

DRAFT

Peace River/Williston Reservoir Advisory Committee Meeting

SUMMARY

Friday, February 19, 2021

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
(PDT)

Via MS Teams Videoconference

CHAIR	Mayor Dale Bumstead
ATTENDEES	Mayor Lori Ackerman; Mayor Joan Atkinson; Councillor Clay Bassendowski; Mayor Rob Fraser; Director Karen Goodings; Mayor Dave Heiberg; Gwen Johansson; Stephanie Killam; Chief Justin Napoleon; Councillor Leigh Summer
GUESTS	Alice Cheung, Specialist Engineer, Distribution Asset & Planning Strategies Thomas Mah, Manager, Regional Distribution Asset Planning Michelle Macdonald, Relationship Lead, Indigenous Relations
BC HYDRO	Dave Conway, Site C Community Relations Manager Bob Gammer, Northern Community Relations Manager Rian Hill, Manager, Environmental Field Services Shanna Mason, Director Regulatory & Environment, Site C Project Marilyn Middleton, Engineering Services Clerk, Stations Field Operations Nalaine Morin, BC Hydro Board Director Chris O'Riley, BC Hydro President & CEO Ken Peterson, BC Hydro Board Chair Darin Thompson, Regional Manager, Stations Field Operations Adil Zaheer, Public Affairs Research Assistant, Communities & Capital Projects
WITH REGRETS	Rick Hopkins; Chief Darryl McCook; Kevin Neary; Chief Johnny Pierre; Carolyn Stock, Indigenous Relations
AGENDA ITEMS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Call to order, Acknowledgement, Introductions2. Review meeting notes and action items from previous meeting3. BC Hydro Board report4. Presentation: Planning for Mass EV Home Charging5. Community Updates6. BC Hydro Staff Reports7. Next meeting: Videoconference – Wednesday, May 19, 20218. Topics for next meetings

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Dale Bumstead welcomed everyone. Introductions were made around the table Joan Atkinson and Justin Napoleon were welcomed as new PWAC members and Nalaine Morin was welcomed as the new BC Hydro Board representative.

REVIEW MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- No comments or questions regarding the December 4, 2020 meeting minutes.
- **Does PWAC scope include Site C Project?** (PWAC December 4, 2020 – **Action 4**)
 - Karen asked are we now including Site C, as an addition, in the PWAC meeting?
 - Dale responded that yes, Site C is within the scope of PWAC. In furtherance to this, Dale reviewed the PWAC Terms of Reference (TOR). Karen requested a copy of the TOR and asked how to bring forward issues of concern from the community for discussion and if it is appropriate to share the meeting minutes with the Peace River Regional District and discuss at their board table. Dale stated that sharing the minutes was allowable and Ken added that even though the TOR are clear, BC Hydro is open to hearing input from communities and is interested in committee concerns. Chris added that he is always happy to hear complaints and concerns directly. His email address is on the company website and he will always give a response, or direct them to the right part of the company for more information, or follow-up. Karen requested that the TOR be an agenda item in a future meeting.

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ACTION 1: Bob Gammer to send copy of the PWAC Terms of Reference to the committee. (Completed – TOR emailed on Feb 25, 2021)

BC HYDRO BOARD REPORT

Ken:

- Introduced Nalaine Morin – our newest member on the Board for the past year, replacing Daryl Fields on the PWAC.
Nalaine thanked the PWAC for the welcome and expressed her pleasure at joining the committee as Board representative. She mentioned that she is a member of the Tahltan Nation. She is a principal at ArrowBlade Consulting Services and has led and managed the environmental review of several large resource development projects on behalf of First Nations. Nalaine has extensive technical experience in both mining and environmental assessment processes. She works mostly with Indigenous Government – resource management. Nalaine is a member of Geosciences B.C. (along with Stephanie Killam) and currently serves as Director.
- Two Directors have stepped down and we've established a search for new board members.
- Requested a recommendation from the committee to the BC Hydro Board for the appointment of PWAC Chair.
 - Motion: Dale Bumstead serve another term as PWAC Chair.
 - Moved by Rob Fraser.
 - 2nd by Lori Ackerman.
 - **Motion carried.**
 - Ken will place on the BC Hydro Board agenda for next week for approval.

Chris:

- Coming out of the winter, we've had a few significant storms and a couple hundred thousand people out of power at times.
- Operationally, things are going very well and we're coming to the end of our fiscal year at the end of March.
- Lots of progress with Site C. We're continuing to work through issues with the foundations and making good progress, with some announcements shortly.
- There are several projects off the main construction site: Highway 29 Realignment, Hudson's Hope Berm and the 500 kV transmission lines.
- The PRES Project transmission line construction is making good progress and it is expected in service ahead of schedule.

PLANNING FOR MASS EV (ELECTRIC VEHICLE) HOME CHARGING

Presentation by Alice Cheung and Thomas Mah

- How does BC Hydro plan to address the increased demand from EVs?

ACTION 2: Karen requested a copy of the slide presentation be sent to her. (Completed – Bob Gammer emailed presentation on March 22, 2021)

- Are there any cold weather issues with EVs?
 - There's not a lot of waste heat that can be used like in an internal combustion engine. It takes a lot of power to heat up the vehicle and that does reduce the range. A work-around is to pre-heat the vehicle while it is still plugged into the charger and this will help with range.
 - Bob – So far, the adoption rate for EVs is lower in the North, but once we get closer to 2040, will this compress the work schedule to get distribution system work done to facilitate the increase in vehicles, or will work be done gradually over the years (starting now) in anticipation of the increase of vehicles in the north?
- When the manufacturers provide a wider variety of models, there will be an increase in sales.
- BC Hydro monitors these loads on an annual basis and adjusts based on the trend and therefore will have time to adjust the forecast requirement for upgrading distribution system equipment.

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- There is load growth, but there is available capacity – and depending on location there may be very little adjustment required
- Thomas: This will be no different from other large load coming up and BC Hydro having to adjust to the demand. Incentive and consumer behaviour – we would see those in advance and be able to accommodate.
- Joan: One of the challenges is that there is currently no infrastructure between Prince George and the Peace region.
- Alice: We are building charging stations throughout the province and one is planned for McLeod Lake this year.
- Chris: We have 91 charging stations at 79 sites and the strategy is to build network along the main highway corridors. We have a station in Prince George and if one is not in Mackenzie, then there is a plan for one. We have had good cooperation from the Federal and Provincial governments for funding, and plan to build that network to deal with the issue.
- Clay: There is a station in Chetwynd coming this spring. Most plans now include fast chargers at their facilities.
- Dale: Should the City be looking at their plans for an increase in demand for EV in the new residential/commercial developments?
- Alice: Municipalities may want to review their bylaws to ensure provision for charging infrastructure is included in new developments. Regarding electrical capacity increase, it will depend on the type of development. For residential customers, this will be addressed through new loading criteria on service transformers. We will continue to monitor the performance of the criteria and adjust as necessary. For larger developments with their own transformation, the developer would need to size their transformer appropriately for the expected EV demand.

COMMUNITY UPDATES

PRRD Area B – Karen Gooding

- Would individuals from Alberta be allowed be members of the PWAC?
 - Ken: As soon as we get into cross borders, it gets complex and would like to stay away from those issues.
 - Karen: Looking more at gathering information for residents downstream of the provincial border, as people that have been contacting her seem to have little information.
- Filing of Site C reports – when will they will be available?
 - Chris: BC Hydro did suspend the quarterly reports to the BCUC while we went through the rebaselining exercise with the provincial government and we are anticipating restarting those reports and provide a catch-up report in the spring. In general, there aren't a lot of impact from our dams downstream in Alberta. The concern over the safety of the Site C Dam has risen because of the foundation issues. We do coordinate with them through Alberta Ministry of Environment.
 - Shanna: There are a few Alberta First Nations that participate in relation to our permit referral for Site C and participate in our environment forums and some on the RCLC. We have been engaging Alberta government, in the terms of the operation of Site C. In December, we did a presentation to Mackenzie County Council.

ACTION 3: Pass on Community Relations contact names to Karen that she will share with Alberta residents in the Peace region for contact when they have BC Hydro related questions. (Completed – contact info for Dave Conway and Bob Gammer emailed on February 22, 2021)

Fort St John – Lori Ackerman

- Loss of a 23-year-old woman and mother through domestic violence. We have lit up our recreation centre in purple in her memory.
- We held our Winter Fest this year and will have results from competitions at our Council meeting on Monday, February 22.
- We are having a by-election – a Council member is taking a staff position with the City. On March 1 we have a meeting to appoint the Chief Election officer.
- RCMP detachment new office building is coming along nicely and on budget.
- Festival plaza is almost ready to go.

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- Both RCMP and Festival projects are a show case for First Nation culture and art in our region.
- Continue to work on the agreement to establish the Doig First Nation urban reserve.
- Set the City budget for 2021 - \$76M capital budget.
- Continue to work with FLNRORD and our First Nations on the resource management plan – working on the Terms of Reference.

Taylor – Rob Fraser

- Still trying to hire a CAO.
- Doing well with respect to BC Hydro – street lights.
- Interested in the environmental review of trucking contingency plan related to the Site C conveyor belt system.
- Highway getting compliments.

Hudson's Hope – Dave Heiberg

- LED street lighting replacement - was the 1st community to have it done. Communication was good between BC Hydro, the contractor and public works staff – a much appreciated and needed upgrade.
- Water treatment plant – in the process of switching from a river/spring source to an aquifer source – now in the commissioning phase.
- New nurse hired and we are fully staffed at the clinic.
- Essential Service House that BC Hydro has provided is an asset, and the new nurse is living in it.
- Site C Reservoir Berm – was worried about community feedback – but have heard nothing.
- Rock trucks are moving – every 3 to 4 minutes going by on highway. This raises two major issues – rock debris and air quality.

Hudson's Hope – Leigh Summer

- Would like to make a protected area using the causeway to the island in the Peace River at the Gates (near the former Beam property) as a safe harbour for boats on the new reservoir. Now is the time to do it, during construction. I would like to talk to someone that could give me some information about the berm.

ACTION 4: Chris committed to speak with Leigh about this next week. (Completed – Chris spoke with Leigh the week of February 22, 2021)

Hudson's Hope – Gwen Johansson

- Appreciate the LED street lighting installation.
- Shares Karen's concerns on the Site C quarterly report.
- Lots of questions on the temporary bridge at Cache Creek and would like more information about the reasoning for the construction.
 - Chris – It is really in support for the community and the highway in the event we have a high water period after diversion and before the new Cache Creek bridge is built.
 - Chris – The engineering was done by MOTI. Even though the probability is low, we were not comfortable with the scenario of the community being isolated if a high water event did occur.

Saulteau – Justin Napoleon

- Nice to be on this meeting and looking forward to future meetings.
 - Nearing completion of our wind farm.
 - Received some grants to install solar panels on some of the Elders houses.

Chetwynd – Clay Bassendowski

- 3 main industries are up and running – sawmill, coal mine, oil & gas.
- Pipeline construction has resumed and is at full construction force.

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- Share the COVID-19 concerns of others - we had a minor outbreak, but there does not appear to be a link to the transitory workers in town.
- District will be getting ready for the water and sewer upgrades.
- Construction sites are starting up.
- In partnership with Saulteau First Nations, we were able to keep our doctor in the community clinic.
 - Justin – regarding the doctor, it has been working well, a good start. Hopefully can grow from this.
- Housing is a major issue - almost a crisis – Council and Administration working on how to satisfy the housing demand today and not overload the housing in the future.
- We had a planned power outage – went off on time and back on ahead of schedule.

Dawson Creek – Dale Bumstead

- In the middle of the pandemic and trying to insure we operate our community safely within protocols.
- Our budget process is complete – operating and capital budget is in place.
- We're struggling with obtaining nurses in the region – we have found that child care is an issue to retain nurses and we have been working on building a model to enhance this.
- Working on our flood mitigation.

Mackenzie – Joan Atkinson

- Note from Kevin Neary – the industrial site is enjoying steady, brisk business from the pipeline projects.
- Mills are still in curtailment, although Canfor continues to log in the area. Plans are to remove 350,000 to 400,000 cubic metres of timber from our TSA to elsewhere.
- Mackenzie just started its timber supply review – we hired Industrial Forestry Service to represent Mackenzie at some of the conversations.
 - The Prince George Timber Supply Area process that was completed in 2017 resulted in a reduction of 33% of Annual Allowable Cut (AAC), but because the apportionment process has not yet been completed, harvesting levels have remained at pre-TSR levels.
 - In October 2022, the Prince George AAC will be reduced by an additional 12% which makes our community very vulnerable as PG milling facilities will look for fibre elsewhere.
 - Been working hard, talking to government, that there must be changes in forestry policy.
- We were successful in getting a \$1 million grant to use for wildfire mitigation along Hwy 39 and we're about 2/3 done the work.
- Trails around the community and tourism strategy – government (FLNRORD) gave authorization to build a trail on Mount Morfee.
 - The trail is a non-status crown road and we look forward to working with BC Hydro on this road for maintenance and upgrades.
- First meeting with PWAC and very happy to be here.

Mackenzie – Stephanie Killam

- Senior society and UNBC and a couple of other stakeholders manage to get \$2 million to work with seniors for a full inclusion into the community.
- There are 1,100 seniors in Mackenzie.

BCH STAFF REPORTS

Peace River Operations – Darin Thompson

- Seven recruitments in progress at GMS – 1 Elec @ PCN, and 3 Elec, 1 GT, 1 Mech, 1 CPC and some vacancies filled.
- One unit out of service at GMS and trying to keep all units online.

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- We are storing some material from Site C at PCN and GMS, so you might see low-bed equipment coming through town.
- Projects ongoing - draft tube gates, control upgrade on G8 and the 500 kV disconnects in the 500 kV Switchyard.

Environment – Rian Hill

- The FWCP Board received 30 funding proposals during the program's project intake. They approved 21 of those plus 3 directed projects so 24 total - 8 fish and 16 wildlife and the successful applicants were notified today. Total investment was \$1.2 million.
- We did not spend the total allotment, so some money will be carried over as surplus into next year's program budget. There was more funding available than projects submitted.
- Chief Pierre and I have executed an agreement to continue the dust program this summer.

Site C – Shanna Mason

- Update on COVID-19 – didn't see the surge after the Christmas break that we expected.
 - 1,496 workers on site.
 - 2 people tested positive with COVID – they are locals and have been isolating at home.
 - 2 others are in isolation – not positive, but symptomatic.
 - We have had 48 positive cases since March 2020 and 17 this year in January.
 - Continuing to work with Northern Health Authority.
- Air quality complaints near the Hudson's Hope area – not sure what is causing it and we are looking into this.

Site C – Dave Conway

- Gave a slide presentation on Site C.
 - Gwen – safety of Site C – who signs off on the acceptance?
 - Ken – the province, with two levels of oversight and the owner's engineer. Additionally, two international experts were hired to double check everything and confirm that it will be constructed within the Canadian Dam Safety Association standards.
 - Chris – initial response is the engineers, which is a mixture of BC Hydro, Kohn Crippen Berger and SNC Lavalin and we have oversight from the Technical Advisory Board and they report independent to BC Hydro. There is a Regulatory regimen in B.C. around dam safety and it is through the Comptroller of Water Rights and they oversee and must approve each step of construction. We have developed some design enhancements to the foundation, so the dam can be constructed safely.
- Karen – Please send out the Site C slide presentation at the RCLC meeting.

ACTION 5: Dave or Bob will send Site C presentation slides to Karen. (Completed – Bob Gammer emailed the presentation to all PWAC members on March 22, 2021)

Northern Community Relations – Bob Gammer

- Williston Reservoir elevation is 2181.8 ft/665.02 m. A year ago, the reservoir was at 2170.2 ft/661.48 m, which is about 10 feet higher than on this date last year.
- The current estimated reservoir forecast, which is subject to change, suggests a minimum elevation around 2163 ft/659.4 m sometime in the last half of April.
- The Williston basin water supply on February 1 was 100.8% of normal and system wide it was 101.3% of normal. The risk of spill sometime this spring at Peace Canyon Dam is high. Spill risk is increased due in part to water supply and generating unit maintenance outages and to maintain the five-foot buffer below the normal full pool elevation of the reservoir.
- The Peace River ice front has advanced rapidly due to the recent very cold weather and has now caught up to an "average" position for this time of year. As of February 14, the ice front is about 60 km downstream of the BC/Alberta border.

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- We implemented Peace River ice control flow on January 30 for an average daily flow of 1,332 m³/s to assist with ice cover formation at Peace River, Alberta. With the ice cover set at Peace River, Alberta, average daily flow was increased by 50 m³/s on Feb 6. On Feb 10, ice cover was deemed to be strong enough (>40 cm thick) that control flow was relaxed, normal operations resumed at Peace Canyon and flows were increased to 1,700 m³/s.
- Our BC Hydro Grants Program application window is open again. Applications will be received online until March 31. We award grassroots grants of up to \$2,000 and broad impact grants of up to \$10,000 based on the posted criteria and alignment to our three focus areas: Building the Workforce of Tomorrow; Safety Education; and Developing Smart Energy Ideas.
- If you are interested in having a Level 2 EV charging station at your home, there are rebates that BC Hydro and the provincial government are offering and the current program funding expires on February 28, 2021.

Ken: Thank you for an interesting meeting. Expect northern part of the province will be a little wetter than normal this year. Site C will be there and safe for 100 years.

Chris: Thank you for the discussions that were raised. I encourage you to give Bob, Dave or myself a call, or email us, if you have any questions about today's meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Videoconference – Wednesday, May 19, 2021

TOPICS:

- Review of the TOR,
- Review of the Transmission rate design – get information of on rate design and when it comes on-line
- Impact of Site C on rates

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m. PST