



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
MINUTES

Thursday, May 14, 2026

Directors Present: Chair Mark Parker
Gladys Atrill
Shane Brienen - via Zoom - arrived at 10:10 a.m.
Leroy Dekens
Martin Elphee
Judy Greenaway
Clint Lambert - left at 10:11 a.m., returned at 10:14 a.m.
Linda McGuire
Shirley Moon
Kevin Moutray
Chris Newell - left at 11:40 a.m., returned at 11:52 a.m.
Michael Riis-Christianson
Stoney Stoltenberg
Sarrah Storey - via Zoom - arrived at 10:04 a.m.
Henry Wiebe

Staff: Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Natasha Burgert, Planning Student - left at 10:31 a.m.
Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator - left at 11:41 a.m.
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services - left at 10:31 a.m., returned at 11:28 a.m.
Trevor Moffat - Planning Student - left at 10:31 a.m.
Amy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services - left at 10:31 a.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others: Ron Poole, Poole Consulting - left at 10:32 a.m.

Jarod Warren, Poole Consulting - left at 10:32 a.m.
Cindy Heitman, President, College of New
Caledonia - left at 11:12 a.m.
Bruce McKay, Vice President, College of New
Caledonia - left at 11:12 a.m.
Meghan Masson, Central & North Land Matcher,
Young Agrarians

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

First Nations Acknowledgement

AGENDA

May 14, 2026

2026-COWM-083

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Committee of the Whole Agenda for May 14, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes - April 16, 2026

2026-COWM-084

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Wiebe

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

*** Staff Introductions**

Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services introduced Natasha

Burgert and Trevor Moffat, Planning Summer Students.

DELEGATIONS

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA - Ron Poole, Poole Consulting Re: West Coast Oil Pipeline

Chair Parker welcomed Ron Poole, Poole Consulting. Mr. Poole introduced Jared Warren.

Mr. Poole provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

West Coast Oil Pipeline Engagement

- Who we are?
- Commitments and Value
- What we are Engaging About?
- Project Description
- Project Timeline
- Environment and Safety
- Committed to working together to Protect Land and Water
- Committed to High Standards - Prevention is Top Priority
- Economic Opportunities
- Possible Next Steps.

The following was discussed:

- Support with the understanding that there will be world class technology built into the proposal and project to mitigate the risks
 - Opportunities for work
 - Local government participation in determining camp locations, effects on rural areas and communities
 - Mr. Poole will bring forward the request to include local government input
 - Camp locations will be dependent on the location of pipeline layout
 - Importance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participation and adequate consultation
- Impact of the North Coast Tanker Ban to the proposed project
 - Needs to be addressed
- Past pipeline experience identified areas of improvement regarding engagement

and need for local government engagement in areas such as:

- Waste disposal,
- Impacts to rural residents and rural roads
- Strain on healthcare and RCMP services
 - Additional workforce in the region creates an additional strain on services
- Public information speaks to the rights of the Alberta Government
- Importance of recognizing the rights of the Province of B.C.
 - Values of the region need to be considered
 - Economic development in northern B.C.
 - Importance of engagement with all residents in the region and the Province of B.C.
- Regional District has repeatedly expressed concerns regarding provincial regulations meeting local concerns
- Require a better understanding of the Federal Government process and the role in the development of the project
- Cumulative impacts of all resource and energy projects throughout the region
- Utilizing existing energy corridors and camp locations to mitigate the impact to the land base
- Consideration of housing vs. camps
 - Province of B.C. recently withdrew funding for housing initiatives
 - Consideration of the use of municipal infrastructure
 - Rather have established housing than camps to provide legacy infrastructure for communities and a critical benefit from projects.

Mr. Poole asked if there was an evaluation and/or report completed at the completion of the Coastal GasLink Pipeline. Staff will forward the information.

Chair Parker thanked Messrs. Poole and Warren for attending the meeting.

COLLEGE OF NEW CALEDONIA - Cindy Heitman, President and Bruce McKay, VP Academic Re: Update

Chair Parker welcomed Cindy Heitman, President and Bruce McKay, Vice-President.

Ms. Heitman provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

- Section 6 of the College and Institutes Act
- Government Priorities for all Ministries

- Expectations for CNC
- Course and Program Offerings, and Funding Partners 2022/2023 - present
 - Burns Lake, Vanderhoof, Fort St. James.

Director Moon brought forward the importance of agriculture to the region's economy and the need to support education in agriculture. Mr. McKay noted that some work is being done to identify what is needed to support education in the agriculture sector of the region. He commented that the CNC recognizes the potential to build programs and/or partner with other organizations.

Director Greenaway identified the closure of the CNC campus in Fort St. James and the request for the building to be returned to the community where the community can host programs and educational courses.

Director Wiebe spoke of the mines being proposed and opening in the northwest and supporting trades and mine training programs. He also noted the potential to create additional student dormitory accommodations to be able to create training opportunities and to remove housing concerns for students. Ms. Heitman noted the global impact on major projects in the northwest and being engaged and discussing future training needs at the provincial level. Ms. Heitman identified the challenges around student demand. Mr. McKay referenced the programs being provided at CNC campuses and the recent announcement by the Province for additional funding and Red Seal seats for trades education. Community workforce grants were discussed and the consideration of providing 100% subsidy to encourage students to enroll in trades and support programs.

Director McGuire encouraged partnering with high schools to provide onsite introduction to job opportunities at mines in the northwest. Directors McGuire and Storey noted the need for simple marketing to promote various programs such as place cards at tables in restaurants and social media opportunities. Ms. Heitman mentioned that the CNC has undertaken similar marketing initiatives.

Director Moutray suggested offering dual credits for students in high school for various programs. He also commented that he is looking forward to the upcoming labour market study.

Director Storey spoke of including business and marketing courses as part of trades training and engaging youth. Ms. Heitman mentioned that the CNC has recently undertaken an engagement process starting at the Kindergarten level to encourage students to consider various training opportunities when children grow and move into

post-secondary education.

Chair Parker thanked Ms. Heitman and Mr. Mckay for attending the meeting.

YOUNG AGRARIANS (c/o Agrarians Foundation) - Meghan Masson, Central & North Land Matcher Re: Update - BC Land Matching Program and Event Planning in the Region

Chair Parker welcomed Meghan Masson, Central & North Land Matcher, Young Agrarians.

Ms. Masson provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

- Overview
- YA Grow - A-Farmer Program Pillars
- Impact
- B.C. Land Matching Program
 - Province
 - Central & Northern B.C.
 - Land Matching Services
 - Sector Challenges
- Examples of successful Farm Transition, New Farm Business and Farm Expansion
- Business mentorship network
- Apprenticeship program.

The following was discussed:

- Purchase agreement protections for young farmer investors
- Variety of farms of interest in the region
 - Large range in size and diverse interests by potential young investors
- Do young farmers continue to work a job during the day
 - Business Plans are sometimes required to ensure there is an understanding of responsibilities
- Various age demographics utilizing the program
- Benefits, exposure and relationship building of the apprenticeship program
- Challenges
 - Land seekers and land matching programs outside the lower mainland is a newer program and needs more matching opportunities
 - Promoting the program
- Regional District promotion of the program.

Chair Parker thanked Ms. Masson for attending the meeting.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services - Keeping It Rural Conference – June 10-12, 2026 – Kelowna, BC

2026-COWM-085

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Greenaway

That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Board authorize attendance of Rural Directors wishing to attend the Keeping it Rural Conference from June 10-12, 2026 in Kelowna, B.C.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services - Union of BC Municipalities Convention - September 14-18, 2026 -Vancouver, B.C.

2026-COWM-086

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Elphee

That the Committee recommend that the Board authorize attendance of Rural Directors at the UBCM Convention from September 14-18, 2026 in Vancouver, B.C.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- Minister Meeting request deadline
- Ministry Staff Virtual Meeting request deadline
 - Meetings will be scheduled for the week prior to UBCM
 - Staff to confirm additional opportunities to meet with Ministry Staff during UBCM
- Resolution Deadline
- Minister Meetings
 - Minister of Infrastructure - Director Greenaway
 - Minister of Health - Director Greenaway
 - Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs and Minister of Finance- Director Storey
 - Withdrawal of Provincial funding for housing

- Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services will hold in-person and virtual public hearings in Smithers June 18th
 - Regional District was selected to provide a presentation
- Directors to forward to staff meeting topics and any additional meeting requests.

Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Area F (Vanderhoof Rural) Grant in Aid for Nechako View Senior Citizens Home Society

2026-COWM-087

Moved by Director Moon

Seconded by Director Moutray

That the Committee recommend that the Board approve a Regional Grant in Aid of \$8,650 from the Area F (Vanderhoof Rural) allocation to the Nechako View Senior Citizens Home Society for a duplex renovation project with Charis Supportive Housing Society.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer - Quarterly Financial Report

2026-COWM-088

Moved by Director Wiebe

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Committee receive the Chief Financial Officer's Quarterly Financial Report memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Shari Janzen, Community Development Coordinator - Go North RV -

2025/26 Final Report

2026-COWM-089

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Wiebe

That the Committee receive the Community Development Coordinator's Go North RV - 2025/26 Final Report.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADMINISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE

City of Prince George - 2026 UBCM Resolution - Northern Rural Homeowners Grant

2026-COWM-090

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director McGuire

That the Committee receive the Administration Correspondence from the City of Prince George regarding the 2026 UBCM Resolution - Northern Rural Homeowners Grant.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCUSSION ITEM

Industrial Development Delegations

Chair Parker noted an increasing number of requests for presentations from wind farms, mines, and other proponents.

The Committee discussed:

- When and how to engage (e.g., early-stage vs. later in the process, east/west areas, or full Board involvement) and whether presentations should be virtual.
- Flexibility depending on relevance
- Projects with regional significance and RBA impacts should be prioritized
- Importance of early consultation and engagement in the progress of projects
- Without participation or consultation, there may be limited ability to raise concerns further in a process
- Evaluate on a project basis considering scope and location
- Projects located in specific electoral areas may be directed to that Director for consideration
 - Impacts in a specific area may affect neighbouring areas and municipalities
 - Meeting with Electoral Area Directors directly may allow for meaningful questions and discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

2026-COWM-091

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the meeting be adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services