

**Minutes Public Information Meeting of the Fire Hall Task Force
Saturday Oct 9, 2010
Mayne Island Fire Hall Board room
Mayne Island, BC**

Called To Order at 2:00 PM by Bill Warning, Chair

Approximately 50 Members of the Public were present

PRESENT

Committee Members from the Public

Don DeRousie
Al Wood
Bill Warning
Ian Birtwell
Bob Aldcorn
Peter Waddell

MIID Board Members of the Task Force

Jim Marlon-Lambert

Admin & Staff

Gerrie Wise, Recording Secretary
Steve DeRousie, Deputy Fire Chief

Chair, Bill Warning welcomed those present and introduced the Task Force Members and Ian Birtwell

Ian Birtwell presented the PowerPoint presentation attached. (handout)

The Chair, Bill Warning hosted the question and discussion period and reminded all that the session is being recorded. He introduced Jim Marlon-Lambert, Chair of the MI Improvement District Board of Trustees, and Mary Cooper, Returning Officer, if holding a referendum is approved by the Ministry.

Q.Sid Mister:

Is there confirmation of the Insurance reduction if the Shuttle Service Certification is approved? Has someone spoken to the Insurance industry about this. His agent has told him there would be no difference because there will be no added hydrants.

A. Peter Waddell answered that he has written confirmation from his insurer, that his personal savings on insurance premium will be reduced by \$500 and encouraged everyone to ask their insurance agent for a specific quote if the Superior Shuttle Service is accredited, giving "hydrant equivalent" protection.

Q Steve Matheson

What are the other elements to meet Superior Shuttle Service Accreditation?

A. Bob Aldcorn was introduced by Bill Warning, giving his credentials:

This is a recent addition to BC and Ontario. The main criteria are:

Within 4 minutes of wheel stop at fire the Dept must produce a certain amount of 900 liters per minute water and for a 6 hours

All equipment must be housed in a protected area for readiness, (in-doors) thus a new fire hall is a key piece of accreditation

It is a tough standard to achieve, but it there as a potential. This takes a significant amount of training for firefighters to meet the requirements and this is part of their weekly practice and training. and the volume of water was achieved at the fire in July.

An inspector from the Provincial Fire Commissioners office would attend, unannounced, and a test will be given to determine if all requirements have been met.

Q Eric Norquist

How was the tax figure arrived at? Did you count all the houses? How many assessments were taken into consideration?

A. Ian Birtwell

The figures were calculated based on the existing 2010 Assessment base. All the assessments on the island were used .Total tax base on the island is \$491 million. The amount required to payback \$270 thousand per year plus the 5% collection fee was divided by the tax base to determine the 4977 mil rate.

Q EN cont'd: In other words you don't really know how much money you would collect. is it just a guess?

A. IB If you apply the mil rate of 4977 to all properties on the island that would be sufficient to pay the bill

Q EN cont'd: (Inaudible) This is actually a debt and I'm not sure this is the way to repay it and so is there still going to be some thought on how the debt will be repaid using the other tax methods such as parcel?

A IB Comparing the two systems, assessment basis seems to be the fair approach: some will pay more, some will pay less. If it is done on a flat rate parcel basis some people will pay less and a lot of people will pay more.

Q. Barry Wilks Re Parcel Tax VS Assessment

Not convinced that parcel tax would cost more. Hopeful there will be much more exploration looking into that. I feel personally that if it does pass as an assessment basis, this will be the most divisive thing in our community. Whereby the 1200 – 1300 residents will not be paying equally. This is an antagonistic process. This is a community service. Asking the community to pull together. He

is uncomfortable with this. Why is it not shared equally with every title on Mayne Island?

A Ian Birtwell

The Board will be making that decision. The past experience has been that collecting a parcel tax is more expensive and more cumbersome to collect. More legal fees are required to place a charge on property for non-payment. Also, a tax deferral is not available under a parcel tax collected by MIID. As to the divisiveness issue, all taxes now, except for a \$40 dock bill are based on the assessment basis. People are already paying different rates. More valuable properties have more property being protected. The Task Force opinion is that the Assessment is a more equitable method and that is the recommendation to the Board. The Board will be making the decision.

Bill Warning, Chair repeated that the decision is will be made by the MIID Board who are still researching the methods.

Q Ken Chubb What percentage of properties are assessed at \$400,000 or less

A Ian Birtwell referred to a chart and he estimated about 60% (approx 900 of 1500 properties)

Q. Ken Chubb: Why in the world would anyone with an assessment value of \$400,000 or less vote for anything other than an assessment value basis

Q Doug McNeil: Since we are protecting improvements, is there a consideration to tax Improvements only?

A. Jim Marlon-Lambert

There are very strict limitations for Improvement Districts. The Law states that Improvement Districts must tax on the Assessment for Land AND Improvements. The Board will be meeting with the Ministry next week and will have an answer for you

Q. Sid Mister -Why is there no dedicated Salt Water pump for firefighting? There should be, he recently was on a job-site with such a fire system pump.

A. Bob Aldcorn – This will be looked into

Q. Barry Wilks. Feels the cost is more that the community can afford. He is also uncertain about the cost. He went on to quote Saturna and North Saanich Fire Dept as examples of new halls which cost less and his contact with NorSteel (?) who quoted a 10,000 sq foot empty building erected on a pre-built foundation for \$119,000.

Q Ed Peterson - Did Barry Wilks approach the Task Force with the information

A. Barry Wilks Yes, I approached the Task Force.

A. Ian Birtwell confirmed he had been approached by Mr. Wilks and passed the information along to the Contract Managers, Liberty.

Liberty took the information into consideration when they researched the design and construction. Both alternatives were researched. The primary reasons for choosing wood were the Wood First Act in BC, the price of wood construction, and the post seismic event capabilities of Steel vs wood construction. Post disaster usability could not be assured by the Steel building producers. You should note that you are comparing your building price with our overall price which includes all the site preparation, all the materials, services, insurance, and interest costs. You need to compare to the base building only. It sounds a lot cheaper, but when you consider all the finishing and fitting it out, it becomes more expensive.

ADJOURNMENT

After asking for any further questions, Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM

Recorded and submitted by:

G. Wise, Recording Secretary

Reviewed and Approved for distribution by:

Bill Warning
Chair, Fire Hall Task Force