

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Thursday, October 8, 2020

PRESENT: Chair Gerry Thiessen

Directors Shane Brien
Mark Fisher
Dolores Funk
Judy Greenaway
Tom Greenaway
Clint Lambert – Via Zoom
Linda McGuire
Chris Newell
Mark Parker
Jerry Petersen
Michael Riis-Christianson
Casda Thomas

Directors Absent Brad Layton, Village of Telkwa
Sarrah Storey, Village of Fraser Lake

Alternate Director Kim Watt-Senner, Village of Fraser Lake

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services
Janette Derksen, Diversion Supervisor – arrived at 1:25 p.m.
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Others Tara Dunphy, Section Head, Regional Initiatives, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development – left at 11:29 a.m.
Ryan Holmes, Director of Regional Initiatives – Skeena, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development – Via Zoom – left at 11:29 a.m.
Steffy Howard-Stratton, Licensed Land and Resource Specialist, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development – left at 11:29 a.m.
Scott Sitter, Assessor, Northern BC Region, BC Assessment

Media Priyanka Ketkar, Lakes District News

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Thiessen called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director McGuire
Seconded by Director T. Greenaway

C.W.2020-8-1

“That the Agenda of the Committee of the Whole meeting of October 8, 2020 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole
Minutes – September 3, 2020

Moved by Director Petersen
Seconded by Director J. Greenaway

C.W.2020-8-2

“That the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes of
September 3, 2020 be adopted.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATIONS

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Tara Dunphy, Section Head, Regional Initiatives and Steffy Howard-Stratton, Licensed Land and Resource Specialist, Ryan Holmes, Director of Regional Initiatives RE: Lakes Resiliency Planning Process Project

Chair Thiessen welcomed Tara Dunphy, Section Head, Regional Initiatives; Steffy Howard-Stratton, Licensed Land and Resource Specialist; and Ryan Holmes, Director of Regional Initiatives Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

Mmes. Dunphy and Howard-Stratton provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

Lakes Resiliency Project – Update Presentation

- Outline
- Goal of Lakes Resiliency Project
- Goal of Lakes Resiliency Project - Review
- Scope of Lakes Resiliency Project – Review
- The Forest Planning Framework
- Timeline of Project to Date
 - Inputs
 - Technical
 - Engagement
- Other Economic Development Activities in RDBN.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Providing the RDBN with a copy of the Project Charter
- Technical Group
 - Yet to convene
 - Will comprise of various key stakeholders with the ability to provide technical input
 - Chair Thiessen requested the RDBN be included in the Technical Group
 - Terms of Reference - FLNRORD staff drafting for review by Technical Group
- March to August 2020 FLNRORD met with:
 - Lakes TSA Coalition
 - Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
 - Cheslatta Carrier Nation
- FLNRORD is also reaching out to Lake Babine Nation to schedule a meeting
- Significant work still to be completed in the 3-year Project
 - Project Sponsor - Geoff Recknell, Regional Executive Director, Skeena – Smithers, FLNRORD
 - At the end of the 3-year timeline Mr. Recknell can review the project to determine if more time is required

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Rural Development Issues
 - The role of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) in supporting rural development is unclear
 - Lack of support for northern rural development for such topics as:
 - Connectivity
 - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Programs
 - Industrial, Commercial, Institutional (ICI) Recycling
 - RDBN has not yet received a response from FLNRORD from the meeting that took place at the 2020 Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) Convention in September
- FLNRORD portfolio is substantial and too encompassing
- Northern residents pay increased amounts for rural development initiatives such as connectivity and recycling.

Chair Thiessen thanked Mmes. Dunphy and Howard-Stratton, and Mr. Holmes for attending the meeting.

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

BC ASSESSMENT –Scott Sitter, Assessor, Northern BC Region RE: Overview

Chair Thiessen welcomed Scott Sitter, Assessor, Northern BC Region, BC Assessment.

Mr. Sitter provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

Overview BC Assessment

- About BC Assessment
- Valuation
- Classification
- Assessment Cycle
- Assessments & Taxes
- Information Supply Chain & Collection
- Assessment Roll Information General
- Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Assessment Roll Insights
- BC Assessment website.

The following discussion took place:

- Site Visits/Google Maps
 - Site visits are a large part of collection of inventories
 - Use other resources – cost effective
 - 8 Inventory Collectors in the RDBN
- BC Assessment mailouts in the beginning of January
 - Short time frame to meet BC Assessment's repeal deadline of the end of January
 - BC Assessment completes its preparation of mailouts beginning of December every year – Mr. Sitter will take forward the request to have the property owners receive the mailout prior to the beginning of January
- Is there a bearing on property values in regard to rural areas expanding fire protection areas
 - Based on sales
 - Investigate data to support the potential for increase in property values
- Accessing property information on BC Assessment webpage
 - Confidentiality concerns
 - Legislation provides guidelines concerning information provided on the webpage

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

BC ASSESSMENT –Scott Sitter, Assessor, Northern BC Region RE: Overview (Cont'd)

- Electoral Area “A” (Smithers Rural)
 - Higher property tax changes year to year
 - Substantial tax increases eg. 26% in one year
 - Challenging for property owners
 - BC Assessment does not have a policy or mechanisms to soften increases
 - Legislation guides BC Assessment
 - In the case of extremely large property values there is relatively new legislation that may be applied
- Impacts of COVID 19 Pandemic
 - BC Assessment is addressing COVID 19 Pandemic in relation to farms
 - To date there is no other COVID 19 considerations for property owners in regard to tax assessments
 - Mr. Sitter recognized the challenges to date in regard to commercial markets
 - Unique situation
 - Some properties are experiencing dramatic impacts and others are not
 - Less sales data available
 - Usually review 3-year trends
 - 2020 will be based on that year alone
 - Work is still being completed
 - Currently, residential properties are similar to previous years
- Pipeline Assessment
 - Assessment completed on per km basis
 - Assessment as of October – kms of pipeline installed
 - Pipeline rate – average depreciation
 - Work Camps
 - Can be categorized as Class 1 or 6
 - Most in the RDBN will be Class 1
 - Life span of pipeline
 - Depreciation table 30 to 40 years
- Residential Assessment
 - BC Assessment reviews land comparison most similar in relation to zoning
 - Adjustments
 - Sale of standard lot
 - Comparisons
 - Single family dwelling
 - Era of house
 - Square footage, etc
 - Various components of the market
 - In areas with minimal property sales
 - Challenging
 - BC Assessment has started to utilize regression analysis
- Value of real estate and taxation
 - Price increases can be dependent on sales of one property
- Brownfields
 - Lack of reclamation work
 - Lack of interest by owners to sell properties
- How does BC Assessment capture builds in rural areas that do not require building permits?
 - Home Warranty Program
 - BC Hydro
 - Aerial reviews
 - Word of mouth

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

BC ASSESSMENT –Scott Sitter, Assessor, Northern BC Region RE: Overview (Cont'd)

- Mining Exploration Camps
- Industrial Plants with more than one tax code
 - Legislation is specialized
 - Complicated process
 - BC Assessment has a specialized team to oversee.

Chair Thiessen thanked Messrs. Johnson and Sitter for attending the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

Office of the Prime Minister
-Acknowledgement of RDBN
Letter re: Rural Connectivity

Moved by Director McGuire
Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

C.W.2020-8-3

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the correspondence from the Office of the Prime Minister – Acknowledgement of the RDBN Letter re: Rural Connectivity.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Letter re: Recycle BC

Director Fisher spoke of a letter written by Recycle BC to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy requesting that the Province hold off on pending changes to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Programs. He brought forward concerns in regard to the impacts to small businesses and residents in the region if EPR programs are not improved.

Write a Letter to Provincial
Election Candidates re:
Recycle BC Request to Ministry
of Environment and Climate Change
Strategy to hold off on Pending
Changes to EPR Programs

Moved by Director Peterson
Seconded by Director Fisher

C.W.2020-8-4

“That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Board write a letter to Provincial Election Candidates within the RDBN to express concerns in regard to Recycle BC requesting Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to hold off on pending changes to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Programs; and further, that the letter be provided to RDBN member municipalities, Chambers of Commerce within the RDBN, the North Central Local Government Association and the Union of B.C. Municipalities.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS (CONT'D)

Rail Safety

Director Brienon spoke of the Board receiving the Friends of Morice Bulkley letter in regard to risk assessment of hazardous petroleum cargo on northwest BC rail corridor at its September 17, 2020 Board meeting. He spoke of the Port of Prince Rupert increasing capacity and the increase of rail traffic. He mentioned the importance of determining the number of derailments that have taken place within the RDBN in the past three years. Staff is inviting CN Rail to be a delegate at a future meeting and will request the information.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Brienon
Seconded by Director T. Greenaway

C.W.2020-8-5

"That the meeting be adjourned at 12:32 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Gerry Thiessen, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant