



Office of the Grand Chief

Tsiothohrha / December 13, 2022

Wa'tkwanonhwera:ton / Greetings,

I am happy to provide you with my monthly report. This report was shared at last week's General Meeting hosted on December 1, 2022, at the Tsi Shaihne Recreation Center. This report covers the month of October, which seems so far back now, but our November meeting was held in December due to scheduling conflicts. My November and December activity report will be made available in January 2023. Monthly reporting has always been critical not only as Grand Chief but also as District Chief. All my reports are available on my Facebook page or my google drive. The last several months can be accessed at:

July 2022 www.shorturl.at/FMR29

August & September 2022 www.shorturl.at/foB04

Now that we have quickly turned to the winter months, the annual Akwesasne Heating Assistance Program (AHAP) deadline has closed as of Friday, December 9. The Community Support Program will now review and process the applications. Therefore, you should expect to have your credit to your supplier by the end of December early January. The program annually receives around 1400 applications between elders and head of household. This year's benefits are \$1500 to the elders and \$1000 for the head of household, with an approximate cost of \$1.6 million. This year's benefit increase was determined earlier to assist families with rising costs.

Traditionally before COVID, our Council began hosting traditional meals at the district recreation centers. We could share a meal with you, take some photos with Santa, and give away some door prizes. As you know, COVID changed many things, so this year our Council decided that we would give away hams and turkeys to the community. Last Friday, members of our Council handed out over 700 turkeys and 700 hams to the community. It was a great pleasure to see so many members come through. Unfortunately, we couldn't visit more, but out of precaution, we still are cautious about gathers. Hopefully, we can return to in-person at next year's district meals, but in the meantime, please be safe during your holiday gatherings.

As the Christmas holiday quickly approaches the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne will be closed from December 23 to January 2, 2023. I hope that you and your family can spend some quality time together and that you are able to relax a bit. On behalf of myself, our Council, and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, I wish you a happy holiday and a Happy New Year. Be safe and keep warm.

Sken:nen,

Abram Benedict
Grand Chief



GRAND CHIEF MONTHLY REPORT KENTENHA / OCTOBER 2022

COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE OCTOBER 3, 2022

- Representatives from DevCore Group presented to Council the conceptual plans for the redevelopment of the former NAV Center. The development group extended an offer to Akwesasne to examine joint development opportunities.
- A.L.L Professional Services presented to Council on the Jay Treaty and the upcoming community consultations happening this week.
- The MCA block one lands working group presented to Council the upcoming process for allocation regarding the block one lands and the community consultation that will be taking place.
- Council agreed that no meeting will occur next week due to the MCA being closed.
- A briefing was provided on the status of the arena ice, installation will remain status quo.
- Council received a briefing on a letter sent to the Seaway International Bridge (SIBC) Board of Directors on the recent decision of SIBC to make special exemptions for unqualified MCA employees.
- A request for financial resources was received by council and referred to the MCA finance committee.
- MCRs passed: Approval to begin the process of block one lands allotment; Approval of funding agreement for victim support worker; Approval of funding agreement for Gladue Writer; Acceptance of

Akwesasne Emergency Management Law for Phase III community consultation; Approval of (2) Canada Akwesasne Funding agreement amendments; Approval of agreement with Quebec for Midwifery practice in Quebec

OCTOBER 4, 2022, BORDER PARTNERS MEETING

Every month MCA's Public Safety Portfolio Chiefs, representatives from the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and I participated in the monthly call with the Port Directors for the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and the United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP). The calls now occur on the first Tuesday of the month on the Zoom platform. These calls are designed for Akwesasne to receive regular updates from the Port Directors on current traffic volumes, any issues with local travelers, and reports of COVID outbreaks at the port if any. These meetings also allow our local governments to provide relevant updates to the CBSA and USCBP representatives.

OCTOBER 5, 2022, MINISTRY OF THE SOLICITOR GENERAL

On the morning of October 5, 2022, members of the public safety portfolio, the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Commission chair, the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Deputy Chief and Chief and I met with representatives of the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General to discuss the Police Service Act 2019. The Ontario Government had revised the police service act and the 2019 legislation has not been implemented yet. The Ontario representatives explained the possibility of First Nation police services opting into the legislation. At the meeting on October 5, 2022, we discussed the benefits and the downside of Akwesasne opting into the act. We also discussed the uniqueness of Akwesasne being in two provinces and the implications for the service. We will discuss this internally and determine the next steps on the offer.

OCTOBER 5, 2022, FEDERAL BRIDGE CORPORATION LTD

On the morning of October 5, 2022, I hosted a call with Natalie Kinloch the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the Federal Bridge Corporation Ltd. (FBCL) regarding the toll policy at the Seaway International Bridge Corporation (SIBC). Recently the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne requested a bridge pass for an MCA employee and in return, the SIBC questioned the qualifications of the employee. As a result of the overreaching information request from the SIBC, I sent an email to the board of directors of the SIBC requesting immediate intervention by the board. On the call on October 5, 2022, I discussed this incident with the CEO and requested a response from the SIBC. While on the call with the CEO she provided me with an overview of the wonderful work the SIBC is doing in Akwesasne.

OCTOBER 6, 2022, MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

On the afternoon of October 6, 2022, I met with the newly formed MCA Executive Committee. The committee reviewed the terms of reference for the committee and received a presentation from a representative of Orbis Risk Consulting on a recent review of the job description for the Executive Director position. The committee discussed the job description with the representation and discussed possible changes for council consideration.

OCTOBER 5, 6, 2022, JAY TREATY ENGAGEMENT



On the evening of October 5 and 6, 2022, the Mohawk Council hosted two community discussion forms on the Jay Treaty. Recently the MCA submitted to Canada for funding to host a community discussion on the Jay Treaty and border issues. The October 5 session was at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center and on October 6 at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Center. Both evening sessions were facilitated by ALL Professional Consulting, who presented background on the Jay Treaty, and the current legal status of the treaty and laid out a series of questions for discussion. The community members present at both sessions provided their perspectives on the Jay Treaty and their thoughts on the border rights we have as Akwesasne Mohawks. Following this session, a series of other engagement sessions happening with other First Nations along the Canada-United States International border. We also hosted an engagement session on Saturday, October 8 at the Akwesasne Housing Authority building on Route 37.

OCTOBER 6, 2022, PUTTING RECONCILIATION IN PRACTICE LEADERSHIP

On the morning of October 6, 2022, I participated in a Zoom session titled: Putting Reconciliation into Practice Leadership Program. During this 45-minute session, I presented to the participants about Akwesasne and our unique border location. I discussed the service challenges we face in Akwesasne being in two provinces and the challenges recruiting licensed professionals. Following my formal presentation, the participants asked me a series of questions in an effort for them to better understand Akwesasne and the realities.

OCTOBER 6, 2022, MCA FINANCE COMMITTEE

On the morning of October 6, 2022, I attended the monthly finance committee. The agenda included a discussion and recommendation to increase the 2022/23 Akwesasne Heating Assistance Program, a discussion on the implementation of the MCA salary grid increase and a discussion on the MCA contracting process. The committee also received a request for additional resources for the reconstruction of two salt domes used by the roads department. The committee also discussed a department surplus, the food pantry, and a sign replacement in Kana:takon. The committee agreed to bring forward a resolution to council regarding the upcoming Christmas holidays for their consideration.

OCTOBER 6, 2022, CANADA'S CHIEF FEDERAL NEGOTIATOR

On the morning of October 6, 2022, I hosted a call with Canada's Chief Federal Negotiator to communicate to him Akwesasne's decision to postpone our upcoming Canada-Akwesasne negotiation sessions. By direction of the portfolio, they asked me to postpone the negotiations

and set up a session for the Akwesasne negotiations team to meet internally to discuss the current status and a plan forward. I let the federal negotiator know that I would meet with the Akwesasne negotiation members and then connect with him soon.

OCTOBER 17, 2022, GRAND CHIEFS MEETING

On the afternoon of October 7, 2022, I met with Kanesatake Grand Chief Victor Bonspille. The Grand Chief had requested the meeting with me to discuss an upcoming tri-council meeting. At the meeting on October 7, we discussed possible agenda items and our expectations for the upcoming meeting.

OCTOBER 7, 2022, MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE, SAINT REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE

On the morning of October 7, 2022, I accompanied representatives of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne health and community and social services to a meeting and presentation to the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe regarding the MCA's detox center. At the meeting on October 7, the manager for MCA's Wholistic Health presented the detox center and explained how it will operate and the services available ahead of detox and after detox. At the meeting on October 7, we discussed possible collaboration between the Mohawk Council and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe. We committed to continuing to meet and discuss further once the detox center was operational.

OCTOBER 10, 2022, NO COUNCIL MEETING THANKSGIVING

OCTOBER 11, 2022, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT

On the morning of October 11, 2022, I attended the monthly Government Secretariat portfolio meeting. The portfolio discussed the draft letter to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and

Northern Affairs Canada regarding the renewal of the Canada Akwesasne political protocol and agreed the letter would be sent. The Aboriginal Rights manager provided the committee with an update on the Dundee settlement funds and provided an overview of the next steps.

OCTOBER 11, 2022, CAMPEAU ROAD FOLLOW UP

On October 11, 2022, I hosted a call with representatives from Ontario regarding a surplus property on Campeau Road that Ontario was looking to sell. Over the last several months we have had various conversations with Ontario regarding this property. On October 11 the Ontario representatives reported that an appraisal of the property had been completed and the options for the government were to put the property up for sale through a real estate agent or the direct sale of a government or First Nation. We discussed the current condition of the property and agreed to discuss it with the Mohawk Council and report back on our interest.

OCTOBER 11, 2022, CANADIAN FORCES SCHOOL OF AEROSPACE CONTROL OPERATIONS

On the afternoon of October 11, 2022, I provided welcoming remarks at the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Control Operations (CFSACO) located at the DEV Hotel and Conference Center in the City of Cornwall. The student military members received an informative presentation from the Native North American Travelling College (NNATC) on Akwesasne and our culture and history. Later in the afternoon, Lieutenant-Colonel Donald Armstrong received a sweetgrass basket commissioned by the school created by a local Akwesasne artisan.

OCTOBER 11, 2022, TRANSPORT CANADA

On the afternoon of October 11, 2022, I hosted a call with Marc-Olivier Ranger from Transport Canada regarding the toll policy for the Seaway International Bridge Corporation (SIBC). I had already spoken to Marc a few weeks back regarding the toll policy and committed to reconnecting with him after my conversation with the Federal Bridge Corporation (FBCL). On the call on October 11, I expressed to Marc the need for a policy revision of the toll policy. Marc explained to me that Crown Corporations like the SIBC and FBCL were responsible for the operation, but expressed the need for a long-term solution to the toll policy.

OCTOBER 12, 2022, QUEENS UNIVERSITY

On the afternoon of October 12, 2022, I participated in a call with representatives of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne health department and Queens University. The meeting had been set up by Chief Dwayne Thomas, at the meeting he explained that he has hoped that Queen's and Akwesasne could closely examine possible partnership opportunities specifically around cancer research. I participated in the introductions of the meeting and expressed my support

OCTOBER 12, 2022, JESSICA GINSBURG

On October 12, 2022, I connected with Jessica Ginsburg a lawyer who previously worked with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne through Arbutus Law Group LLP. I had requested a meeting with Jessica to learn more about her and her current practice. I informed Jessica that the MCA would be going through a process soon and that we could consider her once our self-government portfolio had determined our recruitment process.

OCTOBER 13, 2022, MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE OPEN HOUSE



On Thursday, October 13 the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) hosted our first open house since the pandemic. We welcomed several families, students, and job seekers to the A'nowara'ko:wa Arena. The MCA shared information at booths about each program's services, job opportunities and to receive feedback for program development and improvement. Thank you to all those who attended, congratulations to door prize winners and a big Niawen:kowa to our staff for their hard work and dedication to the MCA and for putting together the 2022 MCA open house.

OCTOBER 13, 2022, MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES



On the morning of October 13, 2022, I welcomed representatives from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) Ontario to Akwesasne for a community tour and luncheon. Jeff Gill the Regional Director and three of his program managers accompanied me and the

Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Director of Community and Social Services on a community tour. Throughout the tour, I discussed the complexity created by the provincial lines and the implications the lines have on our service delivery, especially for our child welfare child protection program. This tour was the first community tour for Regional Director and his manager since COVID. The ministry also works with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Justice Department on justice programming for Akwesasne.

OCTOBER 14, 2022, MOHAWK COUNCIL ELECTED LEADERSHIP MEETING

On October 14, 2022, members of our council and I travel to Kahnawa:ke to meet with Kahnawa:ke and Kanestake elected councils. Our council had extended an invitation to both Kahnawa:ke and Kanestake to meet to begin a dialogue between our council on commonalities. At the October 14, 2022 meeting members of each

council introduced themselves, provided background on themselves and discussed their portfolios and priorities. Each Grand Chief provided welcoming remarks and an overview of the work they are doing with their councils. Following the introductions, our council members several group and or one on one conversations with other council members over lunch. This was an initial meeting and will be followed up with a specific agenda item meeting on commonalities.

