

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

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



OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF

Tsiothóhrha/December 6, 2016

Wa'tkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

I hope everyone is well this great Tuesday; last night we hosted our first MCA Open House at Kanonhkwatsheri:io. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing so many employees in attendance, prepared to showcase the great programming we offer and answer questions from the community. Yesterday we also welcomed Jordan Wapass as the new Executive Director (ED) for the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. Acting Executive Director, Heather Phillips and I spent the entire day touring MCA facilities to introduce our new ED to as many employees as possible and to give him a better idea of the exact locations of our facilities. Nia:wen'kó:wa to all employees for the work that was done to make the first ever open house such a successful event and for providing such a warm welcome to the new ED for the MCA.

Last week we held our monthly General Meeting at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Centre. Approximately 15 people were in attendance. The agenda included a presentation from the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) on their Post-Secondary Program. Council members had recently received questions from community members about Post-Secondary funding and the General Meeting provided a great opportunity for the answers to be provided to the community, directly from AMBE representatives. It's really important for parents and students to understand how the Post-Secondary program works and to be aware of the funding limitations.

Following the presentation by AMBE, Council provided an update on the 2016 Heating Assistance Program and an update on Land Claims. Each Council member then gave a brief update on the specific work they have been doing related to their portfolios. Community members present were able to ask questions about each Council member's report. My monthly report is attached for your information. As announced at the General Meeting, please know that there will be no District Meetings or a General Meeting in the month of December.

Last Thursday, our first Holiday Dinner was hosted in Kanatakon and it was so great to see so many families come out for a traditional meal, served by Council members. This Thursday, December 8, our second Holiday Dinner is being held at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Center and on the following Thursday, December 15 the third and last Holiday Dinner is being held at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center. All are invited and welcome to attend.

In closing, I hope that all of you have a wonderful holiday season! On behalf of Council, I wish you the very best in the New Year.

Grand Chief Abram Benedict

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Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Kenténha/October 2016

October 3, 2016 Council Meeting

- Council agreed that Council meeting updates (these updates) will be provided to CKON for reporting to the community.
- Council agreed that further research will be done to determine a venue and costs for a MCA Christmas Party.
- The possibility of district wide Christmas dinners for the community will be researched for future consideration.
- Chiefs discussed the possibility of making the MCA Respect in the Workplace applicable to Chiefs; further research will be done.
- Council was briefed on an upcoming Chiefs of Ontario On-Reserve Electricity Rate Session; the Akwesasne position is that we must be included in a First Nations rate.
- A request for an additional information session on the Dundee settlement, targeted to leadership, was discussed and will be planned in the coming weeks.
- Council was briefed on the "Dreams take Flight" initiative; further follow up will be done on the possible opportunity.
- A recent donation made by SIBC for corridor art mural work was discussed and Council will respond in writing to SIBC.
- MCRs passed: Approval of relinquishment of lease on Stanley Island; Approval of (2) new construction loans to Community Members; Approval of (7) upgrade loans to Community Members; Approval of 1,000 Officers Partnership Agreement with Ontario; Approval of application to AEDF for arena pavilion; Approval to dissolve Executive Committee at recommendation

of committee; Approval of Executive Director hiring committee recommendation to offer the position to successful candidate; Approval to cease recognition of MCA Management Association and place all management under the MCA GPP.

October 4 & 5, 2016 Great Lakes Public Forum

On October 3, 2016, Chief Adams-Phillips and Chief J. Lazore traveled to Toronto to participate in the Great Lakes Public Forum in Toronto. The International Joint Commission (IJC) is the body responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement on behalf of the governments; the commission is comprised of six commissioners, three from Canada and three from the USA. The governments of Canada and the United States renewed and revised the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in 2012; at that time they committed to holding Great Lakes Public Forums every three years to provide reports on the progress of the agreement implementation. The Great Lakes agreement has the following 10 annexes: Areas of Concern, Lake Wide Management, Chemicals of Mutual Concern, Nutrients, Discharges from Vessels, Aquatic Invasive Species, Habitats and Species, Groundwater, Climate Change Impacts, and Science.

Over the course of the two days I attended, a number of updates were given in a wide variety of areas including the annexes (above) all of which affect the Great Lakes in one way or another. Very detailed formation was provided on efforts to bring or keep the lakes in a safe acceptable condition. The panelists also accepted questions from the floor on the material presented.

At the end of the second day (Wednesday) the IJC hosted a public session for individuals to make comments and suggestions or raise concerns to the six commissioners directly. As the environment portfolio holder for the Chiefs of Ontario, I made a submission to the commissioners about the need to have First Nation involvement in all aspects of the implementation of the agreement. More information about the International Joint Commission can be found at binational.net.

