

SERPENT RIVER FIRST NATION

195 Village Road
Cutler ON, P0P 1B0



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SRFN Chief and Council Meeting
Tuesday, September 23, 2025
Approved Minutes

Chair: Wilma-Lee Johnston

Council: Kerri Commanda (zoom), Shirley McLeod, John (Jack) Trudeau, Steve Meawasige, Michelle Owl

Regrets: None at this time

Director of Operations (DOO): Tracey Seabrook

Staff: Leila Macumber, Director of Health and Wellness; Mathieu Gervais, Acting Director of Lands, Environment and Public Safety (zoom)

Community members in person: 15

Attendees via Zoom: 5

Recording Secretary: Madelaine O'Neill, POLEA

1) **Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Remarks:**

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| - The duly convened Chief and Council meeting of Tuesday, September 23, 2025 was called to order at 6:01pm |
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2) **Adoption of Agenda**

MOTION: 2025-09-23-01

That Chief and Council adopt the Agenda for the Chief and Council Meeting of Tuesday, September 23, 2025, as amended

Moved by	Steve Meawasige
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Seconded by	Shirley McLeod
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CARRIED	By Consensus
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| - Add item 7. a) Chief's Verbal Report |
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3) **Declaration of Conflict of Interest:**

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| - Councillor McLeod declared conflict on item 10. a) Certificate of Possession – Shirley McLeod |
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4) **Community Presentations**

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| - None at this time |
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5) **Approval of Previous Minutes**

a) **Tuesday, August 26, 2025**

Recording Secretary:	Madelaine O'Neill	Date Approved	2025-10-14
2025-09-23 APPROVED C&C MINUTES		Motion of Approval	2025-10-14-02

MOTION: 2025-09-23-02	
That Chief and Council approve the Council Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, August 26, 2025 as amended	
Moved by	Steve Meawasige
Seconded by	Michelle Owl
CARRIED	By Consensus
- Add seconder on item 7.a)	
- Add that Councillor Trudeau lost connection	

6) Business Arising from Minutes

a) Land Use for Business Development Request(s)

i) Bakery - Highway 17/Church Rd

- Council decided on Aug 26 to open a community comment period in response to a land use request made by Jesse Darby for the purpose of developing a business near Hwy 17 and Church Rd.
- Comments of support or opposition could be sent by email, phone, or in-person at the Lands department until September 16
- Fifteen (15) comments were received from community members
- Of the 15 comments received, all 15 were opposed to the development of the bakery.
- Common concerns included:
 - o The proposed location is in a residential area and would significantly impact nearby homes and driveways.
 - o Infrastructure risks, such as increased traffic over water line.
 - o The land is considered culturally and personally significant, especially to certain families.
 - o The trading post would be a more suitable location for such a business
- Request declined until such time that a better suited location can be identified

ii) Restaurant – Highway 17/Village Rd

- Council decided on Aug 26 to open a community comment period in response to a land use request made by Gerald Southwind for the purpose of developing a business near Hwy 17 and Village Rd.
- Comments of support or opposition could be sent by email, phone, or in-person at the Lands department until September 16
- Two (2) comments were received from community members
- Of the 2 comments received, 1 supported the development of the restaurant and 1 was opposed
- Support:
 - o The community member expressed strong support for the restaurant at the proposed location
- Opposed:
 - o The community member cited a lack of space in the location.
 - o Cited the increased risk to nearby homes due to increased pedestrian traffic. Described the potential risks posed by people attempting to access the business during off-hours or mistakenly associating the business with an adjacent home.
 - o Cited risks due to increased vehicular traffic and limited turn-around space.
 - o Cited impacts to wildlife in the area.
- Request declined until such time that a better suited location can be identified

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b) Draft Policy – Framework for External Partnerships

- The Framework for External Partnerships Draft Policy previously brought forward at the duly convened Chief and Council meeting of August 26, 2025 will be posted to the members’ portal and open to community feedback/comments for consideration until Friday, October 17, 2025

7) Reports

a) Chief’s Report

MOTION: 2025-09-23-03	
That Chief and Council approve the Chief’s Verbal Report as presented	
Moved by	Steve Meawasige
Seconded by	John (Jack) Trudeau
CARRIED	By Consensus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chief presented her verbal report, as follows: - “The beginning of the month started with the Robinson Huron Treaty Gathering in Baawaating, Sault Ste. Marie. I was joined by Council and participated in learning throughout the sessions. There was an Anishnaabemowin Revitalization presentation by Loretta Assiniwe, Martina Oswamick and Isadore Toulouse. They will also be coming to Serpent River to engage the Community on the language strategy. A date is yet to be determined. This past gathering marked the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty. Each Chief was presented a medallion for their Community to mark the event. While we were in Sault Ste. Marie Council also took the opportunity to have a site visit for the Sault Ste. Marie Urban Housing Project. At the time of the visit, RSG contracting was intending on completing the final foundations and getting the frames up prior to winter. We already have a number of inquiries and are setting up an email for the purpose of communicating with prospective tenants. Nogdawindamin continues to screen and interview possible candidates for the CEO position. Hopefully this will be finalized shortly. The North Shore Tribal Council had postponed their AGM and quarterly Board meeting as there was a death in the community of Mississauga First Nation. Those meetings will occur next week. September 22, North Shore Link Open House in Serpent River. The Waasmoowin Partnership did a Community engagement. Garden River has left the partnership however, Waasmoowin and Hydro One remain committed to dialogue with Garden River regarding the routing. Tonight there is a Trust engagement in Ottawa and tomorrow in Toronto. We hope that those residing in those areas will attend to learn more about the Trust Deed. Upcoming meetings September 24 – SRFN LP quarterly with Chief and Council September 25 – Nogdawindamin AGM and SRFN LP September 28/29 – Toronto RHTLF September 30 – National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, Spanish Naming Ceremony. The Chiefs and Councils of Sagamok, Serpent River and Mississaugi will be in attendance. October 1, 2– Trust talking circles Sault Ste Marie and Sudbury” 	

