



Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Glen Hare addresses the 2019 Governance Gathering in Sault Ste. Marie.

– Photo by Laura Barrios

‘There are no alternatives...beyond the status quo’, says Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief

By Cindy Males

ANISHINABEK NATION HEAD OFFICE – Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Glen Hare is looking forward to the upcoming citizen vote on the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement*, but he is doing so reflecting on the past.

“Some of our past leadership is not with us anymore. They’ve already started their Spirit Journeys. But I know that they’re with us,” says Grand Council Chief Hare. “This is all work that they started.”

The proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* is an agreement between the Anishinabek Nation, on behalf of its 40 member First Nations, and Canada that will formally recognize First Nations’ authority to pass their own laws in the area of leadership selection, citizenship, language and culture, and government management.

“The Government still has a fi-

duciary responsibility. That’s still there. But, the rest of what happens in our communities — our elections, citizenship— we, as Anishinaabe people, need to control it. We will own our communities from here forward, once we accept this Governance Agreement,” says Grand Council Chief Hare. “Especially the language. Nobody can teach us when it comes to language and culture. That belongs to us. The Creator gave us that.”

Grand Council Chief Hare says the proposed Agreement, for First Nations that ratify, will take them further out of the Indian Act. Many Anishinabek First Nations are already in a self-government agreement when it comes to Education. Of the 28 of the Anishinabek First Nations that have agreed to run a vote on the Governance Agreement, 20 are already in a self-government agreement with Canada and Ontario

for the education of their children. Coordinating the *Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement* and the proposed Governance Agreement, is part of a transition plan currently being developed.

In an open letter to Anishinabek Nation citizens released this summer, Grand Council Chief Hare said citizenship laws are a tremendous concern in First Nations.

“Many of our Anishinaabe children who are deemed ineligible for Indian Status are a part of our future generations. We must determine who belongs to our community, not Canada.”

