

## **Landowners Update – July 2012**

### **From the Board**

The past two months since the AGM have continued to be busy with a number of ongoing projects including the following:



- UBID released a request for proposals to engineering firms and has received 3 responses. The Board expects to consider the proposals and appoint an engineering firm at its July meeting. A variety of engineering projects including approving the plans for the water filtration plant require engineering input.
- We have been investigating options to acquire land for a permanent water treatment plant.
- Ongoing discussions regarding Compliance Coal are focused on assuring that our water source will not be negatively affected by mine operations. The Board is continuing to express its concerns to regulators and we are investigating options to obtain funds for an independent review of the Raven aquifer mapping report expected later this fall.

### **Question of the Month**



**Q:** What is happening with construction of the water filtration plant?

**A:** UBID met with Brian McMahon in June to discuss issues related to construction of the water filtration plant, and we have agreed to regular meetings as the process proceeds. Once UBID receives the final drawings for the plant and our engineers sign off on them construction can begin. We expect to receive the drawings from KIP in the fall.

### **Bits and Pieces**

☺ Category 3 open burning, used for resource management reasons, is still allowed. However, a person conducting an open burn, may only conduct one at a time and must first obtain a burn registration number by calling 1-888 797-1717.

☺ A small patch near the front door of the UBID office is in need of some TLC from a kind gardener. If you can spend a couple of hours to dig out the weeds and grass the trees would be grateful. Call Ruth at 250-335-2511.



## **UBID Begins Community Consultation & Planning for Fire-Rescue Services (FRS)**

Everyone agrees that we want and need Fire-Rescue services and we want to give our volunteer fire fighters and first responders the support and equipment that they need to safely carry out their duties. Most people agree that we need a new fire hall and eventually a new vehicle(s). What are not necessarily agreed upon are the costs associated with doing this and where we will find the money.

In its Strategic Plan UBID committed to support an affordable volunteer Fire-Rescue service that has the resources it needs to meet UBID's service goals. The Board has also determined three goals for the FRS and 2012-2013 was set as the time to focus on these goals. The three goals are:

1. Strengthen relationships between the Board and FRS
2. Improve operational effectiveness
3. Improve capital planning



To accomplish these goals the Board is undertaking a community consultation process to engage the fire-rescue personnel and landowners in discussions about the Fire-Rescue service and ultimately in planning for future needs. This review of the FRS is aimed at ensuring that our community gets the biggest bang for our buck in relation to services, personnel and infrastructure. We plan to involve the community through a series of facilitated focus groups (workshops). Community members will be invited to come together and work in small groups to give their input on a range of issues and topics. Input will be collected from a variety of sources and a report will make recommendations to the Board for any decisions. These workshops will occur over the next several months. At specific points the feedback received will be presented to the landowners for validation.

We see a three-step process:

**Focus Group #1:** (Landowner and Fire-Rescue personnel involvement) Define what the community needs and wants in its Fire-Rescue Service, and identify associated costs. This will include a discussion about reasonable community expectations about volunteering.

**Focus Group #2:** (Fire-Rescue personnel involvement) Determine the staffing, organization, position descriptions and policies etc. that are needed to provide the service for the community.

**Focus Group #3:** (Landowner and Fire-Rescue personnel involvement) Plan for construction of a facility to accommodate the Fire-Rescue Service and related capital planning.

The first Focus Groups for **landowners** will be held in the UBID Board Room on: Monday, July 16<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to approx. 3:00 PM **or** Thursday, July 19<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 to approx. 9:00 PM. The Focus Group for **firefighters** will be on Tuesday, July 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

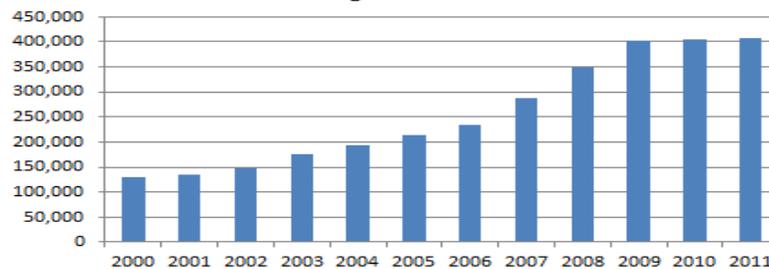
If you are interested in participating please contact the UBID office at 250-335-2511 to reserve your seat. As space is limited, please register early. If additional workshops are required more date(s) will be made available. (The strategic plan is on our website at [www.union-bay.ca](http://www.union-bay.ca)).

