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## NCLGA

Representing over 240 elected officials in over 42 local and First Nation governments.

Established in 1955, the NCLGA is a non-profit, non-partisan association comprised of local government elected officials in North Central BC.

# Connections Newsletter

Issue 06  
January 2026



## A Message from the President

**Gladys Atrill, NCLGA President**

### Happy New Year to all!

On behalf of the Board of Directors of NCLGA, we wish you and your communities the very best in this coming year.

As we launch into 2026 there are a couple of items I would like to share. First, the Board meeting in November was very positive. Your representatives were thoughtful and engaged. In our roundtable the issues shared reflect the reality of what you face in your community or rural area: challenges in health care with emergency room closures and doctor shortages, community safety and homelessness, mental health and addictions, labour shortages, drought and wildfire, budget shortfalls, infrastructure gaps, need for economic development and diversification, and legislative reform. As we all know, some of the issues plaguing our communities are not the responsibility of local governments; however, our residents call on us and look to us to make things better. I extend a heartfelt thank you to you all for the important work you do, even when it seems overwhelming.

Planning for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May in Prince George is well underway. Please mark May 20-22, 2026, on your calendars if you have not done so. At the same time, we are focussed on advocacy. Board members who are attending the BC Natural Resources Forum in January are holding a strategy session just before the forum begins to ensure NCLGA issues are delivered to Provincial Ministers and senior staff.

An excellent webinar on the resolution process was held in November. Thanks to Lara Beckett, Chair of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, and Gord Klassen, Councillor for the City of Fort St. John, for the superb content. As a follow up, I urge you to ensure your local government is talking about important issues and resolutions now and that resolutions are submitted early for the NCLGA AGM. Please take a look at the [Resolutions](#) section of our website. The deadline for submission is Friday, March 13, 2026. There are just a handful of Council or Regional District meetings in which to discuss and agree on resolutions.

Our next webinar on January 14, 2026, is titled, *"Addressing the Development of Substance Use and Mental Health Services in a Psychiatric Hospital for Northern BC"*. Check our website for webinars as they are confirmed. It is an easy and economical way to stay informed and hear from experts on issues important to us.

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ABOVE: NCLGA Board of Directors and staff, Front row (L-R): Sandra Moore (Board Support), Leonard Hiebert, Terry Robert (Executive Director), Melanie Woods, Judy Greenaway, Julie Maitland, Gladys Atrill, Julia Nelson. Back row (L-R): Jerrilyn Kirk, Jesse Wright, Eric de Vries, Barry Cunningham, Kyle MacDonald. Missing: Sarrah Storey, Brenda Enax.

BELOW: November 29, 2025, Board Meeting. Photo by Jesse Wright.



The NCLGA Board of Directors met for their regular Board Meeting on November 28 and 29, 2025, in Prince George, BC. A Presidents report and Director roundtable updates were provided, alongside Committee updates and discussions on Advocacy activities.

Please refer to the [Board Meeting Highlights](#) posted on the website. For a list of Board meetings, check out our [Calendar](#).

Finally, thank you to the Executive members of your Board – Tony, Kyle, and Judy – for your extra time and care, and to all members for your passion for your communities and our region. And thank you to our staff team – Terry, Sandra, and Bettina – for your good work, good humour, and patience in answering questions (maybe more than once).

### Gladys Atrill, NCLGA President

Gladys Atrill has served on the NCLGA Board for the past three years. Gladys has been the Mayor of the Town of Smithers since 2020 and was first elected to Council in 2014. Read more about Gladys here: [Board of Director Bios](#)



# NCLGA Advocacy

## 2025 Mental Health and Addictions Symposium and Accord

The 2025 Mental Health and Addictions Symposium was held in Prince George on October 15, 2025, and was a focused space for Accord Signatories, with discussions dedicated to collaboration and progress sharing on advocacy activities.

Signatories gathered to strengthen relationships, learn from each other, and share progress on advocacy activities related to the Mental Health and Addictions Accord. A range of plenary sessions were held, allowing opportunity for participants to share roundtable updates on successful mental health and addictions initiatives, as well as barriers and challenges that remain in their communities and regions.

Participants engaged in facilitated group discussions on topics including:

- *Trauma-Informed Systems of Care*
- *Cultural Safety and Humility in Services*
- *Supporting Local Action Plans*
- *Strengthening Interagency and Government Partnerships*
- *Wellness in the Workplace – Caring for the Caregivers.*

The Accord was revisited as a living document, and reflections were shared on advocacy priorities. Priority actions and commitments were identified related to advancing next steps, tracking collective progress, and fostering shared accountability.

We are pleased to announce that nine new Signatories have signed on to the Mental Health and Addictions Accord:

- *Village of Granisle*
- *Village of Burns Lake*
- *District of Hudson's Hope*
- *Village of Fraser Lake*
- *Tahltan Band*
- *Association Advocating for Women and Community*
- *Prince George Sexual Assault Centre*
- *Northern Peer Guardians*
- *Youth Wellness Society of Mackenzie.*

To learn more about the Symposium, [click here](#)

To learn more on the Accord purpose and vision, visit [nclga.ca/accord](http://nclga.ca/accord).

The next Signatory meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00pm PST.

## 2025/26 NCLGA Advocacy and Resolutions

The NCLGA continues to advocate on behalf of its members, to bring forward multiple resolutions passed by NCLGA membership during our May 2025 AGM and Convention in Prince Rupert.

Advocacy letters are sent to relevant Ministers on numerous topics, including increased funding for public libraries, improved transportation infrastructure and services, advancing recovery-informed workplace practices, enhanced wrap-around supports for people in recovery, development of blood plasma donor centre, conservation officer advocacy, and balanced emissions policies.

All of the advocacy letters have been or are in process of being uploaded to the NCLGA website.

Please visit [2025 Resolutions](#) at [nclga.ca](http://nclga.ca) for more information.

### ► Searching for Advocacy Updates on specific NCLGA Resolutions?

Please visit [2025 Resolutions](#) at [nclga.ca](http://nclga.ca) and click on the Resolution - if letters were sent to Ministers, the letters will be posted under the Action heading.

## Advocacy and Follow-Up Processes on NCLGA and UBCM-Endorsed Resolutions

Once a resolution is passed by the NCLGA membership at its AGM, and is subsequently endorsed at the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Annual Convention, the responsibility for advancing that resolution transitions to UBCM. UBCM leads the advocacy efforts with the Provincial Government and is the primary point of contact for updates on the status of endorsed resolutions.

To track the progress and government responses to endorsed resolutions, members are encouraged to consult the [Provincial Government Response to Resolutions Report](#), which is published by UBCM annually in February. This report outlines the actions taken or commitments made by the Province in response to each resolution endorsed by UBCM.

## 2026/27 Resolutions

Members are encouraged to review the [2026 NCLGA Resolution Writing and Submission Guidelines](#).

Please note, for resolutions to be included in the Annual Report and Resolutions Book, they must be submitted to NCLGA Staff no later than 5:00 PM on Friday, March 13, 2026.

## Directors Corner (new to the Member Newsletter!)

Director at Large Jesse Wright has worked this past quarter to build the relationship between the District of Mackenzie and Powder King Mountain Resort. The partnership has grown to Powder King having Mackenzie Tourism guides working in their day lodge, while Powder King also tested and certified the District of Mackenzie's rental ski/snowboard fleet for use at Mackenzie's municipally owned ski hill Little Mac.

Jesse has also been planning for a "Mental Health Summit" in Mackenzie, drawing from the experience of the NCLGA co-hosted Mental Health and Addiction Symposiums of 2024 and 2025.



Heidi Salisbury, owner of Powder King, beside the new Tourism Mackenzie stand in the day lodge.

## Please join us at our Next Webinar:

### "Addressing the Development of Substance Use and Mental Health Services in a Psychiatric Hospital for Northern BC"

January 14, 2026 at 12:00 - 1:00 pm. PST

This webinar will include information on the critical need for both secure substance use services and long-term secure psychiatric care. Dr. Kane will speak to what led to the current situation and the wide-ranging effects on other parts of healthcare and societal systems. The focus will be on opportunities that exist to address this critical gap in mental health and addictions care for communities in Central and Northern BC.

**Speaker:** Dr. Barbara Kane, Consulting Psychiatrist, UHNBC

**Who should attend:** NCLGA membership

[Register here](#)

## Member Webinars

January 14, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

### ***"Addressing the Development of Substance Use and Mental Health Services in a Psychiatric Hospital for Northern BC"***

Presenter: Dr. Barbara Kane, Head of Psychiatry, UHNBC

[Register here](#)

April 15, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

### ***"Update on the Findings of the Northern Energy Dialogues"***

Presenters: Sinead Earley and Sarah Korn, UNBC

## Other Webinars

### **Community Action Initiative**

Jan 23, 2026, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

#### ***"What Local Governments Can Do to Support Youth in the Toxic Drug Crisis"***

Exclusive for Local Government Elected Officials and Staff

Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth, B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth. [Register here](#)



## Meetings & Events

### **Minerals North Conference and Tradeshow**

May 6-8, 2026 – Smithers, BC

For information on registration, tradeshow and general conference details, please visit: [Minerals North](#).



Minerals North

### **NCLGA Annual General Meeting and Convention 2026**

May 20-22, 2026

Prince George, BC

Please check back for [more information here](#).

## Board Meetings

### **NCLGA Board Meeting**

February 27 and 28, 2026

Virtual via [zoom](#)

*Remaining Board Meeting Dates to be confirmed.*

## Board Strategy Sessions

### **Natural Resources Forum Strategy Session**

January 19, 2026

### **NCLGA AGM Strategy Session**

May 19, 2026 (all Directors)

### **Minerals North Forum Strategy Session**

May 5, 2026 (TBC)

## CONTACT US

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## NCLGA Newsletter Contributions

We encourage our members to contribute content for the newsletter to [bjohnson@nclga.ca](mailto:bjohnson@nclga.ca). We welcome your submission ideas, including:

- Member Spotlight and Success Stories: highlighting achievements and activities of our member communities
- Upcoming Events, Resources.

### **Award Nominations for 2026 AGM**

Please submit nominations for:

- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Community Leadership Awards

Deadline: April 26, 2026

More info at [2026 AGM & Convention](#)