

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CULTURAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF FRASER-FORT GEORGE HELD ON FRIDAY MAY 31, 2024 IN THE BOARDROOM GALLERY, 155 GEORGE STREET, PRINCE GEORGE, BC

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Members Present: Director Lara Beckett, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George  
Alyssa Gerwing, The Exploration Place  
Danielle Alan, Whistlestop Gallery  
George Harris, Two Rivers Gallery  
Jim Wiens, Mackenzie & District Museum Society  
Kathy Carlson, Central BC Railway and Forest Industry Museum Society  
Krystal Leason, Huble Homestead/Giscome Portage Heritage Society  
Maria Paulson, City of Prince George Civic Initiatives and Partnership  
Rachelle Dumoulin, District of Mackenzie  
Sarah Brown, City of Prince George Civic Initiatives and Partnership  
Tracy Calogheros, The Exploration Place  
Vivian Kenkel, Valemount and Area Museum and Archives

Members Absent: Director Cori Ramsay Alternate Chair, City of Prince George  
Bridget Uhl, Valley Museum & Archives  
Eric Depenau, Village of Valemount  
Jeanette McDougal, Village of McBride  
Paul Johnson, Valemount and Area Museum and Archives  
Sheilagh Foster, Whistle Stop Gallery

Staff Present: Renee McCloskey, Manager of External Relations  
Hilary Erasmus, Cultural and Communications Coordinator

Minutes Recorded and Produced by: Dayna Hegel, Confidential Assistant (Corporate Services)

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

The Regional District acknowledged the unceded ancestral lands of the Lheidli T'enneh, on whose land we live, work and play.

The Chairperson advised that the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation will be hosting their third annual Moccasin Walk on June 28, 2024.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

*Mover: Wiens  
Seconder: Harris*

*THAT the agenda for May 31, 2024 meeting of the Cultural Services Advisory Committee be amended to include Discovery Pass under New Business, and that the agenda be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

*Mover: Leason  
Seconder: Carlson*

*THAT the Minutes of the April 9, 2024 meeting of the Cultural Services Advisory Committee be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED**

**FUNDING REVIEW**

A report was presented regarding funding review.

The Chairperson provided an overview of the Regional Cultural Plan noting that it had been in existence for 18 years and that it was remarkable what all the agencies have achieved in that time. She expressed her appreciation to Don Bassermann and Murry Krause who started the program. She also noted that a lot has changed in the last

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eighteen years and that the recommendations in the funding review will be presented to the Board which will give them a sense of the need and provide context to the Board on how they can continue to support these agencies.

Gaeby Abrahams (Senior Consultant) and Joy Pan (Consultant) from Nordicity NGL Limited were in remote attendance to provide a presentation regarding the Funding Review Report including:

- introduction to the funding review;
- balancing regional priorities;
- Nordicity's approach;
- operating context including environmental factors and RDFFG cultural objectives;
- analysis of operations and activities for the eight funded cultural sites including funding position and key take aways;
- recommendations including funding levels, prioritizing implementation, financial impact to cultural funding program, and additional considerations; and
- next steps including finalize report, deliver report to RDFFG, and consider recommendations as a part of the 2025 budget process.

G. Abrahams and J. Pan responded to questions on the funding review including what makes up the revenue, the requirement for a balanced budget and the percentage increase to the budget for small organizations.

*Mover: Wiens*

*Seconder: Harris*

*THAT the report be received.*

*CARRIED*

## **NORTHERN ROUTES 2024 MARKETING**

H. Erasmus, Cultural and Communications Coordinator provided an update regarding the Northern Routes 2024 marketing plans including:

- minor refresh to the website – homepage layout and functionality on how the links to each of the sites are presented;
- update on campaigns including Route 16 managed by Tourism Prince George, Co-op Marketing Partnership Program by Destination BC, Google advertising campaigns with Splash Media to target people looking for things to do in the area;
- continue to have event support for sites looking to host an event, and
- a photographer will be taking summer photos of the sites in the McBride and Valemount area in June.

*Mover: Paulson*

*Seconder: Kenkel*

*THAT the verbal update on Northern Routes 2024 marketing plans be received.*

*CARRIED*

## **NEW BUSINESS DISCOVERY PASS**

H. Erasmus, Cultural and Communications Coordinator provided an overview of the Discovery Pass. It is a partnership with the region's libraries that has been in place for 12 years and the pass is issued like a library book and gives free entry to Northern Routes Cultural sites. She advised the Prince George Public Library has requested if they can have more copies of the pass.

Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of the pass and whether the time it is checked out could be reduced.

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H. Erasmus, Cultural and Communications Coordinator responded to queries from Directors regarding the number of passes currently available to be signed out, the criteria to access the pass and how long the pass can be checked out for.

*Mover: Leason*

*Seconder: Gerwing*

*THAT Administration provide 8 more Discovery Passes to the Prince George Public Library.*

*CARRIED*

## **ROUNDTABLE**

The Chairperson advised the committee that Renee McCloskey and Tracy Calogheros will be retiring in June, making this their final committee meeting. Tracy has dedicated 30 years to the Exploration Place, demonstrating remarkable leadership and making significant contributions to the community. Renee has been a valuable member of the Regional District for 16 years, offering substantial support and being a joy to work alongside.

The Committee Members wished Renee and Tracy all the best on their retirement.

R. Dumoulin provided an update regarding the District of Mackenzie summer events including:

- annual Rockin the Ridgeline on July 27, 2024 which will include some live performances and food trucks;
- Morphy Lake Scramble on August 17, 2024 which is a 15 km race around Morphy Lake and a dance in the evening with a live band.

V. Kenkel provided an update on the Valemout and Area Museum and Archives including:

- museum is opening June 1 with business as usual, and
- Canada Day Celebration on July 1 partnering with the Valemout Library.

A. Gerwing provided an update regarding the Exploration Place including:

- Little Prince Steam Engine is running;
- Origins Kitchen is getting busy;
- Thursdays in the Park are back again this year;
- Carrier Sekani Family Services, the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society, and the Exploration Place, in partnership with Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, will be bringing a new exhibit in early June called Spirit Bear and Children Make History;
- Earth in Focus exhibit will be coming in June, and
- summer camps are starting to gear up.

K. Leason provided an update regarding Huble Homestead/Giscome Portage Heritage Society including:

- Huble Homestead Historic Site opened again for the season on May 18, 2024;
- as of June 1, there were nine school tours, two weddings with two additional wedding booked, and one special event;
- initially had hired all summer staff early, but are now short by one;
- the full schedule of public events is out, and the next major event is Canada Day but there will also be the Sherlock challenge starting Saturday, June 22; and

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- they were unsuccessful at acquiring a grant for the Huble Diary project, but will still continue on with the project.

M. Paulson provided an update regarding the City of Prince George Civic Initiatives and Partnership including:

- working on grant reviews;
- in the process of designing new grants and will be putting out a survey; and
- the City has introduced new branding including new colours and images.

K. Carlson provided an update regarding the Central BC Railway and Forest Industry Museum Society including:

- curator recently moved away so the position is currently vacant, but holding off on filling the position for at least three to six months;
- received the lost data from the server crash and are waiting for information on the next steps;
- currently doing a review of suppliers and contractors and a review on hospitality cost to best align with the types of programs offered;
- admission cost for the museum has increased as well as the cost to ride the train;
- summer students have started;
- hours of operation have changed to seven days a week;
- received a second intern;
- currently working on a restoration project
- tutorial intern's project is coming to an end with a nice report; and
- lots of tours scheduled, facility rentals and weddings on site.

G. Harris provided an update regarding Two Rivers Gallery including:

- Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration Exhibition opened in April and this is the only venue outside the US;
- recently hired Jessica Endress to fill the position of Director of Learning along with four summer students;
- hosting Community Art Days July 12 and 13, 2024;
- this year's travelling exhibition is Up Around the Bend, by Prince George artist Emily Wilson. It will travel to Mackenzie Community Arts Centre, Valemount and Area Museum, and Valley Museum & Archives in McBride, with an opening reception in Mackenzie on June 10 where it will run until July 10.

J. Wiens provided an update on the Mackenzie & District Museum Society including:

- in the process of moving to a new leased building located on the main street;
- old building is scheduled to be demolished sometime next year;
- received funding from a couple of sources for storage and to help move;
- moving to a digital display of all photos;
- part time assistant has left and having a hard time getting summer students;
- soft opening of the new location is set for July 2, 2024.

D. Alan provided an update regarding Whistlestop Gallery including:

- received funding for three summer students;
- embarking on a summer project using art to illustrate seven iconic stories about the Robson and Canoe Valleys and each piece will be collated into a booklet and put on the website; and
- working with the library on the summer fun projects.

R. McCloskey advised that the Regional Board just approved the 2024 Art and Culture Heritage Grants noting that there were some new applicants this year. She also advised that the Regional District is in the process of interviewing for a Cultural Coordinator and the posting for the Manager of External Relations closes May 31, 2024.

**NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting is to be determined.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Mover: Wiens*

*Seconder: Calogheros*

*THAT the meeting be adjourned at 12:44 p.m.*

**CARRIED**

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Chair

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General Manager of Legislative and  
Corporate Services

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