



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

Thursday, October 09, 2025

- Directors Present: Chair Mark Parker
Gladys Atrill
Shane Brien – arrived at 10:03 a.m.
Leroy Dekens
Martin Elphee
Judy Greenaway
Clint Lambert – via Zoom – arrived at 10:35 a.m.,
left at 10:35 a.m., returned at 10:45 a.m.
Linda McGuire
Shirley Moon
Kevin Moutray
Chris Newell
Michael Riis-Christianson
Stoney Stoltenberg
Sarrah Storey – via Zoom – arrived at 10:02 a.m.
Henry Wiebe
- Staff: Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning – left at 10:03 a.m.
Maria Sandberg, Planning and Parks Coordinator – left at 10:03 a.m.
- Others: Joelle Barfoot, Expansion Program Manager,
CityWest – arrived at 10:04 a.m., left at 10:29 a.m.
Lee Brain, Consultant - Stakeholder Relations, via
Zoom - arrived at 10:04 a.m., left at 10:29 a.m.
Tara Dunphy, Director of Strategic Initiatives,
Skeena Region, Ministry of Forests - via Zoom -
left at 10:12 a.m.
Stacy Mathews, Outside Plant Technical Manager,
CityWest – via Zoom – arrived at 10:12 a.m., left at
10:29 p.m.
Philip Mills, Director, Sales & Marketing, CityWest
- via Zoom - arrived at 10:04 a.m., left at 10:29 a.m.
Wes Eisses, Vice President of Projects, CityWest –
arrived at 10:12 a.m., left at 10:29 a.m.

Stefan Woloszyn, Chief Executive Officer - via
Zoom - arrived at 10:15 a.m., left at 10:29 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

First Nations Acknowledgement

AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

2025-COWM-015

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Committee of the Whole Agenda for October 9, 2025 be approved; and further, that the Supplementary Agenda be dealt with at this meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes - September 4, 2025

2025-COWM-016

Moved by Director Greenaway
Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of September 4, 2025 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UBCM Community Excellence Awards

Chair Parker announced that the RDBN received Honourable Mention for Excellence in Service Delivery at the UBCM Community Excellence Awards for Phase 1 of the Cycle 16 Trail Project. Chair Parker recognized Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services and Maria Sandberg, Planning and Parks Coordinator, for their work on the project.

DELEGATIONS

MINISTRY OF FORESTS - Strategic Initiatives and Forest Landscape Planning - Skeena - via Zoom

Tara Dunphy, Director

Re: Update - Lakes Resiliency Forest Landscape Planning and Bulkley Morice Forest Landscape Plan

Ms. Dunphy provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

Lakes Resiliency Project

- Who's Involved
- Overview: Where are we in the process
- Project Progress
 - Open houses tentatively planned for November 18, 2025

Bulkley-Morice Forest Landscape Plan (FLP)

- Who's Involved
- Overview: Where are we in the process
- Project Progress.

Discussion took place regarding Community Forests being included in the projects. Ms. Dunphy confirmed area Community Forests are involved in the process.

Chair Parker thanked Ms. Dunphy for attending the meeting.

CITYWEST - via Zoom

Stefan Woloszyn, Chief Executive Officer, Philip Mills, Director, Sales & Marketing
Lee Brain, Consultant - Stakeholder Relations, Joelle Barfoot, Expansion Program Manager
Stacy Mathews, Outside Plant Technical Manager, Wes Eisses, Vice President of Projects

Re: Project Update

A PowerPoint Presentation was provided.

- Fibre to the Home Community Partnership
- Connecting Smithers - Upper Viewmount
 - Complete
- Connecting Burns Lake – ERI (Economic Recovery Intake) Funding
 - Complete
- Connecting Burns Lake & Francois Lake – UBF (Universal Broadband Fund)
 - Detailed Design/Permitting

Discussion took place regarding issues with pole access and the Board's assistance in relation to the issues arising with access to the poles. Mr. Woloszyn noted that a letter would be helpful, and he would follow up with staff. Mr. Woloszyn noted that CRTC has made changes to the legislative process to mitigate the issues however the original applications were submitted prior to the change and are subject to the previous process.

The PowerPoint Presentation continued:

- Connecting Cluculz Lake
 - Detailed Design/Permitting
- Connecting Rural Fort St. James
 - Detailed Design/Permitting.

Chair Parker thanked CityWest for attending the meeting.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services - NCLGA Mental Health and Addictions Symposium October 15, 2025, Prince George, BC

2025-COWM-017

Moved by Director Riis-Christianson

Seconded by Director McGuire

That the Committee recommend that the Board authorize Director Greenaway's attendance at the NCLGA Mental Health and Addictions Symposium October 15, 2025 in Prince George, BC and further, that Director Greenaway be authorized to sign the Accord.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services - 2026 BC Natural Resources Forum - January 20-22, 2026 - Prince George, B.C.

2025-COWM-018

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Board authorize attendance of Rural Directors wishing to attend the 2026 BC Natural Resources Forum on January 20-22, 2026 in Prince George, B.C.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- Consider writing a letter to the organizers regarding the need for a larger event space to allow more attendees
 - Registration opened and immediately all hotels and special events are full
- A very successful event for northern BC
 - Challenges to successfully register immediately after registration opens.
- Director Storey reached out to C3 Alliance regarding the registration opening while Elected Officials attended UBCM.

Nellie Davis, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Rural Services - Canada Community-Building Fund BC – Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural) Grassy Plains Hall Foundation Repair Project

2025-COWM-019

Moved by Director Riis-Christianson

Seconded by Director Wiebe

1) That the Committee recommend that the Board authorize contributing up to \$33,000 of Electoral Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural) Canada Community- Building Fund BC allocation monies to a Recreation Infrastructure Project for the Grassy Plains Community Hall, and further,

(participants/weighted/majority)

2) That the Committee recommend that the Board authorize the withdrawal of up to \$33,000 from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator - Food Producing Non-Profit Gathering Report

2025-COWM-020

Moved by Director Dekens

Seconded by Director McGuire

That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator's Food Producing Non-Profit Gathering Report memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding the Food Producing Non-Profit Gathering Report:

- Necessity for sustainable funding
- Volunteer and community engagement strategy needed
 - Volunteer fatigue
 - Stipends etc.
- Organizations working towards similar goals work in silos
 - Also heard the same sentiment from the region's Community Hall representatives
- Policy and advocacy consideration
- Regional Districts need to consider an avenue to find solutions to assist in coordinating volunteers
- Staff research options and investigate examples in the Province and bring forward at a future meeting
- Agriculture Session at UBCM showcased the efforts of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
- Funding options
 - Economic Development funding needed
 - Grant in Aid funding may not be sufficient
- Funding structure of the following:
 - Groundbreakers Agriculture Association
 - Nechako Valley Food Network
 - Fraser Lake Eco-Coop
- Need for strong governance structures for non-profit organizations
- Minimizing reliance on grant funding
- Report identified similar conversation across various sectors regarding volunteer burnout and volunteerism
- Pressure on the tax base to increase staffing to coordinate volunteers
- Downloading from the province creates pressures.

2025-COWM-021

Moved by Director Moon

Seconded by Director Atrill

That the Committee recommend that the Board discuss with staff the possibility of a position to help promote volunteerism and assist with advocacy.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- CAO Helgesen will have a discussion with staff to develop possible ideas to discuss at a future Committee of the Whole meeting
 - Staff will include potential options and programs the RDBN can support to assist groups and assist with volunteerism
- Reviewing current staff positions and work plans
- Agriculture focus
 - Access to good food and food security is needed for all constituents - rural and municipal
- Across all sectors services are needed
 - Recreation
 - Agriculture, etc.
- Non-profits capitalizing on strong governance systems to be efficient and assist with succession plans
- Challenges with government policy e.g. pasteurized milk.

Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator - Young Agrarians BC Land Matching Program

2025-COWM-022

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator's Young Agrarians BC Land Matching Program memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator - Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy - Fall 2025 Update

2025-COWM-023

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Elphee

That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator's Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy - Fall 2025 Update memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Alex Eriksen, Director of Environmental Services - Updated Extended Producer Responsibility Five-Year Action Plan for Mattresses

2025-COWM-024

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Elphee

That the Committee recommend that the Board support and add the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako to the signatory to the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen's letter to the Honourable Tamara Davidson, Minister of Environment and Parks regarding the need to include mattresses and foundations in the Recycling Regulation as identified in the 2021-2026 Five-Year Action Plan.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Director Stoltenberg spoke to the RDBN AI Policy and noted the use of should, shall, must and may. He spoke to the definition of shall and must.

Discussion took place regarding bringing forward the AI Policy for additional review.

2025-COWM-025

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Dekens

The Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to bring forward the RDBN AI policy to review the use of shall, should, and must.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

IN-CAMERA MOTION

2025-COWM-026

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Newell

That this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to Sections 90(1)(c) and 90(2)(b) of the Community Charter for the Board to deal with matters relating to:

- Connectivity
- Labour Relations

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

2025-COWM-027

Moved by Director Brien

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the meeting be adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services