October 7, 2016 Meeting with Transport Canada and INAC regarding Seaway Case

As part of our ongoing efforts to resolve the Seaway litigation against Canada outside of the court process, the Akwesasne team met with representatives of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and Transport Canada on the

morning of October 7, 2016 in Akwesasne. The representatives from Canada provided us with an update on the return of Block 1 Lands for Adams, Toussaint, Presquile and Sheek Islands as well as Stanley Island. Canada also updated us on their progress with examining options to assist with alleviating the impact of bridge toll collections and Kawehno:ke corridor issues and improvements. We reiterated to Canada that “expropriation” is a taboo word for Akwesasne and that we don’t want to willingly be put in the position where Canada is able to take land from Akwesasne, like what was done in the 1950s. The next meeting with Canada will take place in December.

October 22, 2016 Council Meeting

- Council further discussed feedback from the community on the possibility of broadcasting pre-recorded or live streaming the General Meetings and also discussed the policy and format changes that would be needed if meetings are to be broadcast or streamed.
- Council agreed that the travel budget for Mohawk Government will be increased to accommodate the need.
- The need to review Council committees, boards, and commissions was discussed and will be followed up on by portfolios.
- A briefing was provided on the recent community fund callout.
- Council agreed that a communique will be issued to the community on safety in the corridor and the need to be mindful of pedestrians walking in the area.
- Representatives from Welch LLP presented the 2015/2016 MCA audit and discussed future considerations for financial planning.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of (7) sets of Council Meeting minutes; Approval of 15/16 MCYS Justice Program reconciliation report; Approval of 15/16 TPAR report for MCYS Child Welfare Program; Approval of 15/16 revenue and expense report for Ministry of Education Children's Services program; Approval to open individual BMO Education Savings Accounts for ACFS clients; Approval of upgrade loan to community member; Approval of revisions to 2015-2018 Council portfolio listings; Approval of Project Approval Request for Tsi Snaihne School Subdivision Sewage to be submitted to INAC; Approval of funding application to MIRR (Ontario) for enhancements to MCA Communications Unit.

October 11, 2016 Conference Call on Education Governance Proposal

Recently our office has been working with local consultant Dr. Rose Alma “Dolly” McDonald and the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education to develop a governance proposal on education for presentation to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) for consideration. On October 11, 2016 we held a conference call with education portfolio and the consultant to review a draft of the proposal. Feedback was provided and will be incorporated into a final proposal. A future date will be scheduled with INAC to present the final proposal.

October 12 & 13, 2016 Ontario First Nations Economic Forum (OFNEF)



L-R: Grand Chief Benedict, Grand Chief Ava Hill, Chief Clarence Louie, Ontario Minister Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation David Zimmer.

On October 12 & 13, 2016 I co-chaired the Ontario First Nations Economic Forum (OFNEF) in Toronto with Chief Ava Hill of Six Nations. The agenda included several panel discussions in the morning, followed by several afternoon workshop sessions. The agenda also included the following keynote speakers: Chief Clarence Louie from the Osoyoos Indian Band, Gary David former president of the National Centre for American Indian Enterprise Development, and Ted Nolan former NHL player and coach. All three of the speakers were very motivational

speakers and are involved in business development in one way or another.

On Thursday morning Minister Bennett addressed the forum and spoke about the importance of fostering economic development in Indigenous communities and reiterated the government’s commitment to working with First Nation communities. I spoke briefly with Minister Bennett and requested to meet with her regarding a few issues in Akwesasne.

Overall the forum went very well; we received positive feedback from both participants and panelists. The Chiefs Planning Committee will now work to

develop a policy statement for the Chiefs consideration either in November 2016 or June 2017.

October 12, 2016 Meeting with Minister Zimmer and Minister Sousa

On October 12, 2016 Jim Ransom, Chief Troy Thompson, Chief Thomas, and I met with Minister Zimmer and the Minister of Finance Charles Sousa to discuss the next steps with respect to the Ontario Tobacco Pilot Project which Tehotiennawakon is leading for the MCA. This meeting also included Chief Lesley White-eye from the Chippewas of Thames First Nation whose community is also involved in a tobacco pilot project with Ontario. We were



L-R: Hon. Charles Sousa, Chippewas of the Thames Chief Lesley Whiteye, Grand Chief Benedict, Indigenous Relations Minister Zimmer, Chief Troy Thompson.

recently informed that Ontario is prepared to examine revenue sharing models with respect to tobacco; the Ministers reiterated Ontario's commitment to moving this project forward. I clarified to the Ministers that regardless of the arrangement, Akwesasne will not become a tax collector for the province of Ontario and that any model proposed should reflect that. The Ministers understood our position and continue to examine options in collaboration with the MCA.

