

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**

**BROADBAND COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, November 21, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Chair Michael Riis-Christianson

Directors Tom Greenaway  
Clint Lambert  
Rob Newell  
Mark Parker  
Gerry Thiessen

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services  
Nellie Davis, Regional Economic Development Coordinator  
Debbie Evans, Agriculture Coordinator – arrived at 10:31 a.m.  
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning – arrived at 10:15 a.m.  
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Others Newton Choy, Area Field Manager, Telus – arrived at 9:34 a.m.  
Christa Kilbourne, PMP, Project Engineer, Pipeline Implementation  
West, Coastal GasLink, TC Energy – left at 11:11 a.m.  
Tyler Mooi, Manager, Local Governments, Indigenous PureFibre, and  
Custom Deals, Telus – via teleconference at 9:34 a.m.  
Chad Moulatt, Cypress Land/TELUS – left at 10:33 a.m.  
Tanner Moulton, Public Affairs Coordinator, Coastal GasLink Project, TC  
Energy – arrived at 10:15 a.m.  
Jerry Petersen, Electoral Area “F” (Vanderhoof Rural) – arrived at 9:40  
a.m.  
Roberta Squire, General Manager, CSD Northern BC Telus – arrived at  
9:34 a.m.

**CALL TO ORDER** Chair Riis-Christianson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**AGENDA** Moved by Director Lambert  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

**BBC.2019-4-1** “That the Broadband Committee Agenda for November 7, 2019 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority) **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MINUTES**

**Broadband Committee Meeting Minutes – October 24, 2019** Moved by Director Parker  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

**BBC.2019-4-2** “That the Broadband Committee Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2019 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority) **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **DELEGATION**

### **TELUS – Roberta Squire, General Manager, CSD Northern BC, Newton Choy, Area Field Manager and Tyler Mooi, Manager, Local Governments, Indigenous PureFibre, and Custom Deals RE: Update of Telus High-speed Internet and Cell Coverage Plans**

Chair Riis-Christianson welcomed Roberta Squire, General Manager, CSD Northern BC, Newton Choy, Area Field Manager and Tyler Mooi, Manager, Local Governments, Indigenous PureFibre, and Custom Deals.

A PowerPoint Presentation was provided.

#### **Update on TELUS**

- Connecting for Good
- Existing Wireless Investments in the Regional District
- Regional District Priorities
  - What are the main areas of focus of the RD?
  - What solutions are being considered for those communities or areas requiring connectivity?
    - PureFibre – Fibre to the Premise
    - Improved Copper
    - Improved Wireless and Cellular coverage.

Discussion took place in regard to:

- Lack of service on the Southside of Francois Lake
  - 2018 wildfire damage to hydro and telephone infrastructure
  - Ability to communicate was damaged/destroyed – safety concern
  - Discussions with Rio Tinto in regard to building cellular infrastructure on the Southside
- Electoral Area “E” (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural) willingness to support connectivity
- Cypress Land/TELUS acknowledged the lack of connectivity on the Southside and will review
- Smart Hub options/capability
  - Telus observes critical mass
  - Monitors and identifies areas where more capacity is required
- Telus
  - Conducting assessment of infrastructure in the North
  - Easily accessible areas will have a solution first
  - Working with indigenous communities
  - Connectivity to some communities may provide more opportunities to other areas
  - Wanting to support the North
- Restriction on towers
  - To remove restriction the transport to the tower needs to increase
  - More subscribers will drive the need and awareness
- Currently 27 sites serving the RDBN
  - 23 sites are enabled with Smart Hub
  - TelusTool to determine Smart Hub coverage
    - In some areas where the tool indicated there is no coverage there is opportunity, where a strong cellular signal exists, for Telus to override
- District of Vanderhoof Connectivity challenges
  - Impedes youth and those requiring access to good connectivity
  - Impacts retention and recruitment
  - Importance and need for reliable consistent internet service
  - Telus researched the challenges in Vanderhoof
  - Telus purchased and is working with Mascon in Vanderhoof to improve service levels
  - Investment for better connectivity is needed
    - custom fibre – Telus approximate costing - \$9.2 million
- Telus technology investments beyond wireless infrastructure in the region

## **DELEGATION (CONT'D)**

- Fibre coverage in Fort St. James
  - No cell service on Stones Bay and Sowchea Roads
  - Telus to investigate potential opportunities
- Modifications can sometimes be made in order to reach the maximum amount of people
- Electoral Area “B” (Burns Lake Rural) - #1 issue – Internet connectivity
  - Lack of download and upload speeds
  - Determination of peak number of users and lack of speeds during heavy usage
  - Utilization of bandwidth
- Maximizing utilization of the cell towers and smart hubs
- Bonding technology –using two lines and double speed
- Building partnerships and leveraging funding
- Opportunities to grow with funding partners
  - Northern Development Initiative Trust
  - All Nations Trust Company
  - Federal, Provincial, local governments
- Additional people in the region due to the pipeline construction taking place.
  - More capacity degrades the service
  - Need for permanent long-term solutions
- Telus is in conversations with the resource industry to build its infrastructure without depleting current services and potentially add capacity
  - Opportunities for connectivity for local residents
- Approvals for temporary and permanent towers
- RDBN providing its Broadband study
- Funding options and potential co-funding partnerships with local governments to move forward with connectivity projects and initiatives
  - Telus willing to invest where feasible – where there is a gap investigate to solve through collaboration and/or partnerships
  - Telus owns, operates and maintains infrastructure for the long-term
  - Determine areas requiring connectivity, costing and options to develop a business plan to move forward.

Telus to provide information to the RDBN in regard to:

- Coverage
- Plans to improve coverage
- Which sites are enabled – community and site specific
- Map of existing fibre
- Capacity of fibre lines.

Ms. Squire indicated she has been tasked to find synergies and investigate opportunities to improve connectivity in the North. She noted that Telus’ plans evolve depending on other projects and initiatives moving forward.

Chair Riis-Christianson thanked Messrs. Choy and Mooi and Ms. Squire for attending the meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

RDBN Broadband Study

Moved by Director Parker  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

BBC.2019-4-3

“That the Broadband Committee recommend that the Board provide the July 15, 2019 RDBN Broadband Study completed by Tanex Engineering Corporation with Telus and CityWest.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**NEW BUSINESS (CONT'D)**

Invite Coastal GasLink, TC  
Energy RE: Connectivity  
Infrastructure

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Lambert

BBC.2019-4-4

“That the Broadband Committee recommends that the Board invite Coastal GasLink, TC Energy to discuss opportunities for connectivity infrastructure.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Director Greenaway  
Seconded by Director Parker

BBC.2019-4-5

“That the meeting be adjourned 10:34 a.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Michael Riis-Christianson, Chair

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Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant