



OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Akwesasne Community,

Ohiarihko:wa/July 26, 2024

It has now officially been determined that the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) 2024 General Election results have been set aside, and a new election will be held. The details and dates will be forthcoming but for now, I am sharing what we have learned through the appeals process and multiple internal reviews. First, as the Executive Director (ED) of the MCA, I am extending my deepest apologies on behalf of our organization for the confusion and shortfalls throughout this election process. The outcome was not fair to the candidates, their families, or the voters - especially those who were turned away from exercising a fundamental right.

I began my position as ED in May 2024 and was confronted with several important matters, including the scheduled general election. We were also working through multiple transitions in addition to mine, including the retiring of the long-time Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) and appointment of a new CEO and Deputy Electoral Officers (DEOs). Updates to the Voters List were problematic, in part due to technological challenges, and other issues arose. Put simply, people were new to their positions, inadequate resources were available to support the process, and mistakes were made. Going forward, I want to assure the community that we have identified the root causes of our failures and are sharing our plans below to fix them and to help move us forward:

1. Voters List – We are exploring new database options for the Voters List that will provide better access and control mechanisms. For the next election/re-election, we are ensuring that the entire electoral team has ample time to carefully review the list and ensure its accuracy. We will also ensure that the list is accessible and visible, better than it has been in the past.
2. Adherence to Akwesasne Election Law (AEL) – We have assigned the Akwesasne Justice Department to work closely with the CEO, to ensure that she is adequately supported and to ensure that the AEL is applied in every decision and action taken. The Justice staff will also support the CEO in establishing and meeting the specific deadlines of the AEL.
3. Security & Chain of Possession – We are establishing a more secure process for submitting voter applications, that shortens the chain of custody and ensures that the community member can submit documents directly to the CEO, or to a locked location only accessible by the CEO.
4. Access to Information – We will increase the usage of our website and direct-mail to ensure community members, especially eligible voters, have consistent access to the documents they need.

As we proceed to the next steps of a new election, I wish to assure the community that our team is deeply committed to implementing these changes and administering a proper and fair election. We are grateful to those who have upheld the law and followed the processes that are important to a functioning government. Most importantly, I would like to encourage everyone to take part and vote.

Nja:wen'ko:wa,

Mose Herne
Executive Director