

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Thursday, January 12, 2017

PRESENT: Chairperson Bill Miller

Directors Taylor Bachrach
Eileen Benedict
Shane Brien
Mark Fisher
Tom Greenaway
John Illes
Dwayne Lindstrom
Rob MacDougall
Rob Newell
Mark Parker
Jerry Petersen
Darcy Repen
Gerry Thiessen

Director Thomas Liversidge, Village of Granisle
Absent

Alternate Director Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle

Staff Melany de Weerd, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services
Janine Dougall, Director of Environmental Services – left at 12:30 p.m.
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning
Laura O’Meara, Senior Financial Assistant
Roxanne Shepherd, Chief Financial Officer
Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development – left at 1:41 p.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

CALL TO ORDER Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 11:24 a.m.

AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA Moved by Alternate Director McGuire
Seconded by Director Illes

C.W.2017-1-1 “That the Agenda of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Committee of the Whole meeting of January 12, 2017 be approved; and further, that the Supplementary Agenda be received.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole
Minutes – November 3, 2016

Moved by Director Petersen
Seconded by Director Greenaway

C.W.2017-1-2

“That the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes of November 3, 2016 be received.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

2017 Draft Budget

Roxanne Shepherd, Chief Financial Officer spoke to the schedule and approving the 2017 Budget at the scheduled RDBN Board Meeting March 23, 2017. Ms. Shepherd will also provide public notification of budget discussions to take place at the February 9th and March 9th, 2017 RDBN Committee of the Whole Meetings.

Ms. Shepherd noted the general trends that are impacting the RDBN budget and local government budgets throughout B.C.;

1. Downloading of legislative requirements and pressures from the province increasing;
2. Information Technology (IT) has become more complex and security is crucial in safeguarding information;
3. Cost of staff benefits;
4. Fuel, Natural Gas and Hydro costs increasing;
5. Economic impacts associated with mining, forestry, and resource based commodities and interest rates.

Ms. Shepherd provided an overview of the Senior Financial Assistant's January 4, 2017 memo titled “2017 Draft Budget” and the Supplementary Agenda Report dated January 5, 2017 titled “2017 Completed Assessment Roll.”

Director Fisher spoke of the Electoral Area “A” (Smithers Rural) grant in aid increase and an approximate \$11,000 increase to a service creates an approximate increase of 1.4% to Regional Rural Services.

Director Benedict noted the substantial increase to 9-1-1 Service for 2017 vs. 2016. Ms. Shepherd noted that 2016 was an anomaly due to switching service providers and a decrease in costs. Having a decrease in costs created an increased surplus which was applied to the 2016 Budget. The 2017 Budget will return 9-1-1 Service projected tax rates budget to a similar amount previous to 2016. Chair Miller mentioned the decrease in the use of land lines having an impact on the funds that will be received from Telus for 9-1-1 services. Telus also collects a 9-1-1 levy from mobile phones but those funds are not allocated to the 9-1-1 service providers. A meeting was held with Telus in December, 2016 and a request was made of Telus to provide information in regard to the 9-1-1 levy collected from mobile phone users. Contacting the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to inform them of concerns in regard to 9-1-1 communication service providers not receiving 9-1-1 levy funds from mobile phone users was discussed.

REPORTS (CONT'D)

2017 Draft Budget (CONT'D)

Information was requested in regard to the following:

- RDBN Environmental Services budget in comparison to the Regional Districts of Fraser-Fort George and Kitimat Stikine;
- Information in regard to the impacts of the closure of Huckleberry Mine to the RDBN Projected Tax Rate;
- Staff to investigate the possible Asset Management software cost efficiencies with municipalities;
- Special Projects Expenditures listing.

Education Strategy

Moved by Director Fisher
Seconded by Director Bachrach

C.W.2017-1-3

“That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako remove the Education Strategy budget allocation from the 2017 Administration & Finance Budget Initiative.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding the intent and purpose of the Education Strategy. The importance and the role of RDBN Directors participating in discussions and providing input to community colleges and education facilities to support education strategies locally and throughout the region was discussed.

Environmental Services

Director Repen requested an update in regard to desludging the lagoon at Knockholt Landfill. Janine Dougall, Director of Environmental Services noted that in investigating available technology to desludge the sewage lagoons at Knockholt Landfill a decision was made to utilize a bacterial additive. The cost was substantially less than the proposed \$60,000 for a complete desludging of the lagoon. The bacterial additive has proven to be a successful trial and will be continued in 2017. The long term prognosis and plan for Knockholt Landfill maybe to add an aeration system. Ms. Dougall commented that depending on the state in which a lagoon is in, in regard to the need for desludging, the bacterial additive may not work as well, and a complete desludging may need to take place. The additive can then be used as a preventative measure. Staff will forward the information to interested municipalities.

The following was discussed:

- Unsightly Premises Regulatory decrease;
- General Government Expenditures Salaries and Benefits decrease 2016 vs. 2017;
 - o Due to hiring of CAO and CFO;
- Special Projects Expenditures;
- Weed Control;
- Carbon Emission Reduction Initiatives:
 - o Currently allocating funds to continue to move toward carbon neutrality;
 - o In the future, may develop a region wide initiative to use for climate change projects;
- 2017 Completed Roll Total Assessment and the impacts of a decrease and increase in assessments to taxation;
- The Provincial collection of Regional District rural taxes on behalf of Regional Districts.

REPORTS (CONT'D)

2017 Draft Budget (CONT'D)

Further requests:

- Staff provide a table/outline of what an increase in dollars in the budget equals in percentage change to Region-wide and Regional Rural Services;
- Interactive PowerPoint budget presentations;
- Visuals need to be clear;
- Provide clear and simplified RDBN budget information to the public:
 - o RDBN Tax insert to be used to provide information in dollar values to the public;
 - o Directors can provide information for the tax insert to staff by April;
 - Staff will forward an e-mail to the Regional Board to provide deadline information for tax inserts;
- Residents can also contact RDBN staff;
- Villages of Granisle and Burns Lake extended an invitation to RDBN staff to provide a budget presentation to their municipal councils;

Discussion took place regarding the use of grant in aid for costs associated with budget presentations in rural areas. Chair Miller indicated that direction had been provided to staff in the past to provide budget presentations jointly to municipalities and the public.

Break for lunch 12:30 p.m.

Reconvened at 1:10 p.m.

Connecting Consumers and Producers

Moved by Director MacDougall
Seconded by Director Greenaway

C.W.2017-1-4

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the Manager of Regional Economic Development’s January 4, 2017 memo titled “Connecting Consumers and Producers Project Report.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Miller and Director Parker spoke to the benefits and the awareness that is occurring in regard to eating locally grown foods. Alternate Director McGuire mentioned the healthy lunch provided to over 100 residents that was held in Granisle in October, 2016. All food provided was locally grown.

PRESENTATION

Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development – Visit Bulkley Nechako Video Vignettes

Ms. Swenson provided a presentation of the Visit Bulkley Nechako Video Vignettes that were completed in conjunction with the Tourism Regional Project. The project was completed by the 2016 RDBN Economic Development Summer Student.

The videos have been sent to stakeholder accommodations, municipalities and event hosts for review. Minor changes are currently being completed. Once the final edits are completed the links to the videos will be provided to the Regional Board of Directors, Chamber of Commerce, Tourist Information Centres and stakeholder in the region to be utilized to promote the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako. They will also be provided on the RDBN Opportunities website also.

PRESENTATION (CONT'D)

Discussion took place regarding the accommodation tax and the process to implement an accommodation tax.

The project was funded through grant funding from Destination BC, Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) and Nechako Kitimaat Development Fund Society (NKDF).

Visit Bulkley Nechako
Video Vignettes

Moved by Alternate Director McGuire
Seconded by Director Greenaway

C.W.2017-1-5

"That the Committee of the Whole receive the Visit Bulkley Nechako Video Vignettes."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORRESPONDENCE

Germansen Landing
-Request for Letter of
Support for Post Officer

Moved by Director Greenaway
Seconded by Alternate Director McGuire

C.W.2017-1-6

"That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors write a letter of support to for the Post Office in Germansen Landing to remain open; and further, that the letter be forwarded to Canada Post."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Correspondence

Moved by Director MacDougall
Seconded by Director Benedict

C.W.2017-1-7

"That the Committee of the Whole receive the following correspondence and invitations:

- Minister of Natural Resources – Response to Request for Funding to Undergo Regional Trials and Assessment of Crops and Agricultural Lands;
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities - CRTC Decision on Broadband Internet;
- Trans Canada Yellowhead Highway #16 & BC Yellowhead #5 Advocacy Update;

REGIONAL TRANSIT SERVICE CORRESPONDENCE

- Village of Granisle – Resolution re: Support for Adoption of "Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Regional Public Transit and Para-Transit (Highway16) Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1790, 2016
- City of Prince George – Support for Contribution Toward Highway 16 Transit Service
- Town of Smithers – Smithers Support for Highway 16 Inter-Community Transit Plan
- Village of Burns Lake – Northern BC Transit Initiative Funding Approval
- Regional District of Fraser-Fort George - RDFFG Grant in Aid for Regional Transit
- BC Transit – Smithers-Moricetown Transit Service Update

CORRESPONDENCE (CONT)

INVITATION

-The Unsung Heroes of Northern BC – February 4, 2017
- Prince George, B.C.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Minister of Natural Resources – Response to Request for Funding to Undergo Regional Trials and Assessment of Crops and Agricultural Lands

Director Repen spoke to the letter from the Honourable Jim Carr, P.C., M.P. Minister of Natural Resources in regard to the RDBN's request for funding to undergo regional trials and assessment of crops and agricultural lands using mountain pine beetle funding.

Discussion took place regarding Director Parker attending the Senate Hearing Committee and meeting with Minister Carr. Director Parker has submitted a request to meet with the Senate Hearing Committee. Chair Miller spoke to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) supporting the RDBN's resolution regarding the missing mountain pine beetle federal funding and that bringing forward the information to FCM may be beneficial. Chair Miller mentioned bringing forward the information at the RDBN Agriculture Committee for further discussion. Director Repen spoke to the Village of Telkwa meeting with the Honourable Donna Barnett, Minister of State for Rural Economic Development, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and her understanding of the issues and the potential benefits of speaking with Minister Barnett in regard to the issue.

The need to continue to ask questions regarding the missing federally promised \$800 million dollars for mountain pine beetle (MPB) affected areas was discussed. Providing an update and continued awareness regarding the MPB funds to Nathan Cullen, MP Skeena-Bulkley Valley and Todd Doherty, MP Cariboo – Prince George was brought forward.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities - CRTC Decision on Broadband Internet

He spoke to the benefits to the region if the updated speed target of 50 mbps for downloads and 10 mbps for uploads and an unlimited data option could be accomplished. He noted that the higher the speeds for downloads and uploads the more successful the region would be in economic growth. He mentioned the need to develop a communications strategy.

Trans Canada Yellowhead Highway #16 & BC Yellowhead #5 Advocacy Update

Director Repen brought forward concerns in regard to priorities and funds needed for other infrastructure needs such as improvements to Colleymount Road, and the Village of Telkwa's and Fort Fraser's needs for improved water infrastructure.

CORRESPONDENCE (CONT)

Chair Miller mentioned the advocacy of the RDBN at the 2016 UBCM Convention regarding the need for upgrades to Highway 16 to build passing lanes between Burns Lake and Smithers.

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

REPORT

2017 Completed Assessment Roll

Moved by Director Illes
Seconded by Director Benedict

C.W.2017-1-8

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the Chief Financial Officer’s January 5, 2017 memo titled “2017 Completed Assessment Roll.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORRESPONDENCE

College of New Caledonia -Lakes District Campus -Community Consultation on CNC Budget

Moved by Director Benedict
Seconded by Director Illes

C.W.2017-1-9

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the correspondence from the College of New Caledonia regarding Lakes District Campus – Community Consultation on CNC Budget.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Cluculz Lake Hall Ribbon Cutting Event – December 17, 2016

Director’s Petersen and Thiessen attended the Cluculz Lake Hall ribbon cutting event on December 17, 2016 to celebrate the completion of the renovations to the hall. The Cluculz Lake Hall Association provided a Certificate of Appreciation to the RDBN for their assistance with the project.

Smithers Tradeshow Booth

Director Fisher spoke to participating and the benefits of having a booth at the Smithers Tradeshow. He noted that it is very well attended from both the Smithers area and throughout the region. He mentioned the current booth, in partnership, with the Town of Smithers has limited space and there is a need to expand the booth. Director Fisher mentioned that there is currently \$2,000 allocated in the administration budget for Electoral Areas and Municipalities to partner and attend local tradeshow. The funds are accessible to all communities and Electoral Area Directors that wish to attend local tradeshow. RDBN staff in the past has provided information pamphlets and brochures for Director Fisher to provide to the public and promote the Regional District.

NEW BUSINESS (CONT'D)

Smithers Tradeshow Booth

Moved by Director Fisher
Seconded by Director Repen

C.W.2017-1-10

“That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors authorize the rental of two Smithers Tradeshow Booths to be shared between Electoral Area “A” (Smithers Rural), Village of Telkwa and Town of Smithers from the administration tradeshow budget; and further, that the RDBN Regional Economic Development Department work with Directors Fisher, Bachrach and Repen to provide information materials for the Tradeshow Booth.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Building Code for Buildings on Agriculture Land

Director Thiessen brought forward concerns regarding structures being built on Agriculture Lands that don't meet B.C. Building Code. Due to being built on Agriculture Lands the buildings may not be subject to building inspection. Staff will bring forward information at a future Agriculture Committee Meeting.

NW Resource Benefits Alliance

Director Repen spoke of the importance of the North West Resource Benefits Alliance (NWRBA) and the need for all Provincial Election Candidates for the upcoming election in May, 2017 in the north west to support the NWRBA. Chair Miller mentioned that the NWRBA is gathering information to provide to the Honourable Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development as per his request. The NWRBA Memorandum of Understanding renewal will also be brought forward in the near future along with the re-election of the NWRBA Chairs and Vice-Chairs. Chair Miller spoke to his willingness to remain as NWRBA Chair and the need for continuity moving forward. All RBA members need to continue to advocate for the North West Resource Benefits Alliance.

Moved by Director Repen
Seconded by Director Newell

C.W.2017-1-11

“That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors write a letter to the north west Provincial Candidates for the May, 2017 Provincial Election encouraging them to identify their number one platform as being the Northwest Resource Benefits Alliance Initiative.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director MacDougall
Seconded by Director Repen

C.W.2017-1-12

“That the meeting be adjourned at 2:06 p.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY