

SNTC Council of Chiefs Meeting Summary (November 30, 2010)

In attendance

Chiefs: Wayne Christian, Judy Wilson, Rick Deneault, Michael LeBourdais, Nelson Leon, Terry Porter, Shane Gottfriedson.

Councilor: Shannon Jones (Splats'in).

Youth: Josh Gottfriedson

SNTC: Bonnie Leonard, Walter Quinlan, Veronica Leonard

Building a Nation-based Governing Body

"A tribal council is an INAC structure," said Kukpi7 Christian opening discussion about building a nation-based political structure. He asked, "How do we want to organize ourselves? How do we move forward? Where do we need to go?"

Kukpi7 Gottfriedson believes that a new governance model should be built on two key pillars: the 1910 Laurier Memorial and community engagement. "Ask our people what they want. Start there," he said.

Kukpi7 Gottfriedson is encouraged by the prospects for success. For example, working together with Kukpi7 Deneault, in Stk'emlupsemc te Secwepemc Nation, "we're learning as we go."

For Kukpi7 Leon, "nation" means balancing an individual community's need for autonomy with a collective national approach to negotiating. "Collective title equals negotiating strength," he said. "And without nation," Kukpi7 Leon forewarned the chiefs, "we will always be INAC."

On a related point, Kukpi7 Wilson noted that "proper title holder" has to be defined. She suggested a think tank on this and she welcomes input from the communities.

For Kukpi7 Porter, there is the practical matter of technical staff and support to be considered. "As Chief and Councilors, we have to wear too many hats. Many of these projects are worth millions of dollars," he said. He feels that bands lose a great deal of opportunity because Chief and Councilors are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of work before them.

Given the exponential rate of development on the land, all agreed that a structured timeline needs to be put in place. "I think that we have to have this conversation often," concluded Kukpi7 LeBourdais.

Moving forward, Tribal Director Bonnie Leonard presented a "Governance Briefing Note" that outlined: SNTC's purpose as both a rights and title and a programs and services delivery organization; issues to be defined

(nationhood, collective title); key shared principles (ex.: each community speaks for itself); the legal context of title; and the insights and wisdom found in existing Declarations and Accords.

Protocol Agreement between the 17 Secwepemc Bands

On January 14th, there will be an All Chiefs meeting to review the draft Protocol Agreement. Technical staff have been focusing on Appendices to main document that provide implementation mechanisms.

Aboriginal Human Resource Funding Agreements

For a number of years, SNTC has managed aboriginal human resource funding agreements between Canada and the sub-agreement holders (or “partners”) who deliver employment and training services to aboriginal people living in the central interior.

One of the partners, Interior Salish Employment and Training Society (ISETS), wants to separate and carry out its own program. However, Service Canada isn’t allowing this.

The SNTC Chiefs passed a motion supporting ISETS’ efforts to have their own funding agreement, because, as Chief LeBourdais said, “we’re pushing for nation-based agreements between Canada and BC First Nations.”

Finance

Shannon Jones is a Councilor from Splots’in who has a Bachelor of Business degree. She works with one of Canada’s largest investment firms. Chief Gottfriedson recommended that the Chiefs appoint her as a member of the Finance Committee citing financial advice that she’s given Tk’emlups IB.

“We need to build a bigger team and to include our Councilors on SNTC Chiefs committees,” added Chief Leon. Shannon Jones was voted onto the Finance Committee.

In other business, the Chiefs accepted, by motion, the Consolidated Reports for SNTC, Secwepemc Fisheries Commission and CIPAHRD.

Commercial Fisheries

The Chiefs were asked to review a report by Murray Ross (Director, Secwepemc Fisheries Commission) regarding developing commercial fisheries for Secwepemc communities. Chief Leon noted that any commercial effort would have to be balanced with the food and ceremonial fisheries.

“Whispering Pines/Clinton people have always had a fish economy,” said Chief LeBourdais. “If there’s a commercial fishery that meets traditional values, that’s intriguing,” he added.

The Chiefs were asked to review the SFC report with their fisheries and technicians, then, in the New Year, interested SNTC Chiefs are to begin working on developing a business plan.

SEDCO

The Chiefs scheduled a meeting of the Secwepemc Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) for January 27th, 2011.

Youth Council

Josh Gottfriedson requested the Chiefs further encourage young people in their communities to join the Secwepemc Youth Council.