

# MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

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



Kentenhko:wa /November 22, 2018

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

It's incredible how the month of November is flying right by us. I hope that November was a good month for you and your family. Seems like only yesterday we had 100s of children here in Kana:takon for Halloween enjoying the festivities. Now we only have about 32 days until Christmas. The Christmas holiday season is fast approaching, and that means the stores will soon be busy for weeks to come, our children will continue to be more anxious and the parents will continue to feel the frenzy. Hopefully during the holiday season, you will also be able to relax, enjoy time with your family, and take in some good food.

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne will be hosting our annual open houses on November 27, 28, 29, 2018 at each respective school. It's always great to bring the MCA Directors and Managers together to showcase our programs, greet the community, and answer questions about the services we provide. In December, we will be hosting three community dinners, one in each district. Please keep an eye out for more information in the newspaper, online, and in our newsletter.

On Saturday, November 17, 2018 our Council hosted the monthly General Meeting at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Centre. The agenda included a presentation on the proposed natural gas expansion project, an update from Entewatatha:wi, an update on the Dundee Tsikaristisere referendum, and a presentation on the Akwesasne Smart Cities project. Our Council also provided an update on the cannabis file which was followed by an excellent discussion with the community on cannabis. I want to thank all those who came out to our General Meeting to take part. The entire recording of the General Meeting can be found at: <https://youtu.be/QE856HNgbRE>

My monthly report, which provides a brief update on some of the meetings I attended throughout October, was shared at the General Meeting and now is attached for your information and update as well. My next report will be distributed in the new year at the January General Meeting.

I wish you an excellent holiday season, be sure to enjoy time with your families.

Sken:nen

Abram Benedict  
Grand Chief

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## **Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Kentenhko:wa/November 2018**

### **OCTOBER 1, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING**

- MCA legal counsel provided an overview of proposed draft Interim Cannabis Regulations for Council consideration.
- Representatives from the Canadian Coast Guard Indigenous Relations and Partnership Office introduced themselves to Council and provided an overview of programs and services the Canadian Coast Guard delivers.
- 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.
- Council was briefed on the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's efforts to become one of the first 100 communities to be a recipient of a 10-year grant. A 10-year grant is a funding agreement that will replace existing outdated contribution agreements.
- A briefing was provided on a recent Iroquois Caucus membership conference.
- Council discussed the possibility of expanding the Akwesasne Heating Assistance program to Community Support Clients; research will be conducted and reported back.
- Health Portfolio Chiefs provided a report to Council from a recent portfolio meeting.
- Council reviewed a letter received from a residential school survivor; additional research will be conducted in order to respond.

- A request from a religious organization to visit Kawehno:ke was discussed and will be presented at the upcoming District Meeting.
- Council was briefed on a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the conceptual design of a business proposal.
- A briefing was provided on an ongoing waterline access issue and will be followed up on.
- MCRs passed: Approval of 2017/18 audit for Ministry of Education; Approval of (5) upgrade loans to community members; Acceptance of Youth Council member resignation; Approval of allotment of land (mortgage paid off); Approval of new lease on Thompson Island; Approval of Interim Cannabis Regulations.

## **OCTOBER 2, 2018 ONTARIO POWER GENERATION FINAL SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT | 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**



On October 2, 2018, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Ontario Power Generation (OPG) celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the signing of the OPG Final Settlement Agreement at the OPG Visitor's Center. The event was also a recognition and dedication event for the late John Thomas. The event began with opening remarks from the President of the OPG and I, followed by a presentation to the family of the late John Thomas. OPG provided the

family with a commemorative painting for John's contribution to the OPG Visitor's Center and the mural John painted last year. The President of OPG unveiled the renaming of the auditorium to the Sowatise John B Thomas Memorial Auditorium. The ceremony and celebration were followed by a luncheon for all attendees.

## **OCTOBER 3, 2018 ABORIGINAL APPRENTICESHIP BOARD OF ONTARIO**



On the morning of October 3, 2018, I was invited by the Akwesasne Area Management Board (AAMB) to welcome participants of the Annual Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario to the Akwesasne Territory. During my opening remarks, I commended all the participants for the work they do in ensuring Indigenous Peoples are participating in the apprenticeship opportunities in Ontario and abroad. I also thanked AAMB for their contribution to Akwesasne and the partnership they have with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. Following my welcoming remarks, I joined the participants later that evening at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation for a traditional meal.

## **OCTOBER 4, 2018 CALL WITH ONTARIO CANNABIS SECRETARIAT**

On October 4, 2018 I initiated a call with Ashley Collins and Jesse Tordes from the Ontario Cannabis Secretariat to discuss a future meeting with the province to discuss Akwesasne's Cannabis Regulations. I explained to the representatives that Akwesasne will be moving forward with the development of a full Cannabis Law and that we want Ontario to support our law. I also reiterated to the representatives that revenue sharing on cannabis was a topic we



wished to further discuss with Ontario, but more so with the federal government. The representatives agreed that we would meet in late November to receive a presentation from the province.

### **OCTOBER 4, 2018 FINANCE COMMITTEE**

On the morning of October 4, 2018 I attended the monthly finance committee meeting to welcome and introduce guests from Scotia Bank to the finance committee. The Scotia Bank representatives spoke to the finance committee members about the services Scotia Bank offers. This meeting was an introductory meeting for Scotia Bank to learn more about the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and to explore potential ways to work together.

### **OCTOBER 4, 2018 MEETING WITH PROTEUS**

As part of the ongoing Tsikaristisere/Dundee claim settlement, our Council met with Proteus, our investment consultant, to review potential short-term investment options for the claim proceeds. As part of the proposed settlement agreement, the Mohawk Council will invest the proceeds in consultation with the community. Various short-term investment options have been researched and previously presented to Council. On October 4, 2018 Council was provided with a more in-depth analysis of the options. Regular sessions with ARRO will continue as the Council considers all possibilities.

### **OCTOBER 5, 2018 AKWESASNE 10-YEAR GRANT**

As part of Akwesasne's ongoing efforts to become a recipient of a 10-year grant from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), we welcomed representatives from ISC to Akwesasne on October 5, 2018. The ISC delegation included Chief Financial Officer Paul Thoppil, Ontario Regional Director General Anne Scotton, and Director General of Fiscal Arrangements Lynne Newman. We began the day with a tour of the community, travelling from Kawehno:ke to Tsi Snaihne, and then through Kana:takon. All along the way, I explained to the representatives the impacts the border has on our community, from service delivery to access to services, as well as the inflated costs we incur due to the international border. Following the tour, we hosted

lunch at the A'nowarako:wa Arena followed by presentations about our request for a 10-year Grant. We highlighted to the representatives that Akwesasne is a high capacity community with strong governance and financial structures in place.



One of the main points that we reiterated to the representatives was that we want to enact an Akwesasne Financial Administration Law (FAL) in accordance with our internal law enactment processes, and not in accordance with the Financial Management Board (FMB), or under the Indian Act of Canada. ISC requires communities to have a financial law in place before being considered for a 10-year grant. By the end of the meeting, the ISC representatives agreed that Akwesasne wouldn't have to enact our law under the FMB, provided that our law either meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of the FMB. The next step is for ISC to provide us with a draft agreement for our consideration.

### **OCTOBER 9, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING**

- Representatives from the Department of Health provided Council with an overview of the Accreditation Canada process and reviewed the recent report on findings.
- A University of Ottawa law student introduced herself to Council and explained a potential opportunity to assist with the MCA strategic planning exercise.

- Council discussed the recent presentation to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) on the potential 10-year grant and outlined next steps.
- The agenda for the upcoming General Meeting at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation on October 25, 2018 was set.
- Council was briefed on upcoming fundraisers for the Dreams Take Flight event.
- A briefing was provided on the recent community information sessions regarding the potential natural gas expansion onto Kawehno:ke. Additional meetings will be scheduled.
- Council identified Chief Tim Thompson as next week's Council meeting chair in Grand Chief's absence.
- An overview of the upcoming MCA Strategic Planning sessions was provided.
- MCRs passed: Approval for placement of stop sign at Kana:takon intersection of Third Street & Akwesasne Street; Approval of allotment of land (loan paid off); Approval to amend date of Akwesasne Court Regulations (error on date); Approval of 2017/18 Audit for OFNLP; Approval of maps for Additions to Reserve (ATR); Approval of proposal for Restorative Financial Management; Approval of 2017/18 CMHC Audits

