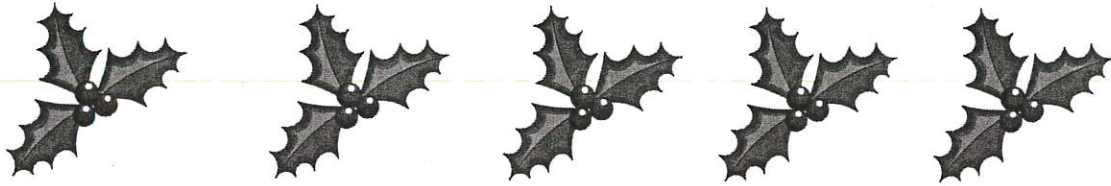


UPDATE FROM THE CHIEF'S DESK...Dec 2017-volume 19



Season's Greetings to all Band Members,

The Council and I are happy to once again be elected and we will do our best to continue moving forward in a positive manner.

ELECTION

Now that elections are over, if you have any questions or concerns you can contact: Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

Atlantic Region Office - Location - Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

Atlantic Regional Office, P.O. Box 160, 40 Havelock Street

Amherst, Nova Scotia, B4H 3Z3

(toll-free) 1-800-567-9604 Fax: (902) 661-6237

We are also developing a place on our website where permission and contact information can be updated regularly, in regards to band business and/or elections. It is important to note we are unable to give out information about our Off Reserve Band Members without permission.

INAC ASSESMENT - Part C

The length of funding agreements for First Nation Communities can range from 1 to 5 years, based on First Nation compliance with INAC funding requirements which determine how well a First Nation Manages its funding agreements. An assessment is done near the end of each agreement term to determine how long the next agreement the First Nation qualifies for. We just completed our Assessment and while we have not received an official letter with the results, our Financial Services Officer after completing the last step with the Band Administrator on December 5 says we have increased our overall percentage to 93%. This is great news and means there should be no problems with securing another Five (5) year financial agreement for the Bear River First Nation. Once we receive an official letter we will post it the website for your viewing. Thank you to all the Band staff!

BEAR AND MOOSEMEAT/HARVESTERS GATHERING

The Harvester's Gathering was a great success. There were lots of activities held throughout the four days. It was good to see so many Band Members participate and to see new faces as well.

This year's communal hunts meant that 52 houses, the Health Center, Learning Center and Band Office received meat. A special thank you to all our Community Harvesters.

Special Note - Councillor Fred was able to take part in the Provincial Moose Hunt in the National Park in Cape Breton. Please feel free to speak with him about his experience. He has some great stories and pictures to share. He also learned a lot about the reason behind this yearly hunt and is willing to share his learning with anyone interested.

Also, Royden, Chief Bob Gloade and myself attended the Provincial Hunt. It was an experience I really enjoyed.

HEALTH PLAN

As with INAC, First Nation and Inuit Health Branch requires the Health Center complete an evaluation and Five (5) year Plan in order to renew their Health Funding Agreement. We are pleased the Health Center has completed both aspects of these requirements. The Chief and Council approved the Health Center's Health Plan and believe there should be no problems with securing another Five (5) year financial agreement for the Bear River First Nation Health Center. Thank you to all the Health Center staff!

ENTRANCE TO THE COMMUNITY

Councillor Frank holds this portfolio and while the scheduled work has been completed, he continues to work on creating a more secure and safe entrance to the Community. He continues to keep our main entrance a priority and ensure continued discussions are ongoing to improve the width of the intersection leading into the Community.

ASH HAVEN

The clearing of Ash Haven extension has begun and should be completed by the end of the year. The next step will be for the engineering company CBCL to complete the design of the road.

SNOW REMOVAL/SNOW SHOVELLING CONTRACTS

Snow Removal – Scopes of work were sent to two contractors with one bid received. Big Horn Earthworks was awarded the contract. Please be reminded it is important to keep your driveway clear for snow removal.

Snow Shoveling – Scopes of work were sent out in a Community notice with one bid received. Dustin Meuse was awarded this contract. Please note, Devon Dueck will be helping Dustin. snow shoveling is provided to the businesses, Elder's and others who qualify.

Councillor Fred Robar-Harlow is the portfolio holder for all snow removal. You can contact him if you have any questions or concerns.

