

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, February 9, 2023

PRESENT: Chair Clint Lambert

Directors Judy Greenaway
Shirley Moon
Chris Newell
Mark Parker
Michael Riis-Christianson
Stoney Stoltenberg

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Megan D'Arcy, Agriculture Coordinator – via Zoom
Nellie Davis, Regional Manager of Economic Development – left at 2:29 p.m.
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning – arrived at 2:35 p.m., left at 2:42 p.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others Gladys Atrill, Town of Smithers – via Zoom
Shane Brienen, District of Houston – left at 1:53 p.m., returned at 2:04 p.m., left at 2:29 p.m.
Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James
Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle – left at 2:29 p.m.
Kevin Moutray, District of Vanderhoof – left at 2:29 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lambert called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Greenaway
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2023-1-1

“That the Rural/Agriculture Committee Agenda for February 9, 2023 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Rural/Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes -October 13, 2022 Moved by Director Parker
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2023-1-2 "That the minutes of the Rural/Agriculture Committee meeting of October 13, 2022 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

AGRICULTURE REPORT

Northwest Invasive Plant Council 2023 Budget Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2023-1-3 "That the Committee recommend that the Board approve a contribution of \$35,000 to the Northwest Invasive Plant Council in the 2023 Invasive Plant Control Budget; and further, write a letter requesting a future meeting to discuss future funding of the program."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- Northwest Invasive Plant Council (NWIPC)
 - o Metrics
 - o Funders
 - o Environmental Services budget provides funds to treat invasive plants at RDBN Transfer Stations and Landfills
 - o Yearly reporting is provided
- Working towards helping landowners manage invasive plants
- Involvement and funding from other agencies
 - o Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's road right-of-way
 - Need for timely mowing of road right-of-way
 - Lack of treating sand pits
- Cost and economic impact to agriculture landowners significant
- NWIPC and provincial responsibility and roles in managing invasive plants
- Homeowner Rebate program
 - o Underutilized
 - o Not intended for larger properties or large scale agriculture lands
- More work to be done regarding education and resources available
- Prioritize areas

AGRICULTURE REPORT (CONT'D)

- Funding considerations/future considerations
- Finding an effective solution to the issue of invasive plants particularly on public lands adjacent to private properties
 - o Utilizing alternative methods of treatment e.g. intensive grazing
- Advocating the province in regard to the economic impacts of invasive species
- Reviewing funding allocation in the future.

AGRICULTURE DISCUSSION

Commercial Kitchen Map Project

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2023-1-4

"That the Committee receive the Agriculture Coordinator's Commercial Kitchen Map Project memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Lambert spoke of potentially certifying community halls as commercial kitchens. In order to sell processed products such as jams, they need to be produced in a commercial food safe kitchen.

VERBAL REPORTS - Chair Parker

Meeting with the Honourable Pam Alexis, Minister of Agriculture and Food - Veterinary Shortage and Food Security

- Virtual meeting
- With the recent provincial cabinet shuffle Minister Alexis is new to the role of Minister of Agriculture and Food
 - o Unaware of the challenges of the number of provincially-subsidized and non-provincially subsidized seats in the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan
 - Challenges and uncertainty for local students attending the program due to costs
- Frustrations
- Continue to advocate
- Economic Impact Study and funding from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 - o Encouraged continued support
 - o Draft document under review
 - o Determining circulation of document
- Assistant Deputy Minister was aware of the history of concerns, issues and advocacy regarding the veterinary shortage
- Discussions continuing with the Minister of Advanced Education and UNBC to develop a veterinarian program
- Some work also being done with the College of New Caledonia regarding program development
- Provincial and Federal governments are working to remove barriers for a number of professionals including veterinarians

VERBAL REPORTS - Chair Parker (Cont'd)

- Discussed importance of food security
 - o Need to be a part of the solution and assist in finding a sustainable solution
 - o Continue to advocate.

Verbal Report

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2023-1-5

"That Director Parker's verbal report be received as presented."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Town of Smithers Zoning Amendment

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2023-1-5

"That staff inform the Town of Smithers that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako has no comments or concerns regarding Zoning Amendment Application No. 22-04."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

RURAL REPORT

Rural Government Financial Plan

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Parker

RDC.2023-1-6

"That the Committee receive the Chief Financial Officer's Rural Government Financial Plan memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- Regional Transit funding
 - o Not sustainable
 - o Provincially implemented initiative
 - Discuss funding with the province in the future
 - o Environmental Services operation of Transfer Stations and Landfills.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2023-1-7

"That the meeting be adjourned at 2:44 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Clint Lambert, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of
Corporate Services