

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**

**RURAL DIRECTORS COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, July 20, 2017**

**PRESENT:** Chair Eileen Benedict

Directors Mark Fisher  
Tom Greenaway  
Bill Miller  
Rob Newell  
Mark Parker  
Jerry Petersen

Staff Melany de Weerd, Chief Administrative Officer  
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services  
Roxanne Shepherd, Chief Financial Officer  
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Other Darcy Repen, Mayor, Village of Telkwa – left at 3:55 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER** Chair Benedict called the meeting to order at 3:46 p.m.

**AGENDA** Moved by Director Miller  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

**RDC.2017-7-1** “That the Rural Directors Committee Agenda for July 20, 2017 be approved.”

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

**MINUTES**

**Rural Directors Committee Meeting Minutes -June 8, 2017** Moved by Director Newell  
Seconded by Director Parker

**RDC.2017-7-2** “That the minutes of the Rural Directors Committee meeting of June 8, 2017 be received.”

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

**REPORTS**

**Mail Ballot Voting** Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services clarified that the Vanderhoof Referendum passed and noted the referenced schedules corresponding with the dates outlined. A copy of “Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Mail Ballot Authorization and Procedure Bylaw No. 1617, 2011” was provided to the Rural Directors. The Bylaw encompasses the Cluculz Lake Fire Protection Area.

Director Petersen mentioned that residents of Cluculz Lake requested the option for mail ballot voting after a referendum failed to establish a service to provide for the provision of fire protection and suppression within a portion of Electoral Area “F” (Vanderhoof Rural). As a pilot project the RDBN considered and passed “Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Mail Ballot Authorization and Procedure Bylaw No. 1617, 2011.”

## **REPORTS (CONT'D)**

The first opportunity for mail in ballots was for the February 16, 2013 Electoral Area "F" (Vanderhoof Rural) Vanderhoof Swimming Pool Contribution Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1644. The referendum passed and the Regional District received numerous complaints in regard to concerns that mail ballot voting was not allowed for all Area "F" residents (only residents in the Cluculz Lake Fire Protection Area as per Bylaw 1617.) Director Petersen indicated that "A Petition to amend Bylaw 1617, 2011 to allow Mail in Ballots during all RDBN elections" that was signed by residents did not include the cost to tax payers to allow for mail ballot voting.

Discussion took place in regard to the number of voting opportunities that are provided during general local elections and by-elections. The staff time required of the Chief Election Officer to examine and verify the mail ballot package certification envelope and the completed elector registration application, along with the cost to have additional staff to conduct mail ballot voting was discussed.

Discussion took place in regard to the limited ability for taxation to provide requested services for areas and the impact to permanent residents in an area vs. seasonal residents.

The future potential for the Province to implement internet voting was discussed.

In the past ten years staff has received very few requests from other electoral areas besides Area "F" for mail ballot voting. The demand is from the area with a large contingent of seasonal dwellers.

Director Petersen commended staff for their dedication to accommodate residents throughout the Regional District.

### Mail Ballot Voting

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Miller

### RDC.2017-7-3

"That the Rural Directors Committee recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors rescind "Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Mail Ballot Authorization and Procedure Bylaw No. 1617, 2011."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The cost implication of mail ballot voting to tax payers for region wide mail ballot voting and the future opportunity for the Province to establish internet voting were brought forward as key considerations. Chair Benedict spoke of the legislation creating challenges in regard to the acceptance of mail ballots up to and on the day of elections and that those mail ballots must be delivered to the polling stations to be included for the final count. The RDBN during a general election may have up to 17 polling stations.

**REPORTS (CONT'D)**

Electoral Area Allocation of  
Federal Gas Tax Funds  
-Second Quarter 2017

Moved by Director Parker  
Seconded by Director Newell

RDC.2017-7-4

“That the Rural Directors Committee receive the Finance/Administration Coordinator’s July 5, 2017 memo titled “Electoral Area Allocations of Federal Gas Tax Funds – Second Quarter 2017.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Director Parker  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2017-7-5

“That the meeting be adjourned 4:06 p.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Eileen Benedict, Chair

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Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant