

We would like to confirm that lawyers for both Desert Cove and the Band have been negotiating a fire service agreement and these negotiations are ongoing. Desert Cove is focused on an agreement that is fair, complete and equitable for our residents as well as the Band.

We believe that the Band's requirement to be paid for fire coverage, as with all municipalities, is reasonable. Municipalities usually collect these funds through yearly provincial property taxes.

The Band has been providing free fire coverage to Desert Cove for over 30 years.

As it stands now, the Band is asking that the yearly cost per household be based on a 0.0015 mill rate. If this mill rate is applied to an average house value of say \$300,000.00, the charge would be approximately \$450.00 per year or \$37.50 per month. The Band wants to use the same mill rate being used by the Regional District of the North Okanagan.

We would note that the other two major developments on OKIB land, Parker Cove and Lawrence Heights, have also been asked to pay, but have also not yet signed an agreement with the Band.

We would also note that ambulance service to Desert Cove is not connected in any way to the OKIB Fire Department and will continue regardless of any fire service agreement.

A substantial amount of time has been spent trying to reach a solution that would see a fire service charge levied through individual provincial tax notices. However, at this time, the Band's credentials and the Regional District of the North Okanagan's mandate prevent the district from entering into a fire service agreement with the Band that would allow Desert Cove residents to be billed via their annual property tax. This may change in the future.

Desert Cove is hoping to have a signed fire agreement in the near future.

If you have any questions please address them in writing to the Desert Cove office.

Email: admin.desertcove@shaw.ca