



# PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT

## BROADBAND INTERNET AND MOBILITY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 24, 2025, 10:00 a.m.  
1981 Alaska Avenue, Dawson Creek, BC

Directors Present:	Alternate Director Wisekal, Electoral Area D Director Courtoreille, District of Chetwynd Director Dober, City of Dawson Creek Alternate Director Graham, Electoral Area B (via Zoom) Director Hansen, City of Fort St. John (via Zoom) Alternate Director Norbury, District of Tumbler Ridge (via Zoom) Director Quibell, District of Hudson's Hope (via Zoom) Director Sperling, Electoral Area C Director Taillefer, District of Taylor (via Zoom) Director Veach, Village of Pouce Coupe Director Zabinsky, City of Fort St. John (via Zoom)
Directors Absent	Director Hiebert, Electoral Area D Director Rose, Electoral Area E
Staff Present:	Shawn Dahlen, Chief Administrative Officer Roxanne Shepherd, Chief Financial Officer Tyra Henderson, Corporate Officer Joanne Caldecott, Deputy Corporate Officer Trevor Ouellette, IT Manager Terri Henrickson, Regional Connectivity Coordinator/Recorder
Delegations:	Megan Chadwick, Community Relations Connecting Communities BC Rachel Greenspan, Executive Director Network BC Ministry of Citizens' Services

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### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Before calling the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Meeting to order, the Chief Administrative Officer explained that an election was held preceding the January 24, 2025 Committee Meeting for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee for 2025 and announced that Director Quibell had been elected as Chair and Director Zabinsky had been elected Vice-Chair.



**2. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Quibell called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

**3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

MOVED Director Zabinsky  
SECONDED Director Taillefer

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee adopt the January 24, 2025 Meeting Agenda:

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

**2. CALL TO ORDER**

**3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**4. GALLERY COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS**

**5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

5.1 Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Draft Meeting Minutes of October 23, 2024

**6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**7. DELEGATIONS**

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**

**9. REPORTS**

9.1 Sharing of the PRRD 2024 Regional Connectivity Strategy Report - ADM-BIMC-30

9.2 Function 135 Regional Connectivity Draft 2025 Budget - ADM-BIMC-032

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

**11. CONSENT CALENDAR**

11.1 Wonder Valley AI Centre - Municipal District of Greenview - ADM-BIMC-031

11.2 Highway 16 - Five New Cell Towers Improve Safety - ADM-BIMC-033

11.3 CRTC Broadband Fund Review

11.4 Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Terms of Reference

11.5 Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Guiding Principles

11.6 Regional Connectivity Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2487, 2022

**12. RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**CARRIED**

**4. GALLERY COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS**

**5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**5.1 Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Draft Meeting Minutes of October 23, 2024**

MOVED Director Sperling

SECONDED Director Courtoreille

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Meeting minutes of October 23, 2024 be adopted.

**CARRIED**

**6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**7. DELEGATIONS**

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**



**9. REPORTS**

**9.1 Sharing of the PRRD 2024 Regional Connectivity Strategy Report, ADM-BIMC-030**

MOVED Director Sperling

SECONDED Director Dober

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee recommend that the Regional Board authorize that the website link for the 2024 Regional Connectivity Strategy Report titled “Regional Fibre-to-the-Premise and Cellular Connectivity Report” be shared with each of the PRRD member municipalities, all First Nations located within the PRRD, the community of Kelly Lake and Northern Health.

The Committee discussed the need for the 2024 Regional Connectivity Strategy Report to be shared broadly with other communities and local governments including the Northern Rockies, PRIS, etc. The Corporate Officer explained that the link for the report was publicly available on the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) website. Directors noted however that the report was not easy to find on the ‘Have Your Say’ webpage or when searching the internet. The Committee agreed that the report should be made more visible on the website and needs to be easier to find online and suggested using more searchable keywords and tags. Directors requested that the report be featured on Facebook as well. Staff confirmed that this work would be completed as requested.

Chair Quibell called the Question to the Motion.

**CARRIED**

**9.2 Function 135 – Regional Connectivity Draft 2025 Budget, ADM-BIMC-032**

MOVED Director Sperling

SECONDED Director Dober

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee recommend that the Regional Board approve the draft 2025 budget totaling 1,482,803 for Function 135 – Regional Connectivity, with a total requisition of \$197,843 and an estimated tax rate of \$0.0058/\$1,000.

**CARRIED**

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

Staff confirmed that Canadian Fiber Optics was scheduled to attend a Closed Regional Board meeting on February 20, 2025 to provide the Regional Board with updates.

MOVED Director Sperling

SECONDED Director Zabinsky

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee approve new the business item regarding the announcement of new Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) Rulings.

**CARRIED**

Director Veach, Village of Pouce Coupe, joined the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

### 10.1 New Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) Rulings (Cont'd)

Director Sperling read a news article from 'Energetic City' announcing new Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) rulings whereby the CRTC announced three new policy actions that will affect Fort St. John, Fort Nelson and 19 other communities in BC and the Yukon. The article highlighted the three policy actions:

- Develop subsidies for the far north that will align costs with the rest of the country.
- NorthwesTel was specifically required to reduce customer bills when services had been disrupted for a day or more.
- CRTC will make it easier for other internet service providers to use the NorthwesTel network to introduce more competition and choices.

Directors discussed the existing difficulties in accessing the NorthwesTel fibre lines and agreed that changes made by the CRTC were good news and wanted to hear what NorthwesTel would have to say. Directors noted the recent change in ownership of NorthwesTel and were curious as to what impact the CRTC changes would have on the region.

MOVED Director Zabinsky

SECONDED Director Sperling

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee invite NorthwesTel to attend the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee meeting as a Delegation in April or at their earliest convenience.

**CARRIED**

Directors asked staff to investigate the CRTC regulation changes more fully and provide the Regional Board with a report before NorthwesTel attends the next Committee meeting in April, so Directors are informed in advance.

MOVED Director Sperling

SECONDED Director Zabinsky

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee authorize staff investigate what new Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) regulations look like before the NorthwesTel Delegation attends the next Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Meeting.

**CARRIED**

## 11. CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Quibell asked Directors whether they wished to lift any items from the January 24, 2025 Consent Calendar and the following items were lifted:

### 11.2 Highway 16 - Five New Cell Towers Improve Safety, ADM-BIMC-033

Directors discussed how important connectivity was on BC highways and how safety was slowly improving in the northern region. Director Courtoireille mentioned the \$5M invested to connect Chetwynd to Mackenzie and how pleased he was to see the progress made in this area. Directors agreed it was good that cellular service on Highway 16 was

**11.2 Highway 16 - Five New Cell Towers Improve Safety, ADM-BIMC-033 (Cont'd)**

improving at last and that Rogers Communications accessibility was improving for 911 emergency calls along highways. Directors also agreed on the importance of maintaining pressure on this issue, noting that while the rules slowly soften, the hope is that the north will see connectivity continue to increase.

**11.1 Wonder Valley AI Centre - Municipal District of Greenview, ADM-BIMC-031**

Director Dober noted that the Wonder Valley Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre would be significant to the economies of Northern British Columbia and Alberta; and Grande Prairie had been chosen for the location because the Alberta Government was in full support of the \$70 billion project.

Director Dober suggested that British Columbia should be establishing a leading edge to get ahead of this important development and suggested that the Board could ask the Ministry what their vision for AI in BC is and whether the Ministry has plans to support future AI projects in BC.

MOVED Director Dober

SECONDED Director Veach

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee recommend that the Regional Board send a letter to the Minister of Citizens Services inquiring what the Province's vision for Artificial Intelligence (AI) in British Columbia is and whether there are plans to support future AI projects in British Columbia.

**CARRIED**

MOVED Director Sperling

SECONDED Director Courtoreille

That the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee receive the remainder of the Consent Calendar items.

**CARRIED**

**12. RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

CERTIFIED a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Peace River Regional District's Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee Meeting held on January 24, 2025 in the PRRD Board Room, 1981 Alaska Avenue, Dawson Creek, BC.

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Travous Quibell, Chair

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Terri Henrickson, Regional Connectivity  
Coordinator/Recording Clerk