

December 3rd 2009

Audit of the Esquimalt Fire Department

- For some time, the Township of Esquimalt has recognized that there have been issues in the fire department surrounding cultural health, costs and departmental stability. Management has been trying to contain escalating costs and employees have not felt included or engaged.
- In an effort to provide the highest level of service while maintaining fiscal responsibility, the Township made the decision in June of this year to conduct an audit to look at the department's organizational structure, culture, leadership, processes for decision making, fiscal responsibility, organizational health and communication.
- The Township required an independent third-party to complete this audit and consult with all employees, management and the union.
- The audit was seen by all parties as necessary to improve the health of Esquimalt's Fire Department.
- Former Conflict of Interest Commissioner for BC, Ted Hughes, was appointed to conduct the audit in July 2009.
- Mr. Hughes conducted his audit from the period July 6, 2009 to November 30, 2009, holding one-to-one discussions with 41 individuals, including IAFF Local 4264 members, Township staff (CAO and HR Manager), the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Fire Department, Esquimalt Mayor and Council, and others.
- Mr Hughes completed his audit on November 30, 2009 and forwarded it to the Mayor, Council and the Township's CAO.
- Council is currently deliberating on this audit and no decisions will be made on implementation of its recommendations until full consideration and discussion has been completed.
- Once this deliberation is completed, short- and long-term strategies for the department will be developed by Council in consultation with senior management.

.....