



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
RURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
Thursday, May 14, 2026**

Directors Present: Chair Michael Riis-Christianson
Judy Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Shirley Moon
Chris Newell
Mark Parker
Stoney Stoltenberg

Staff: Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others: Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle
Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riis-Christianson called the meeting to order at 12:44 p.m.

AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

May 14, 2026

2026-RSC-050

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Lambert

That the Rural Services Committee Meeting Agenda for May 14, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2026-RSC-051

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Rural Services Committee Supplementary Agenda be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Rural Services Committee Meeting Minutes - April 16, 2026

2026-RSC-052

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Greenaway

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ELECTORAL AREA PLANNING

Cameron Kral, Planner - Notice of Work Referral No. 0200077 - Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)

2026-RSC-053

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Newell

That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako's response to Notice of Work Referral No. 0200077.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cameron Kral, Planner Crown Land Referral No. 6409585 - Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)

2026-RSC-054

1. That the Committee receive the District of Houston's letter on the Supplementary Agenda.
2. That the comment sheet be provided as the Regional District's response to Crown Land Referral No. 6409585.

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2026-RSC-055

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Parker

That the comment sheet be amended to request that the Province engage with surrounding properties in relation to the application by the Houston Motocross Association for an outdoor motocross facility.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Parker

That the question be called on Motion 2026-RSC-055 as amended.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Director Newell spoke of the following:

- Importance of outdoor motorized recreation in Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)
- Ensuring that all residents in the area are made aware of the application to the Province by the Houston Motocross Association for a License of Occupation for an outdoor motocross facility
- Surrounding property owners awareness of the potential noise levels of the facility
- Letter from the District of Houston doesn't identify if engagement of surrounding property owners were consulted
- Requesting the Province adequately engage with property owners

Rowan Nagel, GIS Technician - Crown Land Referral No. 6409599 - Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)

2026-RSC-056

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako's response to Crown Land Referral No. 6409599 as amended to include: that approval is granted subject to no negative impacts to existing fishing, hunting or industrial use.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding the potential impacts to other users of the river.

Rowan Nagel, GIS Technician - Crown Land Referral No. 7410403 – Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural) 2026-RSC-057

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Lambert

That the attached comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako's response to Crown Land Referral No. 7410403.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Community Hall Appraisal Project Update

2026-RSC-058

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Moon

That the Committee receive the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services Community Hall Appraisal Project Update.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Director Moon requested direction moving forward. John Illes, Chief Financial Officer mentioned that Directors can reach out to staff to discuss further and that a report could be provided in the future.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Resource Roads

Director Newell outlined concerns regarding the maintenance of resource used Forest Service Roads with the recent downturn in the forest industry.

- Major licensees no longer maintain roads
- Very little funding from Ministry of Forests for road maintenance
 - Some funds provided for maintenance to certain roads based on recreation use
 - Example - Morice Lake area is deemed a high recreation use area
- Impacts from spring freshet, nature and recreational use
- Light industrial use
 - Silviculture and block layout forest companies
 - Do not pay for road use

- Consideration being given to charge exploration companies, fishing and hunting guide outfitters road users
- Process for major license holders and continued forest operations utilizing FSRs
- Major license holders continue to have requirements under their license to operate
- Prime maintainer responsibilities
- Identify and encourage the maintenance where high value recreation areas are located
- Maintenance by rural residents.

Determining solutions, options and advocacy work with the Province was brought forward for discussion. CAO Helgesen commented that he will reach out to the local government CAOs in the Province to determine if there are similar issues and concerns.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Joint advocacy with other local governments
- Importance of FSRs for alternative egress routes throughout the region
 - Need for collaboration between the Ministry of Forests and Ministry of Transportation and Transit
- Release of FSRs by major licensees to Ministry of Forests
- Concerns regarding the proposal to impose maintenance costs on light users when there has been stumpage rate relief for major licensees
- Discussing with First Nations communities use of FSRs.

Director Parker indicated as RDBN Chair he will be meeting with the Chairs of the Cariboo Regional District and Regional District of Fraser-Fort George while attending NCLGA in Prince George May 20-22nd and will bring the topic forward for discussion. Director Elphee mentioned that the District of Fort St. James has submitted resolution R21 - Remote Communities Forest Service Road Emergency Egress Maintenance at the NCLGA Conference and AGM.

2026-RSC-059

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Lambert

That the Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to further the advocacy and investigation into rural resource roads.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chambers of Commerce

Director Parker met with the President of the Fraser Lake and District Chamber of Commerce to discuss the Regional District's role in supporting Chambers.

The Rural Committee discussed the following:

- Examples of how Electoral Area Directors support their local Chambers of Commerce
- Chambers of Commerce support of municipal and rural business
- Steps to engage or initiate contact with local Chambers of Commerce where existing relationships have yet to be established
- Chambers of Commerce role
 - economic development
 - business promotion
 - effectiveness and measuring success
- Each Electoral Area Director building relationships with respective Chambers of Commerce to better understand opportunities for support.

ADJOURNMENT

2026-RSC-060

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Newell

That the meeting be adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

Michael Riis-Christianson, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services