



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

**CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE
AGENDA
Thursday, November 7, 2024**

<u>PAGE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>AGENDA- November 7, 2024</u>	Approve
	<u>Supplementary Agenda</u>	Receive
	<u>MINUTES</u>	
2-4	Connectivity Committee Meeting Minutes - November 9, 2023	Receive
	<u>ADMINISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE</u>	
5-6	RDBN Letter – Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission – 8000-P114-202404929 – Application to Disclose Certain Annual Facilities Survey Data	Receive
	<u>SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA</u>	
	<u>NEW BUSINESS</u>	
	<u>IN-CAMERA MOTION</u>	
	That this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to 90(2)(b) of the <i>Community Charter</i> for the Board to deal with matters relating to the following:	
	• Connectivity Projects	
	<u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE MEETING****Thursday November 9, 2023**

PRESENT:	Chair	Michael Riis-Christianson
	Directors	Judy Greenaway Clint Lambert Shirley Moon Chris Newell Mark Parker Stoney Stoltenberg
	Staff	Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development John Illes, Chief Financial Officer Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services
	Others	Shane Brienen, District of Houston Leroy Dekens, Village of Telkwa Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James Kevin Moutray, District of Fort St. James Henry Wiebe, Village of Burns Lake

CALL TO ORDER Chair Riis-Christianson called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

FIRST NATIONS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

C.C.2023-3-1 "That the Connectivity Committee Agenda for November 7, 2023 be approved as amended; and further, that the Supplementary Agenda be dealt with at this meeting."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Connectivity Committee Meeting Minutes -July 13, 2023 Moved by Director Lambert
Seconded by Director Parker

C.C. 2023-3-2 "That the Connectivity Committee Meeting Minutes of July 13, 2023 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

REPORT

Participation in a Study of Canadians' Internet Service Performance

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
 Seconded by Director Lambert

C.C.2023-3-3

"That the Committee receive the Manager of Regional Economic Development's Participation in a Study of Canadians' Internet Service Performance memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding sharing the Study of Canadians' Internet Service Performance information on the RDBN social media platforms.

Canada's Rural and Remote Broadband Conference

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
 Seconded by Director Newell

C.C.2023-3-4

"That the Committee receive Chair Riis-Christianson's Canada's Rural and Remote Broadband Conference memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Riis-Christianson indicated that the Conference was very informative and noted that the connectivity issues experienced within the Regional District are experienced Canada-wide. He identified that there was no provincial representation at the conference. Rogers was in attendance and spoke of work being done along Highway 16 to address the Highway of Tears Project. Chair Riis-Christianson encouraged the Committee to attend future conferences.

Director Greenaway requested additional information regarding 6Harmonics. Chair Riis-Christianson will provide the information.

IN-CAMERA MOTION

Moved by Director Newell
 Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

C.C.2023-3-5

"That this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to 90(2)(b) of the Community Charter for the Board to deal with matters relating to Connectivity Projects."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Parker
Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

C.C.2023-3-6

"That the meeting be adjourned at 10:44 a.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Michael Riis-Christianson, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director
of Corporate Services



November 7, 2024

Marc Morin Secretary General
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N2

Dear Sir:

RE: 8000-P114-202404929 – Application to Disclose Certain Annual Facilities Survey Data

The Board of Directors for the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) has reviewed the above-note application and wishes to communicate its unqualified support for it.

Like the Province of BC, the RDBN believes the CRTC should disclose certain Annual Facilities Survey data relating to the provision of Internet and mobile wireless services in Canada. We agree that the CRTC should improve the granularity of the ISED Internet Availability Map to show service provider location and technology on 250-meter road segment levels, and we urge the CRTC to share complete Internet/mobile wireless service provider facilities/transport data with all provincial and territorial governments on a confidential basis.

We support British Columbia's assertion that information submitted to the CRTC on available services, plans, and speeds is not consistently treated as confidential by this country's Internet and Mobile Wireless Service Providers. In our experience, although most service providers have refused to share this information directly with us, it is readily available on provider websites and offered to citizens by ISP/MWSP customer service representatives. For these reasons, we agree that the CRTC should not treat this information as confidential.

The RDBN and the Province of British Columbia have a common desire to ensure that all residents - *regardless of their geographic location and socioeconomic status* - have access to reliable, affordable Internet and mobile wireless services that meet or exceed national standards. Improved data sharing is a straightforward, effective way to further our shared connectivity mandates. Identifying areas that lack essential telecommunications services is a data-driven activity, and the inability to obtain the requisite data hinders government's ability to maximize connectivity benefits to citizens. While ISED makes programming and policy decisions based on the Facilities Survey data, BC's ability to do similar work lags because of the restrictions on available data. Our joint effectiveness will improve when we use the same datasets.

The Province of BC has worked closely with ISED for years. Similarly, our Board of Directors, through the RDBN's Connectivity Committee, has worked diligently since 2019 to (a) identify communities, neighbourhoods, and households in our region that do not have adequate Internet and mobile wireless services, and (b) partner with senior levels of government, Internet Service Providers, and Mobile Wireless Service Providers to extend essential telecommunications services to RDBN residents. Our efforts in this regard, and the Province of BC's ability to assist us, have been handicapped by a lack of detailed facilities/transport data. Our inability to access granular-level connectivity data has forced us to spend considerable time, effort, and money gathering information *that the CRTC already possesses and ISPs/MWSPs routinely release to potential customers*. Armed with only general (and, in some cases, anecdotal) information about existing services and infrastructure, we have been unable to identify all unserved/underserved households or develop effect plans to connect them. Building a comprehensive connectivity strategy without adequate baseline service data is like trying to construct a house atop shifting sand; the resulting structure might initially look okay but is unlikely to last or serve its intended purpose.

We trust this letter clearly communicates our unequivocal support for Application 8000-P114-202404929. It's time the CRTC shared granular Internet/mobile wireless service provider facilities/transport data on a confidential basis. Doing so is in the interest of Canadians. We submit, though, that this information shouldn't just be provided to provincial and territorial governments. Local governments like the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako also need access to it for planning and service delivery purposes.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Mark Parker
Chair

Michael Riis-Christianson
Connectivity Committee Chair

cc: RDBN Member Municipalities
NCLGA Members