## Provincial Tax Levies 2000 to 2011

When UBID sets its budget for the fire department and street lighting it submits its needs to the provincial government who, in turn, collects the money from landowners through the UBID portion on your property tax bill. About 90% of the levy is for the fire department and 10% goes to street lighting. The average cost to each landowner is about \$600 although this amount varies depending upon your property values. The following table and graph show the increases to provincial tax levies for firefighting and street lighting in Union Bay over the past eleven years.

UBID Provincial Tax Levies From 2000 to 2011												
Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Fire & St. lighting \$	129,925	133,948	147,205	176,000	194,370	214,000	235,000	287,600	348,800*	402,000	403,822	408,200
% increase over last yr.		3%	10%	20%	10%	10%	10%	22%	21%	15%	0.5%	1%

**Fire Services and Street Lighting**  
Budget Increases



\***Note:** Since 2008 the total Provincial Taxes Levied has included the amount of \$52,000 to pay the UBID Admin. Bldg. Mortgage.



## Fire Bans in Effect

Effective since May 18, Category 2 open fires and fireworks were prohibited across the Coastal Fire Centre, to help prevent human-caused wildfires. The ban will be in place until Sept. 15, or until the public is otherwise notified.

This ban applies to burning of any material, piled or unpiled, smaller than 2 metres in height and 3 metres in width, including burning barrels, the use of fireworks and stubble or grass fires over an area less than 2,000 square metres. The ban does not prohibit campfires that are a ½ metre high by a ½

metre wide or smaller, or apply to cooking stoves that use gas, propane or briquettes. For more information go to: <http://bcwildfire.ca/hprScripts/WildfireNews/Bans.asp>  
Or phone: 1-888-336-7378.

### **Food for Thought – Interesting Idea**



The CVRD dark sky policy says that in the future exterior lighting under jurisdiction of the CVRD will be required to focus only on specific lighting targets and every effort will be made to minimize light spillage in all lighting jurisdictions of the regional district. In its strategic plan the UBID Board endorsed a dark sky policy and has identified some activities to begin to address the issue in 2013-2014.

These initiatives are mainly aimed at light pollution but some jurisdictions are going a step further in an effort to control costs. (In Union Bay we spend \$27,000 each year to provide for street lighting).

We save energy by turning off the light when we exit a room, but how about switching off street lights when we exit a road? US street lamps use enough electricity to power 1.4 million homes, and generate as much greenhouse gas as two million cars do in a year. By reducing the number and length of time streetlights are lit, we can save energy and money—and help reduce greenhouse gases. Although local authorities have yet to install street lights that turn on and off using motion detectors, they are starting to launch a range of other energy-saving practices, including switching off every other light, certain lights after midnight and residential lights that aren't at a street corner.

These practices are being implemented across the globe. Santa Rosa, California, plans to save \$400,000 by removing 6,000 of its 15,000 street lamps, and turning 3,000 off between midnight and 5:30 a.m. Similar schemes are taking place in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Maine. In 2008 the *Daily Mail* reported that one in five local authorities in the UK are switching off some of their street lights. Calgary is in the process of retro-fitting to install low wattage street lights.

There are public concerns that turning off street lights will increase crime and road accidents, but several US studies have shown that switching street lights off at night does not result in an increase in crime, and indeed in many cases brighter street lights resulted in an increase in crime.



Your ideas and input into planning for the Union Bay Fire Rescue Department is important. We want to hear your opinions. Please plan to attend a workshop.