

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

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



OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF

Ennisko:wa/March 31, 2016

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

I hope everyone had a great Easter weekend! Council has been busy with a number of meetings and evening functions this week. Overall this has been a great week.

Last night we held our monthly General Meeting at the Kanonhkwa't'sheri:io atrium with a few members of the community in attendance. We appreciate those who were able to attend the meeting and participate in the various discussions.

The General Meeting agenda included another presentation from Statistics Canada on the upcoming Canada Census survey, as well as a presentation from the Tehotiennawakon Environment Program about the ongoing Minnows and Shoreline Project. As previously stated, the Mohawk Government office was approached by Statistics Canada, who has asked our community to participate in the census survey which is scheduled to begin throughout Canada on May 2, 2016. As follow-up to the initial presentation which took place at last month's General Meeting, we scheduled an informational meeting which occurred in Tsi Snaihne on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 and the second presentation which took place at last night's General Meeting.

In addition, an online survey has been started to gauge the community's opinion on whether or not we should participate in the Canada Census Survey. This survey was initiated by MCA and is internal to Akwesasne; the survey can be easily accessed through a link on MCA's website at www.akwesasne.ca. I encourage you to complete the survey or alternatively, contact a District Chiefs to express your opinion. The decision on whether or not we participate as a community will be based on feedback received from the community. We are providing the opportunity to give your opinion on this issue, anticipate lots of participation from the community in this process, and definitely appreciate all opinions received.

My monthly report was provided at the General Meeting and is also attached for your information. I hope you take a moment to read my report to receive 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.

All my best for the month ahead!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abram Benedict". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Grand Chief Abram Benedict

AKWESASNE-LAND WHERE THE PARTRIDGE DRUMS

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

613-575-2250

WWW.AKWESASNE.CA

BOX 579 CORNWALL, ONTARIO K6H-5T3

MOHAWK GOVERNMENT OFFICES

613-575-2348



Grand Chief Activity Report for the Month of Enniska / February 2016

February 1, 2016 Chiefs of Ontario Political Confederacy, Ontario Minister Zimmer



The Political Confederacy (PC) for the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) hosted a Leadership meeting with the Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David Zimmer to discuss the implementation of the Political Accord, which was signed in August 2015 between the Chiefs of Ontario and the Premier of Ontario. The four-hour meeting covered a variety of topics as outlined:

- Jurisdiction over Child Welfare: Ontario has been involved in the development of an Aboriginal Children and Youth Strategy which includes a large component on jurisdiction. The Province is committed as part of Truth and Reconciliation to supporting jurisdictional discussions over what this means to the Communities and the Government. The Chiefs highlighted the need for transition, follow up, as well the resourced process to take over and maintain jurisdiction.
- Treaty Awareness: The Chiefs highlighted an upcoming Treaty Awareness Week scheduled for November 2016 and asked Ontario to support the efforts.
- Wealth Creation Summit: A proposal was given to Ontario for COO to host a Wealth Creation Summit in the coming months. The Province was receptive to the request and a Committee would follow up with Ontario on the planning.

- Consultation Office: Chiefs of Ontario outlined an initiative it has been working on with Ontario to create a Consultation Office in Ontario. The Province recognized that it doesn't have a standard consultation practice and will work jointly with the Chiefs to develop one.
- Relationship Issues: The Chiefs addressed a number of ongoing issues with the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and reiterated to Ontario that daily issues with these Ministries strains relationships and makes it difficult to see Ontario's commitment to a better relationship.
- OPP Task Force on Contraband Tobacco: With a recent announcement that the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services was financing the creation of an OPP Task Force that will be dedicated to disrupt the distribution of contraband tobacco in Ontario and beyond, the Chiefs asked why they were not consulted on this announcement. The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is supporting the Tobacco Pilot Project in Akwesasne and it was questioned as to what this means for those projects. The Ministry would be following up with the announcement and its originators.

February 2, 2016 Council Meeting

Tuesday Council meeting update:

- Representatives from Statistics Canada presented to Council on the upcoming 2016 Census Canada Survey and talked about benefits of Akwesasne participating; a presentation will take place at the next General Meeting prior to Council determining if we will participate in the Census Survey.
- Representatives from Enbridge introduced themselves to Council and provided Council with a brief on ongoing work in the region.
- A request from the 2016 Akwesasne Carnival Committee was discussed and Council agree to send the annual 5K contribution but will request additional information before considering an additional contribution.

- Council discussed public safety concerns and the need for community awareness; portfolio will follow up with AMPS on the need to promote awareness and presents.
- MCR's passed: Approval of 2016 Addendum(s) to Leases on various Islands; Approval of new lease(s) on various islands; Approval to proceed with new wholesaler for Ontario cigarette quota allocation systems; Approval of renewed Service Contract with Dr. Ojistoh Horn; Approval of renewed Service Contract with Dr. Brian Young; Allotment of land to community member (loan paid off); (3) Approval of upgrade loan(s) to community member(s); Approval of mortgage guarantee Bank of Montreal; Approval of new permit with DFO; Approval of Youth Representative to sit on Akwesasne Youth Council; Approval of Workplace Revitalization Working Group Terms of Reference and formation; Acceptance of 2015-2018 Strategic Plan; Approval (2) of Council meeting minutes. February 3, 2016.

February 2, 2016 Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) Toronto Gala



On the Evening of February 2, 2016 I was invited by Ontario Power Generation (OPG) to attend the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) 18th Annual Toronto Gala at the Ritz Carlton in Toronto. The CCAB honored and celebrated the 2016 Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement Award inductee, Chief Darcy Bear and the recipient of the National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Jacob Pratt. Over the course of evening NHL legend Reggie Leach spoke to the guests about his childhood and his career in the NHL.

February 4, 2016 Lobby Training

Senior Management of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) as well as Council Chief and Mohawk Government staff participated in an all-day Lobby Training session with Ron Gersh and Luke Nicholas from the CCS Group. The instructors explained how the structure of government worked in the political division as well as the bureaucratic division of the government. The process and importance of setting up meetings and to follow up was highlighted as well as key elements to remember and consider when a meeting with government is achieved. Government negotiations and strategies were also reviewed and discussed, the importance of approach based on the government values and commitment was explained. The afternoon session of the training the participants broke into two groups to conduct case studies and mock meetings.

February 5, 2016 Tsikaristisere / Dundee Land Claim

The Akwesasne Tsikaristisere / Dundee negotiation team met with Canada's negotiation team on February 5, 2016 to continue to review and negotiate language for the Final Settlement Agreement as well as the particulars on the Referendum process that will be used for the acceptance of the Agreement by the Akwesasne Membership. Each Party agreed to certain undertakings to be followed up on.

February 10, 2016 Chiefs of Ontario update on the sale of Hydro One

On the morning of February 10, 2016 while in Vancouver, BC for the Assembly of First Nations Forum on Energy, the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Political Confederacy (PC) met to debrief on a recent meeting with Ontario negotiators on the purchase of Hydro One shares. The COO Negotiating Team debriefed the PC and outlined next step for the ongoing negotiations.

February 10- 11, 2016 Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Forum on Energy- Vancouver, BC

On February 9, 2016, I traveled to Vancouver, BC to attend the Assembly of First Nations Forum on Energy. The Forum began with opening words from the National Chief who explained what he saw as expectations over the next two days. The Forum was designed to have one main plenary for the morning to be followed by afternoon breakout sessions for presentations by smaller groups on specific areas. The main plenary presentations were from various communities involved in the energy sector as well as some of the larger corporate energy companies, who either spoke about current projects underway with Indigenous communities or about ongoing challenges in the energy sector. The Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David Zimmer made a presentation to the delegation on how Ontario is working with Indigenous communities in Ontario involved in energy development. During the forum I participated in a breakout session on “Path Taken on Energy Development”, “Free and Prior Informed Consent” and “The Transportation Corridor: passing through First Nation Territories”. Each of these breakout sessions included panelist from either industry or communities who spoke about experiences, challenges, opportunities. Also while at the forum myself and a small delegation from the Chiefs of Ontario met with a group from Australia who specialized in renewal energy to communities with accessibility challenges.

February 17, 2016 Presentation to the Senate Committee



On the evening of February 17, 2016 the Director of Tehotienawakon; Rasennes Pembleton from the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO)

and I traveled to Ottawa to present to the Senate Committee on Aboriginal People. Akwesasne had been invited to present to the Committee who was examining the Jay Treaty and Border Crossing issues. I started off our presentation by introducing Rasennes Pembleton from ARRO who spoke on the history of the Jay Treaty and how the Treaty related to the Border Crossing Rights for First Nations. After Rasennes's presentation, I presented on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; the 94 recommendations and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP). These two documents provide strong rationale as to why and how Canada should recognize and implement of the Jay Treaty. After my presentation James Ransom spoke about the on ground realities in Akwesasne and explained efforts to address the reporting requirements by proposing solutions to Canada. Once our presentation was completed the members of the Committee were able to ask questions about our presentation and about our border challenges. The committee was interested to hear Akwesasne's efforts on the proposed solutions for alternative reporting; we explained the proposals had been made to Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) and the Department of Indigenous Affairs. The committee was also interested to hear how the United States Customs Border Protection (USCBP) treated Akwesasne members when crossing the border into the USA. The Committee explained to us that they would be writing a report to the Government. We extended an invitation to the Senators to tour Akwesasne and to consider holding a special session in Akwesasne.

Transcripts of the Hearing can be found on the Senate of Canada website.

February 18, 2016 Cornwall Port Divestiture

On the morning of February 18, 2016, Chief Loran, the Aboriginal Rights and Research Manager and I along with representatives from the City of Cornwall met with Transport Canada to continue our ongoing negotiations with transport for the divestiture of the Cornwall Port. Akwesasne and the City are

planning on a joint press conference within the next few months pending on the development of a Joint Communications Strategy with Transport Canada.

February 19, 2016 Signing Ceremony with St Lawrence College



On February 19, 2016, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Iohahi:io Adult Education renewed its three year agreement with St. Lawrence College to deliver post-secondary services to the community of Akwesasne. Iohahi:io has had an agreement with the college for several years to deliver programming; the renewed agreement will ensure these programs continue for the next three years.

February 20, 2016 Akwesasne Role Models Recognition Breakfast

On the morning of Saturday, February 20, 2016 a few members of Council and I helped cook and serve breakfast to Akwesasne Role Model nominees. This breakfast was part of the ongoing festivities of the 2016 Akwesasne Winter Carnival. Congratulations and good job to all recipients of the Recognition Award!

February 22, 2016 Mohawk Government Budget Review

On the morning of February 22, 2016 members of Council met with senior staff of the MCA Finance Department to review the proposed 2016/2017 Mohawk Government budget. The current budget to operate the Mohawk Government Department is approximately 1.7 million, which includes all the Chiefs, nine staff members, legal fees, office supplies and travel. The Chiefs agreed to further examine legal fees in an effort to save costs, as well as an allocation for each Chief's travel.

February 23, 2016 Council Meeting

Tuesday, Council meeting update:

- Lawyers on the New York State Claim provided Council with a brief on the Claim and an update on the current status.
- Council approved the Agenda for the upcoming General Meeting.
- A brief was provided on an upcoming request from the OFNLP for the First Nations to consider participating in an Economic Opportunity Model; the request will be further researched and considered at a later date.
- Council agreed to have a session within two weeks around Prioritizing and Lobby Strategy.
- The process in which Residency Letters are used and verified was discussed to ensure that any questionable residency is being reviewed and verified every time.
- Council asked Administration to review the protocol on parking lot and walkway snow removal.

- MCR's passed: Appointment of a community member to represent Kawehno:ke on the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Commission; Approval of new Lease on Colquhoun Island; Approval to rescind the Housing Rental Increase Strategy and the approval of 16/17 Rental Increase Schedule; Approval of amendment to Akwesasne / Canada Financial Agreement; Approval of traditional knowledge on the Great Lakes Pilot Project; Approval of NRDA Institutional Funding Agreement for Thompson Island Youth Camp; Appointment of MCA personnel to the Additions to Reserve (ATR) Working Group; Acknowledgement of final Referendum results for the Akwesasne Court Law and approval for implementation August 2016; Approval of (2) Council Meeting Minutes. February 23, 2016

February 23, 2016 Workplace Revitalization Workgroup

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne passed a MCR 2015/16 #317 dated February 2, 2016 creating the Workplace Revitalization Workgroup and the Terms of Reference for the Workgroup to work under. The Workgroup's primary focus areas are: 1) Develop a Workplace Environment Health Action Plan to respond to results of recent employee surveys; 2) Develop a Strategy to strengthen MCA's citizen-focused culture; 3) Update MCA's Performance Review and Employee Development Policies and Processes; 3) Develop and propose options to strengthen the MCA Administrations Organizational Structure. The Committee's first meeting occurred on February 23, 2016; although I am ex officio to the Committee I attended the kick off meeting and welcomed and thank all the Committee Members for committing to assist in the important work to help improve the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne in many areas. The Committee will meet every two weeks over the course of the next four to five months and will report regularly to Council.

February 23, 2016 Youth Business Graduation Ceremony



On the evening of February 23 I attended the Youth Business Graduation Ceremony at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre. The Akwesasne Child and Family Services (ACFS) started the program in November 2015 in partnership with the Department Tehotiiennawakon

and the Akwesasne Chamber of Commerce to deliver training, coaching and business development technique and skills to the Akwesasne youth participants. Congratulations to all those Youth graduates!

February 29, 2016 Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) Consultation

As the OCAS continues its work towards reconciliation between Indigenous Communities and Children Aid Societies (CAS's), there is a need for the CAS's to understand the different community perspectives on how communities view the relationship with Non-Indigenous organizations and governments. I was asked to present on the Two Row Wampum Belt from our perspective and how it relates to the child welfare sector in Ontario. I gave a bit of History on the Two Row as well as to the significance it has to our people. Explaining the Belt and its original intention will hopefully give Non-Indigenous partners a better understanding of why some of our people will not participate in the European systems.

-End-