

# MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

*Sustaining our inherent rights, facing challenges together to build a strong and healthy future.*



## *OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF*

Kentenha/October 30, 2018

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

I hope you are well this final week of October 2018. I look forward to seeing all the kids out tomorrow afternoon making their way around the Village to collect some treats from our offices and homes. It's amazing how Kana:takon transforms into a spooky village full of many trick or treaters, with loads of goodies being given out into the early evening. I want to thank all those involved in making Halloween such a successful event in Kana:takon and all other parts of Akwesasne. We truly have dedicated community people here, and we appreciate everything you do. Niawen:kowa!

Throughout the months of September and October, Council hosted a total of four community information sessions on the proposed natural gas expansion onto Kawehno:ke. As we roll into November, we will continue to host information sessions as well as a CKON talk show. In the new year, we will have canvassers going door to door on Kawehno:ke to discuss the project with community members. Be sure to keep an eye out for additional information in your mailbox and in MCA newsletters.

I remind community members to sign up for this year's Heating Assistance Program. The heating assistance amount is \$500 per eligible household and for Elders aged 60 or better, the amount is \$800 per eligible household. The deadline for applications is November 30, 2018 at 4:00 pm.

This past month's General Meeting took place on October 25, 2018 at the Kana:takon Recreation Center. Unfortunately, due to a prior commitment, I was unable to attend the General Meeting, but I thank our Council for ensuring the General Meeting proceeded as scheduled in my absence. Also a big Niawen:kowa to Chief Connie Lazore for agreeing to chair the General Meeting in my absence. My monthly report was distributed to the community that evening; I am now sharing my monthly report with you. The full recording of the General Meeting can be found at [https://youtu.be/YizR\\_5V8S7I](https://youtu.be/YizR_5V8S7I)

I wish you the very best for the month ahead!

Sken:nen

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abram Benedict".

Abram Benedict  
Grand Chief



## **Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Kentenha/October 2018**

### **SEPTEMBER 4, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING**

- MCA Smart Cities working group provided Council with an overview of the progress and outlined the next steps for the final proposal development.
- The Comptroller for the MCA provided an overview of the MCA bank accounts and outlined required documentation for signing authorities.
- Council discussed the upcoming 2018/2019 home heating assistance program. It was agreed that further research will be done on the possibility of increasing the amount provided to the community.
- A letter of request to utilize MCA property was reviewed and referred to the OVS committee to examine further.
- MCRs passed: Approval of new youth Council member for the 3-year term; Approval of matching funds for Kawehno:ke street light project; Approval to construct a boathouse and dock for the AMPS SAVE program.

### **SEPTEMBER 4, 2018 NATURAL GAS EXPANSION**

On September 4, 2018 members of our Council met with staff of the MCA Economic Development program to discuss the proposed natural gas expansion project for Kawehno:ke. Our Consultant provided the staff with an overview on natural gas, including its benefits, what the proposed project would entail, and the timelines for the project.

### **SEPTEMBER 5, 2018 INTERNAL CANNABIS DISCUSSION**

On the morning of September 5, 2018 members of our Council met with our legal counsel to review a draft of the Akwesasne Interim Regulations. Leading up to Canada's legalization of Cannabis, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne had undertaken to draft interim regulations. Our Council reviewed the interim regulations line by line and provided feedback to legal counsel to incorporate. Following the meeting of September 5, a small committee of 3 Chiefs and the Grand Chief was formed to receive additional comments from the Council and to work with our legal counsel to develop a final draft regulation for Council to consider at a later date.

### **SEPTEMBER 5, 2018 CITY OF CORNWALL WATERFRONT PLAN**

On the evening of September 5, 2018 our Council met with representatives from Mehak, Kelly & Associates, Inc. who were hired by the City of Cornwall to update their 2007 Waterfront Plan. At the meeting, Cornwall's waterfront plan was shared with members of our Council who provided the representatives with potential future development options. The Mohawk Council representatives made it clear that the meeting was in no way considered consultation for the purpose of any consultation requirements, as established by the Supreme Court of Canada.

### **SEPTEMBER 6, 2018 SELF GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATIONS**

On September 6, 2018 I attended the Canada/Akwesasne Self Government negotiations at the Native North American Travelling College. The morning began with a review of the record of decisions from the previous meeting. The group discussed the progress being made through the negotiations and agreed to keep the pace moving steadily to ratification. Canada provided Akwesasne with some updates on undertakings from the previous meetings. A lengthy discussion was held on Canada's international obligations, for when the final agreement is signed. These discussions are unique to Akwesasne since our community is dissected by the international border, as well as part of Canada's commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The

manager for the Office of Vital Statistics (OVS) provided an update on a project sponsored by Canada to identify property lines. A request to meet with Minister Bennett was also discussed, and Canada pledged to follow up on the request. Unfortunately, I was only able to attend the morning session of the negotiations. The next negotiation session will occur in October.

