



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, July 09, 2026

Directors Present: Chair Mark Parker
Gladys Atrill
Shane Brienens - left at 11:14 a.m., returned at 11:15 a.m.
Leroy Dekens - left at 11:38 a.m., returned at 11:41 a.m.
Martin Elphee
Judy Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Linda McGuire
Shirley Moon - left at 2:11 p.m., returned at 2:13 p.m., left at 2:28 p.m.
Kevin Moutray - left at 1:57 p.m., returned at 1:59 p.m., left at 2:13 p.m., returned at 2:18 p.m., left at 2:26 p.m.
Chris Newell
Michael Riis-Christianson
Stoney Stoltenberg - left at 11:34 a.m., returned at 11:38 a.m.
Sarrah Storey
Henry Wiebe

Staff: Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer - via Zoom
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - left at 12:10 p.m.
Alex Eriksen, Director of Environmental Services - arrived at 11:52 a.m., left at 11:55 a.m.
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services
Maria Sandberg, Parks and Recreation Coordinator - left at 11:53 a.m.
Amy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services - left at 11:45 a.m.

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Scott Zayac, Director of Protective Services - arrived at 10:33 a.m., left at 11:52 a.m., returned after lunch at 12:57 p.m., left at 2:08 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 10:30 am

First Nations Acknowledgement

AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

July 9, 2026

2026-BM-476

Moved by Director McGuire

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Agenda and Supplementary Agenda for July 9, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Board Meeting Minutes - June 25, 2026

2026-BM-477

That the Board Meeting Minutes of June 25, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATIONS

LEES AND ASSOCIATES - Megan Turnock, MSc., MLA, Consultant

- 1. Area G Parks and Trails Master Plan**
- 2. Area C Parks and Trails Master Plan**

Chair Parker welcomed Megan Turnock, MSc., MLA, Consultant, Lees Associates.

Ms. Turnock provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

Parks and Trails Master Plans

- Project Overview
- Timeline
- Role of The RDBN
- Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) and Area C (Fort St. James Rural)
 - Demographics
 - Outdoor Recreation Organizations
 - Other Land Managers
 - Community Engagement
 - Community Values
 - Key Challenges
 - Key Opportunities
 - Vision
 - Goals
- Implementation.

Chair Parker thanked Ms. Turnock for attending the meeting.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Referrals

Natasha Burgert, Planning Summer Student - High Ridge Wind Investigative Use Licence Application Notice - Electoral Areas B (Burns Lake Rural), C (Fort St. James Rural), and D (Fraser Lake Rural)

2026-BM-478

Moved by Director Riis-Christianson

Seconded by Director Greenaway

That the Board direct staff to provide the following comments to the applicant and the British Columbia Energy Regulator (BCER) in response to the notice for the High Ridge Investigative Use Licence (IUL) Application (ERAA #100123014).

The Regional District has concerns regarding the cumulative effects of wind farms and requests that the Province develop a strategy to manage the number and cumulative effects of wind farms in the region. The RDBN is concerned that

the BC Hydro Call for Power process and the BCER approval process for selected projects is not adequate to protect community interests in the RDBN.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding staff confirming if the High Ridge Wind Investigative Use Licence Application overlaps other wind investigative licences in the region.

The Board discussed opposition to the significant number of licences and the possibility of all the projects being approved.

Telkwa Wind Investigative Wind License Referral Response - Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)

2026-BM-479

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Telkwa Wind Investigative Wind License Referral Response - Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) be received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding:

- Visual quality impairments and impacts from wind farms
- Current and future demand for energy
- Geographical areas more suited for wind farms
 - Potential need to connect to the power grid
- Cumulative impacts
- BC Hydro's Call for Power process
 - Studies and reports associated with approved projects
- Gaining an understanding of a wind farm's impact to the energy grid in comparison to a mine or other industrial development
- Creating an RDBN point system to evaluate energy project applications
 - Challenges for the RDBN to gather information from the BCER to use to determine a point system
 - Resource and capacity impacts
- Ensuring there is resident feedback, engagement opportunities and that the information is provided to the BC Energy Regulator (BCER)
- Investigative licence applications vs. permit applications
- Environmental Assessment (EA) Process

- Current process removes projects from the EA review process
 - The need for careful review through the EA process
- BCER Process
 - limited ability for local government to provide response
- First Nations environmental assessment review and process and partnerships with wind projects
- NiTi Wind Project process overview
 - Staff will bring forward a report detailing the process to date and define the RDBN's response criteria and decision-making boundaries with the BCER
- Creating a standardized review process for the RDBN
 - Electoral Area Director input.

2026-BM-480

Moved by Director Moon

Seconded by Director Newell

That staff develop a list of priority items for the RDBN to utilize to review and evaluate proposed energy projects.

Opposed: Director Moutray

CARRIED

Other

**Cameron Kral, Planner - Parcel Frontage Exemption Application PF E-01-26
- Electoral Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural)**

2026-BM-481

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

That the Board exempt proposed Lots B and C from the minimum 10 per cent perimeter parcel frontage requirement pursuant to Section 512 of the *Local Government Act* to permit a parcel frontage of no less than 6.5 per cent for proposed Lot B and 6.6 per cent for proposed Lot C, subject to the subdivision layout being in general compliance with the proposed plan attached to this report as Schedule A.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PARKS AND TRAILS

Maria Sandberg, Planning and Parks Coordinator - Parks and Trails Master Plan - Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)

2026-BM-482

Moved by Director Newell

Seconded by Director Brien

That the Board receive the Parks and Trails Master Plan for Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Maria Sandberg, Planning and Parks Coordinator - Parks and Trails Master Plan for Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural)

2026-BM-483

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Elphee

That the Board receive the Parks and Trails Master Plan for Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Alex Eriksen, Director of Environmental Services - Purchase of a New Dump Truck

2026-BM-484

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Atrill

That the Board approve the purchase of a New 2027 Western Star 47X Dump Truck from Velocity Truck Inland Truck & Equipment for a total of \$298, 807 plus applicable taxes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADMINISTRATION BYLAWS

Bylaw for Adoption

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services - RDBN Pump and Haul Service Establishment Repeal Bylaw No. 2104, 2026 and RDBN Pump and Haul Sewage Disposal Regulation Repeal Bylaw No. 2105, 2026

2026-BM-485

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Atrill

That Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Pump and Haul Local Service Establishment Repeal Bylaw No. 2104, 2026 and Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Pump and Haul Sewage Disposal Regulation Repeal Bylaw No. 2105, 2026 be adopted this 9th day of July, 2026.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services - Southside Rural Fire Protection Local Service Establishment Amendment Bylaw No. 2114, 2026

2026-BM-486

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

That Southside Rural Fire Protection Local Service Establishment Amendment Bylaw No. 2114, 2026 be adopted this 9th day of July, 2026.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) Economic Development Service Grant to the Village of Telkwa

2026-BM-487

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Atrill

That the Board approve an Economic Development Service Grant from Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) of \$10,500 to the Village of Telkwa for the Telkwa Community Hall Kitchen Upgrade project.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Grant to Stellat'en First Nation for Marianne Louis Memorial Hall Restoration Project - Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural)

2026-BM-488

Moved by Director Storey

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

1) That the Board authorize contributing \$5,000 from the RDBN's allocation of Northwest BC Regional Funding (RBA) to Stellat'en First Nation for this First Nations Outreach project.

2) That the Board authorize contributing up to \$5,000 in Build Communities Strong Fund monies from the Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural) allocation to Stellat'en First Nation for a Cultural Infrastructure project and further,
(participants/weighted/majority)

3) That the Board authorize the withdrawal of up to \$5,000 from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Grant in Aid to Stuart Lake Golf Club - Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural)

2026-BM-489

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Elphee

That the Board approve a \$15,000 Regional Grant in Aid from the Area C (Fort St. James Rural) allocation to the Stuart Lake Golf Club for a Clubhouse Replacement Feasibility project.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Shari Janzen, Community Development Coordinator - Letter of Support Request – College of New Caledonia

2026-BM-490

Moved by Director Wiebe

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Board provide a letter of support to the College of New Caledonia to support its application to the Province of BC's Project Based Labour Market Training funding program for its DRIVE program.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Shari Janzen, Community Development Coordinator - Nechako Valley Sporting Association – Resolution of Support Request

2026-BM-491

Moved by Director Moon

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Board support the application to Northern Development Initiative Trust from the Nechako Valley Sporting Association for the 2026 Nechako Nordics Ski Trail and Lighting Upgrade Project.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Shari Janzen, Community Development Coordinator - Regional Business Forum Report

2026-BM-492

Moved by Director Storey

Seconded by Director Greenaway

That the Board receive the Community Development Coordinator's Regional Business Forum Report memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator - 2020-2025 Agriculture Plan Audit

The Board discussed the RDBN 2020-2025 Food and Agriculture Plan Audit.

- Advocacy for community pastures and the expansion of community pastures
- Removing 8.4 (a) and (b) Continue to be a learning organization
 - Implementation of UNDRIP for future consideration
- Status/Notes indicating "Done" when a solution has yet to be determined
 - e.g addressing the need for shavings
 - Identifying "next steps"
 - Include as "in-progress" and continue to include item and advocacy work
- Identifying Board and staff roles and responsibilities
- Prioritize 6.2 a and b

- Continue to advocate to senior levels of government and industry around issues that impact RDBN producers - e.g. foreign and corporate ownership of farmland
- Continue Priority Area 2: Prepare for Natural Emergencies
- 7.3 Reduce organic and plastic agricultural waste in the landfill
 - CleanFarms pilot project discontinued due to funding challenges.

Director Moon indicated her wish to participate on the Engagement Work Plan Working Group.

Break for lunch at 12:10 p.m.

Reconvened at 12:57 p.m.

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer - Directors' Remuneration Update

Chair Parker commented on the Directors' Remuneration Update and Directors' Remuneration Additional Information included on the Supplementary Agenda. CAO Helgesen provided an overview of the structure of the Board. He spoke of the value of the Board, the roles, expectations and the increasing demands placed on Directors in northwest communities. He also noted consideration for remuneration and support that can help attract and retain qualified candidates while maintaining a strong regional voice.

The following was discussed:

- Understanding the role of check signers
 - Director Riis-Christianson outlined the role, responsibilities and time commitment
 - Finance system controls
- Support for:
 - Increased meal reimbursement rates
 - Travel time compensation adjustments
 - Childcare/daycare reimbursement
 - Discussed broadening language to potentially include care for dependent adults or elderly family members
 - Internet allowance
 - Additional compensation to address the increase in responsibilities for the Chair

- Implementing increases gradually over several years
 - Maintaining Vice-Chair compensation at current levels
 - Removing the additional meeting Chair stipend
 - Vice-Chair and Committee Chair compensation remain at approximately \$6,000
 - Increasing meeting-day remuneration to better recognize time spent attending meetings and significant preparation and reading requirements
- Maintaining current meeting attendance remuneration and adding a separate meeting preparation allowance
- Receiving meeting compensation only when Directors attend meetings
- Alternate Directors continue to receive the standard meeting-day rate
- Director remuneration funded through Regional District taxation
 - Rural Director costs, travel and certain expenses funded through rural government
- Cost estimates of rural and municipal taxpayers
- The cost of remuneration changes to the tax payer
- Rural and Municipal Directors responsibilities
- Options 1, 2, 3 and 4
 - Staff bring forward a report with Option 1 a and b including:
 - Chair and Vice-Chair remuneration
 - Meeting compensation
 - Internet allowance
 - Childcare/dependent care reimbursement
 - Taxpayer impacts and cost implications of proposed changes
- Remuneration levels and reviews by other Regional Districts
 - Moving towards a median or average benchmark
 - Remuneration reflecting the value of directors' work and encourage qualified candidates to run for office
 - Balancing fair compensation with taxpayer impacts
- Future consideration in obtaining a third-party review of Board remuneration.

**Scott Zayac, Director of Protective Services - Cooperative Community
Wildfire Response Organization - Final Reports**

2026-BM-493

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Board receive the Director of Protective Services' Cooperative Community Wildfire Response Organization - Final Reports memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services Items to be brought forward to the public agenda from the In-Camera Meeting

2026-BM-494

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Board receive the Deputy Director of Corporate Services' Items to be brought forward to the public agenda from the In-Camera Meeting memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADMINISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE

Joint Advocacy Letter to the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

2026-BM-495

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Board receive the Administration Correspondence regarding the Joint Advocacy Letter to the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

City of Prince George - Northern Rural Homeowners Grant

2026-BM-496

Moved by Director Moon

Seconded by Director McGuire

That the Board receive the Administration Correspondence from the City of Prince George regarding Northern Rural Homeowners Grant.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Northern Development Initiative - Grant Writing Support Approval Letter

2026-BM-497

Moved by Director McGuire

Seconded by Director Wiebe

That the Board receive the Administration Correspondence from Northern

Development Initiative regarding Grant Writing Support Approval Letter.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

VERBAL REPORTS AND COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

Village of Granisle - Director McGuire

- Post Office reductions
 - Wrote letter to the Federal Government requesting that an ATM machine be installed in the Post Office to increase the viability of the business in the community
 - Federal Government has reached out requesting additional information and is considering the request.

Village of Burns Lake - Director Wiebe

Director Wiebe attended the Vanderhoof Centennial Celebration on July 4 & 5 and commended Vanderhoof for the great event.

Village of Telkwa - Director Dekens

- New water line being installed near Highway 16 and the Cycle 16 Trail
- Started a new road construction program.

Electoral Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural) - Director Lambert

- As a member of the BC Cattlemen's Association Director Lambert met leaders from the Ministry of Forests in Burns Lake. He noted that there was a recognition by the representatives of the forest activity taking place in the region. The Regional District was represented very well.

Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural) - Director Greenaway

- Ministry of Transportation and Transit Fort-George District will be installing and managing lights on both sides of Highway 27 at the Echo Lake Pullout
- CityWest will be starting to install high speed internet fibre in the area in August 2026.

Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) - Director Newell

- Snowmelt continues to create high water in the area's creeks, rivers and lakes
- Owen East Forest Service Road (FSR) is receiving additional upgrades
 - Culverts upgraded in 2025
 - The Morice and Owen East FSRs being resurfaced in 2026.

Town of Smithers - Director Atrill

North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) Update

- First meeting of the 2026/2027 Board took place July 3-4
 - Kyle MacDonald, newly elected President
 - Wants to establish a cohesive meeting opportunity for Mayors, Chairs and First Nations Leaders
 - Membership fees will increase 4%
 - Advocacy and resolutions follow-up at the completion of the NCLGA Conference and AGM.
- Town of Smithers
 - Meeting with Western LNG and opened an office in New Hazelton
 - Along with Directors Stoltenberg and Dekens and Town of Smithers Councillor John Buikema met with MLA Sharon Hartwell to discuss the energy corridor
 - Tyhee Lake Triathlon takes place July 12
 - Artisan Studio Tour takes place July 17-19
 - Smithers Skate Park is moving forward with Phase 4 of development
- Congratulations to Vanderhoof for their successful Centennial Celebration on July 4 & 5.

District of Vanderhoof - Director Moutray

- Expressed gratitude for all those that attended the Vanderhoof Centennial Celebrations and made it such a successful event.

Electoral Area F (Vanderhoof Rural) - Director Moon

- Had a wonderful weekend celebrating Vanderhoof's 100th Centennial
 - Thanked those who helped coordinate the Farm Awards, recognizing some of the area's oldest farming operations
 - Nine awards were presented, with the oldest farm having been established in

1907.

Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural)

- Midsummer Music Festival in Smithers on July 3-5 was a success
- Directors Stoltenberg and Atrill acknowledged the passing of Janet Walford, co-founder of Mountain Eagle Books and Town of Smithers community pillar.

Electoral Area B (Burns Lake Rural) - Director Riis-Christianson

- Received formal response e-mail from Ministry of Citizens' Service regarding CRTC Decision 2026-8
- Last fall requested CN remove rail ties from along CN's railway right-of-way, thanked staff for recent followed up with CN to ensure the removal of ties in a specific location in Area B.

District of Fort St. James - Director Elphee

- Fort St. James Caledonia Days to take place July 24 & 25
- Lagoon cells are undergoing a desludging process
- Attended a meeting with Western LNG.

Village of Fraser Lake - Director Storey

- Expressed congratulations to the Vanderhoof staff, community, attendees and participants in a great Centennial event
- Stellat'en Salmon Fest is planned for August 26-28
- Ncha Koh Industrial Park Official opening to take place July 11.

Electoral Area D (Fraser Lake Rural) - Chair Parker

- Met with BC Parks Foundation and Alex Kulchar, Nechako Valley Cattlemen's Association
 - Discussed leasing and utilizing farm land
 - Restore agriculture land
 - Installation of solar water pumps
- Noted an increase in industrial bus transportation used for camp workers

- Discussing with producers winter kill in 2026 and moving forward
 - Discussing with John Stevenson, Regional Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture regarding conducting field studies
 - Starting July 16 will be visiting areas in the region to conduct field studies and review root health of crops
- Commented the jovial/fun atmosphere of the Vanderhoof Centennial Celebration.

RECEIPT OF VERBAL REPORTS

2026-BM-498

Moved by Director Dekens

Seconded by Director Greenaway

That the Board receive the various Directors' verbal reports.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

2026-BM-499

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director McGuire

That the meeting be adjourned at 2:34 pm.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services