## **OCTOBER 15-16, 2018 CHIEFS OF ONTARIO POLITICAL CONFEDERACY**

On October 15 and 16, 2018 I attended the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Political Confederacy (PC) meeting in Thunder Bay. The two-day session was set aside as a retreat for the PC to discuss regional priorities. On the first day, an overview was provided to the chiefs on the current government. It was noted that there are 76 new Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) and it will take time for the government to determine its priorities for each ministry. The PC discussed the fact that the Premier has not once acknowledged the traditional territory of the indigenous peoples. Also, the Rob Ford Government has indicated that the provincial deficit is much larger than anticipated and we should prepare for budget cutbacks over the next four years. The PC discussed strategically aligning with the

Ontario government to promote jobs and business development, which is a common theme. It was also explained that revenue sharing, child welfare, and the opioid crisis are areas where the PC needs to align with the Ontario government. Assistant Deputy Minister Shawn Batiste briefed the PC on internal changes within the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs. The PC had initially invited Minister Rickford to the PC meeting, but due to scheduling the minister was only able to offer a 30-minute phone call with the PC, the PC decided that if the minister couldn't make more time or be at the meeting in person, they would decline the offer to meet. In the recent past, the COO hired a consultant to assist the PC with planning and prioritizing. The consultant provided the PC with an overview of the PC structure and the historical documents review. The PC discussed how COO could become more effective in planning and prioritizing, but it was determined that since a structural analysis is underway by the Chief's office, the PC would allow the review to continue. Other business conducted during the two-day session included: Review of record of decisions; Review of mandate for Ontario First Nations Technical Service Corporation (OFNTSC); Review of mandate for the Aboriginal Sports and Wellness Council of Ontario (ASWCO); Discussion on proposed funding formula of child welfare funding; Review of COO financials; and Update on housing file. The next PC meeting will take place during the Special Chiefs Assembly in Toronto, the week of November 19, 2018.

## **OCTOBER 16, 2018 | 2018 CBC MASSEY LECTURES: ALL OUR RELATIONS: FINDING THE PATH FORWARD**



The Grand Chief of Nishnawbe Aski Nation invited me to attend the October 16, 2018 Toronto session of the CBC Massey Lecture series titled All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward, with journalist Tanya Talaga. Tanya spoke about her experience working in the northern communities and talked about the suicides that plague the communities.



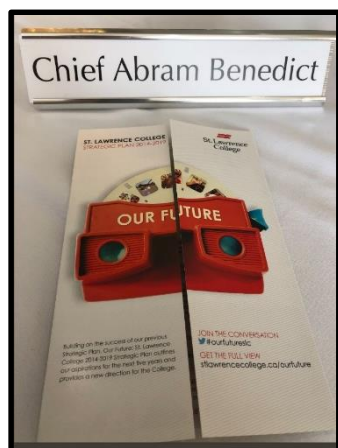
## **OCTOBER 17, 2018 ONEGRID**

On the afternoon October 17, 2018 I met with Mr. John Douglas, the Chief Executive Officer of oneGRID Corporation. Mr. Douglas requested to meet to provide me with information on an electrical transmission project that his company is involved in. Mr. Douglas also provided me with additional information on a micro power generation product his company brought to Canada.

## **OCTOBER 18, 2018 OACAS**

I attended the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) on October 18, 2018. The CEO provided the board with an update from the recent Indigenous Gathering and outlined next steps. Board members who participated in the gathering provided their reflections on the gathering as well. A report was provided from a recent Executive Leadership Section conference where the final strategic plan was presented. The board discussed reconfiguration of the child welfare sector in Ontario; it was understood that the Ontario Government would likely be looking for ways to save money and the child welfare sector will likely have to adjust and adapt. 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 November 15, 2018.

## **OCTOBER 19, 2018 ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS STRATEGIC PLANNING**



On October 19, 2018 the board of governors for St. Lawrence College met in Gananoque to begin working on the 2019-2023 strategic plan. The President and CEO of the college provided the board with an overview of the process that is going to be used to update the plan. Consultants introduced themselves and explained their role in the planning. Following an overview of the process and review of the existing plan, the board

was broken up into three smaller groups to assist in identifying priorities for the plan development. The small working groups discussed the current priorities from the previous plan using a series of exercises to assist in determining the priorities for the next five years. Following this session with the board of governors, additional sessions will be held with staff and students to help shape the next 5-year plan. At the next board meeting, the consultants will report to the board on the key themes being heard from the sessions.

### **OCTOBER 21, 2018 OACAS GOVERNORS FORUM**

On October 21, 2018 I attended an Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) governor's forum. The forum centered on the 2018-2023 strategic plan as well as an update on the current state of affairs in the provincial child welfare system. The CEO for the OACAS provided the participants with an overview of the political climate and explained that with the massive deficit in the province it is expected that the Ontario Child Welfare sector will face budget cuts. The child welfare sector is the 3rd largest sector in Ontario, and the government will look at ways to save more money but have committed that the government's preference is to increase efficiencies without job loss. The day-long session also included a presentation from the Association of Native Child and Family Services of Ontario on the Native Child welfare system in Ontario.

### **OCTOBER 22, 2018 NATURAL GAS EXPANSION**

As part of our ongoing campaign to provide the community with information about natural gas and the potential to expand natural gas onto Kawehno:ke, we hosted an evening information session at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre on October 22, 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 information to the community on the use of natural gas as a fuel and also spoke about the history of the discovery of gas. An overview of the proposed expansion project was also provided. Community members in attendance were able to ask questions and make comments about the project.

## **OCTOBER 23, 2018 CANNABIS INTERVIEW WITH APTN**



On the morning of October 23, 2018 I provided APTN with an interview regarding our recently enacted Interim Cannabis Regulations. I also shared with Annette Francis (the reporter) the anticipated economic impacts 7 Leaf will have on our community. I also shared that we have been working closely with 7 Leaf

through their licensing process and that we look forward to the jobs being created. The entire interview can be found at <https://aptnnews.ca/2018/10/25/indigenous-owned-cannabis-company-becomes-first-on-reserve-facility-licensed-for-medical-marijuana/>

## **OCTOBER 24-25, 2018 INVESTORS CONFERENCE**

On the evening of October 24, 2018 I was invited to attend an investors conference in Toronto called Capitalize for Kids which is also a fundraiser for Children's Mental Health. The day and a half event brought together a number of investment groups, hedge fund managers, and various private companies who were looking for investors and/or wanting to learn more about various investment strategies. The evening of the 24th began with a number of presentations followed by a welcoming reception. The second day included presentations from asset management companies and venture capital companies on investment opportunities. David Rubenstein, the co-founder and co-chief executive officer of the Carlyle Group, spoke about the current political climate of the US government and the impacts the politics have on the markets and investments. David also provided his personal opinion on the future of the White House and explained things are unlikely to change for the next two years and possibly four more after that. David Rubenstein's presentation wrapped up the two-day event.

## **OCTOBER 26, 2018 INTERNAL CANNABIS WORKING GROUP**

On the afternoon of October 26, 2018 our internal cannabis committee met to review and update each other on the progress that has been made. The committee has been meeting to examine and develop the process MCA will use to issue licenses to community businesses under the Interim Cannabis Regulations. We discussed our political strategy for lobbying the government of Canada to enter into a revenue-sharing agreement for cannabis that may be grown and sold on the territory. We also discussed next steps for the development of subcommittees for the Akwesasne Cannabis file to assist with development of a community education campaign. We will continue to advance the development of the process for licensing.

## **OCTOBER 29, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING**

- The Commissioner of Indigenous Affairs for the City of Montreal presented to Council on the reconciliation initiatives the City of Montreal has undertaken and will continue to undertake in the future to promote reconciliation.
- Legal counsel briefed Council on the options for a response to a request for a quarry expansion in the traditional territory of the Mohawks; Council will send a response to the request.
- Council discussed a recent letter received from a group of Sixty Scoop survivors and agreed that further follow up will be done.
- Grand Chief provided the Council with an overview of the 10-year grant initiative and explained how the draft Akwesasne Financial Administration Law relates to the 10-year grant.
- Council discussed a recent Request for Proposals for business development and will further discuss next week.
- A business case from a program was discussed and referred to Administration for follow up.
- Council agreed that no Council meeting will occur for the week of November 12, 2018 due to Remembrance Day.
- A request from the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Annual Christmas Enchantment was reviewed and Council agreed to support all three recreation holiday fundraisers.



- Council agreed that a donation will be made to the Akwesasne Holiday Helpers.
- MCRs passed: Approval to transfer annual OPG \$2.5 million payment to the Akwesasne Community Settlement Trust; Approval of Block 1 lands navigational aid permit in principal; Approval of (2) allotment of land to community member (loans paid off); Approval of amendment to Akwesasne–Canada funding agreement; Approval of lease on Ross Island; Approval of contribution agreement with AAMB for childcare program; Approval of contribution agreement with Ministry of Corrections; Approval of revision to MCA General Personnel Policy (GPP) to reflect Cannabis prohibitions; Approval of amendments to MCA Interim Cannabis Regulations.