### **SEPTEMBER 7, 2018 CORNWALL CHILDREN'S TREATMENT CENTRE DINNER AND ROAST**

On the evening of September 7, 2018 I attended the Cornwall Children's Treatment Centre Dinner and Roast in honour of Reverend Kevin Maloney at the Best Western Parkway Inn in Cornwall. Reverend Kevin Maloney is the Diocesan Director of Vocations for the Alexandria-Cornwall Diocese. The evening began with a meal followed by the roast, which included some funny stories told by friends and colleagues of Reverend Kevin Maloney. The event raised \$40,700 for the Cornwall Children's Treatment Centre.

### **SEPTEMBER 10, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING**

- The interim Cannabis committee provided an update from a recent committee meeting.
- Council was briefed for an upcoming meeting with CBSA on a design lab exercise. Council also discussed a recent case of duties being imposed on a business.
- An update was provided to Council on the recent request for proposals for strategic planning services.
- Two community members presented to Council on the need to expand special needs services for adults.
- A community member requested Council's assistance on an ongoing challenge with Canada Revenue Agency.
- Council agreed that Chief Tim Thompson will chair next week's meeting in the absence of the Grand Chief.
- MCRs passed: Approval of assignment of lease on Stanley Island; Approval of grant agreement with Infrastructure Canada for the

development of final proposal for Smart Cities Challenge;  
Acknowledgment of 2018 MCA General Election Results;  
Approval of 2018 audit for Tsikaristisere/Dundee Land Claim.

### **SEPTEMBER 10, 2018 MEETING WITH PROTEUS**

As part of the ongoing Tsikaristisere/Dundee claim settlement, our Council met with our investment consultant Proteus to review potential short term investment options for the claim proceeds. As part of the proposed settlement agreement, the Mohawk Council must invest the proceeds in consultation with the community. However, it is recognized that as soon as the proceeds are received there will be a need to make short term investments until those longer term options are determined. The short term investment options are what's currently being reviewed. On September 10, 2018 Council received options for consideration from Proteus. Council discussed the options and determined that another date would be set to further discuss the options.

### **SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS—RIGHTS RECOGNITION FRAMEWORK**

On September 11, 2018 I travelled to Gatineau to participate in an Assembly of First Nations (AFN) policy forum on Affirming First Nation Rights and Title and Jurisdiction. The conference began with remarks from the National Chief who explained the work the AFN has been doing to promote rights recognition with the Government of Canada. A presentation was provided to the assembly on the legal responsibilities of the Government of Canada to Indigenous communities. Minister Bennett spoke about the importance of having principal based legislation in place by the Spring of 2019. The Government of Canada announced that they would develop an indigenous rights recognition framework. Since the announcement, Minister Bennett has been dialoguing with communities on what the framework may look like. At the AFN forum, some Chiefs and community representatives were able to address Minister Bennett directly on concerns with the Right Framework. Following a lengthy

question and answer session with Minister Bennett, a representative from the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians (AIAI) provided the assembly with an alternative framework for consideration, in place of the Minister's framework. The participants of the assembly debated all options and determined that additional dialogue was needed at the following day of the forum. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the second day of the debate.

### **SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 CHIEFS OF ONTARIO POLITICAL CONFEDERACY**

On the evening of September 11, 2018 I met with members of the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Political Confederacy (PC) to receive updates on the recent COO restructuring project, discuss the Confederacy member's portfolios, and discuss the upcoming PC retreat set for October 2018 in Thunder Bay. It was explained to the PC that as part of the restructuring project, a survey had been sent to all community leadership with a moderate number of returned surveys. It was further explained that a steering committee will be created to assist with guiding the restructuring work. The PC agreed that portfolio selection would potentially occur at the upcoming PC meeting in Thunder Bay. The agenda for the upcoming PC retreat was reviewed and accepted.

### **SEPTEMBER 12, 2018 PAROLE BOARD OF CANADA**

On September 12, 2018 I attended the Parole Board of Canada Chairperson's Indigenous Circle meeting at the Odawa Friendship Centre. The Chairperson Jennifer Oades welcomed the circle members and reviewed the terms of reference for the circle. After introductions were made, representatives from the Parole Board of Canada provided an overview of the following areas and functions within the Parole Board of Canada: Internal Governance; Recruitment, Selection, and Training; Partnerships and Outreach; and Truth and Reconciliation: Our Calls to Action. Statistics and background information were then presented for the following areas: Elder-assisted hearings; Community-assisted hearings; Conditional Release; and 2018 Elders-assisted hearing reviews.



A member of the circle who is a representative from Correctional Services Canada (CSC) provided an update on the CSC Indigenous Strategy and also spoke about the coloration and communication that occurs between the CSC and the Parole Board of Canada. The circle discussed barriers to successful reintegration, what supports and/or special conditions the Board should consider to increase the likelihood of successful reintegration, what opportunities are being overlooked, what the parole board should be doing to contribute to the elimination of the over-representation. The circle will meet twice a year to provide additional advice and guidance to the Parole Board of Canada.

### **SEPTEMBER 13, 2018 INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA**



On September 13, 2018 we hosted representatives from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Indian Registry Branch. We welcomed the representatives to the community with a tour followed by a meeting

with our Council. In response to Fred Caron's border report, ISC has been exploring the possibility of making the Certificate of Indian Status (status card) machine readable. At the meeting of September 13, we discussed with ISC the impacts of the border to our community and the effects of border wait times. ISC explained that over the next several months, ISC will continue to work to make the status card machine readable and that ISC would work directly with Akwesasne to pilot the deployment of the project. We will set up follow up meetings with ISC to work toward implementation of the pilot.

### **SEPTEMBER 14, 2018 AKWESASNE COMMUNITY SETTLEMENT TRUST**

On September 14, 2018 our Council met with trustees, overseers, and the administrative trustee for the Akwesasne Community Settlement Trust. The purpose of the meeting was for new Council to meet the trustees, the overseers, and the administrative trustee for the trust, but also to receive a presentation from the administrative trustee on the trust and its operation. The administrative trustee from Deloitte explained how the trust works, the role of the trustees and Deloitte, and further explained the current investments of the trust. This meeting gave members of our Council the opportunity to ask questions of the trustees and Deloitte.

### **SEPTEMBER 14, 2018 CORNWALL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL YOUTH HUB**



On the morning of September 14, 2018 I attended a special announcement made at the Cornwall Community Hospital (CCH). The CCH announced that they had been selected to receive government funding to create a youth hub at the CCH and the Hawkesbury Hospital. The hubs will target the needs of youth, aged 12 to 25, who need assistance with mental health, substance use, primary care, education, employment training, housing, and other community

services. Akwesasne will work to identify Akwesasne youth to participate with the establishment of the CCH Youth Hub.

### **SEPTEMBER 17, 2018 ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES**

On September 17, 2018 I travelled to Rama First Nation to attend a gathering with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) titled "Learning Together to Bring Indigenous Children Home." This gathering was part of the ongoing reconciliation work the OACAS is doing to promote better relations between Ontario Children's Aid Societies (CASs) and Indigenous communities. On the first day of the gathering, a panel of various speakers took to the stage and spoke about their experiences in the child welfare system. The experiences were varying from caseworkers working with an Indigenous family and community, to agency supervisors speaking about the importance of relationship building. One of the panellists talked about her experience in the northern communities and the challenges they faced in the child welfare system. Following the panellist presentations, former Chief Marcia Brown-Martel spoke about her experience in being taken from her home as a child in an era that is now known as the 60's scoop. Marcia is the lead plaintiff in the Ontario action against the federal government for allowing the 60's scoop to happen. The first day ended with Elders providing their reflections on the presentations, as well as their thoughts on the current state of the Ontario child welfare system and it's move towards reconciliation. The second day of the gathering was a dialogue with all the participants on the previous day's presentations and reflections and discussion on next steps for the Ontario CASs. The participants were broken into smaller groups to discuss how improvements can be made within CASs and with communities. The two-day gathering ended with a summary report by the facilitator.

### **SEPTEMBER 18, 2018 ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

On the morning of September 18, 2018 the St. Lawrence College Board of Governors held its regular monthly board meeting. The

agenda for the board meeting included an update and report from the President & CEO as well as from the executive team for the college. Each executive member provided the governors with an update from their respective departments within the college. Following the administrative updates, the committee chairs provided reports from the committees. The Academic Committee requested the governor's approval of new terms of reference for the committee as well as the upcoming year's work plan. The Strategy, Communications & Advancement Committee and the Finance, Students & Operations Committee also requested their terms of reference and their upcoming work plan be approved as well. The committee's terms of reference is reviewed and approved by the governors every three years or when new governors are appointed to the board. The next board meeting will be in November.

