



Office of the Grand Chief

Ennisko:wa/March 4, 2021

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

It's hard to believe that we are now in the month of March. I know that with everything happening, it can sometimes feel like every day is the same. It is encouraging though to see that the sun is now rising earlier and setting later each day. This is undoubtedly a sign that spring is on its way; it officially arrives on March 20, 2021. I'm sure many of us are open to welcome in more daylight and the warmer days to come.

March is a mile marker. Spring is coming and so is the one year anniversary since we declared a State of Emergency in Akwesasne in response to the global COVID-19 Pandemic on March 16, 2020. This past year has been a very difficult. Niawen:kowa to everyone for doing your part, for embracing all of the precautionary health measures necessary to keep yourselves and our community safe.

As we have previously reported, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is preparing to rollout COVID-19 vaccines. We have recently been assured by the Province of Ontario that Akwesasne will begin receiving a steady flow of vaccines, beginning in early March 2021. As of the date of this report, Akwesasne has received approximately 400 vaccines which provided 1st and 2nd doses to the residents and front line staff of our long-term care homes, Tsiionkwanohnso:te and Iakhihsotha. Using the priority listing, starting next week we will begin calling community members who pre-registered to schedule a time and place to receive their first vaccination shot. I ask everyone to please continue to exercise patience on the vaccine rollout. Our health staff are working hard to prepare the vaccine rollout, while also continuing to follow up with contact tracing and with those who are required to quarantine. Niawen:kowa to them for doing everything they can to keep us safe.

Last week we hosted our monthly General Meeting where we provided updates on various files, including our COVID-19 response. I encourage you to tune into the recording at: <https://youtu.be/GVSdtNBR5HA> to receive the update. The next General Meeting will take place on March 25, 2021. You can request the link for the meeting and e-mail your questions ahead of time at: meetings@akwesasne.ca.

Until then, I am available to discuss the items in this report or any other item, by phone at 613-575-2250 or by e-mail at: grand.chief@akwesasne.ca. Please note that while I use social media to share information it's difficult for me to respond to all the messages, comments, and posts through social media. I encourage you to call or e-mail me.

Be safe and take care.

Sken:nen/Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abram Benedict', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Abram Benedict
Grand Chief



Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Tsiothohrko:wa/January 2021

JANUARY 4, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE

- Legal counsel provided Council with a briefing on a request received from the Quebec courts for our membership list, to allow the Quebec courts to include Akwesasronon for jury selection. Council denied the request.
- Council discussed the current surge in COVID-19 cases within Akwesasne and requested an update on the timelines for the vaccine rollout.
- An update was provided by the Chiefs Committee on the COVID care package deliveries.
- MCRs passed: Approval of allotment of land to community member (loan paid off); Approval of lease on St. Francis Island; Approval of lease on Colquhoun Island; Approval of amendment to previous MCR due to numbering error; Approval of navigational permit on Cornwall Island; Approval of assignment of lease on Renshaw Island; Approval of allotment of land to community member (loan paid off); Approval of appointment of community member to represent Tsi Snaihne on the Akwesasne Review Commission (ARC).

JANUARY 5, 12, 19, 26, 2021 BORDER PARTNERS MEETINGS

On a weekly basis throughout the month of January, MCA's Public Safety Portfolio Chiefs, representatives from the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, and I participated on weekly calls with the Port Directors for the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and the United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP). The calls occurred every Tuesday morning utilizing the Zoom platform. On these calls we receive regular updates from the

Port Directors on current traffic volumes, any issues with local travelers, and reports of any customs officers that may be in quarantine for any reason. For the month of January, USCBP reported that a few of their officers were reported to be in quarantine, but these exposures were unrelated to working at the port of entry. These meetings also give our local governments the opportunity to provide relevant updates to the CBSA and USCBP representatives. During the month of January, we learned of possible additional border restrictions in Canada, expected in February.

JANUARY 5, 18, 19, 21, 2021 EASTERN ONTARIO HEALTH UNIT

Throughout January I participated on various briefings provided by the Eastern Ontario Health Unit (EOHU) to receive updates from Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, the Medical Officer of Health and the Chief Executive Officer for the Eastern Ontario Health Unit. Dr. Paul provided updates on national and regional COVID-19 case numbers and explained the local regional positive cases. During the month of January, the province of Ontario was under a stay-at-home order with most businesses only open for curbside pickup only. Dr. Paul explained that vaccine rollout had been slow in the region, Canada had experienced some delays in getting vaccines which resulted in delays to EOHU. Dr. Paul explained that the priorities for Ontario were the long term care facilities, following by a priority listing matrix. First Nations in Ontario were at high risk and they are considered a priority as well. It was also reported that many of the cases in the region still continue to be related to close contact with people who have COVID and family transmissions continue to be a concern. Dr. Paul explained that during the month of January, the many measures and enforcement inspections that occur in the region were to ensure that health directives were being adhered to.

JANUARY 6, 2021 CALL WITH EASTERN ONTARIO HEALTH UNIT

On the morning of January 6, 2021, I spoke with Dr. Paul from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit (EOHU) regarding the COVID-19 vaccination process. Dr. Paul explained that the EOHU would be

receiving a specific allocation of vaccines by Sunday, January 10 and the vaccines would be transferred to MCA's Department of Health as early as Monday, January 11. Dr. Paul further explained that this shipment of vaccines would go to Tsiionkwanohnso:te for the residents and staff. I expressed to Dr. Paul the urgency to get the vaccines to the residents and thanked him for the update.

JANUARY 6, 2021 CALL WITH MAYOR OF DUNDEE

On the afternoon of January 6, 2021, I connected with Dundee Quebec Mayor Linda Gagnon regarding an occupancy taking place at Hopkins Point on privately owned land. Linda explained that the Township of Dundee had sent the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne notice that a structure was being constructed on property without the proper permits from the township. Linda further explained that the municipality would be doing another inspection and would send another notice and the process could lead to fines being levied. I explained to Linda that the individuals building on the MCA property and other lands did not have permission of the MCA to do so. I thanked Mayor Linda for the update on the current situation.

JANUARY 6, 2021 CALL WITH MINISTER OF INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA REPRESENTATIVE

On the evening January 6, 2021 I hosted a call with the assistant to the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada Ontario Region to press upon the Minister's office the urgency for Akwesasne to receive COVID-19 vaccines. I explained that the outbreak at our long term care facility was having a devastating effect on the residents. The ISC representative acknowledged the request and impacts and explained that the provinces were responsible for the distribution to communities, including Akwesasne. While I already understood that the provinces are responsible for the distribution, I wanted to ensure that the Minister of Indigenous Services was aware of the current situation in Akwesasne.

JANUARY 6, 13, 20, 27, 2021 WEEKLY COVID-19 MEETINGS

On a weekly basis throughout the month of January, Council met with MCA's Administration to specifically discuss and receive updates on our response to COVID-19. These meetings provide an opportunity for Council to thoroughly discuss our current precautions and travel restrictions. While discussions may occur at length during these weekly Wednesday meetings, decision-making is reserved for the regular Council Meetings.

JANUARY 7, 2021 INTERVIEW WITH CBC MONTREAL

On the morning of January 7, 2021, I provided an interview to Rebecca Ugolini of CBC Day Break Montreal. I provided Rebecca with an overview of the current status of the COVID-19 situation in Akwesasne. I explained to Rebecca that our community currently had a curfew in place and a 100-mile travel restriction. Rebecca asked how effective the curfew had been for our community since Quebec was in the process of implementing a curfew for the entire province. I explained that for the most part our community members were respective of the curfew and we remained in our homes from 11 pm to 5 am, except for essential reasons. I also provided Rebecca with an update on the current outbreak at our long-term care facility.

JANUARY 7, 2021 ONTARIO FIRST NATIONS TECHNICAL SERVICES CORPORATION (OFNTSC)

On the morning of January 7, 2021, I participated in the Annual General Meeting for the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC). The board president welcomed the participants and provided his annual report to the members, on behalf of the board of directors for the corporation. Following the board report, the Executive Director (ED) for the corporation provided her annual report to the members and explained the program changes that have occurred as a result of COVID-19.

Following the reports from the board president and ED, a hired governance consultant from Orbis Risk Consulting provided the

members with an overview of recent reviews and recommended changes to the governance structure of the OFNTSC board of directors. It was explained that considering the recommendation from a recent review and in consultation with the funders (Indigenous Services), this recommendation was being made to change the composition of the board to a skills-based board. This presentation resulted in a very lengthy discussion on the implications of the changes to the board. The current board chair explained that the changes would allow for the corporation to continue to receive funding and it would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the board. The members on the zoom call were split on making changes to the OFNTSC governance structure at first, but they ultimately approved the proposed changes. The members on the call also received and accepted the 2019/2020 audit for the corporation and accepted a new board of directors.

JANUARY 8 & 22, 2021 BI-WEEKLY MEETINGS WITH SAINT REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE

Our Council has been meeting with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) on a bi-weekly basis as part of our ongoing commitment to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for Council and our Emergency Operations Center to share information on our pandemic response with our counterparts from the SRMT. Topics for these weekly discussions include updates on current positive cases of COVID-19, potential changes to community directives, updates from the weekly border calls, and other COVID-19 related discussions.

JANUARY 8, 2021 EDP RENEWABLE ENERGY

On the afternoon of January 8, 2021 members of our Council and I participated in a remote presentation with EDP Renewables. In late December 2020 I had participated in a site tour of the EDP Renewables Nation Rise Wind Farm in the Township of North Stormont. At the presentation of January 8, 2021 the representatives from EDP explained the project including the government purchase

contract whereby the Ontario government has agreed to purchase all the power generated by the windfarm for the next 20 years. The representatives discussed the opportunity for the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne to invest in the project and become an owner. It was further explained that if the MCA became an owner, the project would become eligible for additional incentives. MCA attendees had an opportunity to ask questions about the project and the proposal and committed to providing EDP with an indication of Akwesasne's interest in the coming week.

JANUARY 11, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE

- A concern regarding the need to clarify the applicability of Quebec's curfew was discussed. A clarification will be sent to the community informing them that the Akwesasne Curfew Law is in effect in MCA's jurisdiction and our curfew is currently set from 11 pm to 5 am.
- Council further discussed a request for assistance from Habitat for Humanity for a potential partnership to benefit a community member. Further follow up will be done with the community member being assisted.
- The agenda for the January 28, 2021 General Meeting was set and will be distributed prior to the meeting.
- Council discussed the recent presentation received on an opportunity to invest in a renewable energy project and determined that due to the short time frame, the opportunity will be declined.
- MCRs passed: Approval of wage enhancement agreement for Personal Support Workers at Tsiionkwanonhso:te; Approval to extend the appointment of Akwesasne Legislative Commission members until June 2021.

JANUARY 11, 2021 CALL WITH ELECTED EASTERN ONTARIO OFFICIALS

On the afternoon of January 11, 2021 I participated on a Zoom meeting with Eastern Ontario municipal leaders to share updates on

the current increases of COVID-19 cases in our region. Mayor Bernadette welcomed me and the other attendees, including Mayor Prevost of South Glengarry, Warden Stephane Sarrazin of Prescott Russell, and various administrative staff to the zoom call. We each quickly provided updates from our respective areas and discussed at length the recent surge of COVID-19 cases and the impacts the cases have had on the local hospitals. We agreed that we would set up a call with the local hospitals to receive an update from them and ask the hospitals what the local elected leadership can do to support them. We also discussed the need to have additional data from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit to support messaging to our respective communities on trending risks for COVID infection.

JANUARY 12, 2021 CKON UPDATE

On January 12, 2021, I provided the community with an update on CKON 97.3 Radio. Since April 6, 2020, I had been providing regular updates on the radio to the community. The topics I discussed included the current COVID status in Akwesasne and the surrounding areas, current restrictions, and the COVID-19 vaccine rollout to the community. Following my update and presentation I took questions from the community regarding a variety of subjects. The entire update can be found at: <https://youtu.be/c0zAw9h9aNI>

JANUARY 14, 2021 EASTERN ONTARIO ELECTED OFFICIALS AND REGIONAL HOSPITALS

Following my meeting with Eastern Ontario elected officials on January 11, the Mayor of Cornwall hosted a meeting on January 14, 2021 with the regional hospitals. Representatives from the Cornwall Community Hospital, the Glengarry Memorial Hospital, the Winchester Hospital, and the Hawkesbury Hospital participated on the call. The hospital representatives explained that all of their hospitals were nearing 100% capacity and that they were working together to ensure that patients were being transferred where possible to balance the loads at each hospital. Each hospital provided current statistics on capacity and resources available to the hospital

and reported that they were in need of health care staff. The elected leadership offered to help the hospital in any way they could. The hospitals requested that the elected leadership encourage people to follow the public health guidelines and asked that people exercise patience when coming into the hospitals. It was always requested that patients consider allowing themselves to be transferred to other hospitals in order to free up hospital resources. The hospital explained that when patients need to be admitted for non-life-threatening reasons, the hospital may want to transfer them, but the consent of patient is needed. We thanked the hospitals for the work they are doing. Following the meeting, the following public service announcement was developed: <https://fb.watch/3SaREt2vzL/>

JANUARY 14, 2021 INTERVIEW WITH LEAH KELLY

On the afternoon of January 14, 2021, I provided an interview to Leah Kelly who is a college senior at West Hartford Connecticut. Leah is conducting her sociological senior thesis with a focus on Indigenous Identity and Sovereignty in the Northeast. I provided Leah with a brief overview of our community and answered a series of questions from her regarding Akwesasne, our history, and what my perspective was on our rights and our identity. I explained a bit about my own personal opinion but further explained the broader position of the community on our rights and our identity. I was sure to include a description of how Akwesasne is faced with many challenges imposed by the international border, especially when dealing with the variety of external government approaches that we must deal with due to our location, as well as the impact of each government's policies.

JANUARY 14, 2021 CBC RADIO ONE INTERVIEW

On the morning of January 14, 2021, I provided Julianne Hazlewood of CBC Radio One's Ontario Morning with an interview. Julianne asked about the current outbreak at our long-term care facility and how the community was coping with the outbreak. I explained to Julianne that the staff at Tsiionkwanohnso:te were working closely

with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit to contain and stop the outbreak. I also discussed the current restrictions in place in Akwesasne and the challenges we face with being on the border and having to deal with the many jurisdictions and approaches of external governments to the pandemic.

JANUARY 15, 2021 INTERVIEW WITH OTTAWA CITIZEN

On January 15, 2021, I provided Andrew Duffy with an interview for the Ottawa Citizen. Andrew was interested in understanding the current COVID-19 situation in Akwesasne as he was in the process of writing an article about various First Nation's responses to the pandemic. I discussed our current outbreak at Tsiionkwanohnso:te, our efforts to control the spread, the current curfew and travel restrictions in Akwesasne, and the recent incident where Akwesasne individuals were receiving harassing notes on their vehicles while shopping in Cornwall. The full article can be found at: <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/cornwall-eastern-ontario-face-alarming-wave-of-covid-19>

JANUARY 17, 2021 INTERVIEW WITH CBC SARAH KESTER

On January 17, 2021, I provided Sarah Kester of CBC with an interview regarding the recent event where Akwesasne members received notes on their vehicles while shopping in Cornwall. Sarah explained that she had seen the Mayor of Cornwall's recent social media post and wanted to learn more about the incidents. I explained that I was shocked and concerned about the notes on the vehicles and explained that many people do not realize the geographical location of Akwesasne. Sarah asked if I felt the actions were driven by racism and I explained that it was likely not acts of racism since you generally would not know an Akwesasne member was driving the car. The notes were placed on vehicles with Quebec license plates. I further discussed the matter with the Mayor of Cornwall. The full article can be found at: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/unfriendly-notes-left-on-cars-cornwall-akwesasne-1.5876739>

JANUARY 18, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE

MCRs passed: Approval of COVID support for the Akwesasne Justice Department; Approval to rescind 3 upgrade loans to community members (loans no longer needed); Approval of Pandemic Pay contribution agreement for all PSWs within Department of Health; Approval of 2019/2020 Audit for Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Smoke Free Program; Approval of 2019/2020 Audit for Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Community Support Program; Approval of 2019/2020 Audit for Ministry of Health and Long Term Care AIDS Program; and Approval of working group to finalize the Akwesasne Emergency Response Law.

JANUARY 19, 2021 INTERVIEW WITH KAHNAWAKE K103.7

On January 19, 2021 I was invited to participate in a radio interview with Kahnawake K103.7 to provide the Kahnawake listeners with an update on the COVID-19 situation in Akwesasne. The radio host and I discussed the measures in place in Akwesasne and the challenges created by the borders and the many jurisdictions. We also discussed the notes being left on vehicles in the City of Cornwall that had Quebec plates on them. I provided an update on the outbreak at Tsiionkwanohnso:te and the unfortunate loss of life at the facility.

JANUARY 19, 2021 INDIAN TIMES

On January 19, 2021, I provided the editor at Indian Times with an interview on the current situation in Cornwall where Akwesasne members were receiving harassing notes on their vehicles with Quebec plates. I explained the actions taken by the MCA to inform the public of additional information about Akwesasne and the border realities.

JANUARY 20, 2021 CALL WITH CANADA FEDERAL NEGOTIATOR

On the morning of January 20, 2021, I hosted a call with Canada's Federal Negotiator for our self-government process. On the call of January 20, I explained that Akwesasne was deeply concerned about the outstanding issues at the Akwesasne/Canada table and that we

needed to work to resolve these issues. On the call the representative explained that many of the outstanding issues could be resolved but a few of the major ones would require the minister to provide further direction. I explained that Akwesasne would be continuing to pursue the minister for political solutions. I also informed the representative that Akwesasne was not able to proceed with the next official negotiations set to occur in the coming weeks.

JANUARY 20, 2021 CALL WITH ONTARIO REGIONAL EXECUTIVE

On the afternoon of January 20, 2021 I received a call from Garry Best, the Ontario Region Executive for the First Nation and Inuit Health Branch of Indigenous Services Canada. Garry reached out regarding the outbreak at Tsiionkwanohnso:te and expressed his condolences to the community for the recent loss at the facility. Garry explained that the region would assist in any way possible. I let Garry know that we were short staffed, and the existing staff were getting tired and he committed to following up with our health administration and to offer any supports possible.

JANUARY 21, 2020 CORNWALL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On the evening of January 21, 2020, I participated in the regularly scheduled Cornwall Community Hospital Board of Directors meeting. A representative of the hospital's IT department provided the board with a presentation on cyber security measures and the updates the hospital has undertaken to keep the hospital's computer system safe. The Vice President provided an update and overview of the financial statement for the hospital. A representative of the governance committee updated the board on a review of the board committee membership policy and the human resources recruitment policy. The Chief Executive Officer and the Chief of Staff provided overviews of their written reports to the board. Both presentations outlined the increase of COVID-19 cases and the impacts to the hospital. The Annual Operating Plan Progress Report, Quarterly Corporate Scorecard Report, and Quarterly Patient Safety Report were all

presented and accepted by the board. An update was provided by the Auxiliary and Foundation representatives. The board conducted its standard in camera session to deal with business required to be dealt with in camera. The next board meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2021.

JANUARY 22, 2021 MEETING WITH MOHAWKS OF AKWESASNE COMMUNITY SETTLEMENT TRUST TRUSTEES

On the morning of January 22, 2021 members of our Council met with Trustees for the Mohawks of Akwesasne Community Settlement Trust. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2020 process and funded projects. The trustees provided updates on all the 2020 projects and provided an overview of the available funds for 2021. The group also discussed the additional money being allocated annually to the land acquisition fund and the Natural Disaster Emergency Relief Fund (NDERF). The trustees explained that a policy had been set for the use of NDERF funds and that only a small amount of resources had been allocated to the fund at this time. The trustees explained that over the last several years the community priorities continue to be the same and that this year they utilized a CKON Tetewatha:ren talk show to consult with the community and confirm the use of the last three years top priorities. The administrative trustee provided an overview of the 2021 trust operating budget of \$727,950. The final item discussed was how the overseers are compensated and why a request for them to be administered by the Administrative Trustee was submitted. I explained that the overseers are appointed by Council therefore they should be compensated by Council.

JANUARY 25, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE

- Dr. Paul Roumeliotis of the Eastern Ontario Health Unit (EOHU) provided Council with an overview of the current COVID-19 case trends in the region and explained that many new cases are transmitted through close contacts. Dr. Paul also provided an update on the vaccine rollout and explained that due to delays in

vaccines getting to Canada, the EOHU vaccines have been delayed as a result. It is expected that more vaccines will arrive next week.

- Representatives from NVision Insight Group and MCA's Nation Building program presented an overview and update on the Akwesasne Justice Department review.
- Council received a briefing from District Chiefs who assisted in the delivery of care packages to members of Akwesasne residing in the City of Cornwall. An internal meeting will be set up with MCA programs to discuss programs and assistance available.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of funding agreement with Ontario Ministry of Corrections for Native Inmate Liaison Officer position; Approval of funding agreement with Jordan's Principal for navigators; Approval to award contract to a2z for governance enhancement; Approval to proceed with property severance and transfer for Habitat for Humanity project; Approval of new lease Colquhuon Island East; Approval of new lease St. Francis Island; Approval of 2 new leases Thompson Island.

JANUARY 25 & 26, 2021 JAY TREATY BORDER ALLIANCE

On the afternoon of January 25 & 26, 2021 I participated on a remote conference with the Jay Treaty Border Alliance. This conference was co-hosted by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe. I was invited to participate on a panel titled "Crossing the US-Canada Border During the COVID-19 Pandemic." I provided an overview of the current situation in Akwesasne and explained that the closure of the international border has thankfully had minimal effect on our community members. I also highlighted the different approaches the Canadian government and the US government have each taken to combat the pandemic.