OCTOBER 17, 2022, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE

- Representatives from Heritage Canada introduced themselves to Council and provided an overview of programs available to support community projects.
- Council received a briefing on the proposed natural gas expansion on Kawehno:ke and the ongoing community engagement included a door mailer going out soon.
- A briefing was provided on the development and publication of the MCA strategic plan and the next steps to host a council session to identify the political elements in the plan.
- Council set the agenda for the upcoming General Meeting on October 27, 2022, Kana:takon.
- A sponsorship request was discussed and deferred to the MCA donation policy.
- Council received an update and briefing on the current status of the Akwesasne Canada self-government negotiations.
- An overview was provided in a recent conversation with the MCA directorship regarding communications. Council discussed the need to improve communications and will set up a session to discuss.
- Council was reminded to review the MCA Council Meeting Procedural Regulations.
- A request for assistance on off-reserve land tax was made and will be followed up on.

- Council discussed the Christmas holiday dinners and will explore the possible options.
- Council agreed to support the district holiday enchantments.
- MCRs passed: Approval of lease Pilon Island; Approval of permit Drummond Island; Approval to rescind MCR for previous lease Thompson Island; Approval of assignment of lease Thompson Island, Approval of new lease Thompson Island; Approval of resident trust account audit Tsiionkwanonhso:te; Acceptance of resignation letter from Kana:takon District Chief Ryan Jacobs; Approval of agreement with Quebec for Indigenous Initiative Fund; Acceptance of resignation letter from Akwesasne Mohawk Police Commission Tsi Snaihne member. MCR denied: Approval to rescind and replace the 2022 MCA Christmas Holiday.

OCTOBER 17, 2022, ONTARIO POWER GENERATION (OPG)

On the afternoon of October 17, 2022, I participated in a call with representatives of Ontario Power Generation (OPG) regarding Ontario's recent shortlist of contractors specializing in the construction of battery storage facilities throughout Ontario. I had requested the call with the OPG to receive an update on their company's participation in the construction of such projects. It was explained to me one of OPS's subsidiaries was leading the battery storage development for OPG. I explained that a few years ago the Vice-President of Renewable Energy raised the possibility of a partnership on the battery projects. On the call on October 17, the representatives committed to further examining possible partnerships as the Ontario projects become available.

OCTOBER 18, 2022, CHIEFS OF ONTARIO LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



On the morning of October 18, 2022, I participated in the monthly Chiefs of Ontario Leadership Council meeting at the Scugog First Nation. At the meeting representations from First Nations, Makor Projects Coalition provided the participants with an overview of the coalition and explained that member communities come together to support one another on project development. A lawyer from OKT law provided the council with an update on

the status of the carbon charge negotiations. Following the Chiefs of Ontario secretariat updates, Minister Greg Rickford going the meeting and announced on the investment of 25 million into first nations businesses through various initiatives.

<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1002404/ontario-boosting-economic-development-opportunities-in-indigenous-communities>

OCTOBER 19, 2022, FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNMENT OF CANADA ON THE JAY TREAT



On the evening of October 19, 2022, I travelled to Ottawa to participate in a Jay Treaty Border Alliance meeting with the Minister of Public Safety, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Minister of Immigration and Refugee and Citizenship. This was a follow-up meeting from our numerous lobby sessions and request to the minister for the establishment of a minister First Nations table. At the meeting of October 19, 2022, the community leadership agreed to a governance model to move along with the creation of a table to support an agreeable work plan between First Nations and the Government of Canada on Jay Treaty principles.

OCTOBER 19, 2022, ONTARIO MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

On the morning of October 19, 2022, I hosted a call with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to receive information on an upcoming project on Power Dam Road within the City of Cornwall. On the call on October 19, the representatives explained to me that they were beginning the study phase for the construction of a replacement overpass bridge on Power Dam Road. It was explained that most of the construction area has previously been disturbed by previous construction and that part of the study phase would include an archaeological study and a design study for the project. The call on

October 19 was an opportunity for me to receive information on the project. Future updates will be shared with me, including the possibility of employment opportunities as the project progresses.

