



COMMUNITY NOTICE

For Immediate Release:

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AKWESASNE ELECTION LAW UPDATE & NEW OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEMBER

In pursuit of fair and just laws for our community, the Akwesasne Justice Department (AJD) called for a Tsi Snáihne district community member to serve on the Oversight Committee on Legislative Development. This Committee is comprised of appointed community representatives and Council who draft legislation to protect and advance the inherent rights of the Mohawks of Akwesasne, guided by principles of peace, respect, and fairness. We are pleased to announce that the successful candidate to represent Tsi Snáihne is Theresa Benedict.

Theresa has been a vital researcher with the Akwesasne Rights and Research Office (ARRO) since October 2018, working to preserve Akwesasne's history and cultural heritage while providing educational materials to the community. Her contributions to key projects like the Dundee-Tsi:karistisere and St. Lawrence Seaway Referendums highlight her dedication to advancing the community's interests. Theresa also supported individuals involved in the Federal Indian Day School Class Action, offering guidance with care and commitment. Her ongoing efforts to protect Akwesasne rights and celebrate its culture will bring valuable insight to the OSC.

We are excited to welcome Theresa to the Committee, where she will oversee and receive Council and community input, provide community guidance and direction in the development of Akwesasne Laws, and consider and balance the diversity of perspectives. Niawen:kówa for your commitment to the community of Akwesasne, and congratulations Theresa!



UPDATE ON THE AKWESASNE ELECTION LAW (AEL):

Now that the required community representation is met for the Committee — with one member from each district — work can commence on the AEL Amendment(s). According to the Oversight Committee on Legislative Terms of Reference (TOR), "In order to conduct business for the Oversight Committee, a quorum of three Oversight Committee members is necessary."

Since the four other members of the OSC are Justice Portfolio Chiefs, it would be a conflict of interest for them to work on the AEL. Therefore, quorum could not be met to establish a working task group (WTG) until a new Tsi Snáihne District member was accepted through MCR to serve on the OSC.

The next official OSC meeting will be held this week to discuss forming a Working Task Group (WTG) for the AEL. Along with the three district representatives, WTG members will include MCA staff who serve as administrative and technical support. This team will help guide the amendment process. Moving forward, the AEL WTG will address the petition and decide how to proceed. We appreciate your patience and will provide the community with another update as soon as possible.