

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**

**RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, October 7, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Chair Mark Parker

Directors Mark Fisher  
Tom Greenaway  
Clint Lambert  
Chris Newell  
Jerry Petersen  
Michael Riis-Christianson  
Gerry Thiessen

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services  
Megan D'Arcy, Agriculture Coordinator (West) – via Zoom  
Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development  
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer  
Michelle Roberge, Agriculture Coordinator (East) – via Zoom  
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Others Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle  
Bob Motion, District of Fort St. James – via Zoom

Media Eddie Huband, Lakes District News – arrived at 12:50 p.m., left at 1:30 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 12:48 p.m.

**AGENDA**

Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2021-8-1

“That the Rural/Agriculture Committee Agenda for October 7, 2021 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MINUTES**

Rural/Agriculture Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
-September 9, 2021

Moved by Director Petersen  
Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2021-8-2

“That the minutes of the Rural/Agriculture Committee meeting of September 9, 2021 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## AGRICULTURE REPORTS

### Food and Agriculture Plan -Implementation Update

Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

#### RDC.2021-8-3

“That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator’s (West) Food and Agriculture Plan – Implementation Update memorandum.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding:

- Food Hub
  - o Challenges due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
  - o Capacity issues
  - o Moving toward Slaughter facility licensing correlates to Food Hub
- Focus on existing priorities
- More gated gatherings
  - o What are existing resources?
  - o Have facility/resources in some communities and not others
  - o Is there a way to increase knowledge base of existing markets and fill information gaps?
- Hub Network meeting – specific requirements that need to be identified and included in any proposal that is potentially funded by the province
- Importance of identifying what is needed for producers to meet demand and fill in the gaps
- Establishing guaranteed networks
- Community Gardens
  - o RDBN provides grant writing support to societies that operate Community Gardens
- Connecting Consumers Brochure
  - o Due to COVID-19 was not able to have public events
  - o Transitioned to online directory
    - Search by product/producer
    - Print option
    - Recognize lack of internet connectivity to access online version
    - Exploring printed options
- RDBN survey re: new slaughter regulations
- Land uses in terms of agriculture opportunities
- Gaps in the food chain
  - o Opportunities for local producers.

### Agriculture Outreach Initiatives

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Lambert

#### RDC.2021-8-4

“That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator’s (East) Agriculture Outreach Initiatives memorandum.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Parker expressed support for the Agriculture Outreach Initiatives. Discussion took place regarding the benefits and advantages of a Podcast Series and video series to share relevant information about aspects of operating an agricultural operation as well as basic knowledge for living on rural property in the RDBN.

## RURAL REPORTS

### COVID-19 Relief Funds -Allocation to Electoral Area Services

Moved by Director Newell  
Seconded by Director Fisher

#### RDC.2021-8-5

“That the Rural/Agriculture Committee recommend that the Board approve the following allocations:

- Area A - \$56,630.96
- Area B - \$20,881.05
- Area C - \$15,245.97
- Area D - \$15,880.12
- Area E - \$17,163.83
- Area F - \$39,488.67
- Area G - \$9,729.41.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding organizations applying for additional COVID – 19 Relief Funds due to the continued impacts of the pandemic. The Rural Directors Committee indicated its support for continued support via application to community groups restricted from normal revenue generation activities as a result of the pandemic. Staff will provide COVID-19 Relief Funds criteria to Rural Directors.

### Covid – 19 Relief Funds -Application Approval

Moved by Director Fisher  
Seconded by Director Lambert

#### RDC.2021-8-6

“That the Committee recommend that the Board approve the following application for COVID-19 Relief Funds

#### **-Electoral Area A**

- Smithers District Chamber of Commerce – Live, Love, Local Campaign - \$5,000.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### Grant in Aid – Federal Gas Tax Internal Trade

Moved by Director Fisher  
Seconded by Director Lambert

#### RDC.2021-8-7

“That the Committee receive the Manager of Regional Economic Development’s Grant in Aid – Federal Gas Tax Internal Trade memorandum.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Newell  
Seconded by Director Lambert

#### RDC.2021-8-8

“That the meeting be adjourned at 1:32 p.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Mark Parker, Chair

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Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services