



## PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT

### INFORMATION RELEASE

## CHARLIE LAKE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** March 14, 2011 – On February 3, 2011 the Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society hosted a public meeting at the Pomeroy Hotel in Fort St John. At this meeting the residents of Charlie Lake and Grandhaven who were in attendance expressed their appreciation to the Charlie Lake Volunteer Fire Department and the service they provide to the public. It was made clear that residents support the continuation of the existing fire protection in their community.

Residents also expressed their desire for the Peace River Regional District to directly manage the delivery of fire protection service in order to have direct public accountability. Since the fire service was first established in 1981 the Peace River Regional District has contracted the service, first to the Charlie Lake Community Club and then in 1994 to the Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society to deliver fire protection service to the residents of Charlie Lake and Grandhaven. Currently the Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society manages the fire service delivered by the Charlie Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

On February 24, 2011 Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society, President, Mr. Doug Allen and Charlie Lake Fire Department Fire Chief, Mr. Alan Pinkerton, presented to the Peace River Regional District Board of Directors their 2011 operating budget. The Board resolved to refer the Society's fire service budget as presented to budget discussions on March 10, 2011.

On March 10, 2011 the Board of Directors reviewed the 2011 Annual Financial Plan for the Regional District which included the budget for the Charlie Lake fire protection service. The budget that was presented by the Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society was given First Reading as a component of the PRRD 2011 Annual Financial Plan. The 2011 Annual Financial Plan will now be considered for adoption on March 24, 2011 at the Peace River Regional District Board meeting.

At the February 24, 2011 Board meeting Mr. Allen, on behalf of the Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society, also requested that the Peace River Regional District take over the management of the fire service. The Electoral Area Directors representing the fire service area also asked the Board to consider taking over the direct management of the service.

**PLEASE REPLY TO:**

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The Peace River Regional District Board of Directors resolved:

- a) *“THAT the Regional Board give notice to the Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society (the service provider), as per the Charlie Lake Fire Agreement, that the Regional District no longer wishes to contract with the Society to administer the service, and*
- b) *THAT staff be directed to prepare a board report with recommendations on how this service can be continued.”*

As stated the fire service is administered under contract and in order for the Regional District to take over management of the service, notice to terminate the contract must be given to the Society in order to give the Society an opportunity to wind down its business affairs. Notice has been given to the Society that the Regional District will no longer contract with the Society to deliver the fire service past March 31, 2012. Over the coming months Regional District staff will be identifying and examining a variety of options on how the Charlie Lake fire protection service can be managed effectively and efficiently. The fire department volunteers will continue to be a key component in delivering the fire service, the change will be in the administration and management of the fire service and not the delivery of the service.

The Regional District would like to thank the Charlie Lake/Grandhaven Fire Protection Society for its years of dedication and service in administering the Charlie Lake fire protection service. It is the Regional District’s sincere wish to continue to work with the Society over the next year to implement and transition to a new service delivery model that works for the citizens of the Charlie Lake fire protection area.

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