

**HILTON UNION FIRE BOARD**

**Regular Meeting**

**MINUTES**

February 25, 2026

7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairperson Brian Delvecchio  
Fire Chief Robert Hope  
Deputy Fire Chief Dan See  
Dave Leask  
Mike Garside  
Sarah Brown  
Sally Cohen – by phone

Secretary-Treasurer Sara Dinsdale  
Acting Secretary-Treasurer Britney MacKay

Absent: Kelly Rathwell  
Rod Wood  
Janet Gordanier

Chairperson Brian Delvecchio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Resolution #F2026-01  
Moved: Sarah Brown  
Seconded: Dave Leask

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF THE HILTON UNION FIRE DEPARTMENT accepts the agenda of February 25, 2026, as presented. \*CARRIED\*

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

The Board received a report regarding the delegation of authority to Acting Secretary-Treasurer Britney MacKay for the remainder of the current term.

Resolution #F2026-02  
Moved: Mike Garside  
Seconded: Sarah Brown

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF THE HILTON UNION FIRE DEPARTMENT does acknowledge receipt of the Delegation of Authority letter dated February 20, 2026, from Secretary-Treasurer Sara Dinsdale;

AND THAT THE BOARD OF THE HILTON UNION FIRE DEPARTMENT recognizes the delegation of duties to Britney MacKay in accordance with the Board's by-laws and established practices for the remainder of the current term of Council. \*CARRIED\*

The Board reviewed the minutes from the November 26, 2025, regular meeting.

Resolution #F2025-03  
Moved: Mike Garside  
Seconded: Sarah Brown

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BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF THE HILTON UNION FIRE DEPARTMENT does approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 26, 2025. \*CARRIED\*

Fire Chief Updates:

Fire Chief Robert Hope provided an update on fire calls and volunteer status since the last meeting. There were three (3) fire calls. Two calls were cancelled, or the Fire Department was requested to stand down. The third occurred in December on Walnut Street in the Village of Hilton Beach. It involved a travel trailer that was a total loss. A gentleman had been living in the trailer and using propane heaters. There were no reported injuries. The occupant stated that the fire was likely caused by a faulty propane unit. The Fire Department attended and secured the area.

The Fire Department also conducted a controlled burn of the waste wood pile at the landfill in December.

There have been five (5) training events since the last meeting, which is lower than usual due to the holiday season and weather-related cancellations.

There are currently nine (9) active volunteers; four (4) are fully qualified.

The Fire Chief has had discussions regarding the potential amalgamation of the three (3) Island Fire Department's with Fire Chief Duncan Rydall of the Township of St. Joseph Fire & Rescue and Rick Sirvio of the Township of Jocelyn Fire Department. Concerns were raised regarding the responsibility for the equipment. Discussions indicated that each department would remain responsible for its own equipment. Mr. Rydall advised that he will be retiring in approximately 18 months, having signed a three (3) year contract.

Mr. Brad Neabel, Fire Protection Advisor from the Office of the Fire Marshall, will be attending the next training session on March 10, 2026, to assist with the online reporting system and publishing volunteer certifications online.

The Fire Chief continues to investigate the purchase of a replacement pumper and tanker, or possibly a pumper/tanker combination vehicle. Pricing remains higher than budgeted. One price for a combination truck was approximately \$260,000.00 CAD. The equipment must be replaced prior to July, as the inspector stated he will not perform testing on equipment that is over 30 years old due to liability concerns.

The Fire Chief also provided an update regarding the mobile fire training unit discussed at the November meeting. Further research revealed strict security criteria that is not feasible for the Island Fire Departments.

The Fire Board received a report prepared by Acting Secretary-Treasurer Britney MacKay regarding the 2026 Fire Protection Grant. The report stated that an application was submitted on September 29, 2025, The Township was awarded \$16,000.00 on January 21, 2026, to be used towards the purchase of new bunker gear. Seven (7) pairs of firefighting chainsaw boots have been ordered and received. The Department is currently awaiting delivery of five (5) bunker pants and four (4) jackets ordered by Deputy Fire Chief Dan See from PPE Solutions. The new bunker gear will allow the volunteers to retain older gear as spare equipment should the new gear become contaminated or damaged.

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The Fire Board reviewed a memorandum prepared by Acting Secretary-Treasurer Britney MacKay regarding donations accepted by the Township of Hilton on behalf of the Hilton Union Fire Department. Ms. Sara Dinsdale donated \$1,476.00 raised through two (2) painting events that she hosted at the Hilton Beach Community Hall. Chairperson Brian Delvecchio thanked Ms. Dinsdale for her generous donation. The Village of Hilton Beach donated \$100.00 in memory of Fire Chief Robert Hope's mother, Zella Hope.

Chair Brian Delvecchio requested clarification regarding Clerk Report: 2025-12-10-FBFC re: Fundraising Committee that was sent to both the Village of Hilton Beach and Hilton Township Council's. Secretary-Treasurer Sara Dinsdale explained that the Fire Board is unable to create a fundraising committee pursuant to the Board's establishing by-law and applicable legislation. It was discussed that members of the public may fundraise independently on behalf of the Hilton Union Fire Department and make donations to the Department to be received by Hilton Township.

Resolutions from the Hilton Township and the Village of Hilton Beach were reviewed regarding entering into a discovery phase for the potential amalgamation of the Island Fire Departments.

Chairperson Brian Delvecchio invited members to bring forward any additional business to discuss.

A discussion was held regarding moving the meeting time from 7:00 p.m. to an earlier hour. The majority of members indicated they would not be opposed to an earlier start time; however, one member advised they would be unable to attend earlier meetings. There was no further discussion, meetings will continue to begin at 7:00 p.m.

Resolution #F2025-04  
Moved: Sarah Brown  
Seconded: Dave Leask

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF THE HILTON UNION FIRE DEPARTMENT does adjourn at 7:30 p.m. and agree to meet again at the Hilton Township Municipal Office on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, or at the call of the Chair or by petition from majority members of the Board. \*CARRIED\*



Brian Delvecchio, Chairperson



Britney MacKay, Acting Secretary-Treasurer