



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

Thursday, February 12, 2026

Directors Present: Chair Mark Parker
Gladys Atrill
Shane Brienen
Leroy Dekens
Martin Elphee
Judy Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Linda McGuire
Shirley Moon
Kevin Moutray
Chris Newell - left at 11:53 a.m., returned at
12:03 p.m.
Michael Riis-Christianson
Stoney Stoltenberg
Sarra Storey
Henry Wiebe

Staff: Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
- left at 10:52 a.m., returned at 10:55 a.m.
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Sarah Brand, Recycling Coordinator - left at
10:50 a.m.
Trina Bysouth, Protective Services Clerk - left at
10:50 a.m.
Alex Eriksen, Director of Environmental Services
- arrived at 10:55 a.m.
Cameron Hart, Community Development
Coordinator - left at 10:50 a.m.
Kaia Nitchie, First Nations Liaison - left at 10:50
a.m.
Maria Sandberg, Parks and Recreation
Coordinator - left at 10:50 a.m.
Danielle Sapach, Administration Clerk - left at
10:50 a.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of
Corporate Services

Christopher Walker, Emergency Services
Manager- left at 10:50 a.m.

* **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

First Nations Acknowledgement

* **Recognition of Tumbler Ridge**

Chair Parker, the Board and staff recognized the February 10, 2026 tragedy in Tumbler Ridge with a moment of silence.

AGENDA & SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

February 12, 2026

2026-COWM-058

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Storey

That the Committee of the Whole Agenda for February 12, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes - January 15, 2026

2026-COWM-059

Moved by Director Greenaway

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes for January 15, 2026 be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services - Direct

Action Enforcement Policy

Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning and Development Services provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

Direct Action Enforcement Policy

- Definition
- *Local Government Act*
- RDBN Enforcement Options
- Examples
- Why a Board Policy?

Discussion took place regarding:

- A property in Electoral Area C (Fort St. James Rural) that is a challenge
- Policy provides direction to staff regarding steps to be followed to ensure
 - Procedural fairness
 - Compliance with legislation
 - Consistent and predictable direct action enforcement process
 - Reduces the liability for RDBN taxpayers
- Compliance and ticketing
 - Each approach is independent of one another
 - Issuing of a ticket and cost recovery
 - Direct approach for hazardous waste, unsightly premises
 - Court Order
 - Courts determine cost recovery
- Need for programs similar to the Home Action Response Teams (Hart) in Vancouver that provides a coordinated community response for those impacted by hoarding
- The Policy is mostly a complaint driven process except for situations involving hazardous or unsightly premises
- Challenging for some property owners to pay for cleanup action if added to property taxes
- Electoral Area E where the Unsightly Premises Bylaw doesn't exist if a situation is unsafe the Board may direct staff to address the issue
- Legislation and legal considerations regarding liability and notification to involved parties
- Rights of property owners
- Variables staff take into account and bringing forward to the Board to determine

action

- Staff to bring forward the Policy at the February 26, 2026 Board Meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Alex Eriksen, Director of Environmental Services - DRAFT Solid Waste Management Facility and User Fee Bylaw No. 2090

2026-COWM-060

Moved by Director Dekens

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

That the Committee receive the Director of Environmental Services' Draft Solid Waste Management Facility and User Fee Bylaw No. 2090 memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- Definition of contaminated soil and Industrial limits
- Outside material
 - Benefit to landfill operations
- Contaminated Soil
 - Ambient soil containing arsenic
 - The landfill is unable to accept the material when arsenic levels are above industrial levels
 - Town of Smithers ambient soil arsenic levels
 - Some soils are being taken to Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine
 - Hazardous waste site for B.C. is located in Fort St. John
- Fee structure and cost recovery
- Currently no fees for residential waste disposal
- De-watered lagoon sludge
 - Village of Granisle
- Costs of Environmental Services borne by all RDBN taxpayers
- Staff to bring forward Bylaw No. 2090 at the February 26, 2026 Board Meeting.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer - Updated Budget for Major Services

2026-COWM-061

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Storey

That the Committee receive the Chief Financial Officer's Updated Budget for Major Services memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Committee discussed the following:

- Directors Remuneration
- Minister and Deputy Minister Meeting budget
 - Remove at Board's discretion
- Expenditures: Operations - Landfilling Sites
- Special Projects (612801)
- Agriculture Expenses
 - Budget including staff
 - Grant funding
- Transfers from reserves of \$535,000
 - New capital items
 - Identifying areas to allocate the budget
- Environmental Services
 - Cost of maintenance and site maintenance
 - Staff CPI wage increase in accordance with the Collective Agreement
- General Government
 - Public relations
- Consider increasing the weed control budget
- Impact of sawmill closures in the region on respective municipal budgets
- Bringing forward a budget with a 1.7% increase
- Self-insure and risk management
 - Increasing insurance deductibles
- Lowering taxation
 - Service levels
 - Value of services.

Lunch at 12:07 p.m.

Reconvened at 12:47 p.m.

CAO Helgesen provided an overview:

- Environmental Services
 - Cost of equipment
- Benefits of RBA funding
- Balancing taxation and responsibility to constituents
- Hospital district taxation
- Board consideration of taxation for the region.

CFO Illes noted the cost reduction in general government with a 1% decrease in taxation. CFO Illes spoke about the Impacts to the Residential Tax Payers table in the report.

Staff will bring forward a 2026 Budget for major services to an increase equal to inflation, 1.7% and explore the possibility of removing Minister and Deputy Minister Meeting budget line item.

2026-COWM-062

Moved by Director Riis-Christianson

Seconded by Director Newell

That staff bring back the 2026 budget for major services to an increase equal to inflation of 1.7% and explore the possibility of removing the Minister and Deputy Minister line item and other potential areas for reductions.

Opposed: Director Greenaway

CARRIED

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer - 2026 Draft Capital Budget

2026-COWM-063

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the Committee receive the Chief Financial Officer's 2026 Draft Capital Budget memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding:

- RBA funding expenditure over the 5-year period
 - Prudent management
 - Unspent RBA funds

- Allocating funding for Command Vehicles to the 2027-2028 budget
 - Additional discussion required with the Rural Fire Chiefs
 - Command truck accessories and equipment
- Main building improvements
- Northern Capital Planning Grant (NCPG) can be utilized for land purchases
- Environmental Services Projects
 - Trailer Roof Structure
 - 2 Skidsteers
 - New Dump Truck
 - New Gate
 - Signs
 - Fall protection WSBC
- Utilizing NCPG funding for Administration items.

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer - Northern Capital and Planning Grant (NCPG) Update

2026-COWM-064

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Storey

That the Committee recommend that the Board support the final utilization of the Northern Capital and Planning Grant as proposed in the summary, and to include these amounts in the 2026 five-year financial plan as outlined.

And that the Committee recommend that the Board request permission from the Province to transfer any unused reserve funds as of December 31, 2026 to the Environmental Services reserve to be utilized against 2026 capital purchases.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer - Growing Community Fund Update

2026-COWM-065

Moved by Director Stoltenberg

Seconded by Director Elphee

That the Committee recommend that the Board support the final utilization of the Growing Community Funds as proposed in the summary, and to include these amounts in the 2026 five-year financial plan as outlined.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**John Illes, Chief Financial Officer - Northwest Revenue Sharing (RBA)
Update**

2026-COWM-066

Moved by Director Storey

Seconded by Director Wiebe

That the Committee receive the Chief Financial Officer's Northwest Revenue Sharing (RBA) Update memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was noted:

- Environmental Services budget and the need for grant funding
 - Sustainability considerations
- Long-term Development Plan for Northwest Revenue Sharing (RBA) funding
 - Housing
 - First Nations engagement/partnership
 - Asset management funding
 - Asset management job position
 - Rural funding
 - Parks and Recreation
 - No funding allocated
 - Utilizing NCPG funding and Growing Communities funds for 2026 and 2027
 - Childcare Facilities
 - Provincial direction.

**Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator - European Union
Deforestation Regulation**

2026-COWM-067

Moved by Director Storey

Seconded by Director Wiebe

That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator's European Union Deforestation Regulation memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding:

- ALR land designated for agriculture

- Trees inhibiting the use of agriculture lands
- Chair Parker spoke with Deputy Minister Michelle Koski, Minister of Agriculture regarding the issue
- Takes effect at the end of 2026 but is currently being implemented
- Impacts and challenges of the *European Union Deforestation Regulation in B.C.*

Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator - Growing Opportunities Podcast, Series 3

2026-COWM-068

Moved by Director Storey

Seconded by Director Lambert

That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator's Growing Opportunities Podcast, Series 3 memorandum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADMINISTRATION CORRESPONDENCE

Recommendations from the Premier's Taskforce on Agriculture and Food Economy

2026-COWM-069

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

That the Committee receive the Administration Correspondence regarding Recommendation from the Premier's Taskforce on Agriculture and Food Economy.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

IN-CAMERA MOTION

2026-COWM-070

Moved by Director Brienens

Seconded by Director Stoltenberg

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

- Labour Relations
- Strategic Plan.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

2026-COWM-071

Moved by Director Lambert

Seconded by Director Dekens

That the meeting be adjourned at 1:37 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services