

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

Tetewaie:na - Honoring the past, facing today's challenges, building a strong future.



Onerahtohko:wa/May 8, 2017

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

Yet another month in the books, time sure is passing very quickly. Hopefully, as we spring into May we will begin to see some warmer weather and bluer skies. The crazy and quick changing weather that we have been seeing sure makes us think a bit more about climate change and global warming. At last month's General Meeting, the Akwesasne Green Team presented on the need to reduce waste; the team will be finding more ways for the MCA and our whole community to reduce, reuse, and recycle, all in an effect to take better care of Mother Earth. Environmental stewardship is a responsibility we share collectively. A big Niawenkowa goes out to everyone who participated in the Annual Roadside Clean Up last week!

On April 27, 2017 our Council hosted the monthly General Meeting at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center, with approximately 25 community members in attendance. The agenda for the evening included a presentation from a group of Akwesasne youth who recently traveled to Thunder Bay to participate in an Independent First Nations (IFN) Youth gathering. The youth provided the audience with a great (and very thorough) PowerPoint presentation on the youth gathering. Following the presentation by the youth, I provided a report on behalf of our Council on work that has been completed in support our MCA strategic plan goals and the priorities identified in our Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP). After the presentations, we took questions from the community, as the business from the floor segment of the agenda. **Here is the link to the April 2017 MCA General Meeting:** [https://youtu.be/ Z_Yk-cQnZw](https://youtu.be/Z_Yk-cQnZw). Please take a moment to listen in, stream it on the way to work, or download it to your phone.

We ask that you please provide us with your feedback after checking it out; we need to know if improvements can be made in providing this option to you.

As always at the General Meeting I provided the community with a copy of my written report which I am now sharing with you. I hope you take a moment to review the attached report, which provides a quick snapshot of my activities over the past month, by providing a summary of each of the meetings attended throughout the month. You can also view all my past reports online at www.akwesasne.ca or on my Facebook Page. Feel free to direct any questions you may have to me or contact one of our District Chiefs should you have questions on Council meetings.

Wishing you a great month ahead!

Sken:nen

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abram Benedict', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Grand Chief Abram Benedict

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Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Ennisko:wa/March 2017

MARCH 1 & 2, 2017 TOBACCO FORUM

On the morning of March 1, 2017 I met with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation as part of the ongoing Akwesasne Tobacco Technical Table. The Ministry reviewed the presentation, which was prepared for use the following day for the invited leadership, with the work group in attendance. The work group provided valuable feedback on the presentation.

Following the presentation review, the Ministry provided the technical table with an update on the Traditional Trade application to the Ministry of Finance. The ministry updated that the MCA would need to allocate an amount of quota cigarettes to Traditional Trade and Traditional Trade still needs to meet the financial bonding requirements of the province before the permits will be issued.

The technical team further reviewed the 17/18 proposed work plan for the Akwesasne/Ontario tobacco project; Akwesasne provided an update on the development on the Akwesasne Tobacco Law Regulations and Ontario provided an update on the ongoing MNP pricing review. Ontario updated that the AMPS marine unit proposal is being considered for the upcoming fiscal year.



Tobacco Forum

The tobacco forum began on March 1, 2017 with opening remarks by Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) Deputy Minister Richardson who outlined the objectives of the two day tobacco forum. The main objective of the forum was for Ontario to outline an opportunity for communities to work with Ontario in the area of tobacco.

Deputy Richardson outlined the following key areas to be discussed over the two days:

- 1) Regulation and monitoring
- 2) Establishment of minimum pricing
- 3) Sharing a portion of overall provincial tobacco tax revenue
- 4) Consideration of a 3rd party to support the development, monitoring, and compliance of community laws.

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Chippewas of the Thames provided presentations on their ongoing pilot project work with Ontario. Each community outlined the work completed, challenges encountered, and benefits realized so far, and outlined their next steps.

The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and the Ministry of Finance provided the forum with a presentation titled “Moving Towards Community-Based Regulations of Tobacco and Revenue Sharing” which provided an overview of the reviews the ministry has previously completed and outlined the recommendations for moving forward in working with communities in the area of tobacco. The province outlined that they would like to explore tobacco agreements with communities to support the four objectives as outlined by the Deputy earlier in the day. In exchange for communities participating in the development work with the province would agree to enter into a revenue sharing agreement with the community for a portion of the overall tobacco tax revenue collected in the province. The province outlined what they viewed as potential benefits from a tobacco agreement, in the spirit of improved relationships and reconciliation.

Kelly Croman, a lawyer from Washington State, presented on her experience in working with Tribes in Washington State on an agreement (compact) with the state whereby a royalty system was implemented on reserve. The ultimate achievements were a steady revenue stream for the Tribes and tax parity for the state. Kelly further outlined other benefits to having a compact with the state.

On March 2, 2017 the second day of the forum Manny Jules from the First Nation Tax Commission presented on the function and opportunity the commission could play with respect to tobacco in Ontario. This sort of arrangement supports the concept of a 3rd party administering, monitoring, and collecting levy on behalf of a First Nation, under community laws. Manny Jules also provided a comprehensive overview of taxes and how First Nation communities are connected to taxes.

The Ministry of Finance provided some potential revenue sharing examples as well as what the share could mean for communities; this offer was being made to those communities who are prepared to sign agreements with the province.

Two other presentations were provided in the afternoon of the second day on economic diversification.

Harold Tarbell facilitated the two day session with the ministries and First Nations.

Chiefs Health Forum

Later in the afternoon of March 2, 2017 (day 2) I attended the last panel discussion at the Chiefs Health forum at the Hilton Hotel. The final panel discussion was with the youth who were asked a series of questions and asked to give their perspective. One of the questions asked to the youth panel was what issues they see as being the most pressing for youth in their communities. The two most common themes were mental health and addictions.

Legalization of Cannabis Secretariat

Following the Tobacco Forum, Anne Marie Predko, Director of Legalization of Cannabis Secretariat for Ontario provided an overview of the recommendations from the final report on the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation. She further explained that the Ministry of the Attorney General had been mandated by the Premier to meet with First Nations to discuss areas of interest to communities, with regard to cannabis. It is expected that the federal government will introduce legislation in 2018 that will outline the responsibilities of the province. Anne Marie further explained that in order for the province to develop laws around the legalization of cannabis they need to wait for the Federal Government to introduce their laws. The province extended an offer to work with First Nations as the laws come under development.

MARCH 6, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING

- Representatives from Droulers-Tsionhiakwatha Archaeological Site provided Council with an update on the ongoing operations of the site and requested Council's support to lobby Quebec for additional resources to operate the site.
- Akwasne members who were arrested and charged for hunting without authorization in New Brunswick presented to Council on the circumstances of the hunt and requested assistance from Council; Council will follow up on the request.
- Council was briefed on a request for permission to use common land for the construction of a boat dock; the request will be further researched.

- The Quebec Liaison Officer (QLO) provided Council with an update on a recent meeting in Quebec regarding the RL 31 Slips and the Solidarity Tax Rebate.
- A briefing was provided on the cost implications of the many commissions and committees within the MCA and will be further discussed at an upcoming meeting.
- MCRs passed: Confirmation of signing authority for Canada/Akwesasne funding agreement; Approval of amendment to Canada /Akwesasne funding agreement; Approval of Terms of Reference for working task group on the administration of justice; Approval of renewal of loan with CMHC; Approval of 2016/17 Cultural Development Agreement with Quebec.

MARCH 6, 2017 CALL WITH CLAUDIA FERLAND REGARDING SECURE CERTIFICATE OF INDIAN STATUS (SCIS)

On March 6, 2017 I received a call from Claudia Ferland, Director General responsible for status cards for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). The purpose of the call was to get my feedback on the possibility of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada issuing machine readable cards for the purpose of border crossing, very similar to how a passport or enhanced driver's license is machine readable.

Ms. Ferland explained that if this project goes ahead INAC would be looking at a few phases; one would be for those who have Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS) cards to be able to go through a simple process to have their SCIS card swapped for a new machine readable card. In order for a machine readable card to be issued, the individual has to have a secure card. INAC is in the process of simplifying the application process for a secure card and they expect this to be finalized in the coming months.

The other phase would be for intake clinics to be held for those interested in obtaining a machine readable card. This application process would include getting a secure card first, which means the same policy would apply, that once you get a secure card, you cannot go back to the laminated version.

I stressed to Ms. Ferland that in the past, INAC held intake clinics here in Akwesasne for a "border card" which resulted in applying in person, then having to send additional information to INAC after that. I explained to her that from our assessment many people didn't send the additional information to INAC because at that point, the whole process seems redundant and it becomes annoying and frustrating. I told Ms. Ferland that we need to avoid creating situations like this; we need one simple intake and that's it. I also raised the concern of having to give

up your laminated card at the time of application for the SCIS and how this poses a challenge on the ground, since ID is needed to cross the border, and we often need to cross the border several times per day. As the project development continues, we will continue to update the community on the progress.