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8) Doodem & Committee Minutes & Reports

- None at this time

9) Standing Items

a) Audit Update

- Serpent River First Nation has begun preparations for the 2024/25 audit
- Work is underway though no completion date has been determined yet

b) Community Safety Update

- None at this time

10) New Business

a.) Certificate of Possession – Shirley McLeod

MOTION: 2025-09-23-04
That Chief and Council approved the issuance of a Certificate of Possession to Shirley McLeod for the property located at Lot #103, 79944 CLSR (#78 Gaaming Rd)

Moved by Steve Meawasige

Seconded by John (Jack) Trudeau

CARRIED By Consensus

- Shirley McLeod has applied for a CP on Lot #103, 79944 CLSR (#78 Gaaming Rd) and it remains outstanding as a historical issue
- Shirley originally applied for a CP for the property in 2012; the application was returned by ISC in October of 2024 requesting a map confirming the lot has road access
- A map showing the property is accessible has been created. A signed BCR is required for the application
- The tenant has fulfilled his/her rental housing agreement with option to purchase, as outlined in the agreement and Serpent River First Nation Housing Policies

b.) LEDSP Application – Cutler Acid Site Remediation

MOTION: 2025-09-23-05
That Chief and Council support the application to the Lands and Economic Development Services Program in the amount of \$651,177 to prepare for Phase 2 of the remediation of the former Cutler Acid Site

Moved by Shirley McLeod

Seconded by Kerri Commanda

CARRIED By Consensus

- Serpent River First Nation needs to submit a funding application to Indigenous Services Canada’s (ISC) Lands and Economic Development Services Program (LEDSP) for \$651,177.00 to prepare for Phase 2 of the remediation of the former Cutler Acid site

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- Phase 1 of the remediation project was undertaken in 2023 and 2024; soil and water were sampled, lime was applied to certain areas of the Cutler Acid site, and Zones 1 & 4 were excavated and backfilled to remove impacted soil
- Phase 2 of the remediation – the complete removal of all remaining impacted material across the entire site – is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2026 and take approximately 2 years
- To prepare for the Phase 2 work, tree clearing needs to take place (preferably during the winter to minimize impacts to migratory birds), contractors need to be pre-qualified for bidding, and administrative costs need to be accounted for, among others
- This funding application applies only to the pre-remediation work; additional funding will need to be secured ahead of the full-scale project, likely in early 2026

c.) CMHC Loan Renewal – 16 134 967 006

MOTION: 2025-09-23-06	
That Chief and Council approve the renewal of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) loan as proposed and authorize Administration to execute the required documentation	
Moved by	Steve Meawasige
Seconded by	Michelle Owl
CARRIED	By Consensus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CMHC has issued a renewal notice for the current loan (Account #16-134-967-006) - The current term of the loan is set to expire January 1, 2026 - As of the maturity date, the outstanding loan balance is approximately \$114,415.90 - The proposed renewal extends the loan term for 60 months (5 years), with a new maturity date of January 1, 2031 - Interest will be set at CMHC’s cost of funds plus administrative costs, compounded semi-annually, not in advance. The exact rate will be communicated by CMHC - Monthly payments will continue under the existing agreement until maturity - The renewal agreement specifies no right to prepay the loan in whole or in part during the term. - CMHC requires the following by November 15, 2025 (to avoid penalties or short-term renewal at higher rates): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Signed Loan Renewal Agreement o Most recent Fire Insurance Policy, listing CMHC as the first loss payee. - The loan remains in good standing; there are no defaults - Renewal ensures continuation of financing under manageable terms 	

d.) Serpent River First Nation Limited Partnership (SRFN LP) – Business Centre Mortgage

MOTION: 2025-09-23-07	
That Chief and Council accept approve the Serpent River First Nation Limited Partnership to proceed with early closing of the Business Centre mortgage at the cost of \$35,000	
Moved by	John (Jack) Trudeau
Seconded by	Kerri Commanda
CARRIED	By Consensus

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- This initiative aims to liquidate the outstanding mortgage balance. Although the mortgage is held by SRFN, payments are to be remitted by ECDEV/LP. As per the management agreement, all expenses are to be borne by the manager
- The final mortgage payment is scheduled for February 2026. Currently, monthly interest payments are being incurred, which could be avoided through early repayment
- Should the mortgage not be settled in advance, the final payment, amounting to approximately \$52,000, is due in February 2026. Prepaying the remaining balance at this time is projected to yield savings of approximately \$16,000 over a six-month period
- This initiative is primarily a cost-saving measure and is not anticipated to result in any adverse consequences
- The Serpent River First Nation Limited Partnership Board of Directors has made a significant decision to proactively address its financial obligations. A resolution has been passed to fully pay off the remaining balance of the mortgage ahead of its scheduled final payment date
- The early closing of the mortgage would result in substantial cost savings.
- The remainder of the mortgage for closing would be approximately \$35,000
- The budget includes the allocation of the business center mortgage

11) Community Questions and Answers

- Community member(s) inquired about the date of the Trust Referendum and the timeline for the current Council term. Chief explained that the Trust Referendum will be held on November 1, 2025 and that Council’s term concludes on October 30, 2025 with the General Election scheduled for November 21, 2025

12) Next Meeting Dates

- Tuesday, October 14, 2025

13) Adjournment

MOTION: 2025-09-23-08	
That Chief and Council adjourn the Chief and Council Meeting of, Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 7:06pm.	
Moved by	Steve Meawasige
Seconded by	
CARRIED	By Consensus

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