4 pop-up waterparks throughout the city including two (2) at Foster Park, one (1) at Nichols Park, and one (1) at Shelly Park Playground. These are well attended by the public; a big hit one might say.

Aid agreements - we continue to maintain close working relationships with neighbouring fire services; Town of Qualicum Beach, District of Lantzville and Regional District of Nanaimo. This includes training with our local partners and responding as per mutual and automatic aid agreements.

New Rescue Apparatus, Rescue 45 (R45) - Received and placed into service a new walk-around style heavy rescue apparatus built and delivered by Fort Garry Fire Trucks.

Land Acquisitions - At the direction of city Council, the City of Parksville was successful in acquiring two parcels of land immediately to the West of the existing fire station located at 160 Jensen Ave West, for the purpose of future fire station improvements.



Charitable and Fundraising - Throughout the year and despite the time required to deliver fire rescue services, members find time to engage in support of the community in many other ways. Members host a carwash, supported our rider in Tour de Rock, and facilitated our Fill the Boots for Food Drive.



- **Boots for Food Drive** - due to the pandemic, this annual event in support of the Salvation Army food bank and the Society of Organized Services raised \$34,829 over one weekend in November and coupled with a donation of \$58,635 from the Craig Bay Residents Association, raised a grand total of **\$93,464**. As well, the community donated many toys for the SOS Christmas program.

Challenges

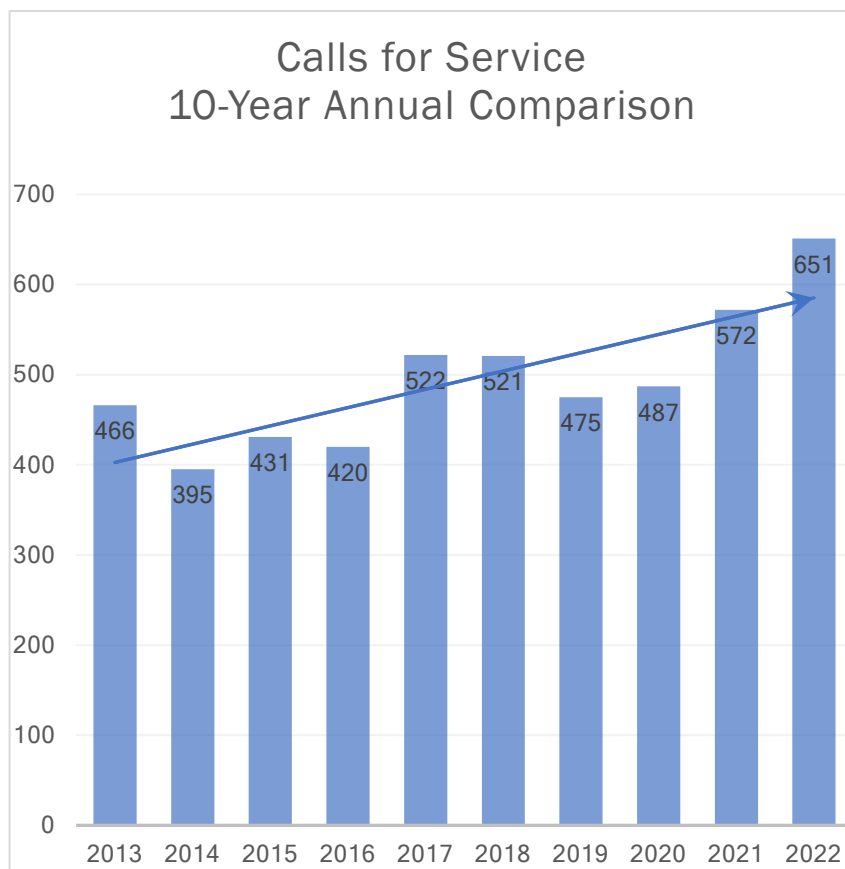
Recruiting and Retention of volunteer on-call members (our most important resource) - We continue to experience increasing volume of calls for service and training requirements which combine to put additional time pressures on volunteer on-call members. Availability and affordability of housing, coupled with few well-paid fulltime job opportunities, create a strain on the ability to members to commit the required time or keep people in the fire protection area. The ability of members to maintain healthy balances between home, work and the fire rescue service continues to become incrementally more challenging as the community continues to grow. We continue to see a year over year erosion of our average length of service which directly impacts experience and development.

