

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 1, 2019

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

As we begin October and the first month of school wraps up, I hope everyone had the opportunity to enjoy September, it seems to have flown by so quickly. Soon we'll get to see all the beautiful changing colors of the leaves.

Last Thursday, on September 26, 2019, Council hosted the General Meeting at the Kanatakon Recreation Center. This was the first General Meeting since June as Council had announced that we wouldn't have any General Meetings in July and August. At last week's General Meeting we received a presentation from the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) on a proposed amendment to the Ontario Power Generation (OPG) Final Settlement Agreement with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. The final settlement agreement signed in 2008 provided for the return of four islands that OPG has in its possession. Due to unforeseen technical issues, OPG hasn't been able to transfer the islands to the MCA. The proposed amendments to the final settlement agreement would allow for the four islands to be returned to the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne in a different matter than initially contemplated in 2008. Following the OPG presentation, ARRO provided an update on the Dundee Land Claim Referendum. After all the presentations, our Council entertained business from the floor and had an excellent dialogue with the community. I encourage you to watch the General Meeting recording at: https://youtu.be/urLcK_lmvYU

I want to remind you that we have a few organizations that support the community, especially during the winter and holiday months. The Akwesasne Holiday Helpers and the St. Regis Catholic Church Food Pantry are two fantastic organizations within Akwesasne. I remind MCA employees that the MCA offers payroll deductions for these two organizations and a few other great community organizations. Payroll deduction forms can be found on the MCA intranet.

I have attached my August monthly report to this letter. The previous two monthly reports, covering June and July, can be found on my Facebook page and my LinkedIn page or at: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=14uDYprR11CN2TDvIXMbnrOWIUJ5EyPIB>
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1DsnyC4AmiGLhPIFerRIKdjvgQwcby6sO>

Sken:nen

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

Abram Benedict
Grand Chief

AKWESASNE-LAND WHERE THE PARTRIDGE DRUMS

PHONE: 613-575-2250
FAX: 613-575-2181

PO BOX 90
AKWESASNE, QUEBEC H0M1A0

WWW.AKWESASNE.CA
INFO@AKWESASNE.CA



Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Seskeha/August 2019

AUGUST 1, 2019 CANNABIS MEETINGS | ONTARIO & CANADA

On August 1, 2019 members of our internal cannabis working group met with representatives from the Ontario Cannabis Secretariat and Health Canada. The Ontario representatives provided us with an update on the Province of Ontario's approach to cannabis licensing on reserve. They explained that they are prepared to sign agreements with communities for the on reserve dispensaries. Ontario also indicated that they were open to a proposal to support the development of an Akwesasne Cannabis Law. Health Canada reported that because of the upcoming federal election that they could only listen in on the conversation and that they would have to wait until after the election to fully participate. We outlined our strategy to Canada and Ontario and informed them that we expect them to support our Cannabis Framework in Akwesasne. Future individual meetings will be set up with Canada and Ontario.

AUGUST 1, 2019 MINISTER O'REGAN

On August 1, 2019 we welcomed Minister Seamus O'Regan to Akwesasne. I met the Minister at the Peace Tree Mall and brought him to the Akwesasne Court where he learned about the inception of our court and the enactment of the Akwesasne Court Law. We then toured the Cornwall Island Administration (CIA#3) building and introduced staff to Minister O'Regan. We also stopped at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center to visit and learn more about the Kawehno:ke Boys and Girls Club. While at the center, the youth welcomed the Minister and asked him to participate in a small play where they acted out an action and the students had to guess the action. Then we traveled to the end of Kawehno:ke to show him the proximity of Kana:takon to

Kawehno:ke. Unfortunately, the Minister wasn't able to tour the entire community due to time restraints.



The tour ended at the Anowarako:wa Arena and we held a meeting with Council. During the meeting, Council members spoke about the unique challenges we face in Akwesasne due to being on the border and on an island. The Minister shared that he was very familiar with being on an island since he lives in Newfoundland. We emphasized our current capital needs and the increased costs we incur due to the border.

AUGUST 2, 2019 TOUR WITH FEDDEV ONTARIO



On August 2, 2019 I welcomed Steve Masson to Akwesasne. Steve is a Director for the Federal Economic Development Agency (FedDev) for Southern Ontario. I had invited Steve to Akwesasne to learn more about our community and for us to

learn more about programs that may be available to Akwesasne

businesses from FedDev. FedDev is a government funding organization that provides loans and grants to businesses, in partnership with the Cornwall and the Counties Future Development Corporation (CFDC). I toured Steve around the community and explained the challenges faced by our organization and community businesses due to the border. While in Akwesasne, Steve was also given a tour of the Seven Leaf facility.

AUGUST 7, 2019 APTN INTERVIEW

On the afternoon of August 7, 2019 I provided an on camera interview with Annette Francis of APTN. Annette had reached out and asked for an interview after reading our press release informing the community that MCA was beginning to take applications for cannabis production and dispensaries. I updated Annette on the work the MCA has been doing in preparation for licensing and explained that we have been working to ensure we have all aspects covered. I also thanked our community for begin patient as we develop the cannabis framework in Akwesasne. The entire interview can be found at the following link: <https://aptnnews.ca/2019/08/08/akwesasne-still-working-on-cannabis-rules-for-entrepreneurs/>

AUGUST 8, 2019 CBC RADIO INTERVIEW

On August 8, 2019 I provided an interview with CBC journalist Simon Coutu on our Akwesasne Cannabis framework. I explained the history of our community's development, challenges, and next steps in the issuance of Akwesasne licenses. The interview will be used as a larger story on Cannabis in First Nation communities.

AUGUST 9, 2019 SIX NATIONS–MEMBERSHIP

On August 9, 2019 Council and I met with representatives from Six Nations regarding membership. Recently Six Nations developed and enacted its own community law on membership and wanted to understand how our membership law worked in our community. Akwesasne has had control of our membership list since 1987. For Six Nations, the federal government had determined who members of Six Nations would be, prior to the development of their own law.

At the meeting, we shared the challenges we have faced internally within Akwesasne on the administration of our own membership law.

AUGUST 12, 2019 COUNCIL MEETING

- Council discussed a recent meeting with Transport Canada regarding surplus lands and agreed to discuss strategy with legal counsel next week.
- A request from Indigenous Sports & Wellness Ontario for Akwesasne to host the 2019 Ontario Native Volleyball Invitational (ONVI) was discussed; further clarification will be sought on the request.
- Council reviewed and provided input into the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan and directed that it be finalized and accepted next week.
- A proposal to sell property to Council was discussed and will be further researched and reported back to Council.
- Council discussed the proposed political service agreements and passed a motion directing administration to continue the development of the agreement for Council's consideration.
- A request was made for Chiefs, committees, and administration to ensure language/culture funding proposals are being submitted to funding sources.
- Council discussed the recent Secure Status Card intake session and the fact that a few applications have been delayed; follow up will be done with Indigenous Services to ensure delays are minimized.
- A request for clarification was made on the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education's (AMBE) policy on grants and bursaries for post-secondary education.
- Council discussed a letter received from the Fire Chief regarding the recent event at the A'nowara'kowa Arena and the possible over capacity violation; administration will follow up with the department.
- A briefing was provided on a proposed recognition event for First Responders.

- Administration briefed Council on a proposed MCR to publish MCA salaries over 100K; as well as a proposal to close the MCA during the Christmas holiday; MCRs are forthcoming.
- A request for a follow up meeting with Canada and the Provinces on Capital projects was made and this meeting is to be scheduled.
- MCRs passed: Approval of Indigenous Services Canada Enhanced Housing Allocation for 30 applications and construction of an apartment complex; Approval of IFN Family Well-Being Program; Approval of IFN Ontario Indigenous Child and Youth Strategy.

AUGUST 13, 2019 EMERGENCY MEASURES TRAINING

On the morning of August 13, 2019 Council met with our Emergency Measures Officer and were provided with an overview of the Akwesasne emergency plan and to learn what Council's responsibilities are during an emergency. The EMO explained what her role is in an emergency and further explained that Council delegates these responsibilities to the EMO and the Executive Director to manage the resources for the MCA. For a State of Emergency, Council is required to declare this through a Mohawk Council Resolution (MCR). It was also explained that a MCR is needed in order to attempt to invoice the federal government for the cost of the emergency. Following the review of the responsibilities, Council participated in a table top exercise whereby we assessed what the impacts would be on the community if a ship were to run aground in the shipping channel.

AUGUST 13, 2019 US CUSTOMS & BORDER PROTECTION



Chief Darryl Lazore and I were invited to attend a BBQ luncheon at the Massena Port of Entry on August 13, 2019. The Massena port host 4 events each year that include inviting community partners to the port for a luncheon.

AUGUST 14, 2019 GRASS RIVER

On the morning of August 14, 2019 representatives from MCA's Environment Program, Portfolio Chiefs, and I met with representatives from the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe's Environment Department, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Arconic, and Environment Canada. We requested the meeting to discuss the Grass River clean up project. Recently we had been advised of the mitigation measures being taken to ensure contaminants from the clean up don't effect our community, but we wanted to ensure the measures were being taken to protect our water intake in St Regis. At the meeting, we expressed our frustration with the EPA's position that they can't go into Canada and that their responsibility is to the USA portion, even though the contaminants cross the border and effect all of Akwesasne. The EPA representatives agreed to officially communicate with Environment Canada and to provide them with testing data and results. We also discussed a communications protocol to ensure that all parties are notified should any risk occur so that everyone can react timely and accordingly. Our Environment Program will continue to work with the EPA and Environment Canada to promote collaborative efforts.

AUGUST 15, 2019 FUEL TAX - CARBON TAX - COO

On August 15, 2019 I participated in a conference call with the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Environment division to discuss an upcoming meeting with the Department of Finance Canada and Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) regarding the carbon tax and its impacts to First Nations in Ontario. The Director of Environment for COO provided background on the carbon tax and explained the possible options to propose to Canada. The committee discussed the fact that the carbon tax was classified as a charge rather than a tax and that when its levied on reserve it's a possible violation of the Indian Act with regard to taxation. It was agreed that we would propose to the government that it was a violation of the Indian Act and has a very board effect on our communities. We also agreed that we would propose that a specific allocation for the revenues generated from the charge be set aside for First Nation communities.

AUGUST 15, 2019 ONTARIO MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG TERM CARE

On the afternoon of August 15, 2019 I participated in a conference call with the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care regarding a citation and violation report against Tsiionkwanonhso:te. The call was a follow up from a report made against the facility last year and over the past year the facility has been working to correct the issues identified in the report. On August 15, MCA reviewed the action items and reported the progress being made to the Ministry. A follow-up site inspection will be occurring at Tsiionkwanonhso:te in October.

AUGUST 16, 2019 NATION BUILDING INTERNAL MEETING

On the afternoon of August 16, 2019 I met with Nation Building staff and received an update on the current status of the Canada/Akwesasne negotiations. This was in preparation for the meeting with Canada on August 23. The team explained the outstanding issues with the negotiations and expressed the need to have Canada continue to work towards a resolve that Akwesasne can accept.

AUGUST 16, 2019 CALL WITH INDIGENOUS SERVICES INDIAN REGISTER OFFICE

On the afternoon I had a follow up call with John Gordon from Indigenous Services Indian Register Office regarding the recent intake session for the secure machine readable status cards. It was reported that 749 applications had been made and that 41 of the applications were outstanding for various reasons. We discussed how the MCA could support the 41 outstanding applications. During the call I requested that another intake session be held in Akwesasne. Our office will follow up with setting up this up.

AUGUST 19, 2019 COUNCIL MEETING

- MCA legal counsel briefed Council on the judicial review for vehicle seizures and also briefed Council on the class action suit filed by a community member against CBSA.

- Legal counsel also provided an overview of the options for surplus Transport Canada lands.
- A request for assistance to rent kayaks for the Annual River Clean Up was discussed and will be further researched for options.
- Council agreed that the Office of Vital Statistics would assist on the follow up with Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) in naming unnamed islands in Akwesasne.
- Council agreed to a \$5,000 sponsorship of the Annual Sweetgrass Language Conference being held in Cornwall on November 1-2, 2019.
- A briefing was provided on the legal bill dispute which arose from the Iroquois Caucus's support of a hunting rights case.
- Council received a briefing on MCA's past contributions to the Akwesasne International Powwow.
- A briefing was provided on past practices for MCA capital projects and concerns were outlined with current practices; MCA administration will follow up.
- MCRs passed: Approval to set time period for the purpose of law enactment quorum requirements; Approval of amendment to MCA Special Needs Policy; Approval to proceed with one agreement for Nation Building/Canada self-government; Approval of direction to Nation Building regarding section 13.2 and 16(2) of the Indian Act; Approval of funding agreement with Quebec and Canada for Justice Program; Approval of MCA to create and publish a MCA Sunshine List; Approval of MCA closure between Christmas and New Year's; Approval of funding agreement with Ontario for SAVE Unit; Approval of amendment to health contribution agreement to reflect new physician compensation; Approval of (2) Emergency Council Meeting Minutes; Approval of (2) Council Meeting Minutes.

AUGUST 19, 2019 INTERNAL WESTERN ISLANDS

On August 19, 2019 Council met with our legal counsel to receive a briefing on the status of the return of the islands stipulated in the Ontario Power Generation Final Settlement Agreement. It was explained that the delays in the return of the Islands was mainly due to the islands legal descriptions, flooding easements, and issues with having to return the islands in accordance with the final settlement agreement. Our legal counsel outlined a possible solution whereby we would have to amend the final settlement agreement to allow for the islands to be transferred to the MCA and then to the Government of Canada under the Additions to Reserve Policy. It was agreed that community presentations would be arranged to educate the community on the current status and the proposed amendments.

AUGUST 20, 2019 CALL WITH TELUS

On August 20, 2019 I participated in a conference call with the Telus Mobility regarding the communications tower on Cornwall Island. We were informed that Telus Mobility was going to sell the tower to Bell Mobility. During the call on August 20, we discussed with Telus the current community contributions and requested increases to the contributions. We also requested that an annual increase be levied on the annual amounts to ensure the amounts stay current. Telus agreed in principal and we will follow up on our proposed terms in writing to Telus.

AUGUST 21, 2019 CHIEFS COMMITTEE ON DESIGN THINKING INITIATIVES

On August 21, 2019 I met with the District Chiefs identified by Council to work on the implementations of the Design Thinking Initiatives (DTI). I reviewed a draft work plan that was developed in collaboration with CBSA on short term initiatives that could be achieved under the DTI. The Chiefs committed to working in smaller committees to achieve the short term goals.

AUGUST 21, 2019 PORT MEETING WITH CORNWALL AND CFDC

On August 21, 2019 I met with the Mayor of the City of Cornwall and representatives from the Cornwall and Counties Future Development Corporation (CFDC). This was a follow up meeting to discuss how the CFDC can support both the city and Akwesasne in the harbour development file. We reviewed the requirements under the transfer agreements and discussed a strategy to ensure that we'll meet our joint obligations. As follow-up to this meeting, the CFDC will make presentations to the MCA and the City of Cornwall on who the CFDC is and what they have to offer.

AUGUST 23, 2019 MEETING WITH CANADA

On the morning of August 23, 2019 Council met with Canada's Chief Federal Negotiator for our self-government negotiations and his support team. Council had asked for the meeting to discuss the outstanding issues of our negotiations. At the meeting, Council outlined the outstanding issues including Canada's right to expropriate Akwesasne lands, taxation, and Canada's Additions to Reserve Policy. We highlighted the need for Canada to work with us to find a solution on these issues. It was explained to us that due to the federal election the Chief Negotiator would need to wait for the election to be over before being able to work with the Minister to find a solution. Canada committed to work with us to find solutions to the points raised by Akwesasne.

AUGUST 24, 2019 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

On August 24, 2019 Council hosted a Special General Meeting at the Kanonhkwatsheri:io Health Facility for the community to consider the draft Akwesasne Financial Administration Law. The Justice Coordinator provided the community with a briefing of what the purpose of the law is. Council then passed a motion to initiate the community vote to take place for a two-hour period. The law was accepted by the community with a final vote of 79 'Yes' and 2 'No'.

AUGUST 26, 2019 COUNCIL MEETING

- Representatives from Contact North introduced themselves to Council and explained the services they provide to their students and the relationship they have with AEDA.
- Representatives from the Cornwall & Communities Future Development Corporation (CFDC) provided Council with an overview of the CFDC and explained the Cross Border Partnership Program and its mission to build and enhance partnerships.
- Council discussed a request to rent a Peace Tree Mall unit; administration will follow up with a plan for MCA usage to accommodate MCA space needs.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of MOU with International Secretariat of Water and MCA for funding purposes; Approval of assignment of lease on Hamilton Island; Approval of (3) Council Meeting Minutes.

AUGUST 27, 2019 COO CARBON CHARGE MEETING

On the morning of August 27, 2019 I attended a meeting at the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) office with Finance Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) regarding the Carbon Charge. The meeting began with a roundtable introduction of the government representatives and First Nation representatives. The government representatives explained to the committee that the charge was only levied in provinces who didn't have a climate action plan. Ontario had a climate action plan until the Ford government was elected and scrapped the plan once elected. The committee representatives pressed the issue of a rights infringement because the Indian Act prohibits Indians paying tax on reserve. Several of the Chiefs and community representatives explained that their communities are feeling the impacts of the charges and that the added cost adds to the already challenging times in food insecurity. The representatives from Canada agreed to examine ways to assist in the mitigation of the impacts of the charge. They also explained that due to the federal election they would have to wait for the next government to be elected before they can continue to work on a solution for Ontario

First Nations. A follow up meeting will be set up with the representatives to discuss protocols and further examination.

AUGUST 27, 2019 CHIEFS COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

On the afternoon of August 27 following the carbon charge meeting with Canada, I attended a Chiefs Committee on Housing at the Indigenous Services Office. The Chiefs were provided an update on the development of an Ontario approach for housing. It was explained that the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) had conducted a housing study that would assist in collecting data for a submission to Canada. The Ontario Chiefs felt that the AFN was moving too slowly in addressing the housing needs and that an Ontario approach was more appropriate to address the needs. A delegation of Chiefs reported that they had met with Indigenous Services headquarters and there was a willingness to work directly with Ontario First Nations. The Chiefs of Ontario (COO) housing coordinator briefed the Chiefs on an election strategy for Ontario to consider in the upcoming federal election. The committee also received an update from the Indigenous Services Canada Ontario Regional Director General (RDG) on the current demands in Ontario for housing and infrastructure. The RDG reported that she continues to advocate and press headquarters to rebase the funding allocation for Ontario since the funding isn't based on the Ontario population, but rather on historical projections and spending.

AUGUST 28, 2019 CHIEFS COMMITTEE ON BORDER CROSSING WITH PS

Following the meeting in July between the Iroquois Caucus Communities and Public Safety Canada Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) Gina Wilson, a follow-up call was held on August 28, 2019. During the call, a staff member of Public Safety Canada provided the Chiefs with an overview of a proposed protocol to address the policy and border issues identified by the Chiefs. A previously drafted protocol was reviewed with the staff member. It was agreed that a review would be done of the proposed protocol with a follow up conference call to be scheduled.

AUGUSTS 29-30, 2019 QUEBEC MUNICIPALITIES AND FIRST NATIONS



On August 29, 2019 I travelled to the Huron Wendat Nation, north of Quebec City, to attend the second summit of Quebec Municipalities and First Nations. Last year the Mayor of Montreal Valerie Plante hosted the first summit in Montreal. On August 29, 2019 I participated in a pre-summit meeting with other Quebec Chiefs and the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL). At the pre-meeting, the Chiefs reviewed the agenda for the next day's summit and discussed the outcomes from the previous summit. The Chiefs discussed the ongoing concern with the Mayor of Oka's comments about Kaneshatake and agreed that should the Mayor attend the next day's summit, they would take a stand of solidarity for Kaneshatake and demand an apology from the Mayor. On August 30, 2019 I attended the Second Quebec Municipalities and First Nations Summit at the Wendake community arena. The Chiefs of Wendake welcomed the participants to the summit, and thanked the Mayor of Montreal for leading the summit in previous years. The Mayor of Quebec City and Montreal provided welcoming remarks and outlined the relations they have with neighbouring First Nations. The Regional Chief of the AFNQL also provided remarks, but spoke about the tension in the room because of the eroding relationship with the Mayor of Oka and the Chief of Kaneshatake. Over the course of the morning and previous evening the Mayor of Montreal met with the

Mayor of Oka on the tension. The Mayor of Oka took the podium with the Chief of Kanesatake and called a truce which was followed by an apology from the Mayor of Oka for his comments. Chief Simon accepted the apology and committed to bettering communications and working through differences. Following the opening remarks and the apology, a series of panelists spoke about their commitment to work with their local City and or towns.