

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Thursday, April 14, 2022

PRESENT: Chair Gerry Thiessen

Directors Gladys Atrill – via Zoom
Shane Brien
Mark Fisher
Dolores Funk
Clint Lambert
Linda McGuire
Annette Morgan – via Zoom
Bob Motion – left at 10:55 a.m.
Chris Newell
Mark Parker
Jerry Petersen
Michael Riis-Christianson
Sarrah Storey – arrived at 10:25 a.m.

Director Absent Tom Greenaway, Electoral Area “C” (Fort St. James Rural)

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer – via Zoom
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Danielle Patterson, Senior Planner – arrived at 11:05 a.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others Nathan Cullen, MLA Stikine - via Zoom – arrived at 10:34 a.m.,
left at 11:04 a.m.
Sam Raven, Constituency Assistant, Nathan Cullen, MLA Stikine
– via Zoom – arrived at 10:30 a.m., left at 11:04 a.m.

Media Eddie Huband, LD News

CALL TO ORDER Chair Thiessen called the meeting to order at 10:24 a.m.

FIRST NATIONS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AGENDA Moved by Director Brien
Seconded by Director Newell

C.W.2022-4-1 “That the Agenda of the Committee of the Whole meeting of April 14, 2022 be approved.

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole Minutes – March 17, 2022

Moved by Director Petersen
Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

C.W.2022-4-2

“That the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes of March 17, 2022 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

Board Meeting Recordings for Public Viewing

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services provided an overview of Board Meeting Recordings for Public Viewing. The following was discussed:

- Member municipalities sharing meetings virtually
- Using the RDBN website to share meetings
 - o File size of digital recordings of meetings
- Including Committee meetings for public viewing
- Option for individuals wanting to join a meeting virtually.

Board Meeting Recordings For Public Viewing

Moved by Director Fisher
Seconded by Director Motion

C.W.2022-4-3

“That the Committee recommend that Board and Committee Meeting recordings be made available to the public via an RDBN YouTube channel. Further, that the recordings remain on the site until the next recording becomes available.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATION

Nathan Cullen, MLA, Stikine – RE: Update

Chair Thiessen welcomed Nathan Cullen, MLA, Stikine.

Mr. Cullen provided the following update:

- Expressed appreciation for Premier Horgan’s appointment of Minister of Municipal Affairs
- RBA meeting in Terrace – April 22-23, 2022
- Meeting with individuals in the Fraser Valley regarding the 2021 wildfire and flooding events
- BC moving from one crisis event to another – floods, fires, Covid-19, etc.
- Covid-19
 - o Support to local governments and businesses
 - o Low mortality rate in BC
 - o Economic recovery one of the best
- \$830M provincial/federal funding partnership in March 2022 to connect underserved rural and Indigenous households with high-speed internet
- Mandate responsible for Immigration
 - o BC welcomed 100,000 immigrants
 - o 60% from other provinces
 - o 40% from abroad
 - o The Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation has stated that on average BC requires 100,000 new residents per year to meet the demand for jobs

DELEGATION

Nathan Cullen, MLA, Stikine – RE: Update (Cont'd)

- Responsible for the settlement of refugees
 - o Canada has accepted 44,000 individuals from Ukraine
 - o BC has a joint commitment with the United Way to be a source of information
 - o Uncertain where Ukrainian refugees will settle.

The following was discussed:

- Veterinarian shortage in BC
 - o Province's commitment of 20 extra seats at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan
 - Only a one-year commitment
 - o Potential short-term solution – International Veterinarians
 - o UNBC's interest in developing a veterinarian educational program
 - o Certification process for skilled individuals coming to BC is included in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs mandate
 - Challenges regarding some professional colleges
- Electoral Area Boundary Review
 - o Three panelists – Elections BC, and two other provincial representatives
 - Rural Caucus requested one panelist from northern BC
 - o Panel has scheduled public meeting dates throughout the province
 - MLA Cullen will forward the information
 - o Largest area is Stikine
 - o Status quo in the north
- Provincial/federal government funding for connectivity for rural and Indigenous communities
 - o Challenges - inaccurate federal/provincial mapping
 - o Need for a mechanism to correct mapping information
 - o MLA Cullen indicated that if provincial mapping requires updating to forward the information to him
 - o He will determine if there is an appeal process regarding the provincial mapping
- Importance of ongoing support for housing – homeless, addictions, mental health
- Various funding allocations
 - o Municipalities and regional districts have different legislative criteria in order to utilize grant funding
 - o Some funding and programs provided by the province are not applicable to regional districts
 - o Having to utilize creative solutions to support projects and municipalities
 - o MLA Cullen requested an itemized list be provided to determine the needs of local governments
- Northwest BC Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA)
 - o Three party service providers
- Immigration
 - o Quicker access to urban municipalities vs. rural communities
 - Province has requested information from the federal government
 - The information is not forthcoming
 - o Require trades/skilled workers
 - o MLA Cullen indicated refugee process is lengthy and requires sponsorship
 - o Process in supporting Ukraine refugees is different
 - o Refugees escaping different areas require different needs
 - trauma, counselling support, entering educational system, etc.

DELEGATION

Nathan Cullen, MLA, Stikine – RE: Update (Cont'd)

- Forestry challenges
 - o Impacts to communities with mill curtailments and shutdowns
 - o Lack of support from the province in providing people to talk to regarding bridging programs
 - MLA Cullen committed to having provincial representatives reach out to the companies, employees and unions to discuss options.

Chair Thiessen thanked Mr. Cullen for attending the meeting.

Truth and Reconciliation
Calls to Action

Moved by Director Storey
Seconded by Director Petersen

C.W.2022-4-4

“That the Committee receive the First Nations Liaison’s Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action memorandum.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Storey
Seconded by Director Brienen

C.W.2022-4-5

“That the meeting be adjourned at 11:05 a.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Gerry Thiessen, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of
Corporate Services