MARCH 7, 2017 CALL WITH THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS AND REPORTS ANALYSIS CENTRE OF CANADA (FINTRAC)

Earlier in January 2017, our office wrote to the Director of the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (also known as FINTRAC) regarding the challenges our community faces with respect to banking and the international border. Over the last several years, community businesses in Akwesasne have faced additional scrutiny from banking institutes with respect to cash transactions, which has hindered business growth and access to banking services. We requested a meeting with the Director of FINTRAC to be able to provide him with a tour of the community and explain the realities of living and doing business in Akwesasne. On March 7, 2017 I spoke to Director Cossette regarding our request. Director Cossette explained to me that FINTRAC has no authority to direct business but rather is the monitoring agency. I explained to the Director that regardless I would like for him to have a better understanding of Akwesasne and the realities the border has on the community and our businesses. Our office will work with Director Cossette's office to schedule a community tour.

MARCH 8, 2017 CORNWALL & THE COUNTIES COMMUNITY FUTURES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CFDC)

On March 8, 2017 I met with Simon McLinden from the Cornwall & the Counties Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) to discuss a project the CFDC has undertaken known as the Cross Border Partnership Program which is dedicated to building a stronger relationship between Akwesasne and the municipalities that surround us. Simon explained to me that he will be meeting with local business leaders and governments to begin to dialogue on how our relationships can be strengthened to benefit the entire region.

MARCH 8, 2017 EMBRACE INITIATIVE—CORNWALL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

On the afternoon of March 8, 2017 I was invited to attend the launch of Embrace, a new initiative between the Change Foundation and the Cornwall Community Hospital. The Change Foundation will be working in partnership with the Cornwall Community Hospital to completely overhaul the way the healthcare system supports caretakers of people with mental health illnesses.



It's really about changing the support provided for the caretakers. I was pleased to be part of the launch of the partnership; during the question period I commented that this change also needs to include consultation with Akwesasne to reflect culturally appropriate service delivery models to meet the need of Indigenous people.

MARCH 9, 2017 BARBEQUE AT TSIIONKWANONHSO:TE

On the afternoon of March 9, 2017 members of our Council and I attended a spring BBQ at Tsiionkwanonhso:te. Considering that a number of residents of Tsiionkwanonhso:te are from Cornwall, we also invited the Mayor of Cornwall to attend the BBQ.



Members of our Council assisted with cooking and serving the meal to residents. After the meal, entertainment was provided by local musicians and a photo booth was set up for photos to be taken of residents and visitors.

MARCH 20, 2017 MEETING WITH CARLETON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT DR. ROUTE

On Friday March 20, 2017 I traveled to Ottawa to meet with the President of Carleton University. Robyn Mitchell, Belinda Koostachin, Margaret Lafrance, and Sheila Lafrance also attended the meeting. Over the last year we have been going back and forth with Carleton on the possibility of partnering with Iohahi:io to deliver a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program here in Akwesasne. Carleton has provided us with an outline of the anticipated cost to run the program with up to 20 students; at the meeting on March 20th we reviewed the latest financial model that Carleton provided to us over a month ago. Carleton was able to answer specific questions we had on the financial model, the next steps will be for us to submit a proposal to the Ministry to assist with the costs of the program.

MARCH 10, 2017 MEETING WITH CANADA BORDER SERVICE AGENCY

Following the meeting with Carleton, I had a 20 minute meeting with Martin Bolduc, Vice President (VP) of Programs, at the Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA). Mr. Bolduc has been involved in the Interdepartmental Steering Committee along with Tina Namiesniowski, Executive Vice President of CBSA. I had asked for this meeting with Mr. Bolduc to discuss the ongoing issue with vehicles driving into the oncoming traffic lane of the toll plaza to evade CBSA. I reiterated to Mr. Bolduc that because of the location of the toll plaza and CBSA we are experiencing an increase in these occurrences, I also reiterated that we need to know if Canada and CBSA were going to move forward with relocating the CBSA to the US side. I also explained that alternative reporting would help to mitigate traffic delays and that Akwesasne made several attempts to get CBSA to implement this option. I was informed that CBSA will be reaching out to us in the coming weeks to begin discussion on alternative reporting.

Given that Mr. Bolduc is part of the Interdepartmental Steering Committee I took the opportunity to inform him that INAC is looking at the possibility of creating a machine readable card. He was aware that we had communicated this to Fred Caron in January when he met with us as the Minister Special Representative on Cross Border issues.

Mr. Bolduc also informed me that in order to ensure safety and awareness the CBSA will be placing additional jersey barriers after the inspection booths to slow down traffic leaving CBSA.

MARCH 15–20, 2017

For the period of March 15 to March 20, 2017 I was out of the office on vacation.

MARCH 21, 2017 CONNECT TO INNOVATE

On the morning of March 21, 2017 I travelled to Ottawa to participate in a meeting with Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada regarding the call for proposals to the Connect to Innovate grant. This grant is being made available to assist with the expansion of fiber networks into communities. Over the last several months the Department of Tehotiiennawakon has been working with Mohawk Networks to prepare to submit an application to the Connect to Innovate fund.



On March 21, the Akwesasne team presented to a number of officials from Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada to provide an overview of Akwesasne as well as an overview of the project we are proposing here in Akwesasne. The representatives from Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada provided us with an overview of their application process as well. The Akwesasne team is working to finalize the application for submission.

MARCH 23, 2017 MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING

On the evening of March 23, 2017 we hosted our monthly General Meeting at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Centre. Chief Thompson and Chief Adams-Phillips presented to the community on a newly formed team known as the Akwesasne Green Team. The Chiefs explained that this team will be looking at ways to reduce community waste starting with getting our community to recycle more. Following the presentation, each Chief provided a 5–10 minute update on work they have been doing throughout the past month. Following the Chiefs updates, separate updates were provided on the Quebec Solidary Tax Credit, the Sixties Scoop, and Mohawk Language initiatives. The entire video of the General Meeting can be found at <https://youtu.be/XVeYJ3xMSW4>.

MARCH 24, 2017 CHIEFS OF ONTARIO POLITICAL CONFEDERACY

On Friday March 24, 2017 I attended the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Political Confederacy (PC) conference in Ottawa. The Regional Chief provided an update on the many ongoing files at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and reported that a number of Chiefs Committees will be formed over the spring and summer. It was reported that the AFN budget and staffing levels are back to where they were prior to the conservatives taking power in 2006.

The Chiefs agreed that the nuclear waste transportation discussion would be placed on the agenda for the All Ontario Chiefs Conference (AOCC) in June and prior to the conference, COO will research other situations where industry has attempted to transport radioactive material.

Joint Action Plan

The Regional Chief provided an update and overview of the Joint Action Plan, which is the Ontario Region's plan to address the water and infrastructure challenges and short falls in the region. The Ontario Regional Chief explained that the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC) is going through a transition but will be hosting a follow up meeting with leadership the first week of April. Also the Chiefs of Ontario will be hosting an infrastructure, water, and housing policy forum prior to the OFNSTC Leadership meeting; these two events will complement each other. COO will be making all efforts to webcast the policy forum. Both meetings will feed into the All Ontario Chiefs Meeting (AOCC) where a final Joint Action Plan will be presented to the Chiefs for acceptance.

Chief of Ontario Restructure Update

Following the PC retreat in Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation in October of 2017 the Chiefs agreed that the restructuring framework would have the following components for a project work plan: Deconstructing Our Current Reality, Modernizing the Current Structures, Recalibrating Policy Coordination, and Advocacy and Nationhood. An overview was provided of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to assist with the restructuring work. The PC approved the RFP to be sent to consultants.

Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) Update

The PC had previously agreed that a Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) would be held in Ottawa and that lobby days would occur immediately after the SCA. The SCA has been set for May 2-3, 2017 and the lobby day will occur on May 4, 2017. The Executive Director for COO updated that the Liberal caucus has agreed to meet

with the Chiefs and plans are underway for the Chiefs to meet with the NDP and Conservative caucus also.

Hydro One Purchase Update

An update was provided on the progress on the purchase of shares in Hydro One. The total purchase price will be \$268 Million with a 25 year loan with the entire \$268 being financed by the province. Part of the offer from the province would include an immediate transfer of \$45 million to the First Nations to use as seed capital investment. The Hydro One Committee has been working on a formula for distribution of dividend (profits) from the purchase; the committee is proposing that the same distribution formula for the Ontario First Nations Partnership (OFNLP) be used. The province is requiring that 80% of the communities accept the deal before the province will sign it. The window for this opportunity will close on December 29, 2017. It is predicted that within 4 years the \$268 million dollar purchase will start paying dividends.

