

Gillies Bay Improvement District Newsletter

GILLIES BAY
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

January 2014
Volume 3, Issue 1

GBID:

Kathleen Boeriu	Chair
Jim Mason	Vice-Chair
Mave Leclair	Trustee
Linda Holmes	Trustee
Warren Kiland	Trustee
Bridget Andrews	Administrator
Ken Taylor	Water Operator
Doug Paton	Fire Chief

Available on our website:

- ◆ **WEB SURVEY:**
Weigh-in on The Future of Texada Fire Services
- ◆ PRRD Fire Service Review
- ◆ Improvement District Amalgamation FAQ

We're on the Web!
www.gillies-bay.ca

An Island-Wide Issue!

The Future of our Texada Island Fire Services

The Gillies Bay Improvement District (GBID) along with Van Anda Improvement District (VAID) Boards of Trustees were approached about the possibility of surrendering our Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) to the Powell River Regional District (PRRD).

The GBID has done considerable research and had many discussions with the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development (MoCSCD), the PRRD, and the VAID Board of Trustees.

The GBID Board of Trustees has approached the VAID Board of Trustees with the proposed amalgamation of the two VFDs and Improvement Districts.

The GBID Board of Trustees does not believe that surrendering the volunteer fire departments to the PRRD is in the best interests of the residents of Texada.

The GBID proposes the following alternate course of action:

1. Both Improvement Districts amalgamate their services under a single 'Texada Island Improvement District' with two zones. Your taxes will support your zone, and you will not notice any changes in the delivery of water or fire protection services. The end result will be unified island services that retain our local autonomy.
2. Eliminate duplicated expenses and utilize savings to address costly infrastructure issues present in both Van Anda and Gillies Bay.
3. Expand our fire protection boundaries to include new properties; with the benefit of increasing our volunteer pool.

**Proposed fire service boundary maps can be found on www.gillies-bay.ca and will be available at our special meeting.*

The reasons that we do not support a conversion to the Powell River Regional District, at this time, are as follows:

1. The PRRD has had four fire departments under their auspices for over 30 years. These fire departments are faring no better, and in some cases are worse off, than our own Volunteer Fire Departments. (*See Services Review on our website*)
2. The most critical and ongoing problem that both volunteer fire departments have faced is lack of manpower, and this **cannot** be solved by the PRRD. It can **only** be solved by amalgamating the two services.
3. It makes no sense to separate our fire service from the water service upon which it depends.
4. The 'Texada Island Improvement District' option was recommended to us by the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development as our best option.
5. We believe that the people of Texada are better served by maintaining local control of our essential services and having them managed by people who also depend on those services.

This is up to you!

Property-holders will have a vote, and the GBID intends to make sure that all rate-payers are informed of all of the options.

We propose that residents of both communities engage in discussion on this important issue, and attend their Improvement District meetings to have their opinions heard. The GBID will be hosting a special meeting on this issue; **TIME AND PLACE TO BE ANNOUNCED** (in the Express Lines).

This is an island-wide issue, and all islanders are encouraged to attend!

Continued on reverse...



2014 REGULAR MEETINGS
7PM @ GB Firehall

Tues, March 11th

Tues, June 10th

Tue, September 9th

Tues, December 9th

How to Contact the GBID:

Phone

604-486-7757

Email

info@gillies-bay.ca

Mail

PO Box 102

Gillies Bay, BC

VON 1W0

What is at stake?

Without the amalgamation, we would lose the opportunity to save money by eliminating the duplicated costs to run two separate Improvement Districts and Fire Departments. We lose the opportunity to share manpower and equipment and consolidate our fire service areas.

One thing is certain: the cost savings and manpower solutions that have been identified by the GBID can *only* be achieved through amalgamation of the two improvement districts and fire departments.

The Board of Trustees would like to stress that even though we have identified a course of action which we believe to be the best option, this decision does not rest with either Board of Trustees. It will be a decision made by the rate-payers through a democratic consultation process.

Where can we get more info & what can Texada Residents do?

Information and links to research are available at www.gillies-bay.ca. The GBID has been providing

updates at special and regular meetings (minutes available online) as well as via our newsletters (via Express Lines and mailouts), to keep our rate-payers informed.

The GBID wants to open up a discussion. So, we are putting our survey out to the island in hopes that people will inform themselves, return the survey, and attend our special meeting.

We are grateful for the residents who have already attended our meetings and provided us with their questions and concerns. We strongly encourage all Texada rate-payers to do the same. **These are *your* services, and you can't be heard if you don't participate!**

Please be sure to fill out the attached survey or fill out our web version at www.gillies-bay.ca called "SURVEY: The Future of Texada Fire Services"

Please send in your survey as soon as possible, as we would like to have the results for our special meeting. Survey collection boxes will be located at both stores (Gillies Bay and Van Anda), for your convenience.

Our Vision

Our vision for Gillies Bay, is also a healthy vision for Texada Island. We strive to see our essential services managed in a way that engages rate-payers; operates with transparency and accountability; maintains local autonomy and cooperates with our neighbours to achieve shared benefits such as enhanced volunteer training opportunities, and operational/budgetary savings.

We believe that our island is unique and our governance should reflect that. We strongly believe that small local governments can operate with more

transparency and more accountability than large senior governments.

We comply with all provincial regulations, and somehow we manage to do it all on a small budget. If our rate-payers are unhappy, they can address us face-to-face at our meetings, or call us on the phone. That kind of engagement only happens in small communities. Do we want to lose that?

This is your chance to weigh-in, Texada! Give us your opinion.

With thanks...

As many of you will already be aware, the Gillies Bay Volunteer Fire Department is under new leadership.

We would like to express our gratitude to our new Fire Chief, Doug Paton. Doug returns to the GBVFD with many years of valuable experience and skills as both a Fire Fighter and Fire Chief. We are pleased to say that Doug has already made a dynamic impact on the fire department.

We would also like to extend our thanks to Ken Barton and Rob McWilliam, who have both made themselves available to the Department for training and restructuring. Ken has returned to the Department in the capacity of Training Officer, and

Rob in the capacity of Deputy Chief. Both of these individuals bring a wealth of knowledge and experience.

We would also like to thank Ken Taylor for his many years of service to the GBVFD. Volunteering is a tremendous and much appreciated gift to the community.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Gillies Bay Volunteer Fire Department, call Doug Paton at 604-414-5121.