

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, March 7, 2024

PRESENT: Chair Clint Lambert

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

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer – via Zoom
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Megan D’Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator
Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development – left at 11:38 a.m.
Janette Derksen, Waste Diversion Supervisor – left at 12:12 p.m.
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer – arrived at 11:22 a.m.
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others Shane Brienen, District of Houston – arrived at 12:47 p.m.
Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James – arrived at 12:47 p.m.
Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle – left at 12:12 p.m.
Kevin Moutray, District of Vanderhoof
Sarrah Storey, Village of Fraser Lake – left at 12:05 p.m.
Henry Wiebe, Village of Burns Lake – arrived at 12:47 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER Chair Lambert called the meeting to order at 11:16 a.m.

AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2024-3-1 “That the Rural/Agriculture Committee Agenda for March 7, 2024 be approved; and further, that the Supplementary Agenda be dealt with at this meeting.”

(All/Directors/Majority) **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

MINUTES

Rural/Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes -February 8, 2024 Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Parker

RDC.2024-3-2 "That the minutes of the Rural/Agriculture Committee meeting of February 8, 2024 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

AGRICULTURE REPORT

BC Vegetable Marketing Expands Regulated Area Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Parker

RDC.2024-3-3 "That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator's BC Vegetable Marketing Expands Regulated Area and the Supplementary Agenda Clarification regarding BC Vegetable Marketing Commission Expansion of Regulated Area memorandums."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- Additional clarification is needed regarding the BC Vegetable Marketing Commission's expansion of regulated areas
- Challenging contacting the Commission
- Researching impacts to areas that were part of the Commission's regulated area prior to the expansion e.g. Quesnel
- The potential impact to BC Farmer's Markets in northern B.C. is unknown
- Concerns regarding potential impacts to vegetable farmers, growers and community gardens in the north
- Lack of communication regarding the January 1, 2024 implementation
- Inviting the Commission to a future RDBN meeting or North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) AGM
 - o Director Greenaway will bring it forward to the NCLGA Planning Committee.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Recent Agricultural Land Commission Decisions Moved by Director Riis-Christianson
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2024-3-4 "That the Committee receive the Planning Technician's Recent Agricultural Land Commission Decisions memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (CONT'D)

Discussion took place regarding the following:

- Decisions made by the ALC do not coincide with decisions made by the Board and don't address local and/or northern considerations
- Board's past advocacy with the Province utilizing the historical decision making by the ALC
- Issue stems from the Ministry of Agriculture removing the two-zone system that was in place in the past
 - o Board advocated that the Province keep Zone 1 and 2
 - o Continued to bring forward the issue once the Province removed the two zones and showcased the differences in the north
- ALC response time
- Lands included in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) that lack agriculture qualities
 - o ALC indicated lack of capacity to review
 - o Important to review
- Provide information and meet with the Assistant Deputy Minister and Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food at a meeting planned for April
- Leading up to the 2024 UBCM Convention consider bringing forward to the Minister of Agriculture and Food the impacts to the region and north regarding the removal of the two-zone system.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORT

Agricultural Plastics (3-year) Pilot Project

The Committee discussed the following:

- Renewing the Pilot on an annual basis and focus on on-farm collection
- Having conversations with producers
- Responsibility of the agriculture sector to recycle agricultural plastics
- Province considering investigating agricultural plastics as part of an Industrial Commercial Institutional (ICI) program in potentially 3-5 years
- Option to utilize the Canada Community Building Fund or Northern Capital Planning Grant for the Pilot
- Challenges identifying new markets to minimize the long distances the product must travel to end markets during the 3-year Pilot Project.

Staff noted that the RDBN Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) recommends reviewing options for recycling programs for agricultural plastics. Six balers have been provided to be used for on-farm collection if the Committee chooses to continue the Pilot Project.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORT (CONT'D)

Agricultural Plastics (3-year) Pilot Project Moved by Director Parker
Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

RDC.2024-3-5 "That the Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to explore a one-year renewal of the Agricultural Plastics (3-year) Pilot Project focusing on on-farm collection; and further, that staff bring forward funding options to the Board prior to the end of the current pilot in June 2024."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Agricultural Plastics (3-year) Pilot Project Moved by Director Newell
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2024-3-6 "That the Committee receive the Waste Diversion Supervisor's Agricultural Plastics (3-year) Pilot Project memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Break for lunch at 12:12 p.m.

Reconvened after lunch at 12:47 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

New Program for Veterinarian Clinics that treat Farm Animals Director Parker commented that the Province has announced that it will provide funding for summer placement costs for veterinary and veterinary technologist students to B.C. Veterinarian Clinics that help B.C. farmers and ranchers care for their animals. The \$300,000 pilot program offers up to \$6,000 per placement to help with wages and travel costs that could support the placement of up to 50 students in 2024.

Connectivity Projects Officially Announced in the RDBN Director Riis-Christianson reported that the Federal and Provincial Government announced combined funding for three connectivity projects in the RDBN, Fort St. James, Cluculz Lake, Burns Lake (rural areas) and Tchesinkut Lake with an estimated completion date of June 2025.

IN-CAMERA MOTION

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2024-3-7

"That this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to Section 90(1)(k) of the *Community Charter* for the Committee to deal with matters relating to the following:
• Future Service Provision."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

RDC.2024-3-8

"That the meeting be adjourned at 2:51 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Clint Lambert, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director
of Corporate Services