

**CITIZEN'S ADVISORY GROUP ("CAG")**  
**TO**  
**SAN JUAN ISLAND EMS ("SJIEMS")**  
**SAN JUAN COUNTY PUBLIC HOSPITAL DISTRICT #1 ("SJCPHD #1")**  
**SAN JUAN COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #3 ("FD #3")**  
**AND THE TOWN OF FRIDAY HARBOR ("TOWN")**

**MINUTES**  
**Wednesday Nov 7, 2018**  
**6:30 pm, 849 Spring Street, Suite B-5**

**CAG representatives:**

Chuck Dalldorf, Town (Chair)  
Rick Frazer, at large  
George Johnson, SJCPHD #1  
Dan Paulsen, FD #3  
Mark Tompkins, at large

**Others Present:**

Nathan Butler, SJCPHD #1  
SJCPHD #1 Board Recording Sec.  
  
Dr. Loren Johnson

**Absent:**

None

**Public Present:**

Many

**By Phone or teleconference:**

None

**Call to Order and Roll Call:** Chair Dalldorf called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**Approve Minutes:** By consent the group agreed that the minutes from October 17, 2018 were acceptable.

**Dr. Loren Johnson:**

Dr. Loren Johnson introduced his background as a retired ER doctor with 43 years of practice, he moved to the island in 2008 and became the Interim Medical Director for the Inter Island Medical Center (IIMC). Later he worked as a staff ER doctor at Peace Island Medical Center (PIMC). He also was on the EMS levy campaign, where "we barely squeaked by."

Dr. Johnson opened by explaining that "EMS is a very challenging environment," with service fragmentation due to separate islands, difficult to get trained staff, and the current SJIEMS levy expires in 2022 generating "unstable revenue." He noted difficulty

getting volunteer staff. "But in spite of that... we have excellent Paramedics and EMTs..." The mutual aid agreement between different county agencies is dated 2005 and few who signed it if any remain.

In addition to this, multiple fault zones such as the Devil's Mountain Fault create significant earthquake risk for the entire region. The geographical and environmental risks create vulnerability for all island residents in the county, though each island is fiercely independent creating challenges for consolidations. Other issues such as loss of ferry service, dam break or pipe rupture, plane crash, shooting, bomb on ferry, norovirus in local restaurant, plane crashes, etc., all create risks that we may be unprepared for.

Dr. Johnson then recommended County-wide Consolidation as a historic opportunity to "unify command and control and deal with disasters." Champions to build momentum are needed, and Johnson further noted that the CAG is already being recognized in the community as our hope for a better future for EMS. He encouraged the CAG to keep moving forward and make their report and recommendations as soon as possible. "Thank you for your work and keep it up."

### **Committee Reports**

*Legal Committee* – Currently working on questions. Discussed some of the legal issues.

*Contacts* – They are continuing to talk to people who can help.

*Finance* – They are working on some spreadsheets to show a combined budget. The committee has 2019 budgets for FD #3 and SJIEMS.

### **Discussion: Going Forward and Narrowing of Consolidation Options**

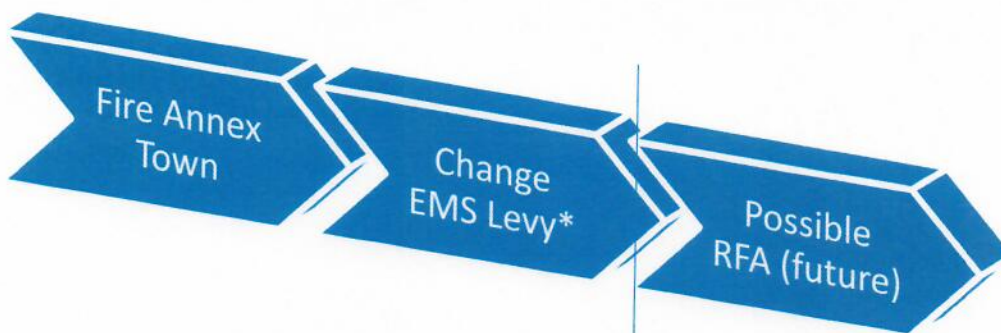
The approach going forward was discussed, and how to stay within the charge given by the two boards and the Town. The group agreed that the elected boards will need to handle discussions with the public regarding level of service and merger. George Johnson said, "We need to keep a tighter box around what we need to do as a committee to the charge that we were given... we can't do everybody's job..."

The group discussed the long-term advantages of a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) in the county, but the determined the immediate steps for consolidation should be the focus. The group broadly agreed that a RFA would be advantageous but beyond the scope of this group.

Rick Frazer noted, "I'm not certain the Fire Department wants it [merger]. I'm not certain why EMS is saying 'go'" and this complicates things. George Johnson replied that individual feelings should not change whether an idea is a good one.

Each member discussed their take on what should happen. When asked whether a consolidated San Juan Island Fire/EMS Agency is a good idea the group agreed by consensus that it was a good idea.

The group then discussed the steps it would take to merge EMS/Fire and the reasons. The Fire Department would need to annex the Town of Friday Harbor, then the EMS levy would need moved under Fire or eliminated while raising the Fire levy to make up the difference. From that point a RFA would be easier to establish, but that is beyond the scope of the CAG.




*\* = Change EMS Levy: either (1) move EMS Levy under Fire or (2) eliminate EMS levy and raise Fire Levy to make up the difference*

**Public Comment:** Richard Grout commented.

**Adjournment:** Chair Dalldorf adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

  
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**Signed by Chair**

  
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**Date**

**The original document is retained at the San Juan County Public Hospital District #1 Office at 849 Spring Street, Unit B-5, Friday Harbor, WA 98250 in San Juan County Public Hospital District #1 permanent proceedings file.**

**Attest: Nathan Butler, Board Recording Secretary for SJCPHD #1**