SERPENT RIVER FIRST NATION

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Duly Convened Chief and Council Meeting
Council Chambers, 195 Village Road, Cutler, ON P0P 1B0
Thursday, August 27, 2026
Approved Minutes

Chair: James Owl
Council: Erin Carne, Rebecca Csaszar, Angela Trudeau (zoom), Justin Urquhart, George Coughlin (zoom)
Regrets: Nicole Pelletier
Director of Operations (DOO): Natasha Becker
Staff: None at this time
Recording Secretary: Madelaine O'Neill, POLEA

1) Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Remarks:

- The duly convened Chief and Council meeting of Thursday, August 27, 2026 was called to order at 6:00 PM
- Opening prayer/smudge by Councillor Urquhart
- Chief acknowledged the start of the school year and upcoming hunting season; and that supports are available for students/parents as they return to school
- Series 3 of Trust Development Working Group (TDWG) engagement sessions "Reflecting & Refining the Trust" have concluded. Chief, whom attended all sessions, noted that they provided valuable insight and discussed the need for a clear path forward and continued communication, particularly regarding Chief and Council's role in the final decision-making process
- Chief noted that the Cutler Jays are actively fundraising through initiatives such as 50/50 draws and encouraged support for their efforts

2) Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: 2026-08-27-01 **That Chief and Council adopt the Agenda for the Council Meeting of Thursday, August 27, 2026 as presented**	
Moved by	Justin Urquhart
Seconded by	Rebecca Csaszar
CARRIED	By Consensus

3) Declaration of Conflict of Interest:

- Councillor Trudeau declared conflict on item 7 c) Nogdawindamin Board Summary Report – July 27, 2026

4) Community Presentations:

a) Robinson Huron Waawiindamaagewin (RHW)

- Following, Council's previous request for a presentation, RHW representatives attended the meeting and provided a general update on current collective work and initiatives across the Robinson Huron Treaty territory
- The presentation included updates on territorial boundaries and overlapping territories, assertion of authority and protection of jurisdiction, treaty research and use and occupancy mapping, economic development, and treaty engagement activities
- An update was also provided on the recent Building Bridges Forum, including discussions with environmental non-governmental organizations regarding land trusts, consultation, inherent rights and relationship-building
- RHW also provided updates on ongoing legal and research work, regional economic development capacity, and upcoming treaty engagement initiatives
- Council received the presentation for information purposes

5) Approval of Previous Minutes

a) Thursday, August 13, 2026

MOTION: 2026-08-27-02 **That Chief and Council approve the previous Council Meeting Minutes of Thursday, August 13, 2026 as presented**	
Moved by	Rebecca Csaszar
Seconded by	George Coughlin
CARRIED	By Consensus

6) Business Arising From Previous Minutes:

- None at this time

7) Reports:

a) Chief's Report

MOTION: 2026-08-27-03 **That Chief and Council approve the Chief's Report for the reporting period of July 7 - August 21, 2026 as presented**	
Moved by	Erin Carne
Seconded by	Rebecca Csaszar
CARRIED	By Consensus

- Chief provided an overview of the written report and highlighted ongoing work related to the Water Treatment Plant upgrades and the Cutler Acid Site Remediation Project
- An update was provided on Water Treatment Plant upgrade planning, including preparation of the Project Approval Request (PAR) for Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and receipt of consultant reports
- Regarding the Cutler Acid Site Remediation Project, Chief reported that the second invoicing period was complete, eight (8) Serpent River First Nation members continue to be employed on the project, and the second ISC funding transfer of approximately $15.5 million had been received into the SRFN Treasury Account

b) Director of Operations' Report

MOTION: 2026-08-27-04 That Chief and Council approve the Director of Operations' Report for the reporting period of August 10-21, 2026 as presented	
Moved by	Rebecca Csaszar
Seconded by	Justin Urquhart
CARRIED	By Consensus

- The Director of Operations provided an update on operational and administrative activities since the previous Council meeting. Updates included recruitment for the Executive Assistant to the Director of Operations position, continuity planning for Finance, improvements to financial reporting and organizational communications, development of centralized event reporting, and an internal IT review of organizational software, hardware, licensing, access and security gaps
- The Director also reported that work is ongoing to strengthen onboarding and off boarding processes and to continue development of organizational SOPs, which will be housed in SharePoint once completed
- The Director further advised that HR is rolling out BambooHR and Citation Canada training and related staff supports
- Externally, updates included participation in the North Shore Forest meeting regarding opposition to aerial spraying and consideration of alternatives such as brushing, as well as follow-up with CMHC on outstanding reporting
- Discussion followed regarding IT security and management of organizational devices, including access controls for SRFN-issued cell phones and potential risks associated with the use of personal devices for organizational business; which will be brought forward at the next Council meeting for further discussion

c) July 27, 2026 - Nogdawindamin Board Summary Report

MOTION: 2026-08-27-05 That Chief and Council approve the Nogdawindamin Board Summary Report for July 27, 2026 as presented	
Moved by	Rebecca Csaszar
Seconded by	George Coughlin
CARRIED	By Consensus

