

Governance



Newsletter

On the ground with Councillor Bill LaForme of Pillar 7 – the Governance of New Credit

Aanii everyone, this is the first newsletter that will be distributed quarterly and will be solely about Governance. In the recent months Governance has been a bit slow in getting things moving as there were numerous items that had to be in place before we could begin. We apologize for this inconvenience, but now we are ready to push forward. In the coming weeks, you will be informed about the progress we have made in

Governance and will be notified about up-coming community meetings involving a proposed Election Code we are currently working on. So please keep an eye out for information regarding Governance as it is important to us that you stay informed, provide input and assist us in shaping our future.

Bill LaForme going over a document during a meeting. Photo from MCFN Facebook.



Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Constitution

The Governance team has begun its work on drafting a constitution for MCFN that will be submitted to MCFN Council and members for review, guidance, and approval. The constitution will be a fundamental law of MCFN. It will address MCFN's sense of itself, how

it is governed, how the membership has input into governance, key positions of its government, and its powers. At this time, the Governance team believes that a high-level constitution will be a good starting point for MCFN. This ensures that MCFN can begin to

establish its laws and powers, as well as begin to tie in some of the work that the Governance team is undertaking presently around governance. The constitution will be redrafted in future years to include more detail.

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Election Code

The Lands, Research, and Membership Department, in coordination with the Governance team, is currently drafting a MCFN election code to be used in consultations with MCFN members.

If approved by members, MCFN's election code will be used for future MCFN elections, rather than MCFN running its elections under the Indian Act. The election code will be drafted specifically for use

by MCFN. It is the hope of MCFN Council that the election code can be used for the upcoming 2019 MCFN Chief and Council election.

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Water Framework

The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) have un-extinguished Aboriginal title to all water and floodplains within our Treaty Lands and Territory, which contains approximately 4 million acres of land. The water within our Treaty Lands and Territory has never been lawfully surrendered by the MCFN or its ancestors. The treaties that our ancestors signed with the British Crown (with the exception being Treaty No. 23) did not speak to the water.

Based on this, and further evidence provided in a number of research reports on MCFN's water, we filed an Aboriginal Title Claim to Waters within the Traditional Lands of the Mississaugas of the New Credit (Water Claim) in September 2016. In support of this Water Claim, we have partnered with University of Guelph

doctoral student, Renee LeRoux-Goretsky, to develop a MCFN-led Water Framework designed to transform the current water governance to meet our needs. This framework is built on community



Save Water/Water is Life. Photo from Andrija Markovic at 123RF.com.

participatory research involving 200 MCFN community members through interviews, focus group discussions, interactive art activities, and a survey.

The Water Framework provides principles for transformative and strategic engagements as part of the Water Claim and other broader applications. The 3 guiding principles chosen by the people for the Water Framework are: Becoming Self-Sustaining, Protecting the Water, and Reconnecting with our Cultural & Spiritual relations to Water. The intention is to expand on these principles so as to develop programs of community action, mobilization and development. The long-term goal of the framework is to help lead the way to reconciliation and our own self-determination by being the stewards of the water within our Treaty Lands and Territory.

Agreement/Renewed Relationship between MCFN and the Government of Canada

This Agreement is currently being drafted by MCFN and Canada. Once finalized and signed, it will establish measures to preserve the ability of MCFN and Canada to continue to have meaningful dis-

cussions on new approaches to understanding and implementing the treaties between MCFN and Canada, new governance models, and the resolution of MCFN's outstanding land claims. The Agree-

ment will also provide MCFN and Canada with the opportunity to continue to operate in its renewed government-to-government relationship.

Future Community Engagement and Communications

The MCFN Governance team and Council recognize the value that members contribute to the planning, development, and delivering of community projects, programs, and services. In moving towards self-government, it is essential that MCFN members be engaged from the initial stages through to the ratification and approval of any laws, projects, programs, or services that MCFN will consider developing. Members will be engaged throughout this entire process. The process will be open, visible, and transparent, while balancing the need for the decision

making process to be efficient and effective. Wherever possible, MCFN will engage its members.

One such, pressing, example, will be MCFN's election code. As MCFN Council wishes to see MCFN's election code utilized for the upcoming 2019 election, the Governance team will be out engaging members from mid to late-February, through to the end of July 2019. More information will be communicated shortly.

The Governance team is also in the process of developing its own

communications, including a new newsletter, which will focus on governance within MCFN, as well as is developing a MCFN governance website. The Governance team is working in coordination with the Communications Department to ensure interdepartmental cooperation and to minimize any duplication of efforts.

Stay tuned for further updates!!!



Governance Teamwork photo that shows the importance of working together to achieve a collective goal. Photo by Stockfreeimages.

See You



Next Time