OCTOBER 20, 2022, PAROLE BOARD OF CANADA CHAIRPERSONS INDIGENOUS CIRCLE

On the afternoon of October 20, 2022, I travelled to Kingston to participate in the Parole Board of Canada Chairpersons Indigenous Circle. The meeting began with the Chairperson welcoming the circle members and providing an update on the recent incident in James Smith Cree First Nation. Following the Chairperson's update, the parole board staff members provided sector updates on the indigenous work they have been doing. The circle members received an update on the culturally adapted virtual hearings and discussed the continued barriers faced by the parole board and Corrections Canada. The circle reviewed a draft Indigenous social history information sheet and provided input into the draft for finalization. The information sheet will be shared with parole board members for their information when dealing with Indigenous offenders. The last item the circle discussed was the scheduling of an upcoming parole board elders gathering, the circle agreed that it was time the elders gathered in person. The next circle meeting will take place in May 2023.

OCTOBER 21, 2022, CITY OF CORNWALL

On the morning of October 21, 2022, Chief Vince Thompson and I met with Cornwall Mayor Glen Grant to discuss the intersection of Brookdale and Water Street. Over the last year, the Mohawk Council has seen an increase in accidents at this intersection and wanted to discuss this with the mayor. The mayor explained that the city had previously had a traffic expert review the intersection and that they would ask the city administration to update the review. Following

this meeting, a follow-up meeting will be scheduled with the mayor to follow up on the review.

OCTOBER 24, 2022, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE

- The Executive Director presented to Council her Ph.D. research project and received feedback and answered questions.
- Council received an updated briefing on the New York State Claim and the status of the settlement negotiations.
- A briefing was provided on an ongoing dispute over a roadway issue in Kana:takon.
- Council discussed communication gaps and solutions to ensure collaboration and success. A session will be scheduled for November to further discuss this.
- A briefing was provided on a recent discussion at the district meeting regarding the Akwesasne Powwow.
- Council discussed the need to update the MCA building assessments to ensure repairs and cost forecasting are being done to mitigate closures.
- A briefing was provided on options for the holiday dinners and an alternative plan.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of resignation of Akwesasne Community Settlement Trust Overseer; Appointment of Council member to MCA Executive Committee; Approval of contract with Dr. Cookson; Approval of (6) housing upgrade loans; Approval of mortgage guarantee with BMO for community member; Approval of (2) renewal of mortgage with Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation; Approval of (3) Council Meeting minutes; Approval of salary step increase for MCA employees with exceptions; Approval of increase to benefit amounts for the 2022/2022 Akwesasne Heating Assistance Program; Approval of office space lease for Akwesasne Family Wellness Program.

OCTOBER 25, 26, 2022 INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA JOINT GATHERING



On October 25 I attended a two-day session at the Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Ontario Joint Gathering in the City of Toronto. During the two days, representatives from ISC updated and explained the many programs available and delivered by ISC. The Minister and Deputy Minister for Indigenous Services Canada also attended to update and hear concerns from First Nation leadership. At the

Ontario Joint Gathering, a long-time advocate and friend of Akwesasne, Ontario Regional Director General Anne Scotton, was recognized for 40 years of public service. Anne will become the Special Advisory to Deputy Minister Gina Wilson and retire in March 2023. Niawen:kowa Anne, for all your support to Akwesasne and congratulations on your new position!

OCTOBER 28, 2022 NEW YORK STATE LAND CLAIM

On the morning of October 28, 2022, I travelled to Malone New York to participate in a New York State land claim settlement negotiation. The parties spend the day in either all-party discussions or individual parties discussing with the mediator facilitating both sessions. These mediation sessions have been ongoing for a few months to bring the claim to an out-of-court settlement.

OCTOBER 31, 2022, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE

- The AMBE Superintendent of language provided Council with an overview of the current status of language teaching with AMBE and expressed the importance to implement new initiatives to support language revitalization with parents and the community at large. The Youth, Elder, Culture and Language Committee committed to follow up and examine options.
- A briefing was provided on the status of a court case involving the Six Nations Elected Council regarding consultation in the Haldimand Tract.
- MCRs passed: Approval of new permit with Bell Canada St. Regis, Approval of new permit with Bell Canada Chenail Range; Approval to rescind MCR for Leases approval; Approval to lease amendment for name change; Approval of MCA Nursing staff salary grid; Approval of application for Aboriginal Community Staff Planning Initiatives; Approval of 2022 MCA Healing Fund recipients.