



## **Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report**

**Kentenhkó:wa / November 2024**

### **Friday, November 1, 2024**

Meeting with CBSA Regional Director General: The MCA-CBSA Border Collaboration Initiative was officially launched in January of 2020, as a result of ground-breaking “design-thinking” sessions that were held to identify challenges and opportunities for collaboration between Akwesasne & CBSA. Design Thinking is a strategic method of designing or improving a service or product with the user in mind. It encourages an organization, for example, to consider who they are creating services for, which then naturally improves the user experience. After making introductions of new MCA Council Members, the group discussed ways to address challenges for medical transports, the remission order, posting wait times on CBSA website that includes the Dundee port of entry, and development of various training initiatives for CBSA officers and frequent travellers of the ports.

Telephone call with AFNQL Regional Chief (prior to AFNQL Assembly November 4 to 6) for Grand Chief to let Regional Chief Picard know that his meeting schedule prevented him from attending the AFNQL Assembly in person, and that MCA was sending a Proxy. They also confirmed to have an in-person informal meeting prior to the AFN Assembly.

Internal Meeting with Director of Justice re: Referendum Protocol. A subsequent briefing note was provided that provided guidelines and procedures for referenda as outlined in the General Referendum Regulation approved by MCR 2015/2016#263.

### **Monday, November 4, 2024**

Council weekly Meeting Update



Council moved the next weekly Council meeting to Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup> because the 11<sup>th</sup> is a holiday.

Council agreed to keep the next General Meeting on its regular schedule of November 28<sup>th</sup>, although it is an American Thanksgiving holiday.

Grand Chief requests confirmation of a Chief Proxy to participate in the COO/IFN Economic Development table. Chief Tesha Rourke has stated interest. IFN uses the MCA for financial administration of the Indigenous Early Learning Child Care Funding for Ontario First Nation Communities. The ED will follow up with MCA Finance. Grand Chief provided updates from the recent IFN quarterly Meeting that he had attended. Council discussed bringing information to the community about the NYS Land Claim. Council discussed the relationship of the Jay Treaty Border Alliance group and its funding. Council discussed the Holiday Meals planning details.

A motion was made to provide the Akwesasne Freedom School with a donation as per the AFS donation request to the Executive Director. The motion was carried.

MCR's

2024-2025 # 275 Council 2024-2027 Portfolio Listing

2024-2025 #276 Ministry of Children and Youth Services Registered Education Savings Plan

2024-2025 #277 Award Tender- Structural Readiness Contract

2024-2025 #278 Bus Camera Purchase

2024-2025 #279 Approval of \$35,000 Donation to American Legion Post 1479

2024-2025 #280 HSP Contract Amendment for AMS/ Kana:takon AC Units



2024-2025 #281 23-24 Approval of the Schedule of Chiefs Salaries, Honoraria and Travel Expenses

2024-2025 #282 23-24 Approval of the Schedule of Directors Salaries

2024-2025 #283 2024 Navigation and Communication Appraisal

2024-2025 #284 Council Meeting Minutes – October 28th, 2024

2024-2025 #285 BMO On Reserve Housing Program

2024-2025 #286 Housing Upgrade Application

### **Tuesday, November 5, 2024**

Akwesasne Community Settlement Trust – Trustees, Deloitte, Financial Advisors met with Grand Chief, Council members, and Executive to discuss the business of the Trust.

Administrative Trustees Interviews for Mohawks of Akwesasne Community Settlement Trust.

### **Wednesday, November 6, 2024**

Entewatatha:wi Portfolio Meeting reviewed the Nation Building Mission, Vision, and background of the negotiations between MCA and the Government of Canada for the Entewatatha:wi Self Government Agreement (ESGA). MCA is in the latter stages of negotiations to exercise governance and jurisdiction. The ESGA is a government-to-government relationship between Akwesasne and Canada. Two legal instruments that are to be finalized along with ESGA are the Akwesasne Land Law and the Fiscal Relationship Agreement. These two companion pieces will ensure continuity of critical government functions. The negotiations are on-going. The Entewatathawi team are thoughtful and methodical as they astutely carry forward this file through each year and term of Council. Their dedication to this community work is appreciated.

### **Thursday, November 7, 2024**



The Iroquois Caucus was formed in 2005 to provide opportunity for Haudenosaunee community's of Kahnawa:e, Kanehsata:ke, Akwesasne, Tyendinaga, Wahta, Six Nations and Oneida of the Thames to assemble and discuss shared issues and concerns. They meet to discuss challenges such as Border Crossing, Hunting Rights, Economic Development and Trade. They have a combined membership of almost 75,000 people.

Iroquois Caucus (IC) Orientation was presented by IC Coordinator Amy Lickers, who provided an Advocacy Overview to all Council. She covered governance, political advocacy of Indigenous Relations and External Relations. Political advocacy are actions that represent, promote, or defend interests (or rights), influence public policy and legislation, and the process of influencing networks, opinion leaders and decision makers.

The IC is funded through an agreed contribution by each community. This has allowed the IC to maintain its autonomy.

### **Friday, November 8, 2024**

Negotiation Preparation, presentation on divestment, and additional review of the Entewatatha:wi Self Government Agreement (ESGA) rolling draft.

The Nation Building team reviewed the draft amendments for the 'Political Protocol Between His Majesty The King In Right Of Canada and The Mohawks Of Akwesasne'. This Protocol has been a necessary political tool to use for discussions with Canada and the Provinces for issues rising from out unique geographical location and relationships. Historically, the Parties signed a Political Protocol on June 7, 1999, followed by a second Political Protocol on January 14, 2005, and a third Political Protocol on May 30, 2012. This renewal is polishing the chain to renew and strengthen an ongoing government to government relationship. The process set out in this Protocol is independent of the ESGA and intended to address ongoing government-to-government initiatives and subject matters not addressed in the ESGA like Inter-Provincial issues and international issues.



## **Monday, November 11, 2024**

MCA Offices were closed for Remembrance Day

Attended solemn remembrance at the American Legion.

## **Tuesday, November 12, 2024**

Council weekly Meeting Update

**Public Safety:** General safety will be investigated because of the fireworks problem on Halloween and during the summer months.

**Council Lobbying Strategy:** Council wants to implement a lobbying strategy class to educate Council members.

**Peace tree Mall:** Council wants to put one-way signs at the Peace Tree mall back road to ensure public safety.

**Holiday Dinners:** The General meeting in December will be cancelled so that Council can host community holiday dinners.

**COO:** Council members will be attending the Chiefs of Ontario Conference over Zoom, while the Grand Chief will be attending in person. Chief Scott Peters will be Chair of the Council meeting on November 18th.

**COO Women's Committee:** The Chiefs' attendance will be updated.

**District Meeting Procedure:** When a death occurs near the scheduled district meeting, it will be up to the district chiefs to decide to if the meeting will be held.

**Staff reaching out to Council:** Council members have a difference in opinion as it relates to staff reaching out to Council members for assistance when submitting work-related complaints. The Grand Chief informed the Council that all communications received by Grand Chief shall be forwarded to the Council and the Executive Director and it will be their responsibility to determine how they will proceed.

Grand Chief shall continue to advise everyone to follow established procedures, document all steps and will refer all issues to the Executive Director.



General Meeting Rules of Order: The MCR for General Meeting date scheduling needs to be amended and brought up at the next Council meeting.

MCR's: AFS – Additional Allocation, Amendments to MCR #2021-2022 #169, Contract Renewal 2024-2025, Nursing Compensation Policy – Updated 2024, IIF IV O/A Steve Tree Service,

Presentations:

Structural Readiness Presentation - AMBE

Council Communication Protocol - Communications

### **Wednesday, November 13, 2024**

Iroquois Caucus Leadership Meeting via zoom session. This was an opportunity for first introduction of Akwesasne's new Grand Chief to the Group. The Leadership portion of the IC are meetings specifically for the Grand Chiefs or Chief figureheads of each community.

Travelled to Ottawa for an Introduction meeting with Indigenous Services Canada Ontario RDG: Meeting Overview, RDG acknowledged Akwesasne's unique geography and MCA's broad jurisdictional responsibilities. ISC Director praised the 2010 Economic Development Strategic Plan, suggesting it be updated with available funding for business plans, feasibility studies, and market trends. Grand Chief emphasized leveraging MCA's talented team to create win-win partnerships for Akwesasne's growth. Grand Chief to consult MCA Economic Development Director on revitalizing the Economic Development Strategic Plan. ISC is open to facilitate partnerships with other funding agencies and align priorities as a community-centered approach to engage federal/provincial counterparts as needed.

### **Thursday, November 14, 2024**

Words of greetings, appreciation and encouragement were provided to Celebration of Life Conference assembly and were carried out by Chief Scott Peters on behalf of Grand Chief who had a scheduling conflict.



Tsikaristisere (Dundee) Trust Overview with legal to update Council and continue with required administrative responsibilities.

ZOOM Call with MCA NYS land Claim Lawyer Frank Holleman to discuss preparations to bring information out to the District Members.

Snye District Meeting was lively and constructive to the vocalization of the district needs. While the position of Grand Chief doesn't normally attend District Meetings, the District Chiefs and District members were accommodating and engaged with the topics of concern which included information update regarding the NYS Land Claims.

### **Friday, November 15, 2024**

MCA internal meetings with Executive Director

### **Sunday, November 17, 2024**

Travel to Thunder Bay Ontario for Chiefs of Ontario Meeting

### **Monday, November 18, 2024**

The Weekly Chiefs Meeting was chaired by Chief Scott Peters in Grand Chiefs absence while attending the Chiefs of Ontario Assembly. The following is that report: 2024-2025 #292 Council Meeting Minutes – November 4th, 2024; 2024-2025 #293 Council Meeting Minutes – November 12th, 2024; 2024-2025 #294 RedMane Technology Canada Inc; 2024-2025 #295 Housing Renovations Funding, Strategic.



Meanwhile in Thunder Bay, I attended the Fall Chiefs Assembly for the Chiefs of Ontario. Monday involved a ZOOM session with Indigenous Services Canada Ontario Regional Director and Ontario Region Staff for the Topic of Environment “All Things Water”. Communities discussed Bill C-61 ‘An Act respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on First Nations lands.

### **Tuesday, November 19, 2024**

Tuesday was Day One of the Fall Chiefs Assembly and included a Grand Entry and Opening Prayer followed by the presentation of a Kastowa to honour the Ontario Regional Chiefs Mohawk culture. It was a pleasant ceremony with many positive remarks by Elders and Youth. The Akwesasne Singing Group performed a powerful song with the water drum making us very proud. There will be a Chiefs of Ontario 50th Anniversary documentary, with a gentlemen named Ryan McMahon as Executive Producer and Director. He is asking anyone who may have photos and video clips to share to reach out to him for inclusion to the project which is planned to be aired at the Summer Assembly. There was discussion of the First Nation Child and Family Services Final





Agreement that was an in-camera session of Chiefs and Advisors/ legal counsel.

A presentation regarding Health Equity Funding Allocation Decision was made by COO Health Director Tobi Mitchell. The recommendation was made to use the OFNLP funding formula as a model for future use of Indigenous Health Equity fund that would reassess funds to 2028. The Majority voted in favour of this approach. The COO Environment sector provided information and updates in three areas, Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act Compensation – a household rebate that COO filed suit to have a higher percentage returned to First Nations, TransCanada Indigenous Property Tax Settlement – a challenge was commenced because it was done without Duty to Consult and Accommodation and a percentage has to be set aside via tolls for impact to First Nations and all future projects must adhere to environmental assessment process, and Ontario Mining Act Lawsuit – endorsed by COO six First Nations in support of it to intervene mining applications who “stake claim” in their communities/territories without Duty to Consult or accommodate. This last item was supported by COO Resolution that was carried in unanimous consent.

Other Resolutions carried included Establishing Native Alcohol Prevention Steering Committee, Water Sufficient Funding Canada Water Act, Process & Development AFN Position Paper United Nations Meeting, Bill C-61 Proposed Clean Water Act, that were all carried by unanimous consent.

### **Wednesday, November 20, 2024**

Wednesday, Day Two, the first two items on the agenda were in-camera involving confidential information on the topics of Bill C-53 and Metis Assertions, and Enforcement and Prosecution of First Nations Laws. Afterward there was a presentation by COO Director of Policy and Communication about Off-Reserve Housing Funding Allocation, and then an address from the Assembly of First Nations National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak. The off-



reserve housing funding allocation presentation had great data and statistics that clearly showed a priority of need in specific northern community's leading up to Thunder Bay area, to which one Chief suggested the Chiefs collectively agree to invest the entire funding to that area to get a return on that investment rather than divide the funding up between 133 communities and not having an amount that could do an entire project within any given community. This recommendation was not formally adopted but is an approach to consider.



The address by the National Chief was inspiring as she spoke of policing and support for justice systems to provide equality within those systems. She provided examples of travesty in and around First Nations communities that prove the need for equitable funding for policing and sustainable funding for each community. The Prime Minister has spoken to the Ministers to get the funding out to communities based on political table work being done. She is passionate about the status of First Nation children being taken from homes. They are talking about new national standards and better ways going forward. The message is made clear to the Ministers that something must be done. They are looking at 23 billion dollars in compensation; for Canada to do a new negotiation mandate; support the next steps of COO and the Anishinabek communities; and to create our own laws on apprehension. She also spoke of supporting economic reconciliation in many areas including mining, forestry, and fishing. She is looking for implementation of UNDRIP to decolonize allocations of Federal and Provincial licenses to achieve reconciliation for First Nations economic growth. This will help to close the infrastructure gap by 2030 that had Canada approving 349 billion dollars to meet the needs of infrastructure gap and improve Canada's economy. She also spoke about housing loans, indigenous identity, investments in education for First Nations Youth, homelessness, opioid use,



and she reminded everyone of the work that Senator Murray Sinclair did during his time in Cabinet fighting for First Nations Rights through Truth and Reconciliation that is the road map of knowledge we can build on.

A presentation on Additions to Reserves and Specific Claims Policy Reform was welcomed by all Chiefs as many of them, much like Akwesasne, have long standing agreements for return of lands that have taken up to two decades or more to process. Valerie Gideon, of Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) presented on the redesign of the 2016 policy, as Canada acknowledged previous changes have not addressed First Nations' concerns regarding the complex and time-consuming process. CIRNAC launched a Technical Advisory Committee to facilitate the co-development of the Additions to Reserve Policy redesign.

Jay Treaty Border Alliance Formerly named the Northern Tribal Border Alliance, the Jay Treaty Border Alliance (JTBA) was formed in 2017 by tribal governments and First Nations communities to collaborate on our efforts to protect our rights preserved in the Jay Treaty, create effective working relationships with the United States Customs and Border Protection and Canada Border Services Agency, and address issues that are unique to the United States-Canadian border.

There is an Indian Boarding Homes Class Action resulting in a settlement for children who were displaced from First Nation communities and Inuit villages to (usually non-indigenous) stay in private homes for the purpose of attending school starting in the 1950's. The claim was filed for the loss of use of language and culture, abuse and other harms. The Federal Court certified the lawsuit and Canada agreed to a settlement. There is a claims process and to find out who is eligible, Members can reach out for more information: <https://boardinghomesclassaction.com/eligibility-checker>; Claims Administrator by email at [claims@boardinghomesclassaction.com](mailto:claims@boardinghomesclassaction.com) or call the contact centre at 1-888-499-1144.



### **Thursday, November 21, 2024**

The final day, Day Three, held presentations on the Prosperity Table, and the Regional Information Governance Centre Project. The Prosperity Table is from the COO Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCoED) that was created to provide support to all First Nations in Ontario as they assert their sovereignty and jurisdiction. Areas they oversee include Employment Table, Supply Chain, and Procurement project. They collaborate with Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. They are also working on matters of taxation and access to banking. The Regional Information Governance Centre Project is in phase 1 and will continue to 2027. It is about research and data management of First Nations information and recommendations from Chiefs about use and protection of information.

More information of the presentations at the Fall Chiefs Assembly can be found on the COO website: [2024 Fall Chiefs Assembly](#)

### **Friday, November 22, 2024**

Working remotely responding to messages.

In-person meeting with AFNQL Regional Chief Ghislain Picard and Associate. The following is a summary of that discussion: Policing: Challenges with Sûreté du Québec (SQ) in First Nation (FN) communities, including non-compliance



with FN laws. Childcare: Issues with Quebec's Civil Code causing jurisdictional conflicts, despite agreements on custom adoptions. Health Care: Focus on cultural safety, with initiatives like Joyce's Principle (post-Joyce Echaquan incident) and efforts by the Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada (IPAC). Reports: AFNQL preparing a report card on Quebec ministries, addressing



language, energy/mining consultation, and Duty to Consult failures. Hydro Quebec: New President Michael Sabia has made comments of UNDRIP support which can help in establishing a relationship with Akwesasne to fix the issues of sustained connectivity for Kana:takon and Snye Districts. From regional discussion there is a suggestion for FNs to establish a government-level Memorandum of Understanding with Quebec to elevate from an assembly to a permanent forum. Upcoming events: Supreme Court Hearing (Tuesday) of Mashteuiatsh complaint about underfunded policing in FN communities.

Assembly of First Nations Winter Meeting (December): Picard to attend, hosting AFNQL caucus sessions.

Internal meeting for final preparation of US Land Claim Information Session set for Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Saturday, November 23, 2024**

Community Information Meeting of NYS Land Claim was held at the Kana:takon School gym to provide an update on the pending proposed Settlement Agreement in the New York State land claim. After many years of negotiations, and the most recent submissions to the Judge/Magistrate, the parties have reported:

- Franklin and St. Lawrence counties are ready to approve the settlement;
- New York State and its agencies are ready to approve the settlement;
- The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council (SRMT) is ready to approve the settlement;
- The Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs (MNCC) require more time to decide on an approval.

Additional information is available on the SRMT Members Portal. For further questions, please contact our Akwesasne Rights & Research Office at [arro@akwesasne.ca](mailto:arro@akwesasne.ca) or 613-575-2250.



For more information on the settlement agreement benefits and land claim history, visit: <http://www.akwesasne.ca/mca-update-on-new-york-state-land-claim/>

### **Monday, November 25, 2024**

#### Council Meeting Update

2024-2025 #296 MOHLTC TC CSS Revenue and Expenses – November 25th, 2024; 2024-2025 #297 Dr. Jennifer Robinson Contract Renewal 2024-2025 – November 25th 2024; 2024-2025 #298 Tsikaristisere Trust Selection of 5 Trustees – November 25th 2024; 2024-2025 #299 CMHC 2023-2024 Audited Financial Statements – November 25th 2024; 2024-2025 #300 Council Meeting Minutes – November 18th 2024; 2024-2025 #301 Justice Organizational Chart – November 25th 2024; 2024-2025 #302 ACFS Winter Snowsuit Initiative – November 25th 2024.

Presentations: Justice Organizational Chart by Director of Justice; Cannabis Regulations community concerns by Nathan Richards; NYS Land Claims Settlement Questions by Council to Legal Counsel, F. Holleman.

December 2<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting is cancelled due to Council attendance at AFN Assembly in Ottawa for the week.

### **Tuesday, November 26, 2024**

Akwesasne – Canada MT Negotiations with Nation Building Staff.

### **Wednesday, November 27, 2024**

Enforcement Symposium, St. Regis Recreation Centre, planned by Nation Building to ensure MCA Department needs are met and information shared in relation to Nation Building development work.

MCA Internal Executive Committee Meeting.

SRMT and MCA Meeting regarding NYS Land Claim information meetings.

**-End-**