



ALERT NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2015

North Galiano Fire Protection Society

RR2 Site 44, C-47, Galiano, BC, V0N 1P0

THIS ISSUE

2015 AGM,
NOV 8

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Election of
Society Directors

MERGER
DISCUSSION:
Feasibility study
terms of reference.



The crew filling our new tender from the Bodega Resort standpipe. This is our third International fire truck purchased from Hub Fire Engines in Abbotsford, Canada's oldest fire engine manufacturer. This almost completes our fire apparatus capital upgrade program, begun in 2006. Our old 1993 Suburban no longer meets the requirements of the insurance underwriter and must be replaced with a new rapid response vehicle. Photo Tom Darby .

THE MERGER DISCUSSION --WHERE ARE WE?

A merger between the currently independent and separate North Galiano and South Galiano Fire Departments has been discussed locally for some time. There are many potential positive and perhaps also negative impacts of such a merger. Before engaging in a process of bringing the two departments together, the community and its representatives in the supervisory bodies (the North Galiano Fire Protection and Emergency Services Commission and the South Galiano Fire Protection Society) deem it necessary to conduct a thorough feasibility study of the merger and its consequences.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE

- 1- Level of fire protection service.** The North Galiano Department is an “exterior” department while the South Galiano department aims at being an “interior” department in terms of its service level. What level would a merged department be able to provide? Would it provide the same level over the whole island? Levels of training of both departments will have to be examined.
- 2. Staffing levels.** Because of the area it must cover, the North Galiano Fire Department has to staff two fire halls. Would a merger with the more populous South Galiano area more easily ensure staffing of all three halls? How would response times be affected? A larger population base could perhaps ease the heavy demand for volunteers by many island organizations.
- 3. Governance.** North Galiano operates under a CRD Commission and also has an auxiliary Fire Protection Society; South Galiano is run by a Society under contract to the CRD. What would happen under a merger? Who would have ownership of the halls?
- 4. Management.** How would the management change? What would the Merged Budget look like in relation to personnel (fire chief, training officer; other, perhaps new, paid positions?).

5. **Equipment.** Any economies of scale to be realized in term of equipment needs? Is the equipment now available in the two departments ideal for a merged department? Any new items needed?

6. **Fire halls.** North Galiano has just constructed a new fire hall; area tax payers are still paying for its cost. South Galiano will probably need a new fire hall. Should that new hall be constructed before effecting a merger? How will new hall costs be shared between north and south Galiano taxation areas?

7. **COST.** How will tax rates change under a new management and operating structure? We need to have realistic estimates based on an assessment of the needs of a merged department with possibly more (or less?) expensive management, equipment and training needs. The impact on home fire insurance costs is also a factor to consider.

Your North Galiano Commission, jointly with the South Galiano Society, proposes to request the CRD to commission an independent feasibility study which will examine all of these concerns and present **FOR YOUR DECISION** a realistic summary of the impacts of a merger.

Come to the AGM, find out more, tell us what you think.

***2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SUNDAY NOV 8, 1:00 PM
NORTH GALIANO COMMUNITY HALL***

2015 HIGHLIGHTS -- Reports...Issues....

MERGER ISSUES-- Express your wishes and concerns

***COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP -- Three positions to fill.
SOCIETY DIRECTORS --- POSITIONS OPEN.***

Commission and Society News

The North Galiano Fire Protection and Emergency Services Commission consists of seven members, including, ex-officio, the CRD's Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area director, David Howe. Commissioners must own property in the North Galiano Fire Protection area. Current commissioners are Paul LeBlond (Chair), Roger Pettit (Vice-Chair), Phillip Buller, David Koster, Ben Maberley and Sandy Moodie.

Commission meetings are open to the public and are held at 10:00 am on the *second* Sunday of the month at the Retreat Cove fire hall (unless posted otherwise).

Commissioners are also directors of the North Galiano Fire Protection Society, which holds title to land on which the new fire hall was built. The Society also provides additional support to the Fire Department.

Application for 2016 Membership - North Galiano Fire Protection Society

* Donations of \$10 or more above the membership fee qualify for a charitable tax receipt *

Everyone over the age of 17 who is a full or part-time resident or property owner in North Galiano is eligible to join. Annual Membership Fee is \$5.00 per person except Fire Department Personnel and Board members are complimentary.

Name.....

Mailing address.....

Galiano street address or lot number.....

Local phone #.....Other phone.....e-mail.....

Additional members' names

.....	\$
.....	\$
.....	\$
Additional donation	\$
Please make your cheque payable to NGFPS.....	Total amount	\$.....

I would like to find out about joining the fire department.

I would like to know how I can help