Energy Roundtable Update

The province has announced that it will remove the delivery charge fee on electricity to First Nations citizens on reserve; there is also a request for band owned facilities on reserve to become part of the exemption. The Chiefs Committee will bring forward this request to the province. The committee also briefed the Political Confederacy (PC) on the ongoing grievance table to resolve individual community's grievances against Hydro One. The PC also discussed the ongoing concerns and impacts with the Ontario Long Term Energy Plan and the many initiatives the province has underway. The PC agreed that a full briefing will be provided to the Chiefs on energy and environment files at the upcoming All Ontario Chiefs Assembly (AOCC).

2017 Budget Review

A full briefing was provided on the recent budget announcement followed by a lengthy discussion on the lack of additional money for First Nation Child Welfare. With the recent decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on the funding inequities it was thought the government would announce new investments in First Nation Child Welfare and also with the recent decision on the 60's scoop in Ontario. The Chiefs will table the child welfare agenda during the upcoming lobby days. The Province of Ontario is set to release its budget on April 6 or 8, 2017.

Strategy for a Safer Ontario and Ontario First Nation Policing

Ontario has identified four priority policing areas as part of this strategy:

- 1) Enhance accountability and strengthen civilian governance of police services boards as well as ensure police oversight bodies are effective and have clear mandates;
- 2) Improve interactions between police and vulnerable Ontarians, including enhancing frontline responses to those in crisis;
- 3) Clarify police duties, modernize training programs, and deliver services using a range of public safety personnel; and
- 4) Develop a provincial framework for First Nations policing to ensure equitable and culturally responsive policing for the province's First Nations communities.

The new plan lays out several large projects, all under short timelines:

- 1) Major legislative amendments to the Police Services Act;
- 2) Implementation of a “hub model” policy approach to community safety;
- 3) Enhancing Ontario’s Response to Missing Persons;
- 4) Death Investigations/Coroner’s Inquests–Improving Service Delivery for Indigenous Communities; and
- 5) Ontario’s Strategy to End Human Trafficking.

The main concern of the Chiefs is the impact that the ambitious timelines and the potential amendments to the Police Service Act will have on our communities. An emphasis is placed on the Chiefs to participate in the ongoing sessions but also for the Regional Chief to raise the ambitious timelines as a concern with the Minister.

MARCH 27, 2017 CALL WITH PUBLIC SAFETY CANADA

On the late afternoon of March 27, 2017 I had a telephone call with Associate Deputy Minister of Public Safety Canada Gina Wilson. I had arranged for the call with Mrs. Wilson to discuss the recent increase of individuals driving into the opposite traffic at the tollbooth on Kawehno:ke in order to avoid Canada Customs. Mrs. Wilson has been briefed on the issue and was equally concerned for public safety. I provided Mrs. Wilson the same message given to Mr. Bolduc of CBSA, which was that because of the location of the toll plaza and CBSA we are experiencing an increase in these occurrences. I also reiterated that we need to know if Canada and CBSA are going to move forward with relocating the CBSA to the US side. I also explained that alternative reporting would help to mitigate

traffic delays and that Akwesasne had made several attempts to get CBSA to implement this option. We spoke about the Interdepartmental Steering Committee on border issues; Mrs. Wilson committed to setting up a presentation to the committee.

MARCH 29, 2017 IGNITED POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE TRAINING

On March 29, 2017 I was invited by the Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) to participate in a day long leadership training session with Ignited Potential Executive Coaching Services based out of Ottawa. The daylong session provided the participants with techniques to improve each participant's leadership skills. The coaches spoke about many varying scenarios whereby workforces become disengaged and provided techniques to bring the workforce back to life. The training overall was very informative and provided practical techniques for leaders to implement.

MARCH 31, 2017 CONFERENCE CALL WITH CANADA REGARDING THE TSIKARISTISERE/DUNDEE CLAIM

On March 31, 2017 the Akwesasne Tsikaristisere/Dundee negotiations team held a conference call with Canada's negotiation team to review a draft letter that Canada will be sending to organizations and municipal governments within the settlement area. The purpose of the letter is to inform municipalities, governments, and other First Nation organizations of the pending land claim settlement. Canada explained that they need to inform the parties of the possible Additions to Reserve (ATR) as an option of the settlement. We reviewed the language in the letter and provided comments and feedback; Canada agreed to wait on the release of the letter until the teams agree to a ratification schedule. At the meeting, Canada provided clarification on land selection area in Quebec as stipulated under the ATR policy. Canada also provided an update to Akwesasne that no decision had been made on the expropriation language or the referendum threshold language as of the meeting of March 31, 2017.