On the second day I participated on a panel titled "Advocating for an Indigenous Right of Crossing into Canada". During this panel I explained the current political climate in Canada and discussed that Canada has options to recognize and implement the Jay Treaty. The panel also heard from various other Tribal Nations on their approach

to border issues and some of the continuous challenges created by the international border. Other panel discussion included updates or presentations from the Assembly of First Nations, the Canada Border Services Agency, the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, and members of Congress.

JANUARY 26, 2021 CORNWALL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

During the noon hour of January 26, 2021, I participated on the Cornwall Community Hospital's (CCH) Governance Committee regular meeting. The CCH staff provided an overview of proposed changes to the vendor visitation policy and explained that the proposed revisions were being recommended to provide additional clarity to the hospital vendors. The committee reviewed and approved the vendor visitation revisions. The committee also made an appointment to the Ethics Committee and reviewed the Pet Therapy Policy, the board performance check-up report, and the board attendance annual report.

JANUARY 26, 2021 MEETING WITH PORTFOLIO

On the afternoon of January 26, 2021, I met with the Nation Building Portfolio Chiefs to discuss the outstanding issues at the Canada/Akwesasne self-government negotiations. I provided an update to the portfolio that I had spoken to the federal negotiator about our outstanding issues and pressed upon him to find a solution to Akwesasne's requests. I discussed the expropriation provision and the taxation provision in the draft agreement and agreed that a follow up meeting would be setup with the Minister of Crown and Indigenous Relations to further discuss the outstanding issues on expropriation and taxation.

JANUARY 28, 2021 GENERAL MEETING

On the evening of January 28, 2021 our Council hosted the General Meeting utilizing the Zoom platform. Agenda items included a presentation on MCA's Response to COVID-19, a presentation on the

Community in Quarantine Program, an update on the COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout and a COVID-19 Financial Update. The entire recording of the January General Meeting can be found at: <https://youtu.be/iQnxxXlDqAE>. The next General Meeting will occur at the end of February on the zoom platform. Questions for Council can be emailed in advance to meetings@akwesasne to ensure they are answered at the meeting.

JANUARY 28, 2021 ELECTIONS CANADA

On the morning of January 28, 2021, I received a call from the Cornwall Elections Canada Electoral Officer. The purpose of the call was for him to introduce himself to me and explain that should or when the Government of Canada call for an election, Elections Canada would be looking to hire individuals to help with the elections. It was further explained that they would be interested in hiring Akwesasne members to be community liaisons for Elections Canada. I explained to the representative that Akwesasne historically has a low number of people who participate in Canadian Elections. The representative committed to sharing job opportunity literature with me once it becomes available.

JANUARY 29, 2021 CALL WITH SERVICE CANADA AND CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

On the afternoon of January 29, 2021 members of our Council met with representatives of Service Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency. I had requested the meeting with the representatives in order to receive additional information on the Canada Economic Relief Benefits (CERB) program. The CERB program was introduced at the beginning of the pandemic as a program that is available to eligible applicants to apply for financial assistance to assist with financial hardship due to the pandemic. The representatives from Canada explained the program to us and explained that the income was being treated as taxable in most situations. We discussed in more detail how this income was going to be treated for tax exempt individuals. The representatives explained that if an individual's

income was tax free the previous year, the CERB benefit would also be treated as tax free as well. The representatives from Service Canada also explained that if individuals didn't have a taxable income and didn't file income tax returns and received letters saying they weren't eligible for CERB, they could submit documentation to show they had an income which would make them eligible for the benefit. Service Canada committed to following up on a request for them to have a representative available to specifically work with MCA representatives, and to provide the number of applicants that were approved for CERB within Akwesasne's postal codes.

JANUARY 29, 2021 EASTERN ONTARIO REGIONAL NETWORK

On the afternoon of January 29, 2021 representatives of our Economic Development Department and Information Services Program and I met with a representative from the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN). The EORN representatives explained that they were meeting with elected officials in eastern Ontario to learn more about the cell phone signal needs in the region. We explained that Tsi Snaihne had the most 'dead zones' for cell coverage in Akwesasne and requested that the EORN representatives examine how they could better support Tsi Snaihne. The EORN representatives explained that they have received government funding to work on improving cell phone coverage.