

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

FORESTRY COMMITTEE MEETING
(Committee of the Whole)

Thursday, June 6, 2019

PRESENT: Chair Brad Layton

Directors Taylor Bachrach
Shane Brienen
Mark Fisher
Dolores Funk
Tom Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Linda McGuire
Rob Newell
Mark Parker
Bev Playfair
Jerry Petersen
Michael Riis-Christianson
Gerry Thiessen
Kim Watt-Senner

Staff Cheryl Anderson, Acting CAO/Manager of Administrative Services
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Others Daniella Oake, Babine Forest Products
Eamon O'Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations North Area Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
Geoff Recknell, Regional Executive Director, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Media Blair McBride, Lakes District News

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Layton called the meeting to order at 10:46 a.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Watt-Senner
Seconded by Director Lambert

F.C.2019-2-1

"That the Forestry Committee Meeting Agenda of June 6, 2019 be adopted."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Forestry Committee Meeting
Minutes – March 21, 2019

Moved by Director Parker
Seconded by Director Funk

F.C.2019-2-2

"That the Forestry Committee Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2019 be received."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATION

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Eamon O’Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations North Area and Geoff Recknell, Regional Executive Director, Skeena Update re: Interior Forest Revitalization, FRPA (*Forest and Range Practices Act*) renewal and Community/Forestry Resilience

Chair Layton welcomed Eamon O’Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations North Area, and Geoff Recknell, Regional Executive Director, Skeena, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

Mr. O’Donoghue spoke of the following:

- Currently there is more mill capacity than trees on the land base
- Adjustments will need to take place
- Will be challenging for communities
- The mid-term is now
- Current BC NDP Government, when elected, recognized the need for change and to have more forest sector benefits into communities
 - Number of jobs created and held in communities
 - How communities can have more value from the forest
 - Benefits accrued back to communities
 - Initiatives to mitigate some of the impacts
 - Bring communities back into forest management

Interior Forest Revitalization (IFR):

- Focused on declining Allowable Annual Cut's
- Addressing what to do and the impact to communities
- Utilize fiber more effectively to create and keep more jobs in communities:
 - e.g. utilize waste
 - What policy changes can be made to help enhance opportunities for businesses to survive and thrive
- Discussion Papers in draft form to be released soon for review in regard to:
 - Fiber sustainability/utilization
 - Adding value in the processing chain
 - Investigate alternative manufacturing
 - Fire Risks for communities
 - Climate change and forest carbon
 - How to deal with forest carbon and greenhouse gas emissions
 - Reduce risk and being thoughtful about carbon utilization and sequestration
 - Forest tenure and fiber supply
 - tenure opportunities
 - eg. Bill 22 –FLNRORD – legislation reform to allow public interest from communities to be expressed in changes such as transfer of tenures/proposed consolidations
- Wood product innovation and bio-economy
- Timber pricing/Softwood Lumber Agreement (dispute):
 - Continue to maintain market pricing through BC Timber sales
 - Moving forward
 - Keeping markets open
- Resilience of communities

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Eamon O'Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations North Area and Geoff Recknell, Regional Executive Director, Skeena Update re: Interior Forest Revitalization, FRPA (Forest and Range Practices Act) renewal and Community/Forestry Resilience (Cont'd)

- Proposed engagement process:
 1. Timber Supply Analysis Coalitions:
 - a. Intended to be locally lead
 - b. Local government, First Nations, Industry stakeholders
 - c. Province intends to run approximately three at a time – “think tank” of what is occurring
 - d. FLNRORD not directly involved and will be coalition led
 - e. Outcomes to be brought to the Deputy Minister for consideration and discussion
 2. Engagement Sessions
 - a. Lead by local FLNRORD staff and District Office staff
 - b. Planning sessions in each district along Highway 16 including Terrace, Smithers and Burns Lake, Fort St. James and other locations
 - c. Opportunity to have presentations, ask questions and conduct break out groups to discuss the Discussion Papers
 - d. Initial engagement session to be completed end of summer 2019.

Director Thiessen mentioned the letter that Premier Horgan spoke of at the COFI Convention April 3-5, 2019 in Vancouver, B.C. that was provided to industry in regard to the engagement process. He noted the importance of communities being provided similar information and communication. Director Thiessen spoke of the uncertainty for potential investors and establishing security in communities to ensure investment opportunities. Mr. O'Donoghue spoke to the letter and noted that the engagement process is to provide an opportunity for communities to have input into the discussion papers that will be released in the near future and will be an opportunity to influence the forest sector going forward. The engagement process will be intensive over the next few months and is a very ambitious timeline with potential recommendations in approximately a year. Director Thiessen requested a copy of the letter that was provided to industry in regard to the engagement process.

Director Funk questioned when the engagement session dates will be released in order to ensure that communities have an opportunity to provide input. Mr. Recknell mentioned that they are sensitive to the summer months and scheduling and will provide the information as soon as it has been confirmed. He also commented that there will be opportunities to provide input and comments beyond the scheduled engagement sessions as well. Mr. Recknell noted they will be sending invitations to stakeholders. Mr. Newell spoke of the importance of including rural representation.

Discussion took place in regard to the importance of providing information to communities that is understandable.

Mr. O'Donoghue defined the issue:

- Mountain Pine Beetle and fire impacts have led to the current state of the forests
- Government wants to mitigate the depth of the implications to communities
 - Investigating from a policy/legislative point of view as to what can be done to mitigate the impacts
 - Investigate ways to better utilize fiber left on the land base
 - Investigating other area successes
 - Researching various options.

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

Director Newell spoke of fiber utilization along pipeline routes and access areas. Mr. O'Donoghue noted at the time the permits were written consideration was given to salvaging more than what was economically viable. He commented that he will review the conditions that the companies agreed to in regard to the pipeline route and access permit language and provide further information to the Regional Board at its June 20, 2019 meeting.

Forests and Range Practices Act (FRPA) Renewal

- Linked to the Interior Forest Revitalization (IFR) process and being completed parallel to the IFR process
- Reviewing how well FRPA has worked since its implementation in 2004:
 - What can be done to improve FRPA
 - Provide District Manager with more authority
 - Overall good model
 - Possibility of landscape level planning process:
 - "Go to" document to approve forest activity on the land base
 - Stream line the process
 - More information available immediately
- Public engagement May 27, 2019 to mid-July 2019:
 - Ongoing broader conversation throughout the process
- Expect legislation to potentially come into effect spring of 2021
- Website access to:
 - Engagement Discussion Paper
 - Provide direct feedback
 - Can potentially have a member of the FLNRORD team conducting the renewal process to present to the Regional Board if required
- Consideration for more spatial information when plans are approved
 - proposed workshop at UBCM was declined

Community/Forestry Resilience

- Wildfire in relation to communities
- Timber Supply
 - Lakes Timber Supply Review (TSR)
 - Challenging
- How to build more resilience into the forest management land base and how to manage in order to have more resiliency built into the forest management land base
- Some areas have become dysfunctional due to Mountain Pine Beetle and/or wildfire
- Timber Sustainability, wildlife and biodiversity sustainability or a community safety perspective - some areas needed to be managed through a more dynamic system that created a more diverse system and could be more resilient to beetle epidemic and or wildfire
- Investigating a pilot project in the Lakes District Area:
 - Suggested at the Wildfire Resilience Conference in Burns Lake in April 2019
 - Created momentum to move forward with initiative
 - Same geographic area as the LRMP (Land and Resource Management Plan):
 - Include area based tenures
 - Community Forest Licences
 - Woodlot licences
 - Planning on public land not private land
 - Mindful of parallel processes occurring

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

- Community planning in regard to wildfire mitigation and protection plans
- TSR – separate process but will provide input
- FRPA and IFR processes
- Other considerations
- Engagement with a broad cross section of stakeholders
- Process/Next Steps
 - Distinction– most communities familiar with LRMP process and the LRMP still exists
 - Different objective at the time the LRMP was developed:
 - Having right balance between economic, park interests and other community values that were managed in the matrix
 - The pilot project will investigate more of a landscape plan but will consider some objectives eg. Visual Quality Objectives (VQO), etc.
 - Will have some linkages to regulatory changes and the FRPA renewal process
 - Summer/early fall 2019
 - Scoping exercise
 - Early discussions with community leaders/stakeholders
 - Recommendations in regard to timelines, process design
 - Initiate process in fall/winter 2019
 - Full open public process will follow
 - FLNRORD will provide follow up report as move forward through process

Discussion took place in regard to:

- Forestry issues relating to the RDBN:
 - RDBN elected officials have an interest in the economics and sustainability of the area
 - Province listens to local government – want to be considerate of implementing policies that are in sync with rural BC and local governments
 - May be links to Emergency Management
 - Opportunity for conversation in regard to BC Wildfire Service – more attention to planning and prevention similar to Regional Districts
 - Opportunity for conversation in regard to forestry landscape level plans and RDBN land use planning
- Community input in forest policy is important
- IFR (Interior Forest Revitalization)
 - more flexibility to allow companies to transfer cuts to other timber supply areas in terms of beetle epidemics - allow better utilization of forests
 - Bill 22 received Royal Assent last week of May 2019
 - Contribute to short term benefit to communities in regard to being in the mid-term currently
 - Spruce Beetle transfers – questions have been asked by a number of stakeholders –Chief Forester considers a number of factors in regard to potential transfers
 - Important that the fairness component is considered
 - Risk assessment and mitigation – fire/flooding etc.
 - Build measures into communities and local governments
 - FLNRORD will be reviewing through the Lakes District Area Pilot Project

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

- Midterm now - short term (next 20-40 years) considerations:
 - Incent better utilization of fiber
 - There will be challenges
 - Not enough trees for the milling capacity that exists
 - Attempt to mitigate impact as best can
 - FLNRORD Rural Development Department
 - Programs
 - Grant funding opportunities
 - Staff within FLNRORD go to communities impacted by mill closures to assist with the recovery process moving forward
 - Important to work together to develop solutions
- June 20, 2019 Regional Board Meeting – FLNRORD Delegation
 - Discussion topics:
 - Timber appurtenancy
 - Species at Risk
 - Forest Tenures
 - Salvage
 - Economics of the Forest industry
 - Peter Jacobsen, Executive Director, Timber Operations, Pricing and First Nations Division, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
- FRPA renewal
 - address fuel mitigation management within 2 kms municipal boundary zone
 - LRMP values /goals – challenges for public safety
 - can raise the concerns through the FRPA renewal feedback process
- Important for continued communications and opportunities to provide feedback and input
 - Mr. O'Donoghue expressed his willingness to provide further information and continue to present to the Regional Board on topics of concern
- Mill shutdowns and curtailments
 - Markets threatening the vitality and viability of communities
 - Challenging to attract investment
 - What impact can local governments have moving forward
 - Impacts to Houston with the closure of the West Fraser Sawmill closure in 2014 and the timber transfer
- July 1, 2019 stumpage increase
 - Supply and demand
 - Capacity and volume
 - Softwood Lumber Agreements
 - Past prices
- Discussion Paper provided to the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) by Ray Shultz that spoke to Jurisdictions and Jobs
- Short term reinvestments in mills being curtailed/cancelled
- Examples of forest innovation projects
- FLNRORD economic values and objectives being clearly defined
 - Auditor General's audit of FLNRORD in the region in regard to management of cumulative effects
 - FLNRORD developed a cumulative effects framework – currently has five values
 - Report with the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and Lake Babine Nation with approximately 25 values
 - Work in progress to improve
 - Environmental Stewardship Initiative with five Nations across the Skeena
 - Mr. O'Donoghue is willing to provide the reports

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

- Comparison of value of timber left standing and value of timber cut
 - Land use plans define values
- Importance of the Northwest B.C. Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA)
 - Province benefits from timber transfers
 - Impacts to regions and communities from timber transfers
- Pipeline right of way clearing
 - Economically viable for pipeline companies or forest companies for fiber utilization
 - Mr. O'Donoghue will follow up with further information
 - Harvesting plans for pipeline right of ways
- Fire Bans
 - Fires started with cigarettes
 - BC Wildfire Services (BCWS) consideration and conditions to implement fire bans
 - Indicators for fuel loads being different today than those in the past and logging practices
 - Mr. O'Donoghue will follow up with Ian Meier, Acting Executive Director, BC Wildfire Service, Smithers, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
- Mr. O'Donoghue will follow-up regarding:
 - Pipeline fiber utilization agreement
 - Economics of Industry – Peter Jacobsen, Executive Director, Timber Operations, Pricing and First Nations Division, FLNRORD
 - BCWS – Fire Bans – Ian Meier, Acting Executive Director, BC Wildfire Service, Smithers, FLNRORD
 - Provide links to the FRPA and IFR discussion papers to RDBN staff
 - Copy of Premier Horgan's letter to industry referenced at the 2019 COFI Conference.

Chair Layton spoke of the Regional Board's topics of discussion concerning fiber utilization, access to residual fiber, harvesting activities, bioenergy, value added, etc. that can be brought forward through the IFR roundtable discussions. Chair Layton will follow up with Mr. O'Donoghue in regard to further discussion.

Chair Layton thanked Mr. O'Donoghue and Mr. Recknell for attending the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Thiessen
Seconded by Director Watt-Senner

F.C.2019-2-3

"That the meeting be adjourned at 12:35 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Brad Layton, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant