

Chief and Council Meeting
Tuesday, May 9, 2023 @ 6:00 PM

In person:

Chief Jason Batisse
Councillors: Stan Fox
Melanie Boucher
Lillian Jobson
Adrian Boucher
Chelsea Daley
Elenore Hendrix (6:09)

Zoom:

Councillors: Clara Hanson
Rachel Batisse

Regrets:

Councillor: Tommy Fox

Staff:

Marilyn Groulx – Band Manager
Delta Flood – Minute Taker

Observers:

In person: Jean Lemieux, Jeannette Landry, Elaine Daley
Online: Alfred Groulx, Hayden Fox, Tristan Flood, Sky Lafrance, Anne Dube, Lorne Flood

Opened at 6:06 pm by Chief Jason Batisse as Chair

6:06 – Open by JB

Item: Wabun update – Jason Batisse

Jason wanted to start by letting new Chief and Council know he has an open phone policy for them for whatever reason they deem necessary as Wabun work for MFN. He also wanted to restate that Wabun answers to current C&C – not previous – without reservation.

Breakdown of services:

1. Health (Angie Collins – Health Director – sends her regrets as she had prior commitments but would be happy to come in the future to give an update on health)
 - a. 3% yearly increase of funding from ISC– distributed to the Communities.
 - b. Have nurse in the Communities.
 - c. Medical transportation
 - i. Clara asked about member off-reserve – do they call Wabun direct? Yes, they can. It gets bit complicated.
 - ii. Wabun can arrange for member transportation. Clara wanted to confirm if there is a cut-off. No, if it's to see a specialist.

- iii. Jason states patient transportation funding is poor at .22/km, \$10 lunch. Members would get more through reimbursement through the travel grant, but it's faster to get funds from Wabun.
 - iv. Health Canada says no for an increase in funds for membership travel as it's meant to be a subsidy – not full cost of program.
 - d. They do home and community care
 - e. Physician care at the communities: had contracted with Dr. Boissineau but she had to withdraw. New contract with the same Doctor currently at Beaver House and hoping to have her come to MFN 2 times per month.
- 2. Financial Advisory Services
- 3. Government Advisory Services (Jason)
 - a. Admin/human resource assistance
- 4. EC/Dev & Technical Advisory services
 - a. Current position is still open – posting for a 4th time (part of the challenge is programs are constrained by ISC budgets (Wabun only receives funding for a wage of 40,000/year)
 - b. Elenore wanted to know who took over the technical services (dump) – Belinda Beairsto has been working on it.
 - c. For the core tech services we have contracted with Ontario First Nation Technical Services Corp. OFNTS is not ideal as it's expensive or not the same quality as before but it's only a stop-gap measure until new hire.
- 5. Honestly say most of monies received for pandemic flowed to communities. Which is pretty typical of all funding coming through the Tribal Council.
- 6. Tribal Council is the same core funding as when started and they push funding out to the communities. They get capacity funding for communities rather than Tribal Council. (Some funding is required by the Tribal Council)
- 7. Emergency Management (Trina)
- 8. MDA – Nicole Charbonneau
- 9. Most staff are Wabun community members.
- 10. Clara asked if pandemic funding was for on-reserve or off-reserve. A: Most is for on-reserve, some may have been for community members in Timmins (Vaccination clinics can be off-rez for e.g.)
- 11. High level look at some of the active files:
 - a. TLE – The land parcel addition information (surveying) now handed to Cathy. Jason was happy and honored to help.
 - b. Jason has been lending his expertise in negotiation for 20 years (TLE, Mining agreements) – very few Tribal Council's have been through the ringer like Wabun Tribal Council.
 - c. Resource Revenue Sharing Project (started 4 years ago – when Kathleen Wynn came) – led initiative with Wabun. We are in year 4 of 5 (MFN has been beneficiary for about 30 million with 9.1 mil probably coming Jan 1st). We have the RSS as Wabun reached out as soon as possible when they heard about it, as well as how Wabun negotiates. Wabun Tribal Council is now doing an evaluation with RSS (talking with Stan and maybe Alex), hoping for a renegotiation or the same deal. It's taking longer than expected. A consultant was hired in December and will be coming the MFN soon. Gov't stated they know the evaluation will not be done in time and asked if an extension of 1 year will work. Jason said yes. (Stated he may have overstepped, but thought it was prudent to continue contract). Document to be sent to Chiefs for signature.
 - i. The funds come through mining and forestry.

- ii. Communities get a portion (45%) from the Forest Management Unit which they historically consulted with which is divided equally per unit.
 - 1. Chief thought MFN was the only one getting the stumpage fees. Jason said there was a specific and separate agreement with only Eacom. Cheques came from Eacom and were for ½ stumpage fees. It was not as lucrative as RSS as only one type of tree in local are.
- iii. Mining side – First Nations’s with IBA split the RSS evenly. (Ontario Keeps Temagami’s portion at this time for the RSS)
- iv. Goal in the next 2 years is that this continues. (Historically Jason heard complaints from First Nation members 20 years ago that we got nothing while we see the mining and logging trucks run). Hoping things are done more respectful and responsible for the environment and that we keep the money here at the same levels we currently have.
- v. It is the best RSS in Canada. Period.
- d. For the last 6 months or so have Wabun has been pursuing a case against the Metis. It started during the TLE. Jason had to respond to Metis assertion that Metis settled Separation Lake and other lands from time immemorial. (Coopting our culture and history). He started by consigning a study by Dr. Leroux on the Abitibi Metis homeland (south of New Liskeard to James Bay). The study brought to light some fallacy and fraudulent claims. (Jason has nothing against true Metis, but the sweeping allegations are not true). Leroux report exposed the loose ties that the Metis report used (e.g., half-breed instantly became a Metis root ancestor regardless of true status.)
 - i. Although the Metis Self-Government Agreement states Metis only want governance, not lands. Margaret Froh (President of Metis Nation of Ontario) said they want to be the same as FN with lands, claiming they were here before Canada was made.
 - ii. Wabun filed a judicial review with Canada. COO set aside monies for this fight. Union of Ontario Indians, RH Chiefs, and many new associations of Indians are coming forward.
 - iii. Might have to take this to the Supreme Court.
- e. Heavily involved in mining negotiations for all the communities.
 - i. 11 IBAs in place
 - ii. Continue to push for better IBAs and environmentally responsible mining.
- f. Represent Wabun Communities with NAN Legal and NAPS, as well as at the Chiefs table as proxy and to represent Wabun Tribal Council interests.
 - i. NAN has been pushing a remote formula to increase amount of funds going to the North – Jason states the formula can’t be applies ad hoc to every program and has been challenging NAN on it for the past 5 years in consultation Wabun Tribal Council Chiefs. (Aside: Grand Chief has been suspended, and will be talking about it this Thursday)
- g. Some local information – focusing on Brunswick House as it’s in Crisis due to social disarray and dependency on chemical drugs. Wabun Tribal Council’s role is to help them resolve the issues and are sending human resources/health team out as well as money out for emergency housing. Wabun is also helping project manage their water treatment build and construction of their new police station.
- h. Apologize to other communities due to focus on Brunswick House.
- i. HR Issues: it’s hard to find good staff as inflation is an issue. Have had to negotiate wages.

- j. New Project – Porcupine to Wawa Transmission line – 4 proponents – want to become an equity owner/partner. Sent an MOU to Chief to sign.
- k. Might buy the Ottawa Senators – but advising Matachewan to withdraw letter of intent to ODAWA group based on the summary of investigation of the agreement (severed power from limited partner from general partner). Sent info to Chief. Chief agreed that they should pull out, as well as some councillors. There may be new opportunities to buy in to the Senators with Nico Sparks and Snoop Dog. (Can't reach Ryan Renolds.)

BREAK (7:03)

Wabun Update Cont'd – Darlene Lafontaine (7:11 PM)

1. Darlene has been with Wabun for 24 years.
2. Finance team is a compliment of 2 people.
3. They take care of Accounting and Finance – Chiefs receive 20 page audit every year.
4. In charge of development corporation: the Wabun office building on Railway Street.
5. 3 Nation Borden Project
6. Loosing 2nd person due to retirement (access to skilled labour difficult so she may be doing all)
7. Hydro Mega
8. Provide advice to Niiwin
9. May of 2021 called in by Marilyn to discuss finances due to former FO leaving.
10. Some challenges in responding to requests due to workloads but try to respond timely.
11. Advisory services: when Jeanine announced compassionate leave, talked with Darlene first for best practices. Jeanine will be available on an ongoing pt basis (payroll, overseeing – not at full expense to MFN).
12. Reality in the audits – 2020-21, 2021-22, 22-23 need to be completed. Committed to go over all the papers as she would with Wabun. Will request a meeting with the auditor to see what we need to do. Had put in a request at Ogemawahj but they come at \$1000/day. We may have to go down that path. Most everything is ready for the audits this summer, but just need to do analytics. Do not have the information or history for 20-21.
13. Elenore asked about outstanding agreements and we may need to look to funding agencies to get copies of the agreements.
14. Would there be a timeframe for completion if we hired contractor?
15. Setting up method to allow for more timely monitoring.
16. Plan to know what the band support deficit will be to have an approximate band source revenue added before hand.
17. Had a conversation with Marilyn, they may have to go to Sudbury. KPMG is down in staff and recruiting oversees even now.
18. Governance training – Darlene does this training which focuses on the difference between policy and admin. She had developed the program (Elenore heard good things). Chief has no problem with the training, however he found it doesn't get followed. Darlene agrees it's only as good as the people taking it. Jason thinks it's okay to give another go. There is a 2-day training with an optional 3rd day on reading finance. Darlene prefers to do it with individual FN's as confidential info may be discussed although she will share non-confidential best practices between Tribal Council First Nations. If you are interested, pick a date.
19. Elenore asked if Wabun Tribal Council has developed its policies over the years? Jason stated they were last updated 3 years ago, but due for refreshment (e.g., HR/harassment).
20. Talked about hiring an HR consultant for Wabun Tribal Council and First Nations to see what can be improved. Use HR Downloads.

Item: Undrip – Chris Mercer (7:32 PM)

- On Behalf of broadly Wabun Tribal Council with Miikana Consulting with Randy Ray they are compiling a report with the purpose to gather information from communities regarding UNDRIP and Bill C15 as to how to bring it into the Canadian Legal Framework
- Please refer to slide deck presented. Included are extra notes.
 - They regret they were brought in late to the project but have received a lot of feedback.
 - What we heard – lots of discussion needs to be had as there is a lot to implement into legislation that has been around for 150 years.
 - **Geonocide – let's not do it ***** LOL**
 - Wabun Communities seem to have more to say on environmental concerns than the rest of Canadian First Nations probably due to the excess proponents in the area.
 - Other communities have had a conversation and provided feedback although not MFN: Chris hopes to get some feedback and would like it.
 - Clara would like to know if any questions can be sent via email and Chris responded he would be happy to receive an email or a call.
 - It was suggested Chris gets in contact with Hayden Doherty Fox as she has been working on this project and has submitted a report. Hayden was in attendance and agreed. Elenore may have someone to get in touch with as well.

Item: Waste Management – Belinda Beairsto (7:59 PM)

1. Done the tech memo with different options to community.
 - Full curbside system – decommission lagoon and dump. BCR was passed prior term.
 - MCA out to ISC for everything. Funding starts to roll out come June.
 - Plan was to have 2 big custom metal dump bins, but not open on top – still access 24/7 – emptied weekly. There will also be a sea can for bulky materials. As well as supplemental spring/fall clean-up. We can't fix environmental damage done with the landfill site, but we can fix all your needs. (When we burn, we accelerate toxins getting into soil and waterways). Without going through the process of dump clean up you can never be sure you're drinking safe water until it's too late and everyone gets sick.
 - Trust that we could get a couple more years out of it current dump. Chief doesn't want bins in driveway for curbside. Belinda stated we can have a choice if we want curbside or just use the bins. Can even add a 3rd bin. Even if 1 house states there's an issue, she can make a special accommodation.
 - Chief agrees that as long as the large bins come he doesn't have to clear more land.
 - Marilyn has been on the ball sharing information and responding to Belinda.
 - Elenore stated we need a way to control outsiders dumping. Talked about moving them to the other side of the reserve.
 - Belinda stated we can dig a shallow trench for carcasses and such.
 - Bins open from the front with 2 folding doors as well as from the top depending on how full it is. (They get manually unloaded)
 - If anything comes up, feel free to let Belinda know. Can go over dimensions and direct feedback.
 - Belinda wouldn't mind if a new hole is dug and backfill the current hole as current is over full.

- Melanie stated concerned about tires and such. Answer: we have an outlet to get rid of ALL refuse.
- There will be a period of time the landfill site will be decommissioned and barred off – during that time we can see the best situation for position of bins.
- It would be prudent to have a septic tank for just for campers.
- Special even bins for Pow Wows and such/family event/ etc.
- Belinda understands concerns re not having access to dump 24/7.

Break

Item: Decommission of Landfill site and lagoon– Drew Hill & Dylan Madahbee (8:27 PM)

1. Started application in 2018 to decommission lagoon but Covid put a damper on it. Chris McKay asked them to manage project.
2. ICIP – The Green Stream Fund – secured funds initially to see about moving site but given how often we have to pump out septic systems it seemed more effective economically and environmentally to have it removed.
3. Have been working with ISC to have sewage and landfill projects joined. Geotechnical and surveying for both. Wanted to treat as one site. ISC agreed.
4. Developed TOR last spring to hire design engineer to come in to do geotechnical work specifically with water to see how to best proceed.
5. Will be about 1.8 million, which brings it to a Project Approval Request PAR. MCA has been handed to C&C. (MCA is smaller version and not useable for the PAR)
6. Field work should be done this summer. Over winter will go to contract to secure construction workers. Will go through MERC – public process.
7. Chief questioned what the ground will look like afterword as he would like to build a nice shooting range there. A- It should be a 20-1 slope probably capped with a layer of clay and/or hydroseed to make it as close to pristine as possible.
8. Marilyn has the report and will send it out. Marilyn also has contact information.
9. They will work with Belinda unless there is someone C&C would like them to contact. Belinda stated they will bring everything back as needed.

Item: Heath Centre Building Committee

Motion made by Rachel Batisse to have Robert Batisse and Jean Lemieux to join the Health Centre Committee. The committee will be comprised of Lulu Jobson, Jean Lemieux, Robert Batisse, and Jason Batisse.

Seconded by Melanie Boucher.

All in favour

Motion carried.

Contract with Scott to get something rolling.

Item: Policies (8:43 PM)

1. Clara thought Harassment and Social Media policies were to be approved. Not everyone had a chance to review them.
2. Elenore recommends C&C review and be prepared to approve at next meeting.
3. There was a change to the harassment policy to include visitors that Marilyn was to add in.
4. Melanie asked about having visitors making appointments, but it was stated that overall current arrangements work. Visitors are not let in until a staff member approves, and usually they will call first. Unplanned visitors may, and have been, turned away if staff are busy.

Item: Housing

1. Chief would like to see the process needed to build a duplex. If we apply for the money, it might not happen this year. Rachel is looking at the application through CMHC.
2. Chief questioned if we plan on planning on building this year? Melanie asked about the situation with hydro. A – we don't know where that's at.
3. Elenore asked if can Marilyn get an update from Rose? No, she can't speak to her about business.
4. Stan asked if we could have hydro come in to give us a break-down on where we're at, if we can build a couple of houses, as well as what we need to upgrade.
5. Elenore recalled hearing that Rose was to give contact info to Trent.
6. Robert Batisse thinks he remembers Laurier saying they need a substation.
7. Action: Marilyn to set up a meeting with Hydro.
8. We currently have 3-4 lots we can build on.
9. Delta Flood has surveyed lots from ISC and can provide it anytime.
10. It was mentioned to get artificial turf for park.
11. Chelsea stated we need to fix log building hydro as well.

Item: Website (8:52 PM)

1. Asked for a few quotes for comparison. Quotes included in package.
2. Chief stated that because we do meetings through zoom, we need to have a secure place to have recorded videos.
3. Clara asked to have Night Owl add to quote to have secure site for adding videos.
4. Marilyn will follow through with request.

Item: Governance/Harassment Training (8:57 PM)

done

Item: Covid Protocols for MFN (8:57 PM)

1. Marilyn would like to know if C&C would like a protocol in place. For example, how long to stay away from office.
2. Rachel stated 24 hours from after fever but must wear a mask for 10 days.
3. Rachel will send Marilyn her work's protocol tomorrow.

Item: Treaty 9 Lawsuit

done

Item: Audits

done

Item: Posters – 7 Grandfather Teachings

1. Clara thought we could have them in the log building and band office. It was stated we have artwork at the office and the rug at the log building (which currently needs cleaning)

Item: Starlink

1. Clara stated that Jean Lemieux requested it to be reinstated at the log building.
2. Jason agrees.

3. Previous Council had decided not to use it. They had decided to take the works down and send to bidding, but it hasn't been done.
4. It was questioned about the need to have Starlink at the band office again. Marilyn is getting a proposal to update equipment for Band Office. Once equipment is updated there will be no issues with the internet at the band office anymore.

Motion made by Elenore Hendrix to have Starlink reinstated at the Log Building.

Seconded by Melanie Boucher

All in favour

Motion carried.

Item: Portfolio holders

2. Clara stated it would be a good idea to introduce who is holding what portfolio as well as updates and plans.
3. Jason says he agrees, but with people watching meetings they will figure it out.
4. Elenore stated that other committees need to be put in place (housing, L&R, etc), as well as TOR. Time to reach out to our own membership for them. Have resource revenue dollars to use as honorariums. Would like to see a balance of on-community and off-community. Members must be committed.
5. Elenore mention that Melanie is new to Council and as our Community Rep has not been provided guidance. She thought it would be good to let her have a community BBQ to get everyone together to get ideas.
6. Jean commented that Committees make recommendation to leadership who make the final decision. Mel and Elenore tacitly agreed.
7. Elenore mentioned the MFN Strategic Plan needs to be revisited as it's out of date. (Last one was 2015-2020)

Item: MFN Buildings

1. Marilyn stated we are band-aid fixing multiple leaks in the band office and leaks are coming into the electrical room.
2. Jason stated that 4 years ago there was a plan for a new band office and health centre, but the last C&C stopped it. Thinks we do need a new building.
3. Lorne Flood mentioned that there is a structural issue with the band office: the bottom floor was put in with trusses that were supposed be put in on the second floor. Agree that the building should be taken down.
4. Make sure you get enough room for staff, growth, and storage.
5. Marilyn mentioned we have a few HEPS filters/air purifiers right now and staff can request one if necessary.

Motion by Elenore Hendrix to start the process to build a new band office.

Seconded by Adrian Boucher

All in favour

Motion carried.

Item: Funds for 2023 Pow Wow

1. Marilyn asked for a donation from MFN towards the 2023 Pow Wow. \$50,000 was given last year.

Motion by Rachel Batisse to donate 50,000 to Pow Wow

Seconded by Clara Hansen
All in Favour.
Motion Passed

9:18 PM – Break

IN CAMERA FOLLOWED