

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**

**RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, November 5, 2020**

**PRESENT:** Chair Mark Parker

Directors Mark Fisher  
Tom Greenaway  
Clint Lambert  
Chris Newell  
Jerry Petersen  
Michael Riis-Christianson  
Gerry Thiessen

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services  
Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development – Via  
Teleconference  
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer  
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning  
Sashka Macievich, Controller – arrived at 9:49 a.m.  
Deneve Vanderwolf, Planner 1/Regional Transit Coordinator – arrived at  
9:56 a.m., left at 10:05 a.m.  
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Others Gladys Atrill, Town of Smithers  
Judy Greenaway, District of Fort St. James  
Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle – arrived at 10:02 a.m.

Media Priyanka Ketkar, Lakes District News.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

**AGENDA**

Moved by Director Riis-Christianson  
Seconded by Director Petersen

RDC.2020-8-1

“That the Rural/Agriculture Committee Agenda for November 5, 2020 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**MINUTES**

Rural/Agriculture Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
-October 8, 2020

Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director Petersen

RDC.2020-8-2

“That the minutes of the Rural/Agriculture Committee meeting of October 8, 2020 be adopted.”

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## RURAL REPORTS

Federal Gas Tax Review Letter Moved by Director Riis-Christianson  
Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2020-8-3 “That the Rural/Agriculture Committee recommend that the Board provide the Federal Gas Tax Review Letter to MP Taylor Bachrach in his role as NDP Critic for Infrastructure and Communities to advocate for changes to the eligibility criteria for the Federal Gas Tax Program.”

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### Grant in Aid Update

CFO Illes provided an overview of his Grant in Aid Update memo. Discussion took place regarding:

- Total grant in aid maximum for all Rural Directors combined
  - o 2017-2019 total grant in aid maximum was not reached
- Regional Grant in Aid
  - o Includes Electoral Areas and Municipalities
- Grant in aid requests unknown year to year
- *Local Government Act* Section 374(9) in regard to grant in aid limitations
- Based on spending limit not taxation limit
- Electoral Area Economic Development Services
- “Trade” limits on expenditures between Electoral Areas
- Electoral Area Directors discretion to adjust taxation below the \$0.10 per \$1,000 of the assessed value of Land and Improvements
- Potential impacts of the COVID Pandemic to groups requesting grant in aid in 2021.

Grant in Aid Update Moved by Director Newell  
Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2020-8-4 “That the Rural/Agriculture Committee receive the Chief Financial Officer’s Grant in Aid Update memo.”

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### Funding Options Impact of Electoral Areas Joining the Transit Service

Discussion took place regarding:

- Consideration of COVID and any taxation structure changes
- Electoral Area “A” (Smithers Rural) supportive of the service
  - o Would like further conversations in regard to improving the service in the west of the Regional District
    - Potential options for funding, scheduling and routes
    - Potential discussions with other passenger transportation operators eg. BC Bus North/Northern Health Bus
- Staff participated in an update with BC Transit
  - o COVID protocols/impacts to ridership
  - o Highway 16 Transit ridership increased quicker than other transit areas of the Province as COVID protocols transitioned
    - BC Transit and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recognize value in the service
    - Solidifies the need for the service to continue in perpetuity
- Electoral Area “C” (Fort St. James Rural)
  - o Currently no service
  - o Interested in service provision

## **RURAL REPORTS (CONT'D)**

- Electoral Area "D" (Fraser Lake Rural)
  - o Alternative available funding and potential future funding options a consideration
- Federal and Provincial Funding for Transit
- Electoral Area "B" (Burns Lake Rural) supportive of services
- Ensure full participation in regard to funding a fair and equitable share of the transit service
- Being prepared for the future
- Alternative Approval/Referendum
  - o Discretion of the Board
- Consideration for Electoral Areas that don't have direct access to the Highway 16 Transit system
- Taxation models
- Future meeting
  - o Rural Directors Committee meeting focusing on Regional Transit Service.

### **Funding Options – Impact of Electoral Areas Joining the Transit Service**

Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director Fisher

RDC.2020-8-5

"That the Rural/Agriculture Committee receive the Chief Financial Officer's Funding Options – Impact of Electoral Areas Joining the Transit Service memo."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **PLANNING DEPARTMENT (Rural Directors)**

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

#### **Crown Land Referrals**

##### **Crown Land Application Referral No. 0280400 – Electoral Area F**

Moved by Director Petersen  
Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2020-8-6

"That the Comment Sheet for Crown Land Application Referral No. 0280400 be provided to the Province."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

##### **Crown Land Application Referral No. 6401785 -Electoral Area B**

Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

RDC.2020-8-7

"That the Comment Sheet for Crown Land Application Referral No. 6401785 be provided to the Province."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

##### **Crown Land Application Referral No. 7410152 -Electoral Area F**

Moved by Director Petersen  
Seconded by Director T. Greenaway

RDC.2020-8-8

"That the Comment Sheet for Crown Land Application Referral No. 7410152 be provided to the Province."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **AGRICULTURE REPORT**

Farm Management Canada's  
Ag Excellence Online  
Conference Dec 8-10, 2020

Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director T. Greenaway

RDC.2020-8-9

"That the Rural/Agriculture Committee receive the Agriculture Coordinator's Farm Management Canada's Ag Excellence Online Conference Dec 8-10, 2020 memo."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Update – BC Beef Plant in  
Westwold

Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director T. Greenaway

RDC.2020-8-10

"That the Rural/Agriculture Committee receive the Agriculture Coordinator's Update – BC Beef Plant in Westwold memo."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Update on the RDBN Food  
Hub Survey

Moved by Director T. Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2020-8-11

"That the Rural/Agriculture Committee receive the Agriculture Coordinator's Update on the RDBN Food Hub Survey."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Director Newell  
Seconded by Director Petersen

RDC.2020-8-12

"That the meeting be adjourned at 10:14 a.m."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

---

Mark Parker, Chair

---

Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant