

SERPENT RIVER FIRST NATION

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SRFN Chief and Council Meeting
June 29, 2021
Zoom Meeting
Approved Minutes

Chair: Chief Brent Bissaillion
Council: Steven Baranyai, Earl Commanda, Kerri Commanda, Joey Jacobs, Shirley McLeod, Tillie McLeod, Michelle Owl, Miranda Pelletier, Jack Trudeau
Regrets: Marlene Essex, Steve Meawasige, Nicole Pelletier-Southwind
Director of Operations: Candace Martin
Recording Secretary: Candace Martin
Staff: Wilma Bissallion, General Manager SRFNEDC (until 7:56 p.m.); Tyler Gary, Communications Officer
Guests: Jennifer Simpson (Item 4. a); Quinn Meawasige (Item 4. b)

1) Call to Order/Opening Remarks:

-The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.
-Chief Bissaillion welcomed Council and community, thanked the Day Care for his Together Through It All t-shirt and expressed appreciation for pride month and excitement for the parade on June 30th
- Chief Bissaillion made the following opening statement:

Aanii Council and Community; Elders and Youth and Neighbours

I'd like to take a few moments to honour the children found across Canada by their First Nations and ask that their Spirits go home, rest and find peace. These may not be the last of the reclaimed children, but we wish to love and share compassion with all communities at this time.

I don't say we discovered because these children weren't lost or misplaced, but purposefully hidden, but now their truth will be heard. From 2008 - 2015, we told our stories, shared our pain and shone a light on what the Institutions known as Residential Schools had done to our communities. Indigenous peoples launched the Truth and Reconciliation, but Canadians ignored it. Volume 4 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is over 270 pages and contains a volume of information about Missing Children and Burials. The truth was written down, but it was ignored. It gives clear direction on what is needed to address the issue, and it flagged that the number of children is unknown. Unknown.

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Canadians ask; What can we do? Read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It is the path forward for YOU, as Canadians and inheritors of this legacy. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission did the work for you; it created a path for ALL Canadians to find a way to get over this Mountain. It gave you the answers, the horror and the stories to do something, but you never read it. You never listened to us back then, and now our children are making you listen. Their voices told through our spirits and Elders weren't heeded, and now they will be heard. Truth. Truth is needed before Reconciliation. Canada is afraid of the Truth.

Every citizen at this moment has a choice: one that will affect you, your family and your children. You know where to find the truth of Canada's past. History will ask you; you knew, but what did you do? Are you going to answer? I didn't personally do it. It was so long ago, or will you accept that the treatment of Indigenous Peoples, the apartheid reserve System, the forced indoctrination of children; the sterilizations; the kidnappings and the missing and murdered women and girls, as what they are; massive and dark stains on the very Soul of this country, that will never go away.

We are here because of what's happened to us: the good, the bad. The Anishinabek of the Serpent River is still here, despite what's been done. I am here because my Grandparents survived. I want every Canadian to realize that every single Indigenous person they may know, maybe a survivor, the children of survivors or their children. They may be all 3 of those.

I want to end today's message with a thought on Canada Day; we see the conversations around cancelling, not cancelling. It's custom in Anishinabek communities and Serpent River; to cancel events out of respect. Canada has been given thousands of reasons to mourn. However, instead, the backlash for just asking to reflect and cancel BBQs and Fireworks has been shocking. Many of the messages we've seen are aggressive and demeaning; it's a constant reminder that we are not wanted in your communities. We are not valued or respected as human beings. Many well-meaning Canadians will take every opportunity to share their racist stereotypes, problematic tropes, and more. We are tired of performing our trauma for you to learn and do better.

So, as Indigenous peoples all across this land, call out and ask for a pause. We are simply asking that you evaluate what you are proud of. What are you celebrating? Is it something you are proud of? Or is this a celebration of Power and Privilege? What message does this send to the Indigenous peoples in your lives?

I'm not asking for you to cancel your special day, but I am asking that you reflect and truly understand the past, how we got here, and whose land you are standing on.

We are here. We are not going away, and we must learn to live with each other.

2) Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: 2021-06-29-01	
That Chief and Council adopt the agenda as amended for the Chief and Council Meeting of June 29, 2021	
Moved by	Earl Commanda
Seconded by	Steven Baranyai
CARRIED	By Consensus
-Councilor Pelletier requested that community safety signage be added to the agenda (as item 11. d)	

3) Declaration of Conflict of Interest:

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None declared at this time

4) **Community Presentations:**

a) Community Member (Jennifer Simpson) Discussion Request

MOTION: 2021-06-29-02

That Chief and Council refer discussions with respect to options to address trespassing on reserve to the Bear Doodem

Moved by Earl Commanda

Seconded by Steven Baranyai

CARRIED By Consensus

-Presenter Jennifer Simpson provided an overview of a recent encounter with non-members accessing the water on reserve, whereby she did attempt to educate the trespassers', put barriers in place to discourage continued access and contacted authorities
-It was clarified that administration was increasing security measures including gates and additional signage; and that relationship building continues with the OPP including to have enforcement with respect to trespassing on reserve
-Given the nature of the discussion focused on security and protection of our land the item was referred to the Bear Doodem for additional consideration

b) Community Member (Quinn Meawasige) Discussion Request

MOTION: 2021-06-29-03

That Chief and Council direct administration to investigate forestry and logging plans on treaty land north of Elliot Lake

Moved by Miranda Pelletier

Seconded by Kerri Commanda

CARRIED By Consensus

-Presenter Quinn Meawasige provided an overview of where he and others are living on the land within treaty territory north of Elliot Lake, and that they have noticed new logging operations (road development) in the area, particularly near the head waters of the Serpent River
-Concern with protection of the land and water
-Council noted this presented an opportunity to review discussions with respect to legal person status for the Serpent River, there are now at least two case examples one being in Quebec

MOTION: 2021-06-29-04

That Chief and Council ask the Marten Doodem to explore obtaining legal person status for the Serpent River

Moved by Steven Baranyai

Seconded by Jack Trudeau

CARRIED By Consensus

5) **Approval of Previous Minutes:**

a) June 15, 2021

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-Deferred due to a technical error

6) **Business Arising from Minutes:**

7) **Reports:**

a) Chief's Report

-Chief Bissaillon provided a verbal report, providing an update on a Chief's Ceremony he had attended the evening before at the residential school grounds in Spanish with the Chiefs of Sagamok and Mississauga First Nations; good discussion around relationships and a path forward including what to do next in response to the residential school discoveries (driven by the First Nations, done in a good way and working together)
-Collaboration to continue and a press release being prepared

b) Director of Operations Report

MOTION: 2021-06-29-05

That Chief and Council accept the Director of Operations Report dated June 25, 2021

Moved by Miranda Pelletier

Seconded by Steven Baranyai

CARRIED By Consensus

-The Director of Operations presented her written report dated June 25, 2021 and answered questions from Council

c) Economic Development Report

MOTION: 2021-06-29-06

That Chief and Council acknowledge the Economic Development Report for May 2021

Moved by Steven Baranyai

Seconded by Shirley McLeod

CARRIED By Consensus

-The General Manager of SRFNEDC presented her written report for May 2021 and answered questions from Council
-The General Manager provided a verbal update on recent events including a failed septic bed requiring replacement and failed gas pumps for which they are awaiting a part to repair
-The General Manager confirmed that information sharing with Darien Resources will begin in July, and that Darien would like to meet with Chief and Council, likely in August

d) EOCG Report

MOTION: 2021-06-29-07

That Chief and Council acknowledge the EOCG Report dated June 29, 2021

Moved by Earl Commanda

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Seconded by	Tillie McLeod
CARRIED	By Consensus
- Chief Bissaillion read the written report dated June 29, 2021 and reminded the community to stay safe as the Delta variant is a concern and not everyone is vaccinated (consider the children)	

8) Doodem & Committee Minutes & Reports

a) Deer Doodem Minutes – May 17, 2021

MOTION: 2021-06-29-08	
That Chief and Council acknowledge the Deer Doodem Minutes of May 17, 2021	
Moved by	Tillie McLeod
Seconded by	Joey Jacobs
CARRIED	By Consensus

b) Deer Doodem Minutes – June 22, 2021

MOTION: 2021-06-29-09	
That Chief and Council acknowledge the Deer Doodem Minutes of June 22, 2021	
Moved by	Tillie McLeod
Seconded by	Kerri Commanda
CARRIED	By Consensus

9) Business Arising from Minutes and Reports

a) Membership Applications – Vote

MOTION: 2021-06-29-10	
That Chief and Council wishes to proceed with the membership adoption process for Michael Sher and that his name be added to the ballot for the membership vote taking place on July 27, 2021	
Moved by	Miranda Pelletier
Seconded by	Steven Baranyai
CARRIED	By Consensus

MOTION: 2021-06-29-11	
That Chief and Council wishes to proceed with the band adoption process for Carlene Wiitala and that her name be added to the ballot for the membership vote taking place on July 27, 2021	
Moved by	Miranda Pelletier
Seconded by	Tillie McLeod
CARRIED	By Consensus

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b) Membership Application

MOTION: 2021-06-29-12	
That Chief and Council approves the membership application for Daniel Ryan Pelletier	
Moved by	Earl Commanda
Seconded by	Shirley McLeod
CARRIED	By Consensus
-Membership vote not required as the applicant has two First Nation grandparents	

10) Standing Items

a) Safe House

-The alarm system is scheduled to be installed July 8 th ; current pilot project going well at this time

11) New Business

a) Membership Vote

MOTION: 2021-06-29-13	
That Chief and Council confirm the membership vote to take place on July 27, 2021 with Covid-19 safety protocols in place	
Moved by	Steven Baranyai
Seconded by	Tillie McLeod
CARRIED	By Consensus

b) First Nations Market Housing Fund Schedule – Custom Election Code

MOTION: 2021-06-29-14	
That Chief and Council approve the First Nations Market Housing Fund Schedule B-10, Phase 1 Custom Election Law with Mack Law Corp	
Moved by	Earl Commanda
Seconded by	Jack Trudeau
CARRIED	By Consensus

c) July 1, 2021

-Chief and Council had a discussion regarding traffic stops or slowdowns by community members on July 1 st (cancel Canada Day movement)
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-Council was in support of an informational movement, whereby information could be shared in conjunction with a traffic slowdown, encourage people to review the Truth and Reconciliation recommendations
 -Council was not in support of a five-hour highway shutdown and requested the focus remain on education
 -OPP aware and will provide safety support, media to be informed

d) Community Safety Signage

-Council recognized a need to review and increase community safety and no trespassing signage throughout due to concerns with the number of non-members on reserve and why
 -Signage is one aspect to start with - also need to consider additional lighting and enforcement mechanisms
 -Council also discussed the need for additional prevention strategies
 -Bear Doodem to continue discussion and consider options such as a Bear Clan patrol, neighborhood watch program, gated/secure community and by-law enforcement

12) Next Meeting Dates

a) C&C Duly Convened Meeting - Tuesday, July 13, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.

13) Adjournment:

MOTION: 2021-06-29-15	
That Chief and Council adjourn the Chief and Council Meeting of June 29, 2021 at 8:53 p.m.	
Moved by	Steven Baranyai
Seconded by	
CARRIED	By Consensus
-Chief Bissaillion reminded community about the first pride parade taking place June 30 th at 6:00pm and invited all to come out	

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