



COMMUNITY NOTICE

For Immediate Release:
Tsiothóhrha/December 3, 2020

PETITION RECEIVED DECLARED NULL & VOID

On September 29, 2020, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) notified the community that a petition had been received on September 21, 2020, requesting that the group calling themselves “the Land Protectors” be stopped from continuing to interfere in family land disputes throughout Akwesasne.

The petition was accepted in principle by Council at a virtual General Meeting on October 29, 2020 and was then turned over to the Chief Electoral Officer for verification that an adequate number of eligible voters had signed the petition, in accordance with the MCA Procedure Regulation.

The Akwesasne Justice Department provided a report to Council on November 4, 2020 indicating that of the 87 signatures contained on the petition, 51 were deemed to be eligible voters, 21 are not on the voters list, and 5 could not be identified. The total number of eligible voters that signed the petition does not meet the threshold of 75 signatures of eligible voters per district, for a total of 225 signatures for a community-wide petition, as recommended by the Akwesasne Justice Department.

As a result of the report on the verification process, Council passed a resolution on November 30, 2020 declaring the petition null and void.

The MCA is aware of a number of land disputes within Akwesasne. When dealing with estates and land transfers, our Office of Vital Statistics follows the rules established by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) as their policies and procedures currently govern estate issues related to land and to land transfers in general. While all attempts are made to assist in resolving land disputes, each dispute is unique and requires all the disputing parties to be prepared to find solutions. This is unfortunately not always the case.

The petition received calls for the disbanding of an organization to ensure they are unable to participate in land disputes. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is unable to disband community groups, but reminds community groups and individuals engaged in advocacy that they should be mindful about respecting the rights of individuals directly involved in any dispute. Any advocacy attempts should be done in a peaceful and respectful manner.

The Mohawk Council will continue to work with individuals, groups, and external governments to find solutions to land challenges and disputes. We thank the petitioners for bringing their concern to Council’s attention and we will continue to ensure that peace and respect are embraced within Akwesasne.