

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

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



OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF

Ennisko:wa/March 7, 2016

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

Happy Monday to all of you, I hope you had a great relaxing weekend!

The General Meeting was held last Thursday on Kawehno:ke at the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk School multi-purpose room. Approximately 25 members of the community attended. We appreciate those who were able to attend the meeting and participate in the various discussions.

The General Meeting agenda included two presentations; the first was by representatives from Statistics Canada on the upcoming Canada Census survey. Our office was recently approached by Statistics Canada, who is asking our community to participate in the census survey which is scheduled to begin throughout Canada on May 2, 2016. Following the presentation we had a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of participating in the upcoming Census Canada survey. No firm decision was made at the General Meeting, but should you have any questions or wish to express your opinion on whether or not our community should participate, please feel free to contact any District Chiefs or me to discuss it further.

The second presentation was provided by Dr. Rose Alma "Dolly" McDonald on our 2015-2018 Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Strategic Plan. The strategic plan was previously shared with the MCA work force but we wanted to present the final plan to the community as well. The presentation sparked discussion around a number of the priority areas and gave each member of Council an opportunity to speak about how they plan assist in seeing the plan through to fruition.

Finally, as I have been doing at each General Meeting, I provided my monthly report to the community. I'm attaching a copy of that report here for you as well. As always, I hope you take a moment to read my report in order to receive a quick update on some of the ongoing work your leadership is involved in. You are also encouraged to like my Facebook page "Abram Benedict" where you will have access to my regularly posted updates and reports.

Please feel free to reach out to me or any District Chief if you have any questions.

All my best for the upcoming month!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abram Benedict", is located below the text "All my best for the upcoming month!".

Abram Benedict
Grand Chief



Grand Chief Activity Report for the Month of Tsiothohrkó:wa/January 2016

January 4 & 5, 2016 Governance Training

The Council Chiefs and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) Executive Director, Directors and Assistant Directors came together for two days of training provided by Carol Hopkins. In September 2015 Council received Governance training on what the function of a Board is and how it should operate. Council wanted the Directors of the MCA to receive the same training on Governance. Part of the training outlined what is expected of Senior Management and in order for change to occur in the current MCA Governance system, Senior Management needs to be part of the training and the ongoing development of a Governance Plan.

January 8, 2016 Interviews for Investment Consultant

Part of the ongoing settlement process of the Tsikaristisere Dundee land claim Akwesasne is required to retain an Independent Investment Consultant to provide financial advice to the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) and community members. With the assistance of Gowlings our Legal Counsel a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued to a number of reputable Investment Consultants in Canada. A short list of potential consultants was created based on a rating system and three companies were offered interviews. On January 8th, Chief Karen Loran and I as well as staff members of the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) conducted interviews of the potential consultants. The final results of the interviews have yet to be completed, but will be released shortly.

January 9, 2016 Meeting with Trustees & Overseers for the Akwesasne Community Trust

On Saturday morning of January 9th the Council and Members of the MCA Internal Technical Team as well as the Trustee and Overseers for the Akwesasne Community Trust met to discuss issues of common concern on the implementation and operation of the Akwesasne Community Trust. Shannon Hall of Pathfinders Consulting assisted in the facilitation of the session, she also provided an overview on communication techniques. The half-day session gave the participants an opportunity to discuss moving forward and ensuring that all parties involved in the Trust understood each other's responsibilities

and duties in the Trusts operation. A future meeting is planned to review amendments to the Trust Agreement.

January 11, 2016 Conference call with Deputy Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development Canada

On the morning of January 11th I had a conference call with Deputy Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Colleen Swords, to discuss a number of issues. This was the first call I've had with Mrs. Swords; I was able to give a bit of an introduction of myself before going into the purpose of the call. We spoke about the delay in Canada confirming the appointment of the Federal Negotiator for the Tsikaristisere Dundee land claim negotiation table; the delay was hindering our ability to negotiate a final settlement agreement for the Community's consideration. The other subject matter we spoke about was the supply of the secure Certificate of Indian status cards and the pending phasing out of the laminated cards to a secure card and the impacts that would have on Akwesasne. Mrs. Swords committed to following up on the two issues, subsequent to the call, the Federal Negotiator was confirmed by Canada.