October 13, 2016 Meeting with Minister Glen Murray



Minister for Environment & Climate Change Ontario, Glen Murray, introduction with Grand Chief Benedict

Thursday October 13, in the afternoon the Political Confederacy (PC) met with the Minister for Environment and Climate Change Ontario, Glen Murray. Recently there has been a lot of discussion amongst the Chiefs about the

Chiefs of Ontario's role with respect to climate change. Mushkegowuk Tribal Council has provided strong objection to the Chiefs of Ontario speaking on behalf of Mushkegowuk. The objection from Mushkegowuk led to resolutions being delayed at the All Ontario Chiefs Assembly (AOCC) in June. Following the AOCC, the Regional Chief has met with Mushkegowuk and Ontario. Ontario has since established a bi-lateral table with Mushkegowuk and has committed to establish other bi-lateral tables with other communities. I expressed to the Minister that Akwesasne would be interested in establishing a bi-lateral table with Ontario on climate change. The Minister and his staff gave an overview of all the ongoing files at the ministry and committed to meeting with the PC on a regular basis. Following the meeting, I spoke briefly with the Minister and extended an invitation to him to tour our community to see the on the ground challenges in Akwesasne.

October 13, 2016 Phone interview with APTN National News

On the afternoon of October 13, 2016 I had a 20-minute phone interview with Brandi Morin from APTN regarding my thoughts on the Trudeau government being in place for almost one year. I highlighted some of the positives such as the funding provided to address housing and child welfare needs; the efforts to include Indigenous people in international forums like the United Nations (UN); recent environmental summits held; and the inquiry into missing Indigenous woman and girls.

After speaking about some of the positives, I highlighted some of the areas that need improvement, such as the need to flow funding quicker for new initiatives; ensuring all Ministries are being held accountable to their mandate letters; and implementation of the Jay Treaty. APTN will be publishing a story on the one year anniversary of the Trudeau government once feedback is received from other Chiefs on the government's progress.

October 17, 2016 Council Meeting

- Staff from Nation Building provided Council with an update and briefing on the program's progress on the self-government negotiations.
- Council set the agenda for the upcoming General Meeting, scheduled for October 27, 2016 at the St. Regis Recreation Center.
- An update was provided on a recent session on "On reserve electricity rates" with the Chief of Ontario.

- Council was asked to review portfolio affiliated committees for the purpose of ensuring the portfolio listings are accurate.
- Council agreed to support the upcoming Kawehno:ke Recreation Christmas fundraiser.
- Council agreed to provide additional clarification on a recent decision of Council regarding MEA.
- MCRs passed: Approval of INAC Housing Capacity funding; Approval of project submission to INAC for Buckshot Road reconstruction; Approval of funding application to Centre of Excellence for MRP Special Pilot fund; Acceptance of the new Mohawk Council of Akwesasne flag for official use; Acceptance of funding from Quebec to support the position of Quebec Liaison Officer.

October 18, 2016 First Nations Water Crisis Summit



On Tuesday October 18, 2016, I attended the Chiefs Water Crisis Summit hosted by the Ontario First Nations Technical Service Corporation (OFNTSC) in Niagara Falls. The OFNTSC outlined the current state of the water crisis in Ontario and provided background on the funding reductions that have occurred over the last 5 years which have translated into a 10% reduction per year. The Prime Minister of Canada has committed to ending Boil Water Advisories (BWA) within the next 5 years (4 left now). The OFNTSC is recommending a First Nations Led Approach (FNLA), seizing on the commitment from the government and ending the BWAs. A proposed conceptual framework on what a FNLA would look like was presented for the Chiefs consideration. The OFNTSC was looking for approval to proceed with further exploration of what a FNLA would look like. Part of the conceptual design would be the creation of an administrative, management, and support structure to advocate and lobby the governments alongside the Chiefs of Ontario but would

also provide support to the First Nations. Once the concept was tabled, the Chiefs present had several questions on the concept and expressed concern with the model, but overall the Chiefs were supportive of giving the OFNTSC the direction to investigate this concept further. A consensus was made on resolution to proceed with further investigation and presentation to the Chiefs in Assembly in November.

October 19, 2016 Meeting with Ontario RDG for INAC

On the afternoon of October 19, 2016 I met with the Ontario Regional Director General for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada Mauricette Howlett regarding a reimbursement of \$150,000 for the design work for the Tsi Snaihne Wastewater Treatment Plant. Mauricette Howlett was leaving INAC that week, taking a position at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), but we wanted to get the commitment to reimburse Akwesasne signed off before she left. We both signed off on the paperwork to process the \$150,000 reimbursement. I extended our appreciation to her for all the work she has done for us, and on behalf of the Mohawk Council, wished her well at CRA.

October 20, 2016 OACAS Board Meeting

The board for the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) met on October 20, 2016 to conduct its regular monthly business. The agenda included a presentation on the shared service model, as well as the new CAS worker authorization program. The regular updates provided to us at the board meetings help to ensure that the entire sector is aware of OACAS' work. Other board business and updates provided included: Update on reconciliation; Board Governance Committee update; CEO report; and financial statement reporting. The next regularly scheduled board meeting is set to occur on November 17, 2016.

October 20, 2016 Conference Call with INAC regarding 5 Large First Nations Study

On the afternoon of October 20, 2016, I was on a conference call with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) regarding the update of the Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) study on the 5 Large First Nations funding formulas. INAC has committed to updating the original study and has engaged PWC to do the work. This conference call was a kick off to PWC beginning the work. Over the next few weeks, PWC will be contacting the 5 Large First Nations communities to schedule a time to come and meet with finance and leadership.

October 24, 2016 Council Meeting

- Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) staff provided Council with an update and feedback from the recent Tsikaristisere/Dundee Land Claim information meetings.
- A representative from the Bank of Montreal Aboriginal Banking Unit provided Council with an update on Aboriginal Banking and the BMO On-Reserve Mortgage Program.
- Council agreed to host the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) Chiefs Assembly.
- Chiefs agreed that a lobbying committee meeting will be scheduled in the near future.
- Council agreed that a press release will be published in response to a press release made by a community group regarding the MCA.
- A brief was provided on a community business and approval was given for the Grand Chief to provide a letter of support.
- Council was updated on "Ionkwakwe:nion" the Book of Recognition.
- MCRs passed: Approval of request to transfer band registry to Mohawks of Akwesasne (membership approved); Approval of business application to be submitted to Quebec AEDF fund; Approval of 2016/17 Heating Assistance Program; Approval of Bank of Montreal mortgage guarantee for community member; Approval of contract award for expansion of waterline to James E Lazore Memorial Road; Approval of 2015 Annual Reconciliation Report for Ministry of Long Term Care Tsiionkwanohnso:te; Approval of amendment of transfer payment agreement with Ontario for Tobacco Pilot Project.

October 27, 2016 Monthly General Meeting

On the evening of October 27, 2016 Council hosted the monthly General Meeting at the St. Regis Recreation Centre. The agenda included roundtable updates from the District Chiefs on portfolio work they have been working on. Following the roundtable updates, we provided an update on the 2016/2017 MCA Heating Assistance Program and an update on the land

claims. The new MCA inclement weather policy was presented to the community for informational purposes. During the heating assistance update portion, Council was questioned on why members residing off the Territory aren't able to access the heating assistance program. Each member of Council responded to the question, but Council committed to further examine the option for next year's program. There were approximately 10 community members in attendance at the meeting. We greatly appreciate the attendance of all community members who were able to attend.

October 28, 2016 Chiefs of Ontario Political Confederacy

Following the General Meeting of October 27, 2016 I traveled to Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation, which is two hours northwest of Thunder Bay, for the Chiefs of Ontario Political Confederacy (PC) meeting. The main purpose of the meeting was for the members of the PC to discuss relationship building and how each representative relates to the PC and the Chiefs of Ontario. Over the last several months, a number of the Chiefs have questioned the purpose of the Chiefs of Ontario and also the advocacy role the Regional Chiefs plays. The representatives present expressed the view of moving forward and it was agreed that regardless of differences the Political Confederacy would continue to work though the challenges.

October 31, 2016 Council Meeting

- Dr. Ian Kalman from Western University briefing Council on a proposed research project on the Cornwall/Akwesasne Port Divestiture as well as on the recently passed Akwesasne Mohawk Court Law. Council will further discuss the request to research in a few weeks.
- Council discussed a health concern regarding burned out structures and will further research options for mitigation.
- A recent letter from Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to a community business regarding GST/HST was discussed and will be further researched and tabled with other communities.
- A briefing was provided on an upcoming welcome reception with AFNQL Chiefs on Wednesday.

- Council was briefed on island lease issues; to be further researched and discussed at a later date.
- A number of post-secondary support concerns were discussed; portfolio will follow up.
- Council agreed that the November General Meeting will occur on November 30, 2016 and that no District Meetings will be scheduled for December 2016.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of 15/16 Audit for Akwesasne Mohawk Police Services; Acceptance of 15/16 Audit for Community Justice Program; Approval of upgrade loan to community member.

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