

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

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



Tsiothohrha/December 15, 2015

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

Happy Tuesday to everyone on this warmer than usual December day,

Last night we held our monthly General Meeting which was originally scheduled for December 3 but was subsequently rescheduled to last night due to the passing of a Kana:takon member earlier in the month. Last evening we observed a moment of silence for all those who have experienced a loss over the last month. The Mohawk Council Chiefs and I send our deepest condolences to all those effected by the loss of a loved one.

Our General Meeting was held at the Kana:takon Recreation with all members of Council in attendance and approximately 22 community members. I want to send my appreciation to all those who were able to attend last night especially considering we're only 11 days from Christmas.

Last evening I shared my November report with the community. I'm attaching a copy of that report for you. I hope you take a moment to read this report in order to receive a quick update on some of the ongoing work your leadership is involved in. I have done my best to capture most of the meetings and events/functions I have been involved with over the month of November. Other members of Council may have also been involved in some of these meetings, but the report is not reflective of attendees.

I hope you find this information useful and informative. I strive to keep the community updated using as many means possible in order to reach as many of you as I can. You can follow me on Facebook by liking my page "Abram Benedict" where I regularly post updates.

Our next General Meeting will occur in the New Year but in the mean time I hope that everyone has a wonderful Christmas Holiday and a safe Happy New Year.

Nia:wen & All my best,

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

Abram Benedict
Grand Chief



Grand Chief Activity Report for the Month of November 2015

November 3, 2015 Council Meeting

Tuesday Council meeting update:

- Two community Midwives presented a request to Council for assistance in developing a criteria proposal to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care; Council will further debate this request at a future meeting once additional information is provided.
- The Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) Manager provided Council with update on the Cornwall Harbor negotiations and next steps.
- Council agreed that 2015 MCA employees Christmas Holidays will remain the same.
- The October / November General meeting Agenda was reviewed and approved, next General Meeting set for December 3, Kana:takon.
- A brief report was provided on a recent meeting in Montreal regarding the City of Montreal's intent to dump sewage into the river, additional meetings are set for this week.
- Council was briefed on an ongoing land dispute; further research will be done and provided to Council.
- Council discussed a concern with the title page of the recently accepted General Personnel Policy (GPP) and agreed that the title be changed from "Their Employee's Their Policy" to "The Employee's, Their Policy"
- MCR's passed: Approval of 2014/15 audit for the Ontario First Nations Limited Partnership (OFNLP)

November 3, 2015 Strategic Plan Day

Council and Senior Management spent an afternoon continuing the process of developing the 2015-2018 Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Strategic Plan. The plan is being facilitated by local consultant Dr. Rose Alma "Dolly" McDonald. The planning began on a Saturday, October 17, 2015, and continued on to Monday, October 19, 2015 as well as this day in November. Two more sessions are scheduled in the month of December.

November 4, 2015 Tsikaristisere Dundee Internal Meeting on Communications Proposal

In preparation for an extensive Community Education Campaign on the Tsikaristisere Dundee land claim, a call for proposals for a Media Consultant to assist the MCA in the Education Campaign was issued. A few proposals have been received and the committee met to review the proposals. A consultant will be selected once a budget has been accepted by Council and the development of an education campaign to be used within the community will follow.

November 6, 2015 Seaway Claim Meeting with Legal Counsel

Chief Karen Loran, the Aboriginal Rights and Research Manager, and I traveled to Montreal on November 6, 2015 to meet with MCA legal counsel Nathan Richards. The purpose of this meeting was to strategize on how the Seaway proceedings will proceed in response to the Case Management hearing held on October 16, 2015. The result of the hearing is that now each party to the proceedings, the MCA and Canada, are each required to meet a number of deadlines over the next six months. In the afternoon we met with James O'Reilly and Gary Carot of O'Reilly and Associates to discuss the plan going forward.

November 10, 2015 Council Meeting

Tuesday Council meeting update:

- Representatives from Gowlings introduced themselves to Council and gave an overview of what the firm has to offer.
- A community member presented "Project Good Mind" to the Council and explained what the project is all about and what the set out to accomplish.

- The MCA comptroller provided an overview of the process and procedures for Chiefs to sign MCA checks.
- Council reviewed the "Portfolio Terms of Reference" document and discussed ways to import the document.
- Three members of Council were identified to sit as board members on the Akweks:kowa Corporation.
- A request for an update on a past plebiscite was discussed and will be further investigated.
- MCR's passed: Approval of (2) allotment of land to community member(s); Approval of permit with DFO for navigation light on Thompson Island; Approval of (4) upgrade loan (s) to community member(s); Approval of Akwesasne Economic Development Fund (AEDF) administration fee from AEDF fund; Approval of final report for A'nowara'kó:wa Arena for the AEDF fund; Approval to proceed with lease renewal and building improvements for current Mohawk Government Location; Approval of amendment to the Health Canada funding agreement.

November 10, 2015 Meeting with Overseers for the Akwesasne Trust

The Overseers for the Akwesasne Trust met with members of Council and members of the Internal Technical Team (ITT) to express concerns with the current status of the Akwesasne Trust. This meeting gave the Council an opportunity to respond to some of the concerns and to also better understand the areas which have been identified as needing further clarification. The Council committed to following up on the concerns raised and to a future meeting with the Overseers, ITT, and the Trustees in order to facilitate better communication amongst those parties.

November 13, 2015 Ministry of Tourism Engagement Session

On November 13, 2015 Chief Louise Thompson and I attended an engagement session with the Ontario Ministry of Tourism on the development of an Ontario Culture Strategy. The Assistant Deputy Minister, Kevin Finnerty, provided opening words and his perspective on the development of the strategy. The session was facilitated by John Beaucage with approximately 40 participants from various communities and organizations. Each of the community representatives was able to provide their insight on the current culture programs, practices, and short falls. We were able to provide an overview of some of the programming offered here in Akwesasne and what is needed from Ontario by way of financial support to continue and enhance the programming.

The Ministry will continue to host engagement sessions over the next few months before releasing a draft strategy.

November 16, 2015 Finance Presentation to Chiefs

MCA's Finance Comptroller, along with other Finance Program staff, provided Council with an in-depth overview of the current MCA financials. This presentation included a review of the annual allocation received from the Ontario Lottery Gaming Corporation (OLG) and how it is spent. Currently about half of the allocation is used to support unfunded programs within the MCA. The Council discussed ways to reduce the reliance on the OLG and how with the upcoming budget process we can begin to make that transition.

November 16, 2015 Leadership Meeting

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs generally try to meet monthly to discuss various issues. At the November 16, 2015 meeting the following topics were discussed:

- MCA's work to get wireless communication within the community
- Natural gas expansion potential
- Update on NYS Land Claim
- Issues with the Bank of Montreal
- Future location of CBSA
- Cemetery maintenance
- Akwesasne Mohawk Ambulance

November 16, 2015 Meeting with Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) Chief Commissioner

The afternoon of November 16, 2015 I was able to sit and have lunch with the Chief Commissioner for the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) Marie-Claude Landry. Mrs. Landry is going across Canada dialoguing with communities to raise the profile of the Commission and to hear how they can create partnerships with communities in order to improve the services offered by the Commission. We spoke about our experiences with the Commission, and how the border impacts our community, and

how Customs impacts our people. I look forward to working with Mrs. Landry and the CHRC.

November 17, 2015 Council meeting

Tuesday Council meeting update:

- The Chairman and staff of St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Studies along with MCA Environment staff presented to Council on what the river institute does and what are some of the ongoing research project they are doing.
- Next General Meeting set for December 3 Kana:takon and no District Meetings will be held for the month of December.
- Council set the meeting schedule during the holiday season and agreed that January 6 will be the first Council meeting of 2016. Legal Counsel provided a brief on an ongoing case.
- MCR's passed: Approval of (4) Council Meeting Minutes.

November 17, 2015 University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine

On the evening of November 17, 2015, I attended the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the Indigenous Program at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine. This Celebration was hosted in the Atrium of the Roger Guindon Hall at the University. The evening was filled with testimony from medical graduates and words of celebratory greetings from the Dean of the University and the head of the Aboriginal Program at the faculty Dr. Darlene Kitty, a Cree from Chisasibi. During the evening I was able to speak to Dr. Kitty about potential opportunities of working with the University either in our clinics or with student recruitment.

November 18, 2015 Monthly Ontario Association of Children's Aid Society (OACAS) Board Meeting - Toronto

Consultants provided an update on the Decision-Making Project and the Shared Services Project. These two projects have been ongoing for over two years and the Board is provided with regular updates on its progress. The Board passed a Resolution to enter into the next phase of the Shared Services Project which includes a business model and a proposal to the Ministry for implementation. The Board discussed an upcoming consultation meeting and the presentations around Truth and Reconciliation which will be a major part of the consultation meeting. Updates were provided on the following areas:

- Upcoming Auditor General Report
- Board Work Plan
- Upcoming MPP Briefing Day at Queens Park

Other regular Board business was conducted which included the Treasurers' Report, Chief Executive Officers' Report and Local Directors' Report. The next Board meeting is scheduled for December 7, 2015.

November 20, 2015 Tsikaristisere Dundee Internal Meeting

As we continue to prepare for an extensive Community Education Campaign on the Tsikaristisere Dundee land claim. We have also been meeting internally regarding the language being proposed by Canada for use within the Final Settlement Agreement. On November 20, 2015 the Committee met to review the language being proposed and to discuss a political strategy to address the issues.

November 23, 2015 Ontario Chiefs Committee on the Environment

On the evening of November 23, 2015 the Chiefs Committee on the Environment met in Toronto. The Chiefs of Ontario Environment Director along with the Youth Environment Portfolio Holder provided opening remarks and introduced a film called "Following in the Footsteps of our Ancestors" which was a short documentary from an Elders and Youth Gathering held in July 2015.

Representatives from Toronto Renewable Energy Co-Operative (TREC) provided an overview on the "First Nations Energy Report" which is a guide to supporting meaningful participation and community leadership in the energy sector.

The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) gave an overview of what the IESO is about and what funding opportunities are available to First Nations in Ontario for community energy planning or educational projects. The IESO is also the Administrator for the Ontario Feed In Tariff (FIT) applications and projects.

Hydro One Senior Manager for First Nations and Metis Relations talked about what the business of Hydro One is and what current First Nation Community Project the company has ongoing. An overview of the current status of the Energy Systems in Ontario was also given, from the generation to the distribution of electricity.

Members of the Chiefs Committee on Education held an in-camera session to discuss the upcoming Climate Change Summit in Paris. An Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Staff Member provided an overview of the process the United Nations Conference on Climate Change will follow and how important specific language regarding indigenous peoples will be included in the final agreements. A brief was provided on what information the AFN is providing for use by the National Chief because he will be with the Canadian delegation going to Paris.

November 23, 2015 Ontario Political Confederacy (PC)

On November 23, 2015 the Political Confederacy (PC) for the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) held their monthly meeting. This meeting was mainly held to prepare for the upcoming Special Chiefs Assembly and the Leaders in Legislature.

The Chiefs Committee on the Sale of Hydro One provided a preview of the power point and critical path presentation being given to the Chiefs.

The PC identified Wally McKay, a new Ontario representative, to the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund.

Ontario recently announced a program for the provision of dental services to low income families, known as Healthy Smile Ontario 2. The PC is concerned with the implementation of the program because it could adversely affect the administration of Non-Insured Health Benefits. The Chiefs office will attempt to set up a trilateral technical table with the Provinces to discuss this program.

The PC discussed the PC portfolios and how they relate to the COO Board of Directors for the Corporation. The PC agreed that they will take the portfolio listing to the Chiefs Assembly to allow for additional representation on the portfolios.

PC Member Gord Peters provided an update and brief on the recent Education Symposium held on November 17-19, 2015 in Thunder Bay. Gord reported that he met with Minister Bennett and informed her that any national education program will not work for Ontario First Nations, and reiterated the need for a regionalized process when it comes to education.

The Region Chief presented the revised version of the Global Plan, "Securing our Rightful Place" which would be presented at the Chiefs Assembly.

The Regional Chief spoke about ways he will better communicate with members of the PC and the Chiefs, which will include weekly updates, written memos, and two way discussions when needed.

The PC reviewed and accepted the Special Chiefs Assembly agenda along with the format and agenda for the Leaders in Legislature.

November 24, 2015 Ontario Special Chief Assembly

The Ontario Special Chiefs Assembly meetings are held twice a year with all the Chiefs in Ontario invited to attend to hear updates and provide direction to the Regional Chief and Chiefs of Ontario (COO) office on priorities of the region.

The Regional Chief presented the Global Plan "Securing our Rightful Place" presentation, fielded a number of questions on the presentation, and received comments on how to improve the plan.

The Chief for the Chippewas of the Thames provided an overview of a recent National Energy Board (NEB) decision to approve the Enbridge Line 9 Project to proceed. The Chief was looking for support from the Chiefs in Assembly on the Chippewas decision to appeal the NEB decision to the Federal Courts and also support for the Prime Minister of Canada to intervene in the process to protect the treaty rights of the community as recognized under the Constitution. The Chiefs in Assembly passed a Resolution in support of the Chippewas of the Thames.

A member of the PC presented on a draft Protocol Agreement that the PC wants to present to the Assembly of First Nation (AFN) National Chief. The protocol would outline how COO and AFN would work together. The Chiefs in Assembly passed a Resolution to accept the Protocol and that it be presented to the AFN for consideration.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne addressed the Assembly and spoke on what Ontario is doing to rebuild relationships with Ontario First Nations and also spoke about the political accord and how it's a mechanism for relationship building. The Premier reiterated her commitment to supporting a National inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Woman and Girls.

The Regional Chief closed the session with the Chiefs and the Premier by speaking about the Chiefs commitment to relationship building and that Ontario First Nations are leading the way with the recent signing of an Accord but noted that there is still a lot of work to do.

November 25, 2015 Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development

The Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development visited Akwesasne and met with Members of Council and MCA Directors on November 25, 2015. This was in response to a letter I sent inviting the Minister to Akwesasne to meet with Leadership

and to see the Walking with our Sisters exhibit. During the half day visit I was able to speak to the Minister about our issues with the current settlement offer conditions for the Dundee Land Claim. I was also able to reiterate to the Minister that Relationship Building is very important to me and that I needed the Minister's involvement in reaching out to the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Public Safety. Akwesasne desires to meet with these other Minister to discuss an array of challenges and concerns under each Ministry.

November 26, 2015 Chiefs of Ontario Leaders in Legislature

Back in Toronto on Thursday I participated in the meeting around Wealth Creation— First Nations Tourism and Resource Benefit Sharing at the Ontario Legislature in Queens Park. The morning session gave the Chiefs in attendance the opportunity to dialogue with the Ministers present, including the Ministers for Tourism, Economic Development, Employment and Trade, Natural Resources and Forestry, and Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development.

November 27, 2015 Ontario Power Generation (OPG) Darlington Nuclear Plant Tour

Chief Tim Thompson, Chief Daryl Lazore, and I were invited by the OPG Implementation Team to tour the Darlington Nuclear Plant in Darlington, Ontario. During our tour we were able to hear about OPG's plan to refurbish the nuclear reactors over the next fifteen years and possible job opportunities that will come with the refurbishment project.