

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, September 7, 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
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning – left at 1:00 p.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Other Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle – left at 1:06 p.m.
Kevin Moutray, District of Vanderhoof - left at 1:24 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lambert called the meeting to order at 12:50 p.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Parker
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2023-5-1

“That the Rural/Agriculture Committee Agenda for September 7, 2023 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Rural/Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes -June 8, 2023

Moved by Director Greenaway
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2023-5-2

“That the minutes of the Rural/Agriculture Committee meeting of June 8, 2023 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Referrals

Crown Land Application Moved by Director Parker
Referral No. 160467107-006 Seconded by Director Greenaway
Electoral Areas D (Fraser Lake Rural)
and F (Vanderhoof Rural)

RDC.2023-5-3 "That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land Application Referral No. 160467107-006."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Crown Land Application Moved by Director Greenaway
Referral No. 159045290-006 Seconded by Director Stoltenberg
Electoral Area C (Fort St. James
Rural)

RDC.2023-5-4 "That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land Application Referral No. 159045290-006."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Coastal GasLink Segundo
Lake Compressor Station
Notification Moved by Director Riis-Christianson
Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

RDC.2023-5-5 "That the comment sheet be provided to the BC Energy Regulator and Coastal GasLink as the Regional District's comments regarding the proposed Segundo Lake Compressor Station."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Coastal GasLink Clear Creek
Lake Compressor Station
Notification Moved by Director Parker
Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

RDC.2023-5-6 "That the comment sheet be provided to the BC Energy Regulator and Coastal GasLink as the Regional District's comments regarding the proposed Clear Creek Compressor Station."

Opposed: Director Newell CARRIED

(All/Directors/Majority)

REPORT

Canada Community -Building Fund BC – Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) Smithers Curling Club – Ice Plant Replacement Project Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2023-5-7

1) "That the Committee recommend that the Board approve an additional \$75,000 of Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) Canada Community-Building Fund BC allocation monies to an Ice Plant Replacement project at the Smithers Curling Club, and further,

(participants/weighted/majority)

2) That the Board authorize the withdrawal of up to \$75,000 from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Pierre Poilievre, Federal Conservative Party Leader in Smithers, September 14, 2023

Chair Lambert mentioned that Pierre Poilievre, Federal Conservative Party Leader will be in Smithers, September 14, 2023 and has asked to meet with cattle producers in the region.

Drought Conditions and Irrigation for Farms

Chair Lambert brought forward concerns regarding the Province requesting farmers in the southern interior of B.C. cease irrigation of their crop cycle.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Potential advocacy and the importance of irrigation for food security in the province
- The need for a provincial inventory and data collection of aquifers and water sources
- Community irrigation projects similar to Saskatchewan
- Newer irrigation systems use less water
- Hay shortage impacts
- Provincial and federal agriculture recovery solutions
 - o Reasonable rates and trucking costs to purchase hay from other provinces and the United States
- AgriStability Program and workshops
- Staff will research the issue and provide an update to the Committee.

NEW BUSINESS (CONT'D)

School Buses

Director Moon spoke of receiving a number of inquiries regarding busing for private school students in the region. Provincial bus funding per student was discussed.

Declaring an Agriculture Disaster within the RDBN

Director Moon inquired about declaring an agriculture disaster in the RDBN due to the current drought and agricultural impacts occurring in the region. She noted that Alberta has criteria and policy in place to declare an agriculture disaster. Staff will bring forward additional information at a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2023-5-8

"That the meeting be adjourned at 1:36 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Clint Lambert, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director
of Corporate Services