

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

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



Enniska/ February 27, 2017

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

It's hard to believe that it's the end of February already and looking at the weather outside doesn't help. One day we are covered in snow and the next it has all melted away; weather this warm is not typical for the end of February. Along with the crazy weather, this time of year comes with the increased chance of catching a cold or even the flu; always remember the best prevention measure is to wash your hands as often as possible. When March break rolls around, no one wants their plans to spend some fun time with their children to be limited due to a cold or the flu.

Last week our Council hosted the regular monthly General Meeting in the district of Kana:takon at the St. Regis Recreation Center. The agenda for the evening included roundtable updates from each of our District Chiefs on the work they have been doing over the past month in their portfolio areas. Following that, we provided the community with an update on the ongoing work to amend the Akwesasne Election Law, and more specifically an overview of the recent survey results and what the next steps will be. An update on the land claim files was also provided. As announced last month we are now recording and streaming the General Meetings online in an effort to get information out to as many people as possible. **Here is the link to the February 2017 MCA General Meeting:** <https://youtu.be/RTKclmc63TE>. Please take a moment to listen in, stream it on the way to work, or download it to your phone. We ask that you please provide us with your feedback after checking it out; we need to know if improvements can be made in providing this option to you.

I would also like to mention that MCA is conducting a survey to determine what our public transportation needs are within the community. We ask that you provide your input by taking the quick survey to help determine what our overall needs are. We have recently been approached by the City of Cornwall to examine the options to link with the Cornwall bus service, so the data received through the results of our survey will help shape those discussions. **Here is the link to the survey on our public transportation needs:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AkwesasneTransit>.

Finally at last week's General Meeting I provided the community with a copy of my written report, which I am now sharing with you. I hope you take a moment to review the attached report, which provides a quick snapshot of my activities over the past month meeting by providing a summary of each of the meetings attended throughout the month. You can also view all my past reports online at www.akwesasne.ca or on my Facebook Page.

Enjoy the month ahead and let those temperatures keep rising!

Sken:nen,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abram Benedict'.

Grand Chief Abram Benedict



Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Tsiothohrkó:wa/January 2017

JANUARY 4, 2017 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

On January 4, 2017, our Council participated in an all-day health and safety training at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre. The purpose of the training was to provide leadership with an overview of the legislative requirements for the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) organization regarding the health and safety of the workforce and workplace. The trainer provided a high-level overview of the requirement of the MCA to have several committees in place to examine and review our internal health and safety policies and procedures. Following the training, Council agreed to work to ensure the organization is meeting its legislative requirements as an employer.

JANUARY 4, 2017 CALL WITH MINISTER SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON BORDER CROSSING ISSUES

On January 4, 2017, I spoke with Fred Caron who was recently appointed by the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada as a Minister Special Representative (MSR) on border crossing issues. The purpose of the call was for Fred to explain the MSR mandate, which is to conduct consultation with First Nation border communities to obtain a comprehensive picture of First Nations' Canada-United States (U.S.) border crossing challenges, to hear about the impacts the border has on their communities, and to collect First Nations views on potential solutions to address these challenges. Fred Caron is currently also Canada's lead negotiator for the Akwesasne–Canada self-government negotiations and is the lead negotiator for Canada on the Dundee land claim settlement. Based on our conversation we agreed that Fred could come to Akwesasne on January 25, 2017 to meet with Council to discuss our border challenges.

JANUARY 4, 2017 MEETING WITH AKWESASNE MEMBERSHIP BOARD

Back in August 2016 members of Council met with the Akwesasne Membership Board to discuss common concerns. On January 4, 2017, our Council met with the board again to follow up from the August meeting and to discuss the Descheneaux

case and its impacts on Akwesasne. The Quebec Superior Court released a decision in August 2016 and ruled that certain sections of the Indian Act having to do with the registration of status violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As a result, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada undertook to amend the Indian Act to remove the section that violated the Charter of Rights, which would ultimately result in additional individuals being entitled to become registered as Indians under the Indian Act. This would include additional people being eligible to be added to the Akwesasne Indian registry rolls. It was determined that we would continue to monitor the enrollment numbers to better mitigate the impacts should a significant increase in enrollment occur. Our Council also dialogued with the board on how the Mohawk Council could support the board with its backlog of membership applications. A follow up meeting between the board chairperson, the Office Vital Statistics manager, Portfolio Chiefs, and I has been scheduled.

JANUARY 5, 2017 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

On the morning of January 5, 2017, I attended the MCA finance committee meeting to receive an update on the 2017/2018 budget development process and an update on the increased cost of the MCA group insurance plan for employees. It was reported that as of March 2016, the accumulated deficit for the MCA was \$545,000, which represented a decrease of \$2,427,500 from the previous year. The finance committee determined that the MCA liability insurance would go to tender in late 2017 early 2018. The MCA tenders the insurance for the organization every 3-5 years to ensure we are receiving a competitive price. An update was also provided on the implementation of a new accounting software program and a report was given on the unspent monies from the previous year that needed to be returned to the funders.

JANUARY 6, 2017 TOUR OF TSIIONKWANONHSO:TE AND IAKHIHSOTHA

On the morning of January 6, 2016, Jordan Wapass, MCA Executive Director and I visited and toured Iakhihsóhtha in Tsi Snaihne to meet the staff and clients of the facility. During the tour, we learned more about the programming that occurs at the facility as well as the needs of the program and facility. Following that tour, we traveled to Kawehno:ke to tour the Tsiionkwanonhso:te Long Term Care facility to learn more about the programming and needs of this facility as well.

JANUARY 6, 2017 CALL WITH INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA

Over the past year, the MCA has been working with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) on the replacement of our wastewater treatment plant in Tsi

Snaihne which services the Tsi Snaihne School, Iohahí:io, Iakhihsóhtha, and all residential homes in the district. On the afternoon of January 6, I held a follow up call with the Capital Planning Officer at INAC regarding our capital submission for the replacement of the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Giancarlo informed me that a follow up meeting will be set up in the coming weeks with INAC senior management on our capital submission. While on the call with Mr. Giancarlo informed me that our submission for Buckshot Road reconstruction was close to approval. We will continue to follow up with INAC on our capital project submissions.

JANUARY 9, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING

- The Director of Tehotienawakon updated Council on the Akwesasne/Ontario Tobacco Pilot project and outlined the next steps for negotiations with Ontario; he also updated Council on the development of a grant submission to expand fiber into the community.
- Council was updated on Ontario's recent legislative change to allow for single name birth registration and was informed about an upcoming information session with Ontario on the changes.
- Council agreed to send a youth representative to an upcoming Ontario sponsored Treaty Forum taking place in Hamilton in February.
- A recent request for a letter of support was approved for an individual filing a human rights complaint against the use of mascots that mock Aboriginals.
- Council made a request for statistics on MCA employee disability claims as it relates to a recent increase in employee insurance premiums.
- A briefing was provided on the development of the workplace health and safety policy committee for the organization.
- MCRs passed: Confirmation of signing authority for Canada/Akwesasne fiscal agreement; Approval of one time funding for Smoking Cessation program with MOHLTC; Approval of amendment to health transfer agreement; Approval of amendments to Finance Policy Section 803-Funding Contributions to Community Organizations; Identification of lead and alternate negotiator for Canada Akwesasne Self Government Final Agreement Negotiations; Approval of amendment to Akwesasne/Canada funding agreement.

JANUARY 9, 2017, WORKPLACE REVITALIZATION WORKGROUP (WRW)

On January 9, 2017, several members of Council met with members of the Workplace Revitalization Workgroup (WRW) as well as the consultant who assisted with the development of the workplace revitalization strategies. Since the strategies were developed, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has recruited and

hired a new Executive Director and felt that a refresher meeting should be held with the WRW team. The consultants from Orbis assisted with the historical background on the reviews that lead up to the creation of the WRW and the strategies. Following the meeting with the WRW, the Executive Director will be meeting with the consultant to determine our next steps.

JANUARY 13, 2017 MEETING WITH PRICE WATERHOUSE COOPERS (PWC) ON THE FIVE LARGE FIRST NATIONS STUDY

In approximately 2007, Ontario's five largest First Nations (Oneida, Akwesasne, Six Nations, Tyendinaga, and Wahta) partnered with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to conduct a financial comparative analysis of the funding formulas between large First Nations and small First Nations. The study determined several areas where the five large First Nation communities were financially disadvantaged when compared to the smaller First Nations. The disadvantage was due to their large population size, the INAC funding formulas, and the caps on funding being imposed. On January 13, 2017 a number of Chiefs, including myself, and the MCA finance comptroller met with consultants from Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) who have been engaged by INAC to review and update the study conducted in the past. The purpose of the meeting was for Akwesasne to provide additional information and updated data about our funding shortfalls related to INAC funding formulas. We also provided the PWC representatives with an overview of the cost the border imposes on our community and its impact on service delivery. The PWC representative committed to meeting with Akwesasne again as they work to update the original study.

JANUARY 16, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING

- A staff member for the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office provided Council with an overview of an upcoming traveling event called "RETURN" which will exhibit in Akwesasne from February 6 -10, 2017.
- The Communications manager provided a presentation on options for recording the upcoming General Meeting so that it can be shared with those who aren't able to attend; Council agreed to record the upcoming meeting as a pilot project.
- Council reviewed the current Chiefs travel budget and will ask the finance committee to review and recommend changes if needed.
- A recent increase in the number of automobile dealers utilizing the Peace Tree Mall as a venue for photographs to be taken to demonstrate the delivery of purchased vehicles was discussed and will be monitored.

- Council was briefed on a program facility expansion concern and will follow up with portfolio and administration on expansion protocols.
- Chiefs discussed and expressed concern with the draft Akwesasne Driver Law and provided feedback for the working task group's consideration.
- Council was reminded of an upcoming meeting with the Mohawks of Akwesasne Community Settlement Trustees to review the draft survey results.
- Chiefs confirmed which District Chiefs would participate on the Governance Committee.
- Council was briefed on a recent incident where Akwesasne hunters have been charged by the New Brunswick government for hunting without authorization; the incident will be further discussed at the next Iroquois Caucus meeting.
- Chiefs were identified to attend an upcoming Tobacco Forum meeting in Toronto.
- MCRs passed: Acceptance of Enhanced Women's Shelters Funding; Approval to share aggregate GIS information with Mohawk Networks for a joint funding proposal; Approval of assignment of lease on Hamilton Island; Approval of (2) right of way easements; Approval of Funding for Restorative Justice Forum; Approval of Capacity Funding with MCYS to implement an Ontario Indigenous Child and Youth Strategy.

JANUARY 16, 2017 PRE-MEETING FOR MEETING WITH MINISTER SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON FIRST NATIONS BORDER ISSUES



On the afternoon of January 16, 2017, a number of members of our Council including myself met with the Director of Tehotiennawakon to prepare for an upcoming meeting with the Minister Special Representative (MSR) on First Nations border issues. The Council determined that the agenda would include a

presentation on Akwesasne's previous presentations on alternative reporting, which have been given to both Canada and CBSA in the past and a presentation on the development of an Akwesasne Border Identification Card. Council also discussed the mandate of the MSR and what some practical solutions may be to Akwesasne's border challenges, which includes supporting Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) development of a secure status card that is machine readable similar to a Canadian passport. The final agenda was set for the upcoming January 25 meeting with the MSR.

JANUARY 17, 2017 CALL WITH CANADA REVENUE AGENCY AND INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA

As previously reported, the Mohawk Council has received several calls from community members requesting assistance from Council with letters received from the Canada Revenue Agency requesting additional information from community members who are recipients of child tax credits. We worked with Indigenous Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and contacted the appropriate personnel within Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for assistance. Several community members have reported that Quebec Revenue has also requested additional information from residents. On January 17, 2017, a few members of our Council and I participated on a conference call with INAC and CRA to discuss their process and review their procedures related to the benefits they administer. Prior to the call, we provided CRA with specific cases where CRA had requested additional information. This specific case information outlined the concerns around the process for reviews. By using those specific cases, the CRA researched internally to determine what was going on. The CRA provided us with an explanation of the processes that were used to mitigate those specific cases. We explained to the CRA that Akwesasne's unique geographical location makes it very challenging for external entities to understand why reviews in Akwesasne are not the same as reviews that occur in non-Indigenous communities. As follow up, we are continuing to work with CRA to mitigate further reviews. It is helpful when we are able to provide CRA with an on-the-ground experience of our border and jurisdictional challenges in Akwesasne. We will also be setting up similar meetings with Quebec Revenue to have a similar meeting and discussions with them.

JANUARY 18, 2017 CORNWALL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BREAKFAST CONNECTS

On the morning of Wednesday January 18, 2017 I was invited by the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce to speak at the monthly breakfast connect function at the Cornwall Ramada Inn. The January theme was Looking Ahead to 2017, with the Cornwall and area leadership of Cornwall, South Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry

and Akwesasne. I was provided 15 minutes of time to provide the 2017 outlook for our community. I provided a quick overview of some of our community's 2016



milestones which including the enactment of our Akwesasne Court Law, as well as the Minister coming to Akwesasne twice to the Cornwall Port divestiture, which lead into our vision for 2017. I explained that we will continue to raise the positive profile of our community and continue to create and maintain great partnerships to increase the opportunities for our people, including the creation of more jobs. Following the presentations from each area's leadership, the attendees could ask questions of the leaders. I was asked a question about the newly elected President of the United States and

what, if any, changes we have seen or expect to see as a result of the change in the US administration. I explained that considering what has been increasingly reported in the US media and, that although it is very difficult to predict, it would seem that President Trump's policy on immigration and his comments about minorities surely give indication that we are all justified in being concerned with what the future holds.

JANUARY 18, 2017 CONFERENCE CALL WITH CHIEFS COMMITTEE ON WEALTH CREATION

In the late afternoon of January 18, 2017 I participated in a conference call with the Chiefs of Ontario and other members of the Chiefs Committee on Wealth Creation. This was the same committee who help guide and prepare for the Ontario First Nations Economic Forum held in Toronto in October 2016. The main theme of the forum was wealth creation. During the economic forum, there were several breakout sessions including the main plenary session which focused on varying themes including best practices, business financing, business start-up, and customer service. Each session had professional note takers to capture the main themes and discussions that took place. The Chiefs committee agreed that a follow up in-person meeting would occur in February to review the reports and work towards developing a draft policy statement to be presented at the upcoming All Ontario Chiefs Assembly in June 2017.

JANUARY 19, 2017 ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES (OACAS) BOARD MEETING

The board for the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) met on January 19, 2017 to conduct its regular monthly business. The agenda included another presentation on the shared service model which also included a decision on the governance model for shared services; this model would be presented to the sector at the end of the month. The board discussed OACAS' strategy on how to best align the association for the upcoming Ontario election. Other board business and updates provided included: Update on Child Protection Information Network (CPIN) deployment; Board Governance Committee update; CEO report; financial statement reporting; update on the decision-making framework; and update on Bill 89. The next regularly scheduled board meeting is set to occur on February 16, 2017.

JANUARY 20, 2016 MEETING INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA



On the morning of January 20, 2016, the Director of Technical Services and I met with senior officials from the capital division of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to follow up on our capital project submissions to the department for contribution. We met with the Assistant Regional Director General, the Director of Community Infrastructure, and the Ontario Director General to review our capital submissions. At this meeting, we were informed that our capital project to reconstruct

Buckshot Road on Kawehno:ke was approved in the amount of \$690,000. The representatives also informed us that the Tsi Snaihne wastewater project was ready for approval from a technical and submission perspective, but INAC could not give us a definite date on when we the funding would be approved because all capital for the year ending March 31, 2017 had already been allocated. While meeting with the INAC representatives, we spoke about an underground fuel tank that we needed to replace; the department will be following up with other divisions of INAC on the fuel tank replacement. We will continue to meet and lobby INAC for the Tsi Snaihne wastewater replacement.

JANUARY 20, 2017 MEETING WITH ONTARIO MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (MOECC)

On Friday January 20, 2017 I met with the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) environment division and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. The purpose of the meeting was for Ontario to review and explain a recent document received by COO environment from the Minister of Environment entitled "Environment & Climate Change Related Initiatives". This document prepared by MOECC outlined the number of initiatives MOECC currently has underway within the ministry. The Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) Jim Whitestone explained the document and also explained a number of areas the ministry needed assistance from COO to help navigate with First Nations communities. It was explained to the ADM that we viewed many other areas not listed on the Environment & Climate Change Related Initiatives needed to be listed on the document and that the ministry needed to involve First Nations in all these areas. The Ministry agreed to meet regularly with COO and myself as portfolio, and we also agreed that a political bilateral table would be set up to deal with a number of political environmental issues.

JANUARY 23, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING

- Representatives of MCA Human Resources (HR) briefed Council on the recent increase to MCA group insurance rates and outlined what mitigation measures are underway to address the increase.
- A community business person outlined a recent business opportunity and requested Council consideration of support; Council will research the request.
- The Office of Vital Statistics (OVS) manager briefed Council on a situation whereby MCA property was broken into and occupied without MCA's permission and what actions have been taken so far.
- Council was briefed by portfolio on a concern and challenge with the existing portfolio structure; further research will be done.
- A request for a land transfer was tabled and will be further researched when the request is received in writing.
- Council asked the Government Support Manager to research the possibility of incorporating a grant writer into the upcoming business plan.
- A brief was provided on the potential collaboration of programs to work on an employment assistance program.
- An issue was raised regarding departmental response time to a past request brought forward; this will be followed up on by administration.
- Council agreed that collaboration on communications on corridor safety concerns will occur.

- MCRs passed: Acceptance of contribution agreement with Canada 150 for Thompson Island Youth Camp; Acceptance of Ontario Ministry of Transportation road subsidy report.

JANUARY 26, 2017 ENTEWATATHA:WI

On January 26, 2017, our Akwesasne self-government negotiations team met with Canada to continue our ongoing negotiations with Canada towards a finalized self-government agreement. The Akwesasne and Canada negotiation teams meet every 2–3 months in Akwesasne. The teams reviewed the minutes and undertakings from the previous meeting. During this meeting a considerable amount of time was spent focused on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Akwesasne has been pushing hard on Canada to include a clause in the final agreement that recognizes UNDRIP, but thus far Canada has not been willing to include the proposed language, even though Canada accepted the declaration at the United Nations earlier in 2016. Akwesasne has also been pushing hard on Canada to include language in the final agreement that would prohibit any future expropriation of Akwesasne lands. Canada has not accepted the expropriation proposal but has committed to work with Akwesasne on alternative language and an alternative solution to our proposal. We will continue to push forward on our proposals to Canada and lobby the minister for considerations.

JANUARY 27, 2017 ENTEWATATHA:WI EXPROPRIATION

On the morning of Friday January 27, 2017 the Akwesasne Entewatatha:wi negotiations team met to strategize a political plan on our proposal to Canada to include language in our final self-government agreement that would prohibit Canada from expropriating any Akwesasne lands. The team reviewed legal options and determined that a meeting with the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs should be held to discuss our proposal and explain our justifications.

JANUARY 30, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING

- A representative from First Nations Market Housing Fund (FNMHF) provided Council with an overview of the programs and services offered by FNMHF; further follow up will be done by MCA housing.
- Members of the Block 1 Additions to Reserve (ATR) working group briefed Council on the ATR progress and outlined the next steps.
- MCA Communications manager briefed Council on the recent recording of the General Meeting and outlined potential steps for improvement.

- Council was briefed on an upcoming request from the Iroquois Caucus regarding financial support for the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG).
- A briefing was provided on a recent case where a MCA contractor's bridge pass was cancelled; follow up will occur with SIBC.
- Council agreed to support a survey to determine the potential need for a bus service in Akwesasne.
- Council agreed that a resolution will come to Council to remove participation by Chiefs on the Space Needs Committee for the MCA.
- MCRs passed: Approval of funding agreement with Ministry of Children and Youth for Family Wellbeing Program; Approval of Designation of Emergency Evacuation Routes for Tsi Snaihne, Kawehno:ke & Kana:takon; Approval of 5 year evaluation report for Health Transfer agreement; Approval of Appointment of Medical Doctor Golberg to oversee Akwesasne Mohawk Ambulance; Approval to increase AEDF funding limit per application; Approval of application to AEDF fund for replacement of refrigeration unit at the A'nowara'kó:wa Arena; Approval of Upgrade Loan to Community Member.

JANUARY 31, 2017 ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES (OACAS) SHARED SERVICES MODEL

Over the last two years, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) has developed what they call the shared service business model. The board of the OACAS has worked with the children's aid societies in Ontario and consultants to develop a shared service proposal model. The shared service model would consist of the creation of a corporate entity that would procure and distribute services which consist of day to day delivery of child protection or in the operation of the CAS office. Some of these services include special assessments, intake, after hour services, and products such as office supplies or maintenance services. The purpose of the service model ensures the entire Ontario sector of CAS is receiving consistent service levels and that these goods and services are being purchased at the best value for money possible. This model utilizes economies of scale. On January 31, 2017, the OACAS held an information meeting with Ontario CASs to update the sector on the development of this work and to answer questions related to the shared service model. So far in the development of this work, the Aboriginal agencies are being considered under a separate service model that recognizes the unique and appropriate needs of Indigenous children. Akwesasne will meet with the OACAS shared service staff in the future to better analyze the benefits to Akwesasne in the shared service model.

JANUARY 31, 2017 CANADIAN COUNCIL ON ABORIGINAL BUSINESS (CCAB) GALA

On the evening of January 31, 2017, I was invited by Deloitte Canada to attend the Canadian Council on Aboriginal Business (CCAB) Gala in Toronto. The CCAB builds bridges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, businesses, and communities through the delivery of diverse programming, providing tools, training, network building, major business awards, and national events. The Toronto Gala is one of the CCAB's biannual networking galas, and every year the CCAB recognizes two Aboriginal persons for their business achievements. This year Herb Belcourt was inducted into the 2017 Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Isabell Ringenoldus of TAWS Security received the 4th National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award for her business success as a young business person.