



REGULAR BOARD MEETING

**MINUTES of the REGULAR MEETING of the BOARD
THURSDAY, June 18, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
MEETING #05/26**

PRESENT (in person): Wade Desserre, Rainy River West
Telford Advent, Township of Morley
Robert Burns, Rainy River East

Present (virtual): Debbie Ewald, Town of Rainy River (Chair)
Brendan Hyatt, Township of La Vallee
Lisa Teeple, Township of Emo
Robert Ferguson, Town of Atikokan
Bill Langner, Township of Dawson
Mike Ford, Township of Alberton
Andrew Hallikas, Town of Fort Frances (Vice Chair)
James Gibson, Township of Chapple

REGRETS: Colleen Fadden, Township of Lake of the Woods

ABSENT: Don Canfield, Rainy River Central

ADMINISTRATION: Charene Gillies, CAO
Leanne Gurski, Director of Finance & Infrastructure
Faisal Anwar, Director of Community Services
Heather Latter, Communications Advisor
Sandra Weir, Housing & Homelessness Prevention Manager
Tanis Fretter, Children's Services & Income Support Manager
Angela Siemens, Directly Operated Early Years Manager

1. Call to Order

The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. Land Acknowledgement

3. Attendance & Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Chair, Deb Ewald joined the meeting and took over chairing.

Resolution #33/26 MOVED BY A. Hallikas and SECONDED BY B. Burns :

RESOLVED THAT the District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB) accepts the regrets of Colleen Fadden for the June 18, 2026 Board meeting.

Carried.

4. Approval of Agenda

Resolution #34/26 MOVED BY B. Hyatt and SECONDED BY M. Ford:

RESOLVED THAT the District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB) approve the agenda of June 18, 2026 as presented.

Carried.

5. Approval of Minutes

Resolution #35/26 MOVED BY A. Hallikas and SECONDED BY W. Desserre:

RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the District of Rainy River Services Board held Thursday, May 21, 2026 be approved as presented.

Carried.

6. Reports

6.1. Directly Operated Early Years: Rainy River Opening Plan

The Board received an update on the transition to a directly operated EarlyON and child care centre in Rainy River, named River's Edge Atelier, with a planned opening date of August 31, 2026, pending Ministry licensing. A. Siemens, Directly Operated Early Years Manager, noted recruitment, family registration, staffing, and site preparations are underway to support the transition and opening. Board members received answers to questions staffing and the waitlist.

6.2. Income Support: 2026 Planned Program Spending

The Board received an overview of the approved 2026 Ontario Works Income Support budget, which is primarily directed to client financial assistance and the administration of income support services.

6.3. Children's Services: 2026 Planned Program Spending

The Board received an overview of the approved 2026 Children's Services budget and planned program spending, with a focus on affordable child care, EarlyON programming, workforce development, and implementation of the new five-year Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan.

6.4. Housing & Homelessness Prevention: 2026/27 Planned Program Spending

The Board received an overview of the 2026 Housing & Homeless Prevention Programs budget and service priorities. The report noted that the 100% provincial funding will support homelessness prevention, housing stability, and related client services across the district, while continuing to respond to local housing pressures, community need, and provincial program requirements.

6.5. Paramedic Services: 2026 Planned Program Spending

The Board received an overview of the approved 2026 Paramedic Services budget and service priorities. The report noted that the budget remains relatively stable while supporting emergency response capacity, workforce stability, fleet readiness,

Community Paramedicine, and ongoing service modernization, with continued monitoring of staffing pressures, hospital offload delays, fleet costs, and other operational risks. A question was raised regarding paramedic staffing levels, and it was noted that staffing levels have improved compared with two years ago, although it have not yet reached the desired level.

6.6. Communications Report

The Board received a communications update outlining recent work to support program promotion, public information, election readiness, bursary selection, recruitment, committee initiatives, and completion of the 2025 Annual Report. The report noted ongoing communications support for River's Edge, paramedic recruitment, Board-related communications, and awareness activities that help strengthen transparency, accountability, and public understanding of DRRSB programs and services.

7. Business Arising

7.1. Fifth & Frenette Property

B. Hyatt, Chair of the Building & Service Review Committee, gave an overview of both previous meetings of the committee (May 21 & June 4) explaining there are two related, but separate streams of work underway on the property. He then spoke to the report in the agenda package, with the recommendation to discontinue further exploration of renovating the existing building for child care in favour of a housing-focused redevelopment approach. The report noted that renovation costs are estimated at approximately \$11.3 million, significantly exceeding available child care expansion funding, and recommended that a housing-led approach for the property may better address long-term financial risk while preserving future opportunities for purpose-built child care, EarlyON, and family support space as part of broader redevelopment.

Resolution #36/26 MOVED BY J. Gibson and SECONDED BY B. Hyatt :

RESOLVED THAT the District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB) direct Administration to discontinue further exploration of renovating the existing former school building for child care and endorse continued exploration of a housing-focused redevelopment approach for the Fifth & Frenette property.

Carried.

8. New Business

8.1. Prehos Vendor Insolvency

C. Gillies spoke to the Chief of Paramedic Service's report about the insolvency of the Prehos electronic patient care reporting vendor and the resulting operational, clinical, privacy, and compliance risks to paramedic services. The report noted that urgent transition and procurement measures are being undertaken under the emergency provisions of the procurement policy to maintain continuity of patient care documentation, preserve data access and security, and support a return to an interim

system solution, with final financial impacts to be reported back to the Board. Questions were raised regarding the availability of alternative vendors, the rationale for the original move to Prehos, potential insurance coverage, and whether provincial support may be available. It was noted that insurance implications are still being reviewed, that the Ministry of Health is aware of the issue and has adjusted some guidelines, and that advocacy to the Ministry for financial support is anticipated.

Resolution #37/26 MOVED BY L. Teeple and SECONDED BY T. Advent:

RESOLVED THAT the District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB):

- Acknowledge the operational, clinical, and compliance risks arising from the insolvency of Prehos; and
- Authorize administration, pursuant to the emergency procurement provisions of Policy F-5.0, to undertake the actions necessary to maintain continuity of patient care documentation, including the procurement and implementation of interim system and support services; and
- Direct administration to report back to the Board on financial impact as required.

Carried.

9. In Camera

The Board moved in camera at 9:55 a.m.

Resolution #38/26 MOVED BY R. Ferguson and SECONDED BY J. Gibson :

RESOLVED THAT the District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB) now meet in-camera to address matters pertaining to:

- X Positions, plans, procedures, or instructions for negotiations conducted by or on behalf of the DRRSB.
- X Litigation or potential litigation.

Carried.

10. Information Items -10:17 resume regular sessions

- 10.1. LTR AMO-OMSSA-NOSDA CWELCC Renewal
- 10.2. DRRSB Letter IRCC Final May 22, 2026
- 10.3. 26-27 Status Quo Funding Letter RRDPS
- 10.4. HPP Allocation Letter SIGNED
- 10.5. Thank You Letter MCCSS
- 10.6. Northern Policy Municipal-Finance Report

11. Next Meeting

The next Regular Board Meeting of the District of Rainy River Services Board will be held virtually on July 16, 2026 starting at 9:00 a.m.

Prior to adjournment a question was asked about the TWOMO election. The Returning Officer, H. Latter noted that a call for nominations has gone out on social media, newspapers to follow, and information is available on the website.

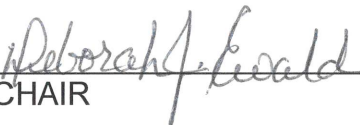
12. Adjournment

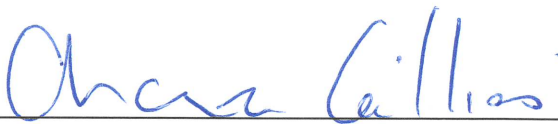
Resolution #39/26 MOVED BY B. Hyatt and SECONDED by R. Ferguson

RESOLVED THAT the District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB) meeting be adjourned.

Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:21 a.m.


CHAIR


SECRETARY-TREASURER (CAO)


DATE APPROVED