- Report received for information purposes
- Councillor Carne reviewed the July 27, 2026 Nogdawindamin Board Meeting Summary, highlighting recent changes to the Board's governance structure and the acquisition of the building at 624 Lake Street in Sault Ste. Marie
- Councillor Trudeau declared a conflict of interest regarding this item. As the Councillor was participating virtually, she remained connected to the meeting but did not participate in discussion

8) Doodem & Committee Minutes & Reports:

- None at this time

9) Standing Items:

a) Audit Update

- The DOO provided an update on the RHT Annuity Audit and explained that the auditors (BDO) are currently away; however, they have received the requested additions for the RHT Annuity Audit, including grouping

consultation costs for clear identification. The revisions could not be completed for this meeting but are expected to be complete in time for the next Council meeting
- For the 2025/26 Audit, BDO will be on-site next week to meet with the senior management team. Four (4) of five (5) outstanding items have been completed, with the remaining item requiring follow-up with the auditors
- The anticipated completion date of the 2025/26 Audit is late September 2026

b) Quarterly Meeting(s)

- Chief provided a brief update on the upcoming Quarterly Meeting taking place on September 19, 2026. Planning is underway and arrangements continue to progress

c) RHT/RHTLF (as arises)

- Chief provided an update on the Robinson Huron Treaty Go Forward Negotiations, noting that correspondence sent to the Premier and Prime Minister regarding the pause in go-forward annuity negotiations had been shared with Council. The correspondence followed earlier concerns regarding delays in negotiations and emphasized the importance of moving discussions forward

d) CHRT 41 Projects

- Chief provided an update following a meeting with CHRT 41 staff and leadership regarding the three (3) priority projects: Social Services Administration Building (PN –P073293), Community Round House (PN – P073245), Mount Lake Family Cultural Centre (PN – P73315)
- Design funding confirmations remain pending, and continued follow-up is underway with the Director General of FNCFS to emphasize the importance of advancing the projects and securing operating infrastructure

10) <u>New Business:</u>

a) SRFN Limited Partnership Matters

i) SRFN Trading Post Repairs - Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)

MOTION: 2026-08-27-06
That Chief and Council hereby officially endorse the Serpent River Trading Post Repairs project and authorize the necessary financial commitments to ensure the successful completion of the initiative

Moved by	Angela Trudeau
Seconded by	George Coughlin
CARRIED	By Consensus

- Council reviewed a briefing note regarding required capital repairs to the Serpent River Trading Post to address water infiltration, mold, and drainage and safety concerns
- The SRFN Limited Partnership has submitted a first-stage application to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) for a project valued at $224,000
- The funding application requires formal support from Serpent River First Nation
- The SRFN Limited Partnership will provide a $22,400 cash contribution and assume responsibility for any project cost overruns; with work anticipated to begin in October 2026 to minimize disruption to operations

ii) Lease Issue

MOTION: 2026-08-27-07

That Chief and Council acknowledge the communication and legal measures undertaken by the SRFN Limited Partnership regarding the expired Trading Post lease and support SRFN Limited Partnership proceeding with the removal of the structure and secure storage of any remaining tenant property, in accordance with legal advice	
Moved by	George Coughlin
Seconded by	Justin Urquhart
CARRIED	By Consensus
- Council reviewed a briefing note regarding an expired lease at the SRFN Trading Post. The former tenant's equipment, signage and other property remain on-site following the expiry of the final removal deadline, preventing planned site rehabilitation and restoration of food services - SRFN Limited Partnership advised that legal counsel has confirmed its authority to remove and securely store the remaining property and proceed with removal of the existing structure and site cleanup	

b) Request(s) for Support – Maamwesying Community Health Services

i) Indigenous Brain Health Assessment Bundle Research Project

MOTION: 2026-08-27-08

That Chief and Council That the Chief and Council of Serpent River First Nation formally supports and endorses participation in the above-noted research Project; and

The First Nation agrees, in principle, to collaborate with the research team in a manner that is community-led, voluntary, and based on ongoing informed consent, subject to mutually agreed-upon research agreements; and

Serpent River First Nation affirms that:
All research activities within the community will respect local protocols, customs, and governance structures; and

