

Volume I

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Muscowpetung Salteaux Nation Quarterly Newsletter

"Keeping Our People Informed"

December 2011



It is with great pride and honour that I present to you an over view of the office of the Chief of the Muscowpetung First Nation. It has certainly been an interesting and challenging time for the leadership in our First Nation in the past 18 months. We have been faced with the challenge of fulfilling and concluding the commitments made by the previous administration, specifically in the area of housing. We are currently waiting for the final step in our Flood Claim File, which is the survey issue related to 80B the hay grounds. Both of these files have been the major focus of the leadership of the band since April 2010 and both have forced us to use band funds to ensure that they are concluded in a timely fashion.

Since April 2010, we have been making every effort to ensure that the 24 homes (phase 4 ,5 & 6) that were allocated in the summer of 2009 are constructed. We have approval of 14 homes (phase 4 & 5) and they are presently being constructed, additionally we are still awaiting approval on the other 10 homes of phase 6. We have not yet received a ministerial loan guarantee on the 10 units to date.

Chief Todd Cappo's Message



"the flood cost us
nearly \$200, 000"

Once we get approval we will proceed in the bidding and construction processes of those units. The leadership has been committed to ensuring that these units become a reality for the members of Muscowpetung. In doing so, we have committed all our discretionary financial resources to the construction of the homes. This housing endeavor has created a strain on our ability to conduct day-to-day business of the band and has resulted in the laying off of several employees.

The Flood Claim file is near completion, we are currently awaiting the results of the IR 80 B survey, once that is concluded the technicians will input that information within the easement agreement. Our survey consultant Ron Eichel has indicated that the survey is undergoing an independent review. The surveying process is the step that has been the main factor in the delay of the information and ratification dates. The band was in receipt of the ratification money in January 2010 and that money was spent. Since that money has been spent Muscowpetung must use its own resources to fund the information and ratification steps. This has also created a strain on our planning and budgeting processes.

It must be stressed that these two files have required a lot of attention and financial resources to ensure that our members are properly taken care of and that we follow through on the commitments made in terms of housing. The flood claim file is one that we need to conclude to ensure that our band and its members have an opportunity to improve the quality of all our lives.

These are not the only issues that we been dealing with. In the spring of 2011 like many other areas in the province we too have had to deal with a flood that caused over a million dollars in damage to homes, community buildings, and infrastructure. This flood forced the leadership to cover the costs of sandbagging, emergency relocation of members, and the fixing of damaged roads. This flood cost us nearly \$200,000 and we have still not received reimbursement from either level of government. Efforts of getting the money reimbursed to the band is still a work in progress and we hope to realize some repayment resources in the near future. Like many other Indian Reserves that were impacted by flooding we are still waiting for positive intervention from both levels of Government. The government doesn't always move as quickly as we would like them too.

Since early this year I have been actively involved the Kinookimaw Beach Association. The Chiefs of the 7 bands have agreed to set aside the ownership issue and focus on the economic development side of the land. We have been fortunate to receive money from AANDC (formerly INAC) to hire a professional person to conduct feasibility studies to examine potential economic development ventures. This work is ongoing and the Chiefs meet on a monthly basis to address the governance structure and to help us understand the day-to-day operations of the leased lots and the golf course.

Chief Todd Cappo's Message



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"Efforts are being made on a constant basis to make sure that projects and initiatives are being done."

The leadership have also submitted an application for a new school to the department. That endeavor will take several years to realize and requires continuous lobbying efforts with the Minister of AANDC (Aboriginal and Northern Development Canada). Once the homes currently being built are completed we hope that the families make an effort to support our current school. I say this because the AANDC compile the enrollment numbers each year and monitor that number closely. It hurts our arguments when most of the children eligible to attend our on reserve school are actually attending a school situated off the reserve.

Over the past 18 months it has been challenging to maintain a consistent operation at all levels of the band. I want to acknowledge the managers of every department who have made a tremendous effort in keeping their departments operating and functioning to ensure that all programs and services have been delivered to the members on the reserve. It's the managers that have had the task of ensuring that our members are taken care of and I sincerely thank all of you. All managers will be soon attending financial management training with Cindy Egbert. This training is to ensure that each department head has a sound understanding of the finances and accounting processes.

The Band has recently been approved a major capital renovation to our school for \$250,000 and has received \$711,000 for repairs and maintenance to our roads. We currently have our Infrastructure and Capital Department working closing with the project manager in this endeavor. These 2 initiatives are vital in maintaining standard roads and help us to address deficiencies at the Muscowpetung Education Center.

