

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Thursday, September 7, 2023

PRESENT:	Chair	Mark Parker
	Directors	Leroy Dekens Martin Elphee – via Zoom Judy Greenaway Clint Lambert Linda McGuire Shirley Moon Kevin Moutray Chris Newell Michael Riis-Christianson Stoney Stoltenberg Sarrah Storey Henry Wiebe
	Directors Absent	Gladys Atrill, Town of Smithers Shane Brienen, District of Houston
	Staff	Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development – arrived at 10:10 a.m., left at 10:27 a.m. John Illes, Chief Financial Officer Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning – left at 10:52 a.m. Deneve Vanderwolf, Planning Technician/Transit Coordinator – left at 10:52 a.m. Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services
	Others	Gillian Moxham, Project Director, Transit Strategy & Policy Branch, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure -via Zoom – arrived at 10:15 a.m., left at 10:52 a.m. Lindsay Taylor, Government Relations Manager, BC Transit – via Zoom – arrived at 10:15 a.m., left at 10:52 a.m.
	Media	Saddman Zaman, LD News

CALL TO ORDER Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

FIRST NATIONS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AGENDA

Moved by Director Storey
Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

C.W.2023-6-1

"That the Agenda of the Committee of the Whole meeting of September 7, 2023 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole
Minutes – June 8, 2023

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

C.W.2023-6-2

"That the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of June 8, 2023 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

National Day for Truth and
Reconciliation- September 30,
2023

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Lambert

C.W.2023-6-3

"That the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Monday, October 2, 2023."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Rural Bursary Policy

Discussion took place regarding the Manager of Regional Economic Development's Rural Bursary Policy:

- Including Trades Programs in the fields for special consideration
- Including additional schools in Eligible Institutions:
 - o Northside Christian School
 - o Bulkley Valley Christian School
 - o Houston Christian School
- Supporting all graduates from all schools in the region including brick and mortar, independent schools and online graduation programs
- Rural Bursary Policy vs. utilizing Grant in Aid for those Directors wanting to contribute
 - o Electoral Areas C (Fort St. James Rural) and D (Fraser Lake Rural) currently provide a bursary
- Annual Regional Grant in Aid taxation
- Providing consistent support throughout the region
- Schools distribute the bursary to successful recipients within the school's criteria

REPORTS (CONT'D)

- Director input in the selection process
- Including students with a municipal or rural permanent address
- Village of Granisle provides a bursary to a graduate
- District of Vanderhoof provides two bursaries – one for an academic field and one for a Trades field
- Number of schools per area
- Staff to bring forward additional details at a future meeting.

REGIONAL TRANSIT

Bulkley-Nechako Transit Service (Bylaw 1790) Amendment Bylaws

The following was discussed regarding the Director of Planning's Bulkley-Nechako Transit Service (Bylaw 1790) Amendment Bylaws memorandum:

- Need for confirmation of financial certainty from the provincial and federal governments
- Request for a meeting with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure at the 2023 Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention in Vancouver September 18 to 22, 2023 was declined
 - o Awaiting a response regarding a request to meet with Ministry Staff
- Funding formula and model for the Bulkley-Nechako Transit
- Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 included in the memorandum
- Additional taxation challenging
- Charging more per rider
- Communication between BC Transit and the communities when drivers/buses are cancelled
- Operating and capital cost formula
 - o Setting a contribution limit
- Potential costs and tax increases in the future
- City of Prince George contribution to the service
- Investigate fare increases and potential policing
- Village of Granisle Community Bus increased fares from \$5 to \$7.50 without objection
- Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural) – off-corridor
 - o Residents have travelled to Vanderhoof to find the Bulkley Nechako Transit bus full
 - o Seniors Helping Seniors bus operates in Fort St. James
 - o Off-corridor communities' contribution is lower than those on-corridor
- Observed Less hitch-hiking along Highway 16
- Discussion with First Nations
- Conducting an Alternative Approval Process

REGIONAL TRANSIT (CONT'D)

- BC Transit Service Review of the Bulkley-Nechako Transit System
- Possibility of discontinuing the service without higher levels of government support commitment.

CORRESPONDENCE

City of Quesnel – Re: Quesnel Highway 97 North-South Interconnector Project Request for Support Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Lambert

C.W.2023-6-6

“That the Committee receive the Administration Correspondence from the City of Quesnel regarding Quesnel Highway 97 North-South Interconnector Project Request for Support.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Late Resolution to UBCM RE: 2023 Wildfire Season -Economic Impacts to the Forestry Sector – Request for Inventory Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

C.W.2023-6-7

“That the Board submit the following late resolution to the 2023 Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention:

Whereas 2023 has been the worst wildfire season in BC’s history with over 2.2 million hectares burnt, and close to \$1 billion spent to combat the wildfires;

And whereas in April 2018 the Province received the Abbott/Chapman report titled *Addressing the New Normal: 21st Century Disaster Management in British Columbia* whereby recommendation 104 states: “Following wildfire events, promptly undertake timber supply reviews to enable industry response and adaptation to a new allowable annual cut, and to allow BC to better understand and respond to impacts on habitat, fibre availability and community stability.”

NEW BUSINESS (CONT'D)

And whereas there has not been a provincial inventory of land base assets since the 2007 fire season; however, within the last 2 years the Province has undertaken several new forest and land based initiatives such as the Old Growth Strategic Review, Forest Landscape Plans, and B.C. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework proposals that are being conducted in the absence of accurate inventory data;

Therefore be it resolved that the Province of BC immediately defer its current land base initiatives until a comprehensive inventory is conducted after the 2023 wildfire season recognizing that the impacts of wildfire to wildlife habitat, timber, fish, water, First Nations Reconciliation, and community stability need to be examined and prioritized to understand if the current land base initiatives remain in the best interest of the Province."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Wildfire Mop Up

Director Newell brought forward concerns and frustrations regarding the mop up of wildfires and that wildfires continue to burn and not be completely extinguished. He noted that local resources do not appear to be utilized to full capacity.

Discussion took place regarding rural fire response and the example of the Chinook Emergency Response Society on the Southside of Francois Lake. Training volunteers and rural areas taking the initiative regarding wildfire response was also discussed.

An After-Action Review was discussed as well as recognizing initiatives that worked well and areas that could be improved regarding wildfire response.

INCAMERA MOTION

Moved by Director Storey
Seconded by Director Newell

C.W.2023-6-8

"That this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to Section 90(1)(c) and (2)(b) of the Community Charter for the Board to deal with matters relating to the following:

- *Fire Safety Act*
- Labour Relations
- Legacy Funding
- Northwest B.C Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA)."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

C.W.2023-6-9

"That the meeting be adjourned at 11:20 a.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of
Corporate Services