

# Community gets a look at brand new fire hall



By Jayson Koblun

**OHSWEKEN** – The ribbon has been cut — Six Nations' new Fire Hall No. 1 officially opened last Thursday in Ohsweken.

Community members and several media outlets witnessed the building's grand opening on April 7; Six Nations Fire and Emergency Services, members of the Elected Council, Grand River Enterprises (GRE), KL Martin and LANCA were there to give thanks for everybody's hard work and determination to see this project through to completion.

"It took a little longer than we planned, but it's worth it," said Elected Chief Ava Hill. "This new building looks amazing."

Elected Chief Hill said the grand opening took place just shy of one year from when the first shovel broke ground on April 23, 2015. Initially the project was planned to be completed in Dec. of 2015, but several delays pushed it back until now.

"We can all be proud of our team of firefighters, who work tirelessly to keep our families and community safe," said Hill. "While most people run out of a building during a fire, our firefighters are the first to run towards it. They deserve to have the proper facility for operations and the invaluable services they provide."

Dave Hill, elected councillor, spoke for a few minutes of the circumstances that made the project possible, also thanking GRE for

the \$2 million contribution that was given to help fund the state-of-the-art facility.

Several others took turns speaking about the new hall. Afterwards, attendees of the event were invited outside the headquarters

to witness the ribbon cutting and unveiling of a plaque that has been set up in honour of GRE's contribution.

The fire hall was open for guided tours when the ceremony was finished. The *Two Row Times* tagged along

with a group of students from the intermediate multi-level Grade 7 and 8 class from J.C. Hill School to see all that the new fire hall has to offer.

"Part of our life skills program is to introduce students to the community," said Mrs. Mc-

Naughton, a teacher at J.C. Hill. "So we brought the students here because this new fire hall is something special to our people and to our reserve. The students need to know what kinds of things are accessible to them within

the community and how to access them."

McNaughton was accompanied by two teachers aides — Mrs. T. Johnson and Mrs. J. Johnson, they said that they came out to the grand opening for a day of learning and to have a little bit of fun with their students. During the tour, Captain Josh Isaacs let several of the students try on some real firefighter's gear and he showed them many of the different safety features on their fire trucks.

"A fire truck like one of ours can easily cost more than \$2 million," said Isaacs as he showed the students a spreader, more commonly known as the jaws-of-life.

With 52 active fire-fighting personnel, Six Nations Fire and Emergency Services are committed to working with the Elected Council to prevent and fight fires, improving community safety.

"This new headquarters is going to allow us to strengthen the foundation of Six Nations' fire services and provide us with the opportunity to grow as a department. This is an incredible time. What we're going to be able to do with this facility, moving forward, will not only provide a safer community for Six Nations but for every family that lives within it," said Six Nations Fire Chief Matthew Miller.



A student from J.C. Hill School in the Intermediate Multi-Level Grade 7 and 8 class introducing himself to Sparky, the fire hall's dalmatian mascot. PHOTO BY JAYSON KOBLUN



Six Nations Elected Chief Ava Hill is seen in the background of the picture addressing community members and officials during the grand opening of Six Nations' new Fire Hall No. 1. She thanked all who were involved in the project and the community for their support.



Fire Chief Matthew Miller and Elected Chief Ava Hill posing for a picture beside one of the original Six Nations' fire Department trucks. The fire hall was completed almost exactly one year apart from the initial start date. PHOTO BY JAYSON KOBLUN