Any collection, use, storage, and sharing of data will comply with OCAP® principles and community-specific data governance requirements;

Serpent River First Nation supports the involvement of Elders, community members, and local health staff in the Project, as appropriate and determined by the community;

The Chief and Council authorize the designated community representative(s) to engage with the Project team to:

- **Participate in planning and implementation discussions;**
- **Review and contribute to community-specific research activities;**
- **Support knowledge sharing that benefits the community;**

This Resolution shall remain in effect for the duration of the Project, unless amended or rescinded by Chief and Council

Moved by	Rebecca Csaszar
Seconded by	Erin Carne
CARRIED	By Consensus

- Council reviewed briefing note from Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services regarding a request for a Band Council Resolution (BCR) supporting continued participation in the Indigenous Brain Health Assessment Bundle Research Project. The multi-year initiative focuses on developing an Indigenous-informed approach to brain health and dementia assessment, with community participation, Indigenous leadership and culturally appropriate research practices
- The project is progressing into community engagement and data collection, and participating First Nations were asked to confirm their continued support and participation

ii) Community-Based Indigenous Pediatric Therapy Services

MOTION: 2026-08-27-09

1. That Chief and Council of Serpent River First Nation fully supports the development and implementation of the Regional Community-Based Indigenous Children's School Therapy Service led by Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services.

2. Chief and Council support Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services in submitting and administering a Jordan's Principle Group Request on behalf of participating North Shore Tribal Council First Nations to expand pediatric rehabilitation services.

3. Chief and Council recognize Maamwesying as the regional lead agency responsible for coordinating the planning, implementation, administration, reporting, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement of the proposed regional pediatric rehabilitation initiative.

4. Serpent River First Nation supports participation in collaborative planning, community engagement, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement activities associated with the regional service model.

5. Chief and Council support collaboration between Maamwesying, local schools, Education Authorities, Jordan's Principle Coordinators, Community Health Representatives, Ontario Health partners, and other service providers to improve coordinated care for First Nations children and families.

6. Chief and Council support the incorporation of Indigenous languages, traditional teachings, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, cultural practices, and land-based learning opportunities within the delivery of pediatric rehabilitation services, consistent with community priorities and local protocols.

7. Chief and Council support appropriate information sharing, subject to informed consent and applicable privacy legislation, to facilitate coordinated care between families, schools, health providers, and community programs.

8. Chief and Council recognize that this regional initiative builds upon Maamwesying's existing Home and Community Support Services infrastructure, maximizing investments in frontline services while avoiding duplication of administrative systems.

Moved by	Rebecca Csaszar
Seconded by	Justin Urquhart
CARRIED	By Consensus

- Council reviewed a request from Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services for a Band Council Resolution supporting the development of a regional Community-Based Indigenous Children's School Therapy Service. The proposed service is intended to improve access to culturally safe pediatric rehabilitation services for First Nations children and youth, including occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, physiotherapy, developmental screening and school, home and community-based supports

- The BCR would also support Maamwesying in pursuing regional funding, including through Jordan's Principle, and establish support for a coordinated regional service model across participating First Nations

c) Ontario First Nations 2008 Limited Partnership (OFNLP) Funds – Interest-Earning Options

MOTION: 2026-08-27-10 **That Chief and Council move to approve recommendation #1 and transfer the total ($3M) of the OFNLP funds to the unused BMO Treasury account and start earning interest immediately**	
Moved by	Justin Urquhart
Seconded by	George Coughlin
CARRIED	By Consensus
- Council reviewed a briefing note regarding approximately $3 million in OFNLP funds currently held in a non-interest bearing Bank of Montreal (BMO) account - Options were presented to transfer the funds to an existing BMO treasury account to begin earning interest, place the funds in a locked-in GIC, or maintain the funds in the existing account - Discussion followed regarding the importance of maximizing interest earned on community funds, the available investment options and associated calculations. It was directed that a more detailed analysis of the OFNLP funds and investment options be brought forward, with clearer calculations and further recommendations for consideration	

11) Community Questions and Answers:

- Community member inquired whether any youth from Serpent River First Nation would be attending the 2026 Robinson Huron Treaty Gathering. It was explained that attempts had been made to identify interested youth, though no participants had been confirmed. Interested youth were encouraged to reach out

12) Next Meeting Date(s):

- Thursday, September 10, 2026

13) Adjournment:

MOTION: 2026-08-27-11 **That Chief and Council adjourn the Chief and Council Meeting of Thursday, August 13, 2026 at 8:24 PM**	
Moved by	Justin Urquhart
Seconded by	Erin Carne
CARRIED	By Consensus