### **SEPTEMBER 19, 2018 INTERVIEW WITH CBC**

On the afternoon of September 19, 2018 I participated in a phone interview with CBC Montreal about our Tsikaristisere/Dundee Claim. Jessica Deer, the reporter, asked about the process we are using for the referendum and we also spoke about why the claim is important to the community. For anyone interested in reading the full article, it is available at: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/akwesasne-mohawk-referendum-vote-dundee-land-claim-1.4828347>

### **SEPTEMBER 20, 2018 ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES**

The board for the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) met on September 20, 2018 to conduct its regular monthly business. The consultant hired to assist with the OACAS 2019-2024 strategic plan provided the board with an overview of the final plan. The CEO spoke about how the strategic plan tied into a change management framework for the organization and how over the next few years the organization will undergo a change in how it operates, to be more effective and responsive to the sector. An update was provided on the recent provincial election of June 2018, an overview was given on the newly elected government priorities, and it was

explained there is uncertainty in the child welfare sector because of the change in government. The Indigenous Director gave a debrief from the recent Children's First Gathering and discussed the overall success of the gathering. Other board business and updates provided included: Shared Services Intra-Zone Updates; Strategic Planning; Finance Report; and CEO Report. The next board meeting is set to occur on October 18, 2018.

### **SEPTEMBER 21, 2018 TSIKARISTISERE/DUNDEE INFORMATION SESSION**

On September 21, 2018 I attended a Tsikaristisere/Dundee information session at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre. Over the last several months our Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) has collaborated with our education consultants to set up community information meetings to share information about the claim and the ongoing referendum process.

### **SEPTEMBER 21, 2018 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE**



I was invited to attend Akwesasne's 1<sup>st</sup> celebration of the International Day of Peace by Mr. Kirby Jock, which took place on September 21, 2018. The morning began with a traditional opening to mark the day, which was followed by welcoming words. Mr. Jock

spoke about the importance of peace and recognition of the International Day of Peace. I echoed Mr. Jock's sentiments but also talked about the importance of community collaboration to advance our community priorities. The attendees marked the significance of peace and unity by planting a white pine tree at the ceremony site.

### **SEPTEMBER 21 & 24, 2018 NATURAL GAS EXPANSION**

As part of our ongoing community information campaign to inform the community about natural gas and the potential to expand natural gas onto Kawehno:ke, we hosted a lunch and learn at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre on September 21, 2018. I provided an overview of the history of the main transmission line on Kawehno:ke, the past studies that have been conducted, and the attempts to access natural gas. Our consultant provided the community with information on natural gas as a fuel and also spoke about the history of the discovery of gas. An overview of the proposed project was also provided. Community members in attendance were able to ask questions and make comments about the project. A second information session was similarly held on the evening of September 24, 2018 at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Centre. Additional information sessions will be set up in the coming months.

### **SEPTEMBER 24, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING**

- Representatives from the Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario (ASWCO) provided an overview of who they are and the programs available for community partnerships.
- The Manager for the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) provided an update to Council on the ongoing education process for the upcoming referendum for the Tsi:karistisere Dundee land claim.
- A representative from Cornwall Gravel provided Council with an overview of a proposed project to expand an existing quarry located on Akwesasne traditional territory. Further follow up will occur.

- Council determined that they will provide assistance, in the form of political solutions, to a community business. This is with regard to the business's ongoing challenges with the Canada Revenue Agency.
- MCRs passed: Approval of 2017/18 audit report for AIDS program; Approval of 2017/18 audit for Health Access & Diabetes Program; Approval of 2017/18 audit for Community Service Program; Approval of 2017/18 TPAR report for Child Welfare Program; Approval of 2017/18 CMHC audit for section 95; Approval of transfer agreement with Ontario New Relationship Fund; Approval to increase the benefit allotment for the 2018/19 Heating Assistance Program; Approval of Assignment of lease on Hamilton Island; Approval of Assignment of lease on Renshaw Island; Approval to rescind MCR for previous lease assignment; Approval of amendment to contract with Ministry of Community and Corrections for program delivery; Approval of contract with Zu.com for development of Akwesasne Smart Cities final proposal.

### **SEPTEMBER 27, 2018 TEN-YEAR GRANT**

On the morning of September 27, 2018 Chief Connie Lazore and I held a conference call with Orbis Risk Consulting. The purpose of the meeting was to strategize for an upcoming meeting with Indigenous Services. Over the past several months, MCA has been pursuing Indigenous Services for a 10-year Grant for the MCA. On the conference call of September 27, we discussed the upcoming meeting with Orbis and reviewed a number of slides from a PowerPoint presentation and agreed that specific slides on the MCA readiness would be included in the presentation for the upcoming meeting.

### **SEPTEMBER 27, 2018 GENERAL MEETING**

On the evening of September 27, 2018 we hosted our monthly General Meeting at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre. The evening began with an introduction of the Akwesasne Youth Council members, followed by an update presentation from the Aboriginal

Rights and Research Office (ARRO) on the Tsikaristisere/Dundee claim and the referendum process. Following those presentations, the Manager for the Entewatatha:wi Nation Building program provided the community with an update on the Canada-Akwesasne negotiations. The entire recording of the General Meeting can be found at: <https://youtu.be/aX2SIx w6FY>