In conclusion, I thank all the members of Muscowpetung and it is hoped that this newsletter will help you better understand what we have been doing in the past 18 months and we hope to continue this on a quarterly basis. Efforts are being made on a constant basis to make sure that projects and initiatives are being done. So if there are any issues that you would like to have addressed or require more information on please don't hesitate to contact me at the Band office 306.723.4747 or (mobile) 331-6800 or email me at toddcappo@gmail.com

Sincerely

Chief Todd Cappo



Happy Holiday Greetings

The band is currently getting ready to sign our \$30.6 million settlement and everyone is being kept busy with the planning. These past two years have been full of challenges, however we overcame the obstacles and continue to deliver our programming. We have successfully completed two years of summer student programs, adult education program, heavy equipment training and are in the process of renovating the school and road reconstruction. We continue to serve the Muscowpetung First Nation membership with continued openness. In closing happy holidays and a Very Happy New Year

Sincerely,

Marcella Poitras, B.Admin.

Director of Operations

Director of
Operations

Marcell Poitras



Lawyer Update

Dwayne Stonechild

Legal flood settlement update: The drafting and negotiation of the Flood settlement documents are complete. The last requirement before we can begin the ratification process is the completion of the Land Survey. This is near completion and is a land survey of the precise area the First Nation is proposing to designate to the Government to use for annual flooding. Essentially, this will legally authorize the government to use Muscowpetung lands identified in the survey, every spring to flood.

That is fundamentally the basis of this legal claim. It is a unique land claim in Canada, where Canada did not have legal authorization from Muscowpetung First Nation to flood approximately 1080 acres of reserve land when they built the 1942 Echo Lake dam structure. These acres were primarily hay lands that Muscowpetung used to fuel and support a livestock and horse economy. When the hay lands were destroyed by the annual floods caused by the dam structure, the First Nation was no longer able to support and feed their livestock operations. This gives you a simple overview of the basis of this claim.

What is unique about this claim is that it is not a common Indian land surrender claim. In this case, Muscowpetung First Nation will still own this land after the settlement is complete and has refused to ever surrender it. However, the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan need to use these lands on an annual basis during the spring to flood. Basically, as the snow melts and water from the West starts flowing down the Qu'Appelle river system, the Echo Lake Dam is managed so as to hold back enough water to fill Echo and Pasqua lakes. From the Government's perspective, this water management in turn continues to be extremely beneficial to cabin owners, business owners, land owners, recreational enthusiasts, tax revenue, the town, the RM, etc...

Through years of negotiation, this settlement recognizes the illegal trespass by the government on Muscowpetung lands; the destruction of Muscowpetung hay lands by the echo lake dam; the resulting impact the loss of hay had on the community and economic base of Muscowpetung; and the necessity for a compensation arrangement for the future use by the government, on a permanent annual basis, to flood 1080 acres of Muscowpetung lands to sustain lake water levels and manage the Qu'Appelle river system.

Band membership will be asked to approve this settlement package and legally authorize Chief and Council to execute these settlement documents on your behalf. We will need you to review, understand and approve the following documents ("the Settlement Package"):

- a) The Flood Claim Settlement Agreement and Schedules, between Muscowpetung and Canada;
- b) The Tripartite Agreement and Schedules (to Facilitate the Settlement Agreement), between Muscowpetung, Saskatchewan and Canada;
- c) The Designation Agreement, detailing the authorizations Muscowpetung First Nation is giving Canada to designate their lands for flooding purposes specifically described in the Easement;
- d) Easement / Instrument of Grant for Flooding Easement – is the document that legally authorizes the use of Muscowpetung lands for flooding purposes. This authorization will be given to Saskatchewan Watershed Authority.
- e) Schedule "A" to the Easement / Instrument of Grant for Flooding Easement is the precise legal description, land survey and map of the Muscowpetung land area comprising of the 1080 acres, that make up the Easement area. This is the survey and map we are currently waiting for to be completed;
- f) Easement Agreement for Flooding: details the strict terms governing the Easement for flooding of Muscowpetung lands in the Easement area;
- g) Muscowpetung First Nation Legacy Trust Agreement and Schedules: details the Trust terms on the expenditure and management of the settlement money. The Council has chosen a chartered bank to act as its corporate Trustee, to oversee investments, to professionally manage for long-term use and sustainability. The Trust Agreement is designed to preserve and grow the trust fund and to generate a sustainable annual income for the benefit of the First Nation. There will be an expert advisor, our trustee and myself at band information meetings to answer any questions you may have on this complex Trust document.

Lawyer Update

Dwayne Stonechild

If the survey of the Easement Lands can be approved by January 31, 2012, we are hopeful and planning to begin the Ratification process in February 2012, with a vote day in April 2012.

The ratification process is a 40-day process, where each voting member is mailed out the "Settlement Package". This is why it is very important your current mail address is with the band office. During this 40 days, there will be information meetings scheduled where the Muscowpetung Negotiation team, our Corporate Trustee, our financial advisor, our INAC electoral officer and myself will give presentations on the settlement and answer any questions or concerns you may have. Please assist us in anyway you can to inform members of when/where the information meetings will be held and encourage members to attend.

The dates for the information meetings will not be set until the surveys are complete and the settlement package initialed by the parties. Once set, the dates and times of all information meetings will be included in the mail out packages and mailed to your last known address. If you think this is an issue, please contact the band office to update your address, or email me at d.stonechild@shaw.ca and I will forward your revised address to the membership clerk. Please title and caption your email: MUSCOWPETUNG SETTLEMENT ADDRESS UPDATE.

The documents are overwhelming. We are here to assist you to understand them. We are preparing overviews and power point presentations that will help with understanding the principles of each document and the settlement in general. There will be professional technical advisors at the information meetings to answer your questions.

My sincere best wishes to you of safety, love and family in the upcoming holiday season; and to prosperity and peace in 2012. I hope to see you early in the New Year.

Sincerely,

Dwayne Stonechild

Lawyer for Muscowpetung Sauteaux First Nation

Stonechild & Racine Law Firm



Social Development

Byron Toto

Hello to all band members on and off reserve!

My name is Byron Toto and I have been the Income Assistance worker since May 26, 2010. When I first started as the income assistance worker I wanted to change our program to almost mirror Regina Social Services and for our clients to be more responsible for themselves and to help themselves instead of depending on the band to pay for everything through social development.

The program is changing as of April 1, 2012 ASEST (Active Support for Education & Training Strategy) where all 18 to 25 year olds will have to do job searches or be registered in school or training of some sort to be eligible for assistance on the reserve. All clients have been told about the changes.

The clients have been abiding by them and have been accepting the change. A few have went back to school and a few have found full time employment for themselves or through our employment coordinator. Which is the direction I would like to take the program into.

I would like to thank Muscowpetung Leadership, Our Elders and our membership for giving me the opportunity to work for our community.

THANK YOU!

Byron Toto

Income Assistance Worker



Health Report

Cindy McArthur

Beverley McIntrye

Brenda Poitras

Hand Washing:

Over the holidays there will be plenty of visiting one another!! Which can lead to bad colds, flu, and diarrhea. Lots of handwashing will prevent these from happening. This has been reviewed with MEC school kids.

Mould

Is there mould in your home or trying to prevent mould in your home???? Contact Barry Cappo (Bambi) for moisture bags while supplies last!!

Health Cards

IMPORTANT.....Please check for the Green sticker on your SASK HEALTH CARE CARD to ensure that it says RENEWED TO Dec 31, 2014. If you have not received your sticker in the mail PLEASE call 1-800-667-7551 immediately with your mailing address. Your new sticker must be on you card before January 1, 2012 or you will likely be turned down from your doctor.

Muscowpetung Prevention Program: (Qu'Appelle Child & Family Services)

- ❖ Youth meeting on December 6, 2011 @ 5:00pm at the Muscowpetung Health Center
- ❖ Budgeting workshop on December 8, 2011 @ 10.00am
- ❖ Women's Group on December 12, 2011 @ 2:00pm
- ❖ Self Care Workshop on December 15, 2011 @ 1:00pm

Sliding Party on December 22, 2011 from 2-5pm. *All parents must attend with their children*

All programs will be held at the Muscowpetung Health Centre



Reminders from Our Community Health Nurse:

Muscowpetung Going Green

Last Chance...

NOW AVAILABLE for all Muscowpetung's Going Green Smoke Free Homes! Your new replacement green (flood) light for your front doors are in! Please pick yours up from Chelsea at the Health Center ASAP. This will be the Final Batch to be issued for the campaign.

Flu Vaccines:

Flu vaccines are still available and recommended for ANYONE OVER 6 months old. Anyone getting a flu vaccine will be entered into a draw. Preschoolers will be in a separate draw. Draws will be held at the community Christmas Dinner on December 21, 2011.

Muscowpetung Christmas Dinners:

December 16, 2011

- ❖ MFN Staff Christmas Dinner

December 18, 2011

- ❖ Muscowpetung Urban Dinner at the Gathering Place from 4:00- 8:00pm

December 21, 2011

- ❖ MEC Christmas Concert @ 10:00am
- ❖ On reserve Community Dinner right after x-mas concert at 12 noon.
- ❖ Last Day of School & Work until January 4th & 5th

December 28 -29, 2011

- ❖ Muscowpetung First Nation 3rd Annual Powwow in Lebret, SK

