

**Qalipu First Nation
Council Meeting
March 26, 2022**

Microsoft Teams

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Attendance

The following members of Council and Staff attended the meeting:

Name:	Position:
Mr. Brendan Mitchell	Chief
Ms. Jennifer (Jenny) Brake	Western Vice-Chief
Mr. Andrew (Andy) Barker	Central Vice-Chief
Ms. Salome Barker	Youth Representative
Mr. Jasen Benwah	Councillor Port Au Port
Ms. Charlene Combdon	Councillor Exploits
Ms. Sharren (Sherry) Dean	Councillor Corner Brook
Mr. Calvin Francis	Councillor Gander Bay
Ms. Terri Greene	Councillor Benoit's Cove
Mr. Francis (Frank) Skeard	Councillor Glenwood
Mr. Robert (Bobby) White	Councillor Flat Bay
Mr. Ivan J. White	Councillor St. George's
Mr. Hayward Young	Councillor Stephenville
Mr. Keith Goulding (Staff)	Band Manager
Ms. Paulette Brinston (Staff)	Executive Assistant
Mr. Andrew Simmons (Staff)	Director of Finance
Mr. Mitch Blanchard (Staff)	Director of Health and Wellness
Ms. Monique Carroll (Staff)	Director of Education and Training
Mr. Jonathan Strickland (Staff)	Director of Natural Resources
Mr. Rod Bennett	Director of Operations

Absent

Western Vice-Chief Jennifer Brake was absent due to other obligations. Councillor Bobby White and Gander Bay Ward Councillor Calvin Francis left during the proceedings.

The council meeting began at approximately 10:15 a.m. Chief Mitchell outlined the topics for discussion of the day, with the primary focus being on organizational operations. Sherry Dean preformed a smudge and Chief Mitchell offered a prayer. Chief Mitchell discussed a delegation planning to meet with the Pope in Rome to request a formal apology to residential school survivors and victims.

Acceptance of the Agenda- Motion 39-21-22

Moved by:	Terri Greene	Seconded by:	Calvin Francis
Motion Carried	All in favour	Nine (9)	Zero (0) Against

Edits to the Agenda

No proposed additions were made to the agenda. A note was made that the agenda included the minutes of a special meeting of council regarding the Labour Market Initiative from March 8, 2022, these were not included in the council kit. The Band Manager will circulate these minutes to council for review.

Acceptance of the Minutes of January 22, 2022- Motion 40-21-22

Moved by:	Sherry Dean	Seconded by:	Jasen Benwah
Motion Carried	All in favour	Nine (9)	Zero (0) Against

Finance and Audit Committee- Minutes of February 11 and March 4, 2022- TOR

QFN's Director of Finance, Andrew Simmons provided an overview of the FASC recommendations for changes to the terms of reference resulting from their February 11 and March 14 meetings. Changes were made to the Terms of Reference of the FASC to reflect quorum discussion from the January 22nd meeting of council.

Acceptance of the FASC- TOR, Motion- 41-21-22

Moved by:	Bobby White	Seconded by:	Calvin Francis
Motion Carried	All in favour	Nine (9)	Zero (0) Against

Establishment of a Natural Resources Reserve Fund- Motion-42-21-22

Natural Resources receives most of their financial support from DFO as a result, there is a lack of flexible funding for Natural Resources. The FASC came up with the recommendation to establish a reserve fund for any revenue they generate, that would remain there until a council-approved budget was established. This approach would create a way to monitor funds for the department. As a part of this recommendation, an initial allocation of \$50,000.00 (fifty thousand) will be assigned to the fund.

Moved by:	Andy Barker	Seconded by:	Hayward Young
Motion Carried	All in favour	Nine (9)	Zero (0) Against

Departmental Budgets/ Annual Operating Plans

The budget and annual operating plans were presented by the directors of their corresponding departments.

Health and Wellness

Presented by Director, Mitch Blanchard, the budget focuses primarily on services to membership including medical transportation, accommodations, and mental health counselling. A part of the agreement with ISC, requires that budgets for these services remain relatively stable, ISC will cover any overages if incurred.

The Department is hoping to expand mental health services including the goal of onboarding a dedicated mental health professional, also looking to expand to non-clinical health treatments incorporating cultural interventions. The department is also looking at recruiting some new mental health providers to alleviate the pressure.

Mitch also called upon ward councillors to help bridge the knowledge gap with members by making them aware of services and programs currently available. The Department is also looking at ways to improve communication with members. There is also a focus on increasing personnel capacity to administer services more effectively to membership and expand on services currently offered.

Band Support

These reports were presented by Director of Finance, Andrew Simmons. Band Support covers several areas of the organization including the executive office, council, and general operational costs that help with the administration of organizational services.

Andrew Barker inquired about the line item regarding the election budget, Andrew Simmons clarified that this was the budget allotted for the recent election, but it was exceeded slightly due to a learning curve with expenditures from new election procedures, specifically the electronic voting system. A greater budget is allocated for the upcoming election. IRA budget has also been expanded to handle an anticipated influx of requests for card renewals.

Andrew Barker inquired about the post-secondary education budget being lower than in previous years. Band manager, Keith Goulding provided clarification that the department occasionally gets additional financial support from Indigenous Services Canada in the form of Notice of Budget Adjustments (NOBAs) that provide additional resources for that department, but they are not known about in advance.

Education and Training

Budget and AOP discussion presented by department Director Monique Carroll. The first budget presented under the department is the ISETS CRF (Consolidated Revenue Fund), which is part of the agreement with Service Canada. Some members of staff are paid under that budget and includes expenditures such as rental space for staff, telephone, and office supplies. Core expenses in the budget represent wages for those staff members and fees associated with their work. Agreement holder expenses represent the support provided to students under this program including tuition, fees, books, and allowances. Expenses under the RCMP summer program are also included in this section. A portion of the housing program wage is also covered under the agreement holder portion of this budget. Many employment program initiatives also fall under this section of the ISETS CRF budget.

Gander Bay Councillor Calvin Francis asked if the employer under the wage subsidy program is required to have status. Monique advised that the employer is not required to have status, the employee would be the person receiving the support. However, they do have priority groups and status members receive preference for support.

Central Vice-Chief Andy Barker asked Monique to explain how funding support works for status and non-status applicants. Monique explained that members are the priority group, deregistered individuals would fall under the next priority level, the only requirement being that they self-identify as Indigenous. Non-status students can only be funded under the Service Canada fund.

After some questions from council regarding funding of non-status students, Monique explained that non-status students could not receive support under the post-secondary support program, which is funded by Indigenous Services Canada, those funds are solely for status members. Non-status students can only receive support under the ITSEPS CRF agreement, and they are prioritized behind status students. If they are planning to attend University, ITSEPS funding is only permitted in the last two years of university studies.

The overview moved on to ISETS EI budget, wages for administration in the department are split between admin and core expenses. A portion of the admin budget also funds salary for IT staff. The budget is for students with active EI claims, or students who are EI eligible. Wage subsidies and Parachute skills funding is also provided under this budget for EI eligible recipients.

The final budget under Education and Training covers the Post-Secondary Education (PSE). This budget is for students attending post-secondary who are status holders. Chief Mitchell inquired about students paying out of pocket for tuition, Monique clarified though the program is referred to as a reimbursement program, students are not required to pay for their tuition upfront, they provide their CSO with a receipt with a balance owing and get eligible expenses paid to them.

Council took a break at 12:15 p.m. for lunch. The Council Meeting resumed at 1:00 p.m.

Environment and Natural Resources

Director of the Environment and Natural Resources, Jonathan Strickland presented his department's budgets starting with the AFS (Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy) Budget. This budget includes expenses related to the Aboriginal fisheries guardian program, with river guardians covering Western NL and Central NL.

Discussion moves to the MAMKA (Mi'kmaq Alsumk Mowimsikik Koqoey Association) budget which is a partnership with Miawpukek First Nation (MFN). Currently the program is undertaking a bat monitoring project, expenditures for this program include equipment to facilitate this program. The next budget is the CNPP (Community Nominated Priority Placement) Program is a five-year project nearing its end, which includes research on several animal species in the area. The next budget is the Valentine Gold Project budget which is funded by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada which provides funds for the department to review environmental impact data to provide feedback, some funds in this budget are set aside for salary for the time staff devote to reviewing the materials, providing comments and fund for travel to attend meetings. The final budget is Qalipu Natural Resources Economic Development which focuses on the business activities of the department.

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Some council members discussed the hope of establishing a MOU between QNR and Qalipu Development Corporation. Many of the work intersects and there's a potential opportunity to work together on projects, particularly with the Marathon Gold/ Valentine Lake Project with environmental monitoring being required.

Culture, Tourism and Community Development

Band Manager Keith Goulding provided an update on the recently vacated Director position in the Department. Interviews have concluded and discussion with the hiring committee on selecting the candidate.

Director of Finance Andrew Simmons presented the Community Development budget. Indigenous Services Canada is the department's main source of revenue. Some of the funds from this budget were moved to band support as they were more appropriately placed in that budget. Under expenses, Andrew highlighted the department's contribution to Qalipu projects, this item represents the departments investment in applications from other entities. The increase in the next five year represents a five-year tourism strategy that will be implemented.

Motion to Approve and Adopt Budgets- Motion-43-21-22

Moved by:	Sherry Dean	Seconded by:	Andy Barker
Motion Carried	All in favour	Nine (9)	Zero (0) Against

Executive Committee Report

Mi'kmaq Community Campaign- Concept was initiated by a member from Swift Current who approached Councillor Frank Skeard, with the goal of acknowledging Mi'kmaq Communities through signage. This would require the support of municipalities and work to develop the sign to make it available to interested communities.

Frank Skeard and Band Manager, Keith Goulding will work on moving forward with this initiative. Council had a brief discussion about potential resistance from government regarding the language on the signage.

Councillor Bobby White left the meeting at approximately 2:30 pm.

There is an initiative to get a flag erected in the town of Grand Falls Windsor, the plan is being headed by Director of Operations, Rod Bennett, Chief encouraged local councillors to get involved as well.

There was also some discussion around Wigwam Point. The land originally belonged to the Sple'tk First Nation; their lease was terminated at which time Qalipu planned to acquire the land from the province. Councillor Charlene Combdon discussed her ward's interest in the project and some of the concerns she has heard from community members. Chief Mitchell stated that community members would be consulted in addition to any other interested parties. Councillor Combdon also expressed that she felt consultation, preferably an in-person meeting, with the town of Peterview, would be important even before the land purchase takes place. Chief Mitchell explained that the meeting was already scheduled by the Provincial government through the Department of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation.

Mawio'mi's upcoming in the communities, looking at offering funding supports in Burgeo, Grand Falls Windsor and Corner Brook. The final item on the Executive Committee report is a QNR Briefing note regarding the planned cutting by Corner Brook Pulp and Paper in the area designated as Charlie's Place. Chief Mitchell advised that council has a meeting upcoming with CBPP to discuss the matter.

Council remarks

Salome Barker- Discussed how hope among youth has been a little stunted recently, group had to change approaches when it comes to meetings. Youth have been hosting online gatherings to have a space where they can come and discuss any issues or events. Discussed the hope to have regional based gatherings in the future, so youth can remain connected with each other.

Andy Barker-Wanted to speak to the point of the two AGAs. The motion was brought in maybe the first year or second year of the last council. Shortly after that decision, the AGA was livestreamed, meaning membership can view the meeting online, felt having two AGAS seems repetitive. Suggested considering rotating locations for one meeting.

Chief Mitchell- From the point of dissemination of information the livestream comments make sense. Traveling to Central gives a personal touch with the community. The commitment to hold an AGA in Central has already been made, so we will hold to that commitment and evaluate in the future.

Hayward Young- Agreed with Andy Barker's suggestion to rotate to different communities.

Frank Skeard- Disagree with the suggestion of having a single AGA, there's a different demographic that would view the livestream in comparison to who would attend in person.

Calvin Francis- Not much happening in the Gander Bay ward, community groups who received gift cards from the QFN Food Program were very grateful for the funds.

Charlene Combdon- Stated she disagreed with changing AGAs. She has a meeting with the town of Grand Falls Windsor on a way to move forward with QFN. Back to Sherry's comment, using members in advisory committees, are vital. When planning events, its important to include knowledge keepers. The town of Badger has offered a piece of land to Qalipu First Nation, Pope's Point which is a culturally significant location.

Sherry Dean- Discussed how she has a large ward, with a small number of gift cards to distribute, learned some lessons from the experience. Recently held a ward meeting and had a great discussion around programs and services. She discussed how she is doing an Honour Song Initiative as part of Mawio'mi planning with the school board. Her group will also be hosting a Sunrise ceremony to mark talks in Rome regarding reconciliation. She also discussed committees and suggested it would be beneficial to separate the Housing and Health committee given the need under both initiatives. Mawio'mi planning committee, well under way, a group of volunteers already committed and offering support.

Terri Greene- Excited for the Mawio'mi. Discussed how she has been reaching out to municipalities in the ward, planning to build relationships. The town of Humber Arm South is having an event on August 12th to open a walking trail which they are working on Indigenizing. She also received some feedback from membership on the Food Security Program and felt that people were misinformed about the roll

out of the program. She plans to host an in-person ward meeting in Lark Harbour and will continue with virtual meetings.

Jasen Benwah- Groups who received gift cards, were very grateful. He stated that he was hoping to host a ward meeting in May, if the COVID situation permits. Benoit First Nation has a Mawio'mi happening in process. He discussed that April 5th, 2022, marks the 175th anniversary of the founding fathers in his community, the unveiling of a monument is planned for that day and other activities.

Ivan J. White- Discussed how the past two years seems to have perpetuated a denial of our culture. His community's bowling centre has created a gathering place for residents to reconnect.

Hayward Young- Discussed how he feels that there's been a disconnect in communication from QFN and membership, stated he believes information is not getting to the people who really need the programs. He stated he hopes to have events with staff to advise membership of the programs and services available. He felt that the organization needed a staff member to visit the Stephenville office to help with services.

Chief Mitchell- Spoke about COVID-19. He recommended people to be careful with the disease. 35 people lost their lives in March to the disease. He encouraged people to wear masks and expressed concern about the numbers of new cases. He also stated he was happy to see councillors hosting ward meetings and the upcoming cultural events planned.

Sherry Dean- When the meeting started off, it was stated it would be nice if council created a prayer in Mi'kmaw. She then spoke in Mi'kmaw, Thank you, creator, for this beautiful day.

There was some discussion around potentially changing the dates for upcoming meetings. An agreement was made to re-visit the planning to accommodate council members.


Adjournment

Charlene Combdon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at approximately 4:25 p.m.

Minutes Submitted By: Paulette Brinston



Approved By: Chief Brendan Mitchell



Certified By: Paulette Brinston

