

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Thursday, April 5, 2018

PRESENT: Acting Chair Mark Parker

Directors Shane Brienen
Mark Fisher
Tom Greenaway
Rob MacDougall
Rob Newell
Jerry Petersen
Darcy Repen

Directors Taylor Bachrach, Town of Smithers
Absent Chris Beach, Village of Burns Lake
Eileen Benedict, Electoral Area "E" (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural)
Dwayne Lindstrom, Village of Fraser Lake
Thomas Liversidge, Village of Granisle
Bill Miller, Electoral Area "B" (Burns Lake Rural)
Gerry Thiessen, District of Vanderhoof

Alternate Directors Gladys Atrill, Town of Smithers
Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle
Tom Shelford, Electoral Area "E" (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural)

Staff Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services
Nellie Davis, Proposal Writer – arrived at 10:52 a.m., left at 11:40 a.m.
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Haley Jeffrey, Emergency Services Manager – left at 11:40 a.m.
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning – arrived at 10:49 a.m.
Kristi Rensby, Finance/Administration Coordinator – arrived at 11:17 a.m., left at 12:15 p.m.
Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development - left at 1:04 p.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Others Chris Mushumanski, BC Search and Rescue Association – left at 11:40 a.m.
Andy Muma, BC Search and Rescue Association – left at 11:40 a.m.

Media David Koch, Lakes District News – left at 1:01 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 10:43 a.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Newell
Seconded by Alternate Director Atrill

C.W.2018-3-1

"That the Agenda of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Committee of the Whole meeting of April 5, 2018 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole Minutes –March 8, 2018

Moved by Director MacDougall
Seconded by Director Petersen

C.W.2018-3-2

“That the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes of March 8, 2018 be received.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nechako Watershed Service Meeting Minutes -March 8, 2018

Moved by Director Fisher
Seconded by Director Greenaway

C.W.2018-3-3

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the Nechako Watershed Service Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2018 be received.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATION

BC Search and Rescue Association – Chris Mushumanski and Andy Muma RE: Evacuation Issues

Acting Chair Parker welcomed Chris Mushumanski, Nechako Valley Search and Rescue and BC Search and Rescue Association and Andy Muma, Houston Search and Rescue and BC Search and Rescue Association.

Messrs. Mushumanski and Muma provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

Search and Rescue

Mr. Mushumanski spoke of the statistics and trends for Search and Rescue incidents from 1991/1992 to 2016/2017.

SAR Groups Recognized by EMBC (Emergency Management BC) in northern British Columbia

- 24 SAR groups from 100 Mile House north
- 5 SAR groups within the RDBN
 - o Bulkley Valley
 - o Houston
 - o Burns Lake
 - o Nechako Valley
 - o Fort St. James

Requesting Agencies

- The RCMP, BC Ambulance Service, IIO (Independent Investigations Office of BC), Coroner Service, Regional Districts and municipalities can activate SAR groups through the Emergency Co-ordination Centre (ECC)
- SAR cannot be self-deployed
- Search and Rescue is a volunteer organization with no paid individuals providing services

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

BC Search and Rescue Association – Chris Mushumanski and Andy Muma RE: Evacuation Issues (Cont'D)

All groups can...

- Complete a variety of ground search techniques
- Complete basic rescues
- Recover deceased subjects
- Deliver evacuation alerts or notices
 - o Increase in services in past ten years
 - o E.g. forest fire and flooding events
 - o Fire Events in 2017 – Central Interior (Cariboo region/Williams Lake)
 - SAR was activated for 41 days consecutively
 - 4000 volunteer hours on one task

Meeting/Training

- Coordinating efforts on such events as the 2015 Bobtail Fire near Cluculz Lake has led to further training events and coordination with SAR groups in the north
- Now meeting annually
- Meeting/training planned for April 7, 2018 in Prince George
- SAR groups often have to travel some distances to attend training events at a substantial cost to each group

Capabilities

- Each group has its own recognition of capabilities
- E.g. swift water, avalanche, etc.
- Emergency Management BC provides guidelines in terms of training required, equipment needed, how current training needs to be, how many members with that training and equipment required to respond, etc.

Avalanche

- Important for local governments to be aware of which SAR group has certain capabilities
 - o Bulkley Valley SAR has Avalanche capabilities within the RDBN
- Assistance can be requested from different SAR groups with different capabilities

Swift Water

- Includes log jams/boat capsizing etc.
- Bulkley Valley and Houston SAR Partner
- Nechako Valley SAR

Flat Ice

- Bulkley Valley SAR
- Nechako Valley SAR

High Angle Rope Rescue

- Bulkley Valley SAR

CDFL/HETS (Class D fixed line/Helicopter long line rescue systems)

- Prince George SAR
- Terrace SAR
- Fort St. John SAR
- Reduces risk to SAR members
- Specific pilot/specific SAR member

SAR Training

- Training is provided in house, by the Justice Institute and by third party providers
- Volunteers are first trained in the 90 hour Ground SAR course
- From there they can train in a wide variety of areas including advanced first aid, team leading, search management, and more

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

BC Search and Rescue Association – Chris Mushumanski and Andy Muma RE: Evacuation Issues (Cont'D)

Regional Issues

- Search vs. rescue
 - o Eg. North Shore SAR – high level of rescues vs. northern teams experience more searches
 - o majority of searches take place in specific areas
 - o Northern BC teams typically smaller vs. southern teams
- Initial response vs. full response teams
- Unique locations vs. repeat offenders
 - o Searches/rescues in the north are in unique locations each time vs. North Shore SAR experiences the majority of its searches/rescues in specific locations
- Training frequency and cost
- Working with First Nations
- Use of convergents – not registered SAR volunteer
 - o Northern teams find it necessary to utilize convergents to assist in conducting searches due to the large areas needing to be searched
- Challenges of multi-day and remote callouts

Funding and the SAR Support Model

- Funding is a critical issue for all 5 groups, currently for SAR hall buildings
- BCSARA is currently working with the provincial gov't to secure long term, stable and predictable funding for the 80 recognized GSAR groups in BC
- This will benefit all groups in the north that have limited access to grant writers, large publicity
- This will benefit all groups in the north that have limited access to grant writers, large publicity campaigns and variety of corporate sponsors

Successes in the North

- Financial support from the different levels of local government, either in cash or in kind donations
 - o Village of Burns Lake
 - o District of Fort St. James
 - o District of Vanderhoof
 - o District of Houston
 - o Village of Fraser Lake
 - o Town of Smithers
 - o Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
- iPad mapping
 - o SAR groups rely heavily on map technology
 - o Mapping technology required a skilled knowledge base
 - o The volunteer groups do not always have skilled personnel
 - o Mr. Muma spearheaded the initiative in the north and it is starting to be utilized in the south
 - o Revolutionary technology to better assist SAR groups

Mr. Mushumanski mentioned that SAR dedicates a lot of its volunteer time fundraising and securing funding. The past provincial government recognized the funding challenges and provided \$5 million for three years with the funding being divided among SAR groups according to a funding formula based on certain criteria such as capabilities and qualifications, etc. BC SARA is in its last year of the three year funding term. Gaming grants have been a main source of funding and in 2017, they introduced a capital gaming grant application to assist in funding capital projects. Until 2017, gaming grant funding could not be used for capital expenditures. With the provincial funding of \$5 million nearing the end of its three-year term BC SARA is continuing to pursue provincial government for an alternative funding model.

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

BC Search and Rescue Association – Chris Mushumanski and Andy Muma RE: Evacuation Issues (Cont'D)

Director Brienen asked if the three-year recertification process was sufficient. Mr. Muma noted that the three-year training recertification process is sufficient and assists in helping volunteers to have vital skills that keeps both themselves and others safe. The challenges associated with the recertification process is the cost and travel required to maintain certification.

Director Brienen asked about the top challenges experienced by SAR currently. Mr. Mushumanski noted the following:

1. Volunteer retention
 - a. 90 hour ground SAR course to start
 - b. 200 hours a year training; and,
 - c. Responses over and above the training time
2. Unpredictably of responses
3. Management of volunteers (unpaid position)
 - a. Tracking recurrence training, etc.

Director Petersen questioned the ability for SAR to utilize its iphone/ipad technology for mapping purposes outside connectivity areas. Mr. Muma mentioned that the mapping can be cached on the device for use when connectivity is unavailable and to be uploaded once the device is in wifi range. Bluetooth technology is also utilized to share information between devices.

Director Newell noted that mining companies often list SAR as first responders in their emergency plans but do not provide funding to the group. Director Newell asked if work has been completed to determine the effectiveness of mobile air to ground satellite technology for communication outside areas of connectivity. Mr. Muma noted that research has been done but there is yet to be technology that consistently works and is reliable for the cost in the northern B.C. He mentioned that 24 volunteers within the SAR community has formed a provincial technology committee to research communication options for SAR groups across the province.

Director Repen spoke of supporting SAR through a letter of support to the Province and/or a resolution brought forward at the Union of B.C. Municipalities 2018 convention. He also brought forward the potential for a search and rescue taxation mechanism to provide cost recovery funding for SAR groups. Mr. Mushumanski commented that they have researched a number of SAR models around the world and investigated the best possible method for cost recovery. He spoke of the challenges associated with a potential taxation of backcountry user groups/outdoor equipment purchases and mentioned that SAR does not support charging for rescues. Mr. Mushumanski noted that funding to SAR is being provided through gaming grants but it is an unpredictable process along with time consuming for volunteers to complete the grant process. He noted that BC SARA has communicated to the provincial government that the funding is being provided through grants it just needs to be a more reliable efficient method of funding.

Mr. Mushumanski stated that BC SARA recently implemented a new data management system to accumulate better data in regard to search and rescue tasks.

Discussion took place in regard to the Honourable Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General overseeing Emergency Management BC and BC SARA. Alternate Director McGuire spoke of bringing forward long term funding for BC SARA to Minister Farnworth. The Regional Board provided direction to staff to bring forward a draft resolution in regard to long term funding model for BC SARA to submit to the Union of B.C. Municipalities for consideration at its 2018 convention.

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

**BC Search and Rescue Association – Chris Mushumanski and Andy Muma RE:
Evacuation Issues (Cont'D)**

SAR groups within the RDBN have utilized the RDBN Proposal Writer for grant funding applications and has been successful in receiving gaming grants. Houston SAR was successful in receiving the newly formed capital gaming grant. One of two successful SARA groups that received the capital gaming grant funding out of numerous groups that applied for the grant. Messrs. Mushumanski and Muma thanked staff for all their work in regard to grant applications.

Discussion took place in regard to the number of callouts for search and rescue increasing since 1991/1992 to 2016/2017. Mr. Mushumanski noted that the increase in call volumes is attributed to a number of factors: “Instagram effect” – individuals taking great photos of accessing locations that require knowledge and skill and posting them on social media and others not realizing the skill required to visit that location but wanting to follow. The profile of SAR has also been raised in recent years and tasking agencies are realizing the value of accessing SAR groups and their resources. The callout numbers in 2017 did decrease and it was suggested that it could relate to the closure of the bush and forests due to wildfires and wildfire risk. Mr. Mushumanski commented that BC SARA has reduced its groups from 126 to 80 groups currently and EMBC has a moratorium on new groups in the province as it reviews the needs required for SARA in the province.

Mr. Mushumanski spoke of the benefits and need for education. He mentioned that the funding for the “Adventure Smart” program has assisted in providing education to outdoor users. There was also a train the trainer event that took place in Vanderhoof to assist in promoting the program.

Acting Chair Parker thanked Messrs. Mushumanski and Muma for attending the meeting.

REPORTS

Director Remuneration

Moved by Alternate Director McGuire
Seconded by Director MacDougall

C.W.2018-3-4

1. “That the Committee of the Whole receive the Chief Financial Officer’s March 22, 2018 memo titled “Director Remuneration;” and further,
2. That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors direct the Chief Financial Officer to present a new draft remuneration bylaw for further discussion at the next Committee of the Whole Meeting.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer provided an overview of the memo titled “Director Remuneration.” He spoke of the Canadian Revenue Agency’s *Income Tax Act* change that removes the municipal officers’ allowance beginning the 2019 calendar year. He noted that an increase of the remuneration by 10.4% (plus the cost of living allowance for BC) for the 2019 calendar year will result in most directors receiving the same after tax benefit. Discussion took place regarding the percentage increase required for annual income from all sources less than \$40,000, \$40,000 to \$80,000 and near \$100,000 to cover the additional taxation that Directors would be required to pay when their entire remuneration becomes taxable.

REPORTS (CONT'D)

This information was provided for Directors to have a reference point in determining the amount of increase they personally would need to receive the same amount after taxes. For the purposes of the bylaw; however, each Director must receive the same increase. Directors will not need to disclose their income.

Mr. Illes also noted the following:

Part Two – Per Diem amounts for meetings

- Consideration of per diem amounts for meetings
- Consideration of travel allowances
 - Discussed the Cariboo Regional District rate of \$20 per 100 km driven to compensate Directors for their time while travelling
 - Would compensate those also wishing to carpool
- Consideration of per diem amount for Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Directors similar to the Northwest Regional Hospital District Bylaw
 - Discussed not making changes

Part Three – Directors' Monthly Remuneration

- Consider additional pay by Rural Director
 - Discussed not making changes
- Consider the financial discrepancy between municipalities

Part Four- Extra Allowances

- Consider allowance for the Chair and Vice Chair

Discussion took place in regard to considering the non-taxable benefits to directors outlined in Mr. Illes' March 26, 2018 memo rather than increasing remuneration. Director Repen brought forward consideration for the use of video conferencing technology to hold one of the two meetings in a month. Discussion took place regarding the challenges of consistent reliable video conferencing technology. Director Fisher asked if there would be flexibility in regard to funding for an electronic device for use for electronic agendas, rather than buying a new device, upgrading devices that Directors own. Mr. Illes noted security consideration in regard to the device.

Pension Plans for Directors was discussed. Staff will investigate further and provide the information to the Regional Board.

Director Newell brought forward the cost for internet/cell service in his area and the additional cost for ICBC insurance between commercial and pleasure-use-only for vehicles when using multiple vehicles for use for RDBN business.

Break for lunch at 12:15 p.m.

Reconvened at 12:44 p.m.

REPORTS (CONT'D)

Cannabis Legalization

Moved by Director Repen
Seconded by Director Brienen

C.W.2018-3-5

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the Director of Planning’s March 26, 2018 memo titled “Cannabis Legalization.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning noted that the current RDBN zoning bylaws could be interpreted to the sale of cannabis in any zone where retail is allowed. However, the provincial government has indicated that local governments will be sent referrals regarding the issuance of retail sales licenses and will be given the ability to veto a location. Staff will do more research as the implementation of cannabis legalization moves forward and make recommendations regarding any changes necessary to the zoning bylaw. formalized.

It was noted that the Province has indicated that cannabis will not be sold in conjunction with liquor in urban areas; however, in rural areas cannabis may be allowed to be sold from rural liquor agency stores.

Director Repen noted the importance of having a cohesiveness between communities and that regulations be similar between jurisdictional boundaries. Mr. Llewellyn commented that municipalities might evaluate and potentially amend their zoning bylaws to address the uses related to cannabis. Jason said that he expects the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch regulations to be thorough.

Director MacDougall mentioned that the District of Fort St. James hosted a public forum in regard to cannabis legalization. At this time, the District of Fort St. James Council has determined they will not approve the sale of cannabis until further regulations are in place and will reevaluate as regulations and legislation is formalized.

Director Llewellyn noted that staff will complete their research and report back to the Board with further recommendations.

CORRESPONDENCE

Northern Health - Northern Healthy Communities Forum -Response to Request for Time Change

Moved by Director MacDougall
Seconded by Director Brienen

C.W.2018-3-6

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the correspondence from Northern Health – Northern Healthy Communities Forum – Response to Request for Time Change.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORRESPONDENCE (CONT'D)

Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services mentioned that Directors wishing to attend the Northern Healthy Communities Forum at NCLGA in Fort Nelson on May 7, 2018 may inform staff that they wish to take the charter flight leaving from Prince George on the morning of May 7, 2018 in order to arrive in time for the Forum.

Correspondence

Moved by Alternate Director McGuire
Seconded by Director Repen

C.W.2018-3-7

“That the Committee of the Whole receive the following correspondence:
-Northern Health – Northern Healthy Communities Forum – Response to Request for Time Change;
--Federation of Canadian Municipalities – Apply to the Low Carbon Economy Challenge.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations And Rural Development – Rural Dividend Program – Approval of Funding – 2018/19 Rural Tourism Initiatives

Moved by Director Fisher
Seconded by Director Brien

I.C.2018-3-8

“That the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors receive the correspondence from the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development re: Rural Dividend Program – Approval of Funding – 2018/19 Rural Tourism Initiatives.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Scholarship/Bursary Funding For Medical Professionals RE: Retention in the North

Director Newell mentioned that the Northwest Regional Hospital District Board of Directors is funding scholarships for medical professionals to assist with medical professional physician recruitment. He spoke of the need to investigate changing the Federal Gas Tax criteria to use the funding for retention and recruitment of local residents into healthcare, forestry and mining sectors. Director Newell will contact the Union of B.C. Municipalities in regard to Federal Gas Tax criteria changes.

IN-CAMERA MOTION

Moved by Director Brien
Seconded by Director Greenaway

C.W.2018-3-9

“In accordance with Section 90 of the *Community Charter*, it is the opinion of the Board of Directors that matters pertaining to Sections 90 (1)(i) the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for the purpose (Home Occupation at Gala Bay Road) and 90 (2)(b) matters pertaining to the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the Federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party (Information Technology Services) must be closed to the public therefore exercise their option of excluding the public for this meeting.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director MacDougall
Seconded by Alternate Director McGuire

C.W.2018-3-10

“That the meeting be adjourned at 1:13 p.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Acting Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant