

**Qalipu First Nation
Council Meeting
May 29, 2022**

Qalipu Community Room

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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
Mr. Jasen Benwah	Councillor Port Au Port
Ms. Charlene Combdon	Councillor Exploits
Ms. Sharren (Sherry) Dean (joined via Teams)	Councillor Corner Brook
Mr. Calvin Francis	Councillor Gander Bay
Ms. Terri Greene	Councillor Benoit's Cove
Mr. Francis (Frank) Skeard	Councillor Glenwood
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. Mitch Blanchard (Staff)	Director of Health and Wellness
Ms. Angela Brockway (Staff)	Manager of Tourism and Community Development

Absent

Youth Representative, Salome Barker sent her regrets. Flat Bay Ward Councillor, Bobby White was also absent for the meeting.

The council meeting began at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Acceptance of the Agenda- Motion 01-22-23

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

Edits to the Agenda

No proposed additions were made to the agenda. Later in the meeting, Councillor Frank Skeard requested to add discussion around a letter of support for Charlie's Place to the Agenda.

Acceptance of the Minutes of March 29, 2022- Motion 02-22-23

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

Edits to the Minutes of March 29, 2022

Exploits Ward Councillor Charlene Combdon noted that Director of Operations, Rod Bennett attended the meeting, but was not included in the attendance list. She also wanted the record to reflect council discussion regarding Wigwam Point.

Changes to Hours of Operation for River Guardians- Motion 03-22-23

River Guardians previous hours differed from their manager and did not align with the National average. The proposed motion would amend the HR policy to reflect the correct hours that fisheries guardians currently work.

Frank Skeard asked to clarify that this motion does not have financial consequences. Band Manager Keith Goulding confirmed this proposed change would only impact the hours that the River Guardians currently work.

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

Be it resolved that the Human Resources Policy of Qalipu First Nation will be amended to reflect the approved change in working hours for the River Guardians.

Changes to Council Honorariums - Motion 04-22-23

This Motion was initiated as there had been some discussion about compensation for council for their time devoted to their roles. The Band typically evaluates this structure somewhat regularly and current practice is not in step with inflation. The proposed change would structure compensation for council using municipality's strategy for compensation which uses a ratio based on total fixed revenue.

Moved by:	Calvin Francis	Seconded by:	Frank Skeard
Motion Carried	All in favour	7 (Seven) in favour 1 (One) abstention	One (1) Against

Be it resolved that remuneration for Qalipu First Nation Council will be amended using a ratio format to determine their Honoraria, effective June 1, 2022, retroactively.

Councillor Frank Skeard noted that since there is a financial consequence to this motion, execution of this motion will be deferred to the finance and audit committee.

Action item: Council will now receive \$9600.00 annually pending approval of the FAC. If approved by the FAC, the increase for council Honoraria will be retroactive to June 1, 2022.

Council engaged in a discussion about limiting the tax implications for councillors. Jasen Benwah who voted against the increase noted that councillors currently receive a T4 when they should be issued a T4A.

Councillor Ivan J. White abstained from voting.

Amendment to Mandatory Vaccination Policy- Motion 05-22-23

There have been several changes since the policy was brought into effect. The province has modified their mandatory vaccination policy to include a sunset clause that would end the policy effective May 31st, 2022. The sunset clause would provide flexibility allowing the policy to be re-enacted as required should the province’s COVID-19 situation require it.

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

Be it resolved that the Mandatory Vaccination Policy implemented by Qalipu First Nation council for staff and guests of QFN is amended to add a sunset clause whereby the policy will pace with the Provincial Government’s mandatory vaccination policy, set to end on May 31st, 2022.

Housing Strategy- Motion 06-22-23

Presented by Director of Health and Wellness, Mitch Blanchard. The standing committee has made recommendations where the need is the greatest in relation to the housing portfolio. There are currently two contract employees working on the housing portfolio, but the goal is to expand staffing of the housing team as the program grows.

Council discussed the challenges of housing issues that need to be addressed including home repairs, housing insecurity, and acquiring the funds for a down payment. Western Vice-Chief Jenny Brake suggested engaging other departments to provide holistic support to members to assist them in areas such as education, employment, or entrepreneurial support.

Moved by:	Calvin Francis	Seconded by:	Terri Greene
Motion Carried	All in favour	8 (Eight) in favour 1 (One) abstention	Zero (0) Against

Be it resolved that the Housing Strategy presented to Council is approved.

Frank Skeard abstained from voting.

Letter of Support for Charlie's Place-Motion 07-22-23

Calvin Francis brought forward a request for a letter of support from council to have the land known as “Charlie’s Place” be designated as an Indigenous Protected Conservation Area. Corner Brook Pulp and Paper had planned to cut in the area, the designation would cease the development of the land.

Moved by:	Calvin Francis	Seconded by:	Jasen Benwah
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Motion Carried	All in favour	8 (Eight) in favour 1 (One) abstention	Zero (0) Against
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Be it resolved that a letter will be prepared on behalf of the Qalipu First Nation Council to offer support to designate the land known as “Charlie’s Place” as an Indigenous Protected Conservation Area.

Frank Skeard stepped away from the discussion regarding Charlie’s Place.

Council broke for lunch at approximately 12:00 p.m. The council meeting resumed at 12:30 pm. Corner Brook Ward Councillor, Sherry Dean joined via Teams after council returned from lunch.

Experience Qalipu Strategy

Manager of Tourism and Development Angela Brockway joined the meeting to provide an overview of the Experience Qalipu Strategy. Canadian Ecotourism Services (CES) were consultants on the preparation of the new five-year strategy. The development of the strategy involved public consultation both in person and online with input from stakeholders and community members.

Given the depth of the material, after some discussion among council, the decision was made to hold a separate meeting with Angela at a later date to discuss the implementation of the strategy. Angela also discussed the Indigenous Sense of Arrival partnership with Deer Lake airport and the hope to expand that program to other points of entry in the province.

Ward Councillor Terri Greene expressed concern regarding the accessibility of the plan to tourism operators outside the organization, particularly non-members. Angela indicated they would not restrict access to the plan, in fact, the goal is to see tourism operators benefit from the plan. Band Manager, Keith Goulding clarified that the plan, if passed by council, would be accessible on the Qalipu First Nation website.

Approval of Member-at-Large for the Health and Housing Standing

Committee Motion 08-22-23

An expression of interest was circulated for a member-at-large representative to serve on the Health and Housing Standing Committee. Committee Chair Sherry Dean brought forth the motion to approve Debbie Hannovak to serve as a member-at-large for the committee.

Moved by:	Sherry Dean	Seconded by:	Hayward Young
Motion Carried	All in favour	Ten (10)	Zero (0) Against

Be it resolved that Debbie Hannovak will serve as Member-at large for the Health and Housing Standing Committee.

Approval of Member-at-Large for the Operations and Communications

Standing Committee Motion 09-22-23

An expression of interest was circulated for a member-at-large representative to serve on the Operations and Communications Standing Committee. Committee Chair and Western Vice-Chief Jenny

Brake brought forth the motion to approve Melanie Callahan to serve as a member-at-large for the committee.

Moved by:	Jenny Brake	Seconded by:	Ivan J. White
Motion Carried	All in favour	Ten (10)	Zero (0) Against

Be it resolved that Melanie Callahan will serve as Member-at large for the Communications and Operations Standing Committee.

Council remarks

A brief conversation occurred with council regarding the length of time to receive council kits. Some members felt the information was not provided in time to review the material. An agreement was made that information not received within 10 days prior to the council meeting would be tabled for discussion until the next meeting of council.

Andy Barker- He would like to revisit the discussion of two AGAs in the next council meeting. He asked Chief about the recreational and ceremonial food fishery and where things stood on those discussions.

Chief Mitchell- He met Joyce Murray, Fisheries Minister recently, plans to have a meeting in June. Emphasized to Minister Murray that he would like to have Qalipu’s application for food, social, and ceremonial fishing reviewed.

Andy Barker - Sple'tk is operating a language center. He discussed that he would also like to see established guidelines for email protocols among council and staff. He expressed concern over cellphones on the desk and in use during council meetings.

Frank Skeard- The presence of Qalipu is good but is lacking in the Central Region. The Band needs to make an effort to establish relationships with groups in the Central Region to strengthen those connections. If we have an employee who has territory-wide responsibility, he would like to see them travelling to underserved communities. He stated that he would like to say thanks to Keith and staff, members are calling to express gratitude about the services they are receiving.

Hayward Young- Planning to have a ward meeting on June 9th, locating them between Stephenville Crossing and Stephenville. He will be doing a presentation on the Journey of Collaboration Project. Planning to have a ceremony in Stephenville Crossing to raise the Mi'kmaw flag. We are still not reaching some of our people, those who need services the most. As far as the airport goes, people ask why we don't have the initiative in other points of entry. Who paid for the program?

Keith Goulding clarified that the Deer Lake Airport Indigenous Sense of Arrival program was co-funded by ACOA and Tourism, Culture, and Innovation (this department name has since changed).

Hayward Young- Wanted to discuss employee turnover, expressed concern that we are losing good employees. Wondering what we need to do to retain employees. He also expressed concern about employment of non-members.

Keith Goulding explained that of the 10 employees that have left the organization since the last fiscal year, 2 employees are permanent, the remaining 8 were contract employees. We have had 3 previously

contracted employees return recently. The vast majority who have left the organization were because their employment contracts had ended. The permanent employees who left were given increased salaries in their new roles and a work from home environment. We have tried to be competitive when it comes to total compensation, our salaries are less competitive, so we have tried to offer other advantages to compete. We are also undergoing a salary classification review where we hope to see changes to salary. Hoping to get council's approval on salary classification.

Chief- Would like to address what appears to be a perception among councillors that we have a problem with retention. Two employees who had worked for QFN left to work for Indigenous Services Canada have left those roles for new positions. The salaries are far higher than their QFN salaries and have the advantage of working from home. As Keith mentioned, several contract employees have returned which should demonstrate they enjoyed working for Qalipu and were willing to return.

Jenny Brake- If you enter someone's office and ask them if they enjoy their job, they are not going to be honest. She stated that she won't argue about points that have been made. Individuals who left Indigenous Services Canada left for better opportunities, just as when they left Qalipu First Nation they were seeking better opportunities. There is a lot of feedback about the toxicity of the environment. She stated that she has been told in confidence by outspoken employees that they are not happy coming to work each day. It might not be something you (Chief Mitchell) hear, but it is a topic of conversation among staff members. They are actively looking for somewhere better to go because they are not content here, not sure if it is wages. If we can give people something to encourage them. Hopefully the salary review will benefit employees.

Chief- We recognize compensation is an issue. Must take exception to comments that Qalipu is a toxic workplace. I have had people tell me it's the best place they have ever worked, and I am not soliciting these comments.

Jenny Brake- It might be a small percentage of staff, but if employees are unhappy, we have to address it.

Charlene Combdon- I guess exit interviews are completed when employees leave. Maybe if we have a better form to share their feelings when an employee leaves, maybe we could identify what the issue is. They may be afraid to share their feelings in a verbal exit interview. Maybe every 6 months employees could participate in anonymous surveys to share concerns.

Keith Goulding explained that if an employee leaves the organization, anonymity is a problem. Exit interviews are done in writing with the Human Resources Manager. Due to covid, staff have not been able to gather, so they are missing that connection with upper-level management.

Terri Greene- Regional Health authority is conducting employee engagement surveys, which is how they are catching a lot of these issues. It is completely anonymous; they look for themes.

Sherry Dean- Reminded council that she is looking for moose for the Mawio'mi. The provincial government's Education department, along with QFN's Education and training Department and the Mawio'mi committee are working together to get kids to learn the Honour Song. The committee is offering Youth workshops in preparation for the Mawio'mi. The more engaged council are in the community, the better off we will be. She will be hosting two ward meetings: one on the North Shore and one in the Qalipu Community Room. Attending the Atlantic Congress of Nursing meeting.

Ivan J. White- Held first ward meeting, there were few people in attendance, however the conversation was valuable. Wendy Brake, Journey of Collaboration coordinator was in attendance. Some guests at the meeting discussed how they share information among themselves as members, this may present an opportunity for communication for less connected members.

Calvin Francis- Propose meeting be adjourned.

Jasen Benwah- Held a ward meeting, Western Vice-Chief Jenny Brake was in attendance. Wendy Brake also presented on the Journey of Collaboration. Hosting a Come Home Year activity throughout the summer, with a mini powwow happening on July 31st. Doing workshops with the local schools regarding to mark National Indigenous People's Day.

Jenny Brake- Working at Grenfell with student support and Indigenous Affairs and working with the band to have direct payment for students receiving funding. She will also be attending the nursing conference with Sherry and the Canadian Apprenticeship conference. Sitting on the board of Directors for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Skilled trades, they will be expanding to Indigenous tradespeople on the island, connecting tradespeople with employment/apprenticeship opportunities. Working with Wendy Brake on the Journey of Collaboration project, which is an important initiative. Working with Empowering Indigenous Women tanning a bear hide as a community project, taught by an elder to skin the animal. She asked about entrepreneurial support available and asked who handles that portfolio.

Keith Goulding explained that Lezley McCarthy is the Business Development Officer, she would handle connecting members with funding agency opportunities. We also offer Self-Employment assistance and wage subsidies through the Department of Education and Training; Yvonne MacDonald would be the contact for that support.

Jenny Brake- She also asked where things stood with the development of the Particpark?

Keith Goulding stated that engineering work has been ongoing throughout the fall and winter. The Community Development department is heading up that initiative now. Working with a municipal government is different, but once the information is available it will be circulated to council.

Terri Greene- Assisting members with housing applications, taking time to go to the Community Hall and help members with applications. Would like to see sessions similar to the ones held with council in the winter, this may help to cut down on time at the council meeting. She also asked about discussions with York Harbour Medal, a meeting was supposed to happen in May, and it is now June.

Keith Goulding stated that he has not heard from them about the progress.

Charlene Combdon- Alex Antle and Nelson White have been selected to visit the Titanic site. Been chatting with some people in St. Albans., hoping to include Central Vice-Chief Andy Barker in a meeting. Will be attending an Exploits tourism event on May 31st. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society will be holding a Grand Opening. Thanks to Badger Brook First Nation with GFW, who will be doing a cold plate sale, pay what you can afford.

Spoke to a group concerned that Marathon Gold is going ahead with development not engaging with Indigenous owned businesses. They would like to have a relationship with the company. They are looking for something else, maybe an in-person meeting



Members are inquiring about the Children's Day camp happening in Central, members wanting to know more information about the location. Qalipu Cultural Foundation is hosting their gala in GFW June 25. Ticket purchases are very low. It offers a 3-course meal, silent auction.

There were some discussions among council regarding events happening throughout the summer including National Indigenous People's Day, Powwow in Flat Bay, Burgeo Mawio'mi, and Corner Brook Mawio'mi.

Adjournment

Calvin Francis made a motion to close the meeting. The council meeting ended at approximately 2:45 pm.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 28th, 2022.

Minutes Submitted By: Paulette Brinston



Approved By: Chief Brendan Mitchell



Certified By: Paulette Brinston