

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

Tetewaie:na - Honoring the past, facing today's challenges, building a strong future.



OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF

Ohiari:ha/June 1, 2016

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

Happy June 1st to all of you!

As summer rolls in and the school year comes to an end I hope all of you are doing well. I look forward to all the graduation ceremonies over this coming month, from pre K's to High School, College and University!

Last Thursday evening, we held our monthly General Meeting at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Center with an estimated fifteen community members in attendance. We appreciate those who were able to attend the meeting and participate in the various discussions.

The General Meeting agenda included a presentation from the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) Human Resource program manager. Council and administration felt that this would be good for the community to have a better understanding of the Human Resource practices within MCA with a special focus on how the preferential hiring policy is implemented. Thank you to Lynn Roundpoint-Chaussi and Heather Phillips for making the presentation to the community.

Another presentation at the General Meeting was from Scott Peters on the proposed Trails Development in all three districts. The presentation included a proposed layout of the walking trail locations as well as proposed conceptual improvement and enhancements to the areas of the walking trails. Community feedback was positive, next steps will be now to seek funding for the project; early estimate costs are \$1 million for all three districts.

I am providing you with my monthly report which unfortunately was not available last week. I hope you take a moment to read my report which includes updates on some of the ongoing work your leadership is involved in. Take note that the attached report may not be entirely reflective of all participants at each meeting. You are encouraged to like my Facebook page "Abram Benedict" where you will have access to my regularly posted updates and reports. Please feel free to reach out to me or any District Chief if you have any questions.

Enjoy your day, and the wonderful month of June ahead!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abram Benedict", is written over a white background.

Grand Chief Abram Benedict



Grand Chief Abram Benedict's April 2016 Activity Report

April 1, 2016 Iohahio & Carleton University

Following our meeting with the President of Carleton University on March 9, 2016 we met with representatives of Carleton to further discuss the delivery of a bachelors program here at Iohahi:io. As previously discussed with Carleton, Akwesasne needs to have a committed core group of students in order for a three year program to be delivered successfully. On April 1, 2016 we met with Carleton representatives to go through a number of students files that have expressed an interest in the bachelor program. Each potential student will have to be assessed individually to ensure the admission requirements are met.

April 4, 2016 Council Meeting update

- Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) Manager briefed Council on a recent negotiation meeting with Transport Canada which outlined the next steps for the ongoing negotiations.
- Council discussed the procedure for issuance of status cards and will research the policy for issuance to non-Akwesasnon.
- An annual request from Northern Cree members to hunt in the Akwesasne Territory was discussed and will be further researched prior to considering giving them permission.
- The Council meeting schedule was reviewed and Council agreed to move the Council Meetings to Mondays instead of Tuesdays.

- MCRs passed: Appointment of Overseer to the Akwesasne Community Trust; Acceptance of 2014/15 Akwesasne Economic Development Fund (AEDF) Final Report; Approval of AEDF application for community business; Approval of funding proposal to AANDC 2016/17 P&ID fund; Approval of Council Meeting Minutes; April 4, 2016

April 5, 6, 2016 Think Tank Session on Child Welfare

I attended a day and a half session hosted by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS). The theme of the session was reconciliation, as it relates to the child welfare sector in Ontario. The Children's Aid Societies in Ontario have been pondering the idea of apologizing to the indigenous people for their role in residential schools, and the implementation of government assimilation policies on Indian people. A presentation was made on a draft reconciliation framework that the OACAS had developed. The OACAS also gave an overview on some of the work individual CASs is working to close the gaps and improve the working relationship with local Indigenous communities. The participants provided feedback on the framework and discussed the merits of an apology from the CASs. A majority of the participants felt that an apology should come with action, but they also felt that if anyone should be making the wrongs right it should be the Canadian government rather than the agencies.

April 6, 2016 Hydro One Conference Call

I participated in a conference call with other members of the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Political Confederacy (PC) and the Hydro One negotiation team. The negotiation team informed the PC that Ontario is moving forward with a second public offering of shares for Hydro One. Ontario plans to sell 60% of the company through the stock market. After this second round of sales, Ontario will still own 70% of the shares

leaving another 30% to be sold. The Chiefs in Ontario are attempting to negotiate a 10% ownership share in Hydro One. This work will continue over the next several months.

April 7, 2016 Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (AIC) - Thunder Bay

Members of the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Political Confederacy (PC) met with the Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (AIC). The AIC is an organization that represents all the Aboriginal Education Institutes in Ontario. Iohahi:io is a member of the consortium. The purpose of the meeting was for the AIC to provide an update to the PC with respect to the development of an Ontario AIC Position Paper. Currently AICs in Ontario are not recognized as educational institutes and are unable to deliver programs which graduate students under the AIC institute. Instead, programs must be delivered in partnership with mainstream colleges or universities. The AIC is asking the political leadership for assistance in lobbying the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities for recognition of the AIC as educational institutes.

April 7, 2016 Political Confederacy (PC) Meeting - Thunder Bay

Following the morning meeting and presentation by the Aboriginal Institutes Consortium the PC met to discuss other files. The education program for the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) provided the PC with a review and budget analysis of the 2016 federal budget with respect to education. Ontario will continue to lobby the federal government for a population based formula. When it comes to regional allocations of money, Ontario is the largest region and lacks the required funds to provide for the population. Representatives from the Ontario First Nations Limited Partnership (OFNLP) provided a briefing on an issue with respect to Ontario holding back \$37 million dollars from the Casino Rama operating reserves. The OFNLP is requesting political support to lobby Ontario to release the \$37 million to the First Nations in Ontario.

Other items discussed included:

- Upcoming agenda for the 2015 All Ontario Chiefs Conference – in Thunder Bay on June 28-30, 2016.
- Review of agenda and format for upcoming meeting with Premier of Ontario Kathleen Wynne.
- Hydro One meeting update.

April 8, 2016 Economic Roundtable



On Friday morning, members of Council as well as staff from Tehotiiennawakon met with members of the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, City of Cornwall, Akwesasne Chamber of Commerce, Akwesasne Area Management Board, Cornwall Tourism and other area organizations. The discussion was based on common themes and local initiatives to enable our communities to work together to create opportunities for all our people. We spent the morning going over current initiatives in each community and organization. The group agreed to develop an information sharing committee to examine ways of communicating with each party on common themes, opportunities, and challenges.

The Agenda items included:

- Access and deliveries to Akwesasne

- Local Business Networks
- Akwesasne Employment Opportunities
- Tourism

Overall the morning meeting went very well. This meeting was a first of many steps to work with our surrounding organizations and governments.

April 11, 2016 Council Meeting update

- Council discussed a request for support from a member of the Youth Council and agreed that the members of the Youth Council will be announced and introduced at the next General Meeting by Council and they will each be given the opportunity to provide a bio.
- Youth Council travel protocols and budget was discussed. Council was briefed on a recent Property Acquisition Team (PAT) meeting and will be provided with further details on properties that are being examined.
- An update was provided on a recent working group formed at the AFN. The group is working on border identification cards.
- Council agreed to identify next week's Chair for the Council meeting while Grand Chief is away on Travel. Council also agreed that when the Grand Chief is away the Chair will rotate among Council Members.
- A recent release from Six Nations and Kahnawake was discussed and Council agreed to provide a release supporting Six Nations and Kahnawake.
- Representatives from Assured Care Consulting presented on a Organizational Review of Iakhihsotha and Tsiionkwanohnso:te.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of Terms of Agreement In Principal for Cornwall Port Divestiture Agreement; Acceptance of retainer

agreement with Arbutus Law; Approval to rescind MCR for Bank of Montreal mortgage guarantee; Approval of Bank of Montreal mortgage guarantee for community member; Appointment of Community Member to represent Tsi Snaihne District on the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Commission; Approval for Statistics Canada to canvas Akwesasne for 2016 Census Survey, participation is voluntary; Acceptance of 2016/2017 MCA operating plan and budget; Acceptance of 2016/2017 budget reduction strategy. April 11, 2016.

April 14, 2016 Cornwall University Steering Committee & Carleton University



I traveled with the Cornwall University Steering Committee to Ottawa to meet with Carleton University. The steering committee has been considering partnering with Carleton University to start a "Lead to Win" program in Cornwall. The committee met with the Executive Director of the "Lead to Win" program to hear what the program is all about and how it could be started in Cornwall. The objective of the program is for select students to be able to build a venture to generate \$1 million annual revenue in three years. A very ambitious team and sponsor will work with students and programs to make each venture a success. In order for this program to start in Cornwall at the Nav Canada facility,

the steering committee would have to raise a million dollar endowment fund to support the “Lead to Win” program. The committee will consider options at a later date.

April 15, 2016 Workplace Revitalization Workgroup (WRW)

As an ongoing initiative, the Mohawk Council Workplace Revitalization Workgroup (WRW) provided Council and Senior Managers with an update on the work completed so far. The workgroup explained the themes that have been identified as a result of interviews with staff. Four themes were discussed at length:

- 1) Organizational Design (Executive Services and Mohawk Government)
- 2) PREA process and employee development,
- 3) Work place culture and climate at MCA,
- 4) Quality programs and service to community.

The WRW was mandated by Council earlier in the year to examine and make recommendations to Council for improvement in these four areas. The WRW is expected to make the recommendations by the end of June 2016.

April 17, 2016 Political Confederacy Meeting - Toronto

On afternoon of Sunday April 17 the Political Confederacy (PC) under the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) met to prepare for an upcoming meeting with the Premier of Ontario. Since the signing of the Political Accord last year with the Premier, the Chiefs committed to meeting bi annually. The PC also conducted other regular business which included an update from the Ontario First Nations Limited Partnership (OFNLP), who had presented to the PC at the prior meeting, but wanted to present the PC with a draft letter to the Premier for consideration. Legal Counsel for COO provided a briefing on the recent Daniel case

decision from the Supreme Court of Canada. It was agreed that a two page brief would be provided to all the Chiefs on the decision. The PC spent a significant amount of time discussing the situation in Attawapiskat, the focus of the discussion was around how the Chiefs could support the community and how the COO Office should be prepared for future emergency situations. On behalf of Akwesasne I extended our support and assistance in any way we could, but the challenge is that many communities such as Attawapiskat don't have the capacity to receive the supports. The members of the PC reviewed the COO portfolio system and each PC representative chose a portfolio. Akwesasne agreed to participate on the Wealth Creation, Tobacco, Environment, Water and Climate Change portfolios.



April 18, 2016 Political Confederacy (PC) & Meeting with Premier



On April 18, the PC continued its regular business from the day before and also prepared for the afternoon meeting with Premier Wynne. In the afternoon members of the PC traveled to Queens Park for the meeting with the Premier. Each member of the PC including myself had speaking parts under various heading. The Ontario First Nations Young Peoples Council (OFNYPC) presented on "Safe Talk" training for youth, and how this could assist with community issues such as the one in Attawapiskat. Some of the key presentations made to the Premier were:

- Addressing poverty in Indigenous Communities via "Poverty Action Now" position paper
- Ending boil water advisories in Ontario in partnership with the Federal Government
- Jurisdiction over Child Welfare
- Truth and Reconciliation Recommendations
- Resource revenue sharing

April 20, 2016 Call with Stephen Gagnon: Director General, Treaties & Aboriginal Government

Following our recent rejection for negotiations from Indigenous Northern Affairs Canada on the North Shore, Barnhart and Baxter Island Claims, I arranged for a telephone call with Stephen Gagnon to discuss other options. I expressed our serious disappointment with recent notification. Mr. Gagnon informed me that the MCA could continue to further research the claims and resubmit them for consideration. The MCA Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) will further research the claim and resubmit when additional evidence is found.



