



**Michipicoten First Nation 2017-2019 Leadership  
Chief and Council Strategic Planning Session #7  
Council Chambers, January 22 & 23, 2019**

**1.0 ATTENDANCE**

Gimma Kwe Patricia Tangie  
Councillor William (Bill) Swanson  
Councillor Evelyn Stone  
Councillor John Paul Chalykoff  
Councillor Janet Demary  
Councillor Don Humphries (Day 2 only)  
Holly Hughes, Interim Band Manager  
Colin Lachance, Community Advisor

**2.0 OPENING PRAYER:** Gimma Kwe Patricia Tangie

**3.0 CHIEF'S OPENING REMARKS**

Gimma Kwe Tangie welcomed participants. She explained that the purpose of the meeting was to continue with the leadership strategic planning agenda that started at the beginning of the political term and to take stock of strategic achievements to date, related priorities that may require attention between now and the end of the current leadership term, and other matters that may need to be flagged for priority attention next term. She stressed that direction had been given early in the new term to balance the need to respond to acute and immediate community priorities with the need to invest in longer term solutions. She highlighted the fact that the agenda of the day has been structured to allow for a robust review of eight (8) main community sectors as a means of determining if, during the existing political term, a healthy balance had been achieved in advancing both stop-gap measures and long-term solutions. It was generally agreed that proof of at least one strategic initiative moving forward or identified in each of the eight community sectors would be considered a success, given that the intent was not to do it all, but to do what was do-able.

## **4.0 SECTORAL ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1 Sector 1: Governance**

A review of governance related strategic discussions held by the leadership during the current term took place, identifying transparency, workload management, portfolio system, Council committees, code of conduct, election code ratification, citizenship, UOI education, constitutional development, sovereignty and government-to-government relationship building as related topics. While Council discussed the outcome of a number of stop-gap measures taken within a number of areas, including securing funding to resource a policy review, particular attention was given to discussing how to maintain momentum regarding moving the community governance agenda forward in a good way. The leadership consequently agreed to begin working immediately on the development of a 10-year governance action plan that would parallel the Anishinabek Nation 10 Year Governance Strategic Plan currently under development, recognizing that the two are connected by virtue of MFN recently ratifying its constitution. It was noted that an Anishinabek Nation governance workshop has been scheduled to take place in Sault Ste. Marie during the first week of March, 2019. In the meantime, the leadership recommitted to improving community decision-making, stating with the development of a draft Chief and Council Code of Conduct.

### **4.2 Sector 2: Fiscal Relations**

Council recognized that community financial independence breeds political independence and that a robust fiscal agenda would need to complement the governance agenda. Council discussed how this was advanced during the current term on a number of fronts including a comprehensive review of existing finances; ongoing discussions and community engagements on the need to overhaul community trusts; an explosion of resource partnership discussions in the last two years particularly in the energy, mining and forestry sectors; discussions around the need for a revised financial management approach to better deal with the management of resource partnership agreements; and the need to advance a resource revenue sharing dialogue process with the Government of Ontario. Council concluded that it would be important to send correspondence to the Government of Ontario in support of a more pro-active government-to-government relationship building approach and in particular support of a more robust resource revenue sharing agenda.

### **4.3 Sector 3: Administrative Excellence**

Council discussed a number of administrative priorities including staffing actions, the reconstruction of the Band files, the development of a new organizational chart and the updating of the Band communications plan. It was noted that previous Council discussions acknowledged that this sector required more stop gap attention than anticipated given staff vacancies and missing files. It was further noted that outside funding was secured to support a file reconstruction process as well as to start a comprehensive policy review, a process that will continue into the new political term.

#### **4.4 Sector 4: Infrastructure Review**

Council discussed a number of infrastructure priorities including the need for a roof over the rink, a new Band Hall kitchen, a Health Centre expansion, window replacement on various buildings, an upgraded water treatment plant, and a capital review. Council continued to recognize that an upgraded water treatment plant was critical to community well-being and community growth and therefore required priority attention. The Chief agreed to make some inquiries in this regard. Council recognized that not all of the monies required to upgrade community infrastructure are available from government agencies and will need to be supplemented by own-source revenue. Council identified the need for a comprehensive capital review that would be tied to the fiscal review in order to identify infrastructure priorities as well as to help to shape community dialogue on what portion of own source revenues are made available to the community as a whole and what portion is made available to individual community members.

#### **4.5 Sector 5: Economic and Business**

Council undertook a detailed review of all economic and business projects being advanced and were generally pleased with the tremendous progress made in a relatively short period of time. It was concluded that a strong letter to the Ontario Ministry of Energy, Mines and Northern Development (MEMND) regarding ongoing concerns on the government-to-government side of this agenda may assist with business-to-business discussions, notably the Nextbridge/Hydro One issue given that this provincial ministry only recently took on energy matters and may therefore not understand the complexities of the file. With respect to the forestry file, Council reaffirmed its commitment for MFN becoming a member of Wahkohtowin as well as a signatory to the Northeast Superior Enhanced Sustainable Forestry License. The need to ratify the partnership agreement between the community and Rayonier was recognized as a priority given that the funding from this agreement would be used during its first year to cover the entry fee for joining Wahkohtowin. On the strategic planning side of the economic and business agenda, Council reviewed the draft 5 Year Socio-economic Plan and agreed to endorse the eight identified priorities of water and land protection, increased management and control of reserve lands, investing resources in citizens, governance development, election code development, working together, financial planning, and broadening the economic base.

#### **4.6 Sector 6: Lands Stewardship**

Council reviewed ongoing land stewardship issues and priorities including in the areas of guardianship, landfill closure, source water protection, Caribou management, emergency preparedness, environmental assessment, a state of the environment report and the development of an environmental management system. Council recognized that related reserve land issues will move towards strategic resolution over the next two years as land code and environmental management system development dollars flow from the *First Nation Land Management Act* agenda. With respect to off-reserve stewardship priorities, it was also noted

that Wahkohtowin has advanced a robust regional guardianship agenda that can be expanded into Michipicoten First Nation's territory. Meanwhile, a draft Caribou Protection Strategy is under development and is awaiting funding that is tied to the Nextbridge partnership agreement. The source water protection agenda has stalled due to the lack of commitment of virtually every federal and provincial agency that has been approached. One sharp letter has already been sent to the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change in this regard, and Council has agreed to send similar letters to MNRF and MENDM.

#### **4.7 Sector 7: Cultural Renewal**

Council discussed the critical importance of advancing this strategic priority given that it is tied to Michipicoten's constitutional guarantees and community identity. It was noted that the strategic objective is not to convert all members back to a traditional Indigenous worldview but to merely provide members with an option to do so if they should wish. The need for a community healing lodge was once again discussed. It was recognized that the Rayonier agreement may allow for dimensional lumber to be made available for the healing lodge for free, and possibly for the rink roof at cost. Council agreed that these considerations should be built into the agreement which is expected to be concluded by the end of February 2019, and actioned as a priority next fiscal year. The need to ensure that the Province of Ontario registers Manitou Mountain as a conservation reserve under the *Public Lands Act* was viewed as another related priority, a matter that has been outstanding for over two years. Given that the management of conservation areas and parks was recently transferred from MNRF to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MECC), Council recognized the need to send a letter to the MECC stressing the importance of protecting Manitou Mountain and advancing the MFN guardianship and source water protection agendas. Council also took stock of the progress being made in advancing the MFN "Telling Our Story" project being funded provided by the Ontario Arts Council, including reviewing a draft agenda for the community dialogue sessions scheduled for the week of January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Council also discussed the progress being made in advancing the territorial land use and occupancy mapping exercise that will further assist the community in reclaiming its past in support of plotting its future.

#### **4.8 Sector 8: Strategic Linkages**

Council recognized the role that the MFN Comprehensive Community Planning (CPP) process will play in connecting all of the sectoral strategic activities. Council reviewed a CCP update report provided by Michael and Judie Bopp and provided some comment regarding proposed expectations of the next CCP community meeting proposed for the week of January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Using a house analogy, years of intergenerational trauma caused by the Doctrine of Assimilation would represent contaminated soil that requires remediation in order to provide a clean base on which to base the constitution values that will hold up the Nation, with each of the community sectors represented by individual rooms.

## **5.0 SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC ACHEIVEMENTS**

Council recognized that it did not achieve all of its identified strategic objectives for its political term, but also recognized that it was not expected to do so either. The goal was to identify strategic potential and to move forward on those that presented themselves as the best opportunities. If the intent was to ensure that there was at least one strategic initiative moving forward in each of the eight community sectors, then it was concluded that this goal had been accomplished due to the following achievements or commitments:

- Sector 1: Governance: 10 Year Action Plan tied to Anishinabek Nation process
- Sector 2: Fiscal: Fiscal Framework development commitment
- Sector 3: Administrative: Policies and Procedures review commitment
- Sector 4: Infrastructure: Comprehensive capital review commitment
- Sector 5: Economic and Business: 5 Year Socio-economic Plan
- Sector 6: Land Stewardship: *First Nation Land Management Act*, Wahkohtowin
- Sector 7: Culture: "Telling the Story"
- Sector 8: Interconnectedness: Comprehensive Community Plan

## **6.0 NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

### **6.1 Code of Conduct**

The leadership reviewed a preliminary draft Chief and Council Code of Conduct and provided preliminary feedback on the wording in the various sections including purpose; community expectations; ties to community vision; statement of intent; general responsibilities such as employment implications, confidentiality, conflict of interest, portfolio system, administrative relationship, attendance and drug testing; specific duties; consequences; and coming into effect. The leadership asked that a redrafted Code of Conduct be developed as soon as possible so that another discussion could take place before the next community election.

### **6.2 Other Direction**

Based on the above, Council agreed to the following:

- All Councilors are encouraged to attend the Anishnabek Nation governance workshop in Sault Ste. Marie during the week of March 5, 2019 in support of developing an MFN 10 Year Governance Action Plan, starting with direction to be provided in support of developing a funding proposal to be submitted to the relevant agencies before the end of the fiscal year;
- Government-to-government relationship letters are to be sent to various government agencies as soon as possible, including MNRF, MEMND and MECC;

- Enquiries are to be made as soon as possible on the results of the EAGLE Project and INAC contaminated sites investigations on-reserve;
- Enquiries are to be made as soon as possible on ways to advance the need for a water treatment plant upgrade as well as a community emergency response strategy;
- A newsletter is to be developed as soon as possible summarizing the outcome of the 2017-2019 MFN leadership strategic planning agenda, to be posted on the MFN Website as soon as possible along with all supporting documentation.

## **7.0 CLOSING COMMENTS**

Roundtable closing comments were provided, summarized as follows:

- Much work has been done, but much more needs to be done
- We didn't get to some of our priorities
- Amazing how it all came together
- We learned to trust one another and help one another
- We need to be more involved in day-to-day activities
- We now need to move smother, faster, with more staff
- We need to pay particular attention to off-reserve membership needs
- We are becoming increasingly disciplined and it is keeping us on track
- Election Code development needs to be a priority for next term
- We have formulated a solid Blueprint for Action

## **8.0 CLOSING PRAYER:** Gimma Kwe Tangie