January 11, 2016 Jehovah's Witnesses

Monday, January 11th in the afternoon I met with representatives of the Jehovah Witnesses (JW) from the Massena and Cornwall organizations. The JW representatives wanted to share some of the JW literature that they had translated into Mohawk, and also wanted to share how they do outreach. The JW have changed how they make contact with people. In the past they may have come off as being pushy, now they do not tolerate any outreach methods like that.

January 11, 2016 Dinner with Jerry Benson Chairman of the Committee to bring a University to Cornwall

On the evening of January 11th, I met with Jerry Benson to receive an update on the ongoing work of the committee to bring a university to Cornwall. Akwesasne has been involved in the committee work for over a year with regular representation on the committee. The committee has made proposals to partner with Carleton University to deliver programming at the Nav Canada facility in Cornwall.

January 12, 2016 Council Meeting

Tuesday Council meeting update:

- Council was briefed on an upcoming Iroquois Caucus meeting set for January 27, 28, 2016 in Ottawa.

- A proposed postal code change for Kawehno:ke was discussed and will be further researched.
- A brief was provided on community feedback regarding Statistics Canada request for Akwesasne to participate in Census 2016; a presentation from Statistics Canada will be forthcoming.
- Council agreed that the next Council meeting the majority of the time will be dedicated to the discussion of Council's political plan for advancing our priorities, also Council agreed that a Chairperson will be appointed while the Grand Chief is on Vacation.
- Council asked Administration that any proposed travel to the USA be considerate of the exchange rate, Council agreed to this as well.
- A brief was given on a recent break-in at HAVFD station # 2, Council agreed to support the HAVFD and replace the equipment that was stolen (value \$2900).
- MCR's Passed: Approval of Cultural Development Agreement Final Report; Approval of Change in signing authority for resident trust account; Rescind (2) MCR's approving upgrade loan (no longer needed); Approval of Maintenance Loan to community members.

January 12, 2016 Presentation of Strategic Plan

Following our Council meeting of January 12th, members of Council and I attended a session with MCA Directors and Managers to hear a presentation from Dr. Rose Alma McDonald on the final Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Strategic Plan for the 2015-2018 Council term. The Strategic Plan is the final product after several working sessions with MCA Council Chiefs and Management. The final plan is scheduled to be presented at a future General Meeting.

January 12, 2016 Meeting with Grand Chiefs



On the afternoon of January 12th, following our presentation of the Strategic Plan to the Management of MCA, I met with Mohawk Council of Kanesatake, Grand Chief Serge Simon and Mohawk Council of Kahnawa:ke, Grand Chief Joseph Norton. At this meeting we discussed what each community was doing on the topic of tobacco and what regulatory framework existed in each community. We also discussed pipelines, and the impacts the proposed expansions would have on our territories. We agreed that the pipeline discussion would be held at a future Iroquois Caucus meeting.

January 12, 2016 Meeting with City of Cornwall Committee on port divestiture.

As part of the ongoing negotiations with Transport Canada for the divestiture of the Cornwall Port, Akwesasne meets regularly with the City of Cornwall to discuss strategy for the negotiations and to prepare for upcoming meetings with Transport Canada. On the evening of January 12th Akwesasne and City of Cornwall's negotiation committees met to prepare for an upcoming meeting with Transport Canada, this was also was opportunity for me to familiarize myself with the divestiture file since I haven't been involved with this issue until now.

January 14 & 15, 2016 Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Political Confederacy (PC) - Toronto

Over two days the Political Confederacy met in Toronto and discussed and provided direction on these areas:

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) relationship with COO - PC feels that with the lack of transparency and consultation from the National Chief with Ontario, Ontario will continue to push Ontario region priorities with the Federal Government and maintain direct relationship.

Consultation office - Ontario wants to reform the provincial consultation practices, Ontario proposes to hire a second position to COO to develop the policy. The Premier has offered to create a new provincial legislation to establish First Nations consultation requirements. PC will engage with the Ministry Aboriginal Affairs (MAA) to improve consultation practices and work on this initiative.

Proposed Ontario First Nations Economic Summit - COO is going to establish a working committee to work with Ontario to develop the summit. The target is either within three months or the Fall of 2016.

Pre-Budget Consultation - COO will seek a separate meeting with Minister of Finance and Minister of MAA on Submission. COO will appear in front of Finance Standing Committee

Update on Health Accord - Ontario recently released a discussion paper on "Patients First: A Proposal to Strengthen Patient-Centered Health Care in Ontario." The position paper outlines proposed changes to the Health Care System and COO is concerned with what the impacts are going to be on First Nations especially since there are already challenges with LHIN's. The upcoming health form will have a think tank session on the changes to LHIN's.

Stats Canada - The PC feels that the First Nations Regional Health Survey needs to be ramped up and used as an alternative to the Census collection. Statistics Canada publishes all data on-line and the principals of OCAP are not in place for the First Nations Data. COO will look into alternatives for data collection.

Update on Hydro One: Since the IPO sale in November shares have risen by \$1.50 per share. Next steps will be to develop a negotiation position; negotiate favorable finance terms; structure on how shares will be held; long term opportunities with equities in Hydro One; and make a determination if the purchase makes financial sense. The committee's work is ongoing.

January 19, 2016 Council Meeting

Tuesday Council meeting update:



- The Assembly of First Nations National Chiefs introduced himself to Council and also provided Council with an update on priority areas he has been working on.
- Representative from Welsh - Orbis Risk Consulting provided Council with a recap of the Organizational Review of Governance and Management Process and Structure Report completed in June 2015; and discussed next step and the formation of a working group to make recommendations to Council.
- Council discussed the resourcing of the Liaison positions within Mohawk Government and tasked Administration to research and report back.
- The draft agenda for the upcoming General Meeting was reviewed and will be released shortly.
- Council agreed to provide a Letter of Support for the widening of Hwy 138.
- Council was briefed on efforts to recover MCA costs from a summer accident involving tugboats at the North Channel Bridge demolition project.

- The logo for the Village of Whitesboro New York was discussed and Council agreed to send the Village a letter expressing our discontent over the continued use of the logo.
- MCR's passed: Approval of composition of members on the Entewathatha:wi Working Table; Council supports the Gottfriedson Class Action (Day Scholar); Approval of new lease Stanley Island; Approval new permit Colquhoun Island; Approval of CMHC loan renewal; Appointment of Chairperson while Grand Chief is away.

January 20, 2016 Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, Breakfast Connections

On January 20th I was invited by the Cornwall Business Chamber of Commerce to speak at "Breakfast Connections". This event is designed as a networking event for local businesses to come together to hear from other businesses on common themes. This Breakfast Connections theme was Outlook to 2016 from local politicians. The presentation panel was made up of the City of Cornwall, Akwesasne, Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP), Member of Parliament (MP) as well as local County representation. I was allotted ten minutes to highlight Akwesasne's priorities over the next year. I also highlighted my ambition to work closer with local Communities, Counties, City and other willing partners in areas of commonality including Job Creation. The venue was attended by approximately 40 people.

January 21, 2016 to January 28, 2016 Annual Vacation

From January 21st to 28th I was on vacation and out of the Country. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the monthly General Meeting. Thank you to our Council for assisting in the meeting's facilitation and presentations. Also a big Nia:wenko:wa to the Tsi Snaihne Chiefs for chairing the meeting.

January 29, 2016 Meet and greet Father Jerome B Pastores



Part of continuing to build relationships and in the spirit of working together on January 29th I met with Father Pastores from the St. Regis Mission Church to talk about the Food Bank Program the church operates and how the MCA can create awareness to the Program and the continued need for donations throughout the year. Over the next few months we will look into ways we can support the Food Bank Program at the St. Regis Mission Church.