April 20, 2016 Breakfast Kick off for Cornwall Children's Treatment

On the morning of April 20 I attended the annual breakfast kick off for the Cornwall Children's Treatment Centre. The breakfast was the beginning of an annual Bike-a-Thon

Plus fundraiser that the Cornwall Children's Treatment Centre hosts in order to raise money for the centre and their services. Keynote speaker Peter O'Brian shared his own sexual abuse experience that he endured as a young man and what actions lead to him to coming forward and reporting the incident to the police authorities. Peter O'Brian is the husband of Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett. Mrs. Bennett was also in attendance at the breakfast function and afterwards we were able to speak briefly. We spoke about the pre-clearance announcement from Canada and I let her know that is what is needed here in Cornwall is to relocate the CBSA Port. I also let her know that Minister Goodale had accepted or invitation to come to Akwesasne and we would be talking with him about that. I mentioned to her that so far we have had good productive negotiations with Canada on the Seaway Case and the Cornwall Port divestiture files. I offered to meet with the Minister in her office to follow up on a few items; she was open to meeting. I also expressed to her my disappointment with the recent notification from Canada on the North Shore, Barnhart & Baxter Island Claims.

April 20, 2016 Cornwall Port Divestiture

Akwesasne meets regularly with the City of Cornwall to discuss the ongoing negotiations and prepare for upcoming meetings with Transport Canada. Over the lunch hour on April 20th Akwesasne and City of Cornwall committees met to review and finalize the co-ownership agreement between the City of Cornwall and Akwesasne.

The committees agreed that subject to the MCA's approval an official signing ceremony would take place on April 25 at the A'nowarako:wa Arena. Once the co-owners agreement was signed the parties would then work to finalize the transfer agreement with Transport Canada.

April 23, 2016 Focus Meeting on Cornwall Port

Council held a focus meeting at the Kana:takon School to provide the community with an update on the Cornwall Port divestiture file. We explained the negotiations have been ongoing for about two years, attempts to divest the Port of Cornwall had occurred in the past in 2004, which failed when Cornwall and Akwesasne couldn't agree on equal partnership.

April 25, 2016 Council Meeting update

- US Customs Massena Port Director as well as other representatives from US CBP introduced the new Tribal Liaison to Council and gave a brief on the liaison duties.
- Council reviewed and set the agenda for the upcoming General Meeting.
- A recent administrative decision on evaluations was reviewed and reaffirmed by Council.
- An update was given on MCA's assistance in the preparation for Kashechewan evacuees.
- Akwesasne Island lease renewal schedule was discussed and OVS committee will further research increase options as well as Akwesasne resident fee schedule.
- Council discussed options for enforcement, deterrent and protection of wetlands and shorelines within Akwesasne, further research will be conducted on options for consideration.

- Council agreed to a letter of support for an AMBE funding application to AANDC.
- Council was briefed on a book of recognition concept.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of Cornwall Port Divestiture Co-owners agreement between the City the Cornwall and Mohawk Council of Akwesasne; Acceptance of Akwesasne Trustee Resignation; Appointment in principal of Trustee to the Akwesasne Community Trust; Approval of AANDC Common Annual Report FY 2015/16 for P&ID funding; Approval to rescind upgrade application loan - loan refused; Approval of (3) Council Meeting Minutes. April 25, 2016.

April 25, 2017 Signing of the Co-owners agreement with the City of Cornwall

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the City of Cornwall held a signing ceremony to officially sign the co-owners agreement between the two parties. This agreement brings the Mohawk Council and the City of Cornwall one step closer to receiving the Cornwall Port from Transport Canada. The next steps will be to finalize a transfer agreement with Transport Canada.

April 29, 2016 Iohahi:io Closing Ceremony

Iohahi:io hosted a closing ceremony for their Human Resources Program graduates. I was asked to share a few congratulatory words with the graduates. A few Chiefs attended the ceremony and wished the graduates well in their bright futures. Congratulations to all the 2016 graduates.