Training - In 2022 we started to see more outside training opportunities for our members with the loosening of Covid restrictions. While this allowed for our firefighters to build their knowledge, skills, and abilities there were significant challenges securing spots in courses as there are limited providers, locations, seats, course offerings and many other fire departments vying for the same training courses. Additionally, there is a backlog of members requiring courses which will mean additional expenditures (above typical) to get back to a normal cadence.

Unhoused Population / Drugs Addiction / Mental Health - The department continues to see significant increases in calls for service related to the unhoused population, drug addiction and mental illness, or some combination of these situations. Responses to associated incidents include overdoses, outdoor fires, burning complaints, and unsafe hazardous conditions.

Fire Station Facility - We are experiencing more acute issues in relation to our fire station facilities including cramped administrative spaces; insufficient apparatus, equipment maintenance, storage, and fitness spaces; inadequate health and safety provisions in relation to decontamination; along with lack of space configured for overnight accommodations, amongst other things.

Incident Response



Calls for service - The department responded to or dealt with **651** incidents totalling **637** hours of incident duration and **4,869** on-scene person hours.

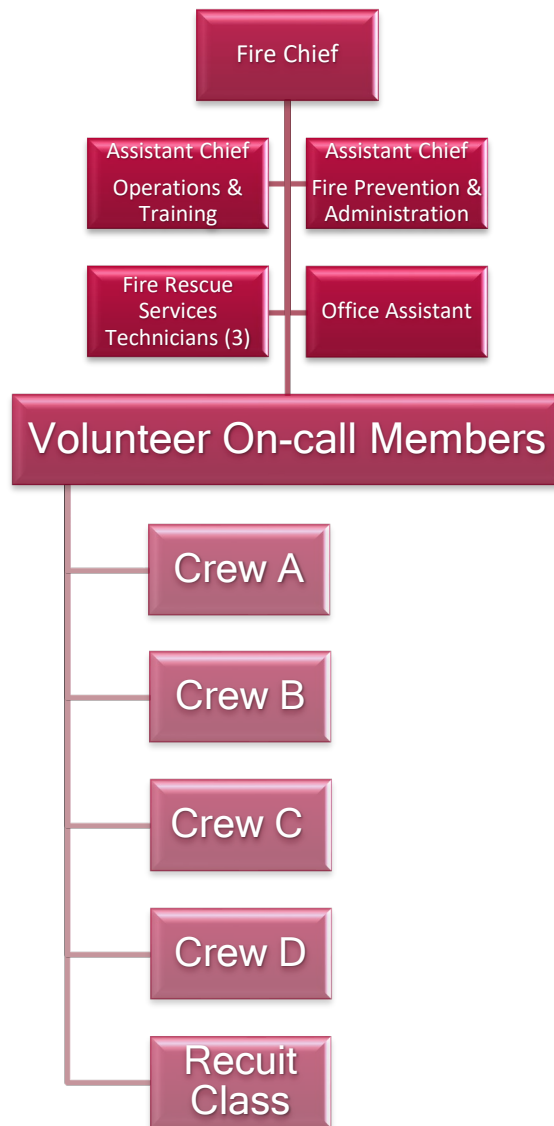
Responses included fire, medical aid, hazardous materials, rope rescue, confined space rescue, auto extrication, alarms, motor vehicle incidents, burning complaints, and miscellaneous public service.



Pride ~ Courage ~ Passion ~ Teamwork

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Distribution of Personnel



1 - Fire Chief

1 - Assistant Chief
Operations & Training

1 - Assistant Chief
Fire Prevention &
Administration

3 - Fire Rescue Service
Technicians

1 - Administration
Assistant

Up to 44 - Volunteer
On-Call members



Facilities and Apparatus

The PVFD operates out of one fire station located at 160 Jensen Avenue West (corner of Jensen Avenue and Alberni Hwy). The fire rescue department also operates a training facility located at 1159 Franklin's Gull Road.

Station 41 – 160 Jensen Avenue West



PVFD Training Centre – 1159 Franklin's Gull Road



Apparatus

- 2 – Engines (Pump Trucks) – E41 & E42
- 1 – Reserve Engine – E43
- 1 – Quint Aerial Apparatus / 105' Rear Mount Ladder – L49
- 1 – Heavy Rescue – R45 (***Received and into service 2022***)
- 1 – Water Tender – T47
- 1 – Special Operations Trailer – SOT41
- 3 – Command / Utility / Training / Inspection Vehicles – C41, C42 & C43