COMMERCIAL FISHING

Any revenue received from our Fishing Agreements with Annapolis Valley this year and last, have been put into a separate account from the General Account. The funding is being used to purchase a boat owned and operated by the L'sitkuk Fisheries. It is our goal to enter the water debt free so as not to put a burden on the Communities' monies. The only withdrawals taken from this account are to purchase safety equipment that helps build capacity on the boat and approximately 5% which goes back into the Community for Community Events such as the Harvester's Gathering and Winter Wonderland.

I have been meeting with Fisheries Minister Leblanc and we have plans to host a meeting in the New Year to discuss fisheries for Bear River as we continue to be an unsigned Band.

AQUACULTURE

With two job postings sent to the Community with no response, Councillor Carol Ann and the Band Administrator have taken on the extra work to keep this project moving forward. They have been working Fridays and some evenings to ensure it doesn't interfere with the time needed to work on regular Band Business. It is the hope of the Bear River First Nation to enter into Aquaculture while being stewards of the water and lands. Not only is our goal to enter Aquaculture for Economic

reasons but also for Research and Development reasons, including selling and using species to filtrate and clean up the messes that our waters have already encountered. This like fishing is a slow process but it is important to do it right and for it to have no negative impact on the environment. Meetings have been held regularly with ulnooweg, Biologists, Department of Fisheries (Saint Andrews by the Sea Biology Centre (SABS)), the Minister of Aquaculture, the Province and others. Some of the projects being worked on are:

- Oysters - a location has been identified and a second is in the works for a Research and Development Project. The hope is to eventually have Oysters as a Commercial Business for BRFN.
- Clam Beds - a research and development project with a trade's mission to a First Nation Company in British Columbia to learn how to clean and rejuvenate our beaches. This is strictly to help the environmental impacts on our beaches and rejuvenate the clam population.
- Other aquaculture species - research is being done to determine if there are other viable species that can be done through aquaculture environmentally friendly with a positive economic benefit to the Community.

We hope that once some of these projects move forward and more stable employment can be created so the Community will want to participate and apply for the positions.

OTHER INFORMATION

I have been speaking with our Regional Director, Financial Services Officer and others to keep the momentum going for a new Band Administration Building, New School and a Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services Facility in the Community. I will continue to move forward with this.

For all those with Housing Requests into the Chief and Council, please know we do take them seriously. A C&C Housing Meeting will be scheduled soon into the New Year to update the Long Term Housing Strategy. Once completed we will send updates to all those waiting. In the meantime we thank you for your patience.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

October 10

November 7

November 20

November 28

December 5

Regular Council Meetings are generally the first Tuesday of every month. If you would like to have an item added to the agenda please feel free to contact me or another Council Member before a scheduled meeting. Requests in writing with as much information as possible are best and will help speed the process. Please note, we have been very busy and sometimes we are unable to meet. Please note we do our best to reschedule.

OTHER MEETINGS

November 2 - Native Women's Association - NS - Band Office

November 10 - MK - Dartmouth

November 14 - MK - Dartmouth

November 21 - KMKNO/MFAC

November 22 & 23 - Child Symposium - Dartmouth

November 28 - Truro

November 29 - ulnooweg/KMKNO - Truro

November 30 - KMKNO - Truro

December 1 - MK BOD - Halifax

December 11 - CMM BOD - Truro

December 12 - Community Christmas Supper

December 13 - MFCS

December 14 - KMKNO - Truro

December 15 - Halifax Convention Centre Grand Opening - Halifax

December 16 - MK - Membertou

Please know when I am at meetings I am dealing with the higher levels of Government such as the Premier, Ministers and other Organizations such as KMKNO, MK, MFCS, CMM, Tripartite, DFO etc. I have and will continue to fight to protect our Environment, Resources, Future Generations, Fishing, Hunting, Roads, Schools, and Treaties etc. At times I have Dr. Sherry Pictou join me for some of my meetings as an advisor.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Again, I can be reached at the Band Office by email at carolbrfn@eastlink.ca.

You can also contact your other Council Members; Councilor Fred Robar-Harlow - brfnfred@eastlink.ca, Councilor Frank Meuse - frankbrfn@eastlink.ca, Councilor Carol Ann Potter - capbrfn@eastlink.ca.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2018!

Sincerely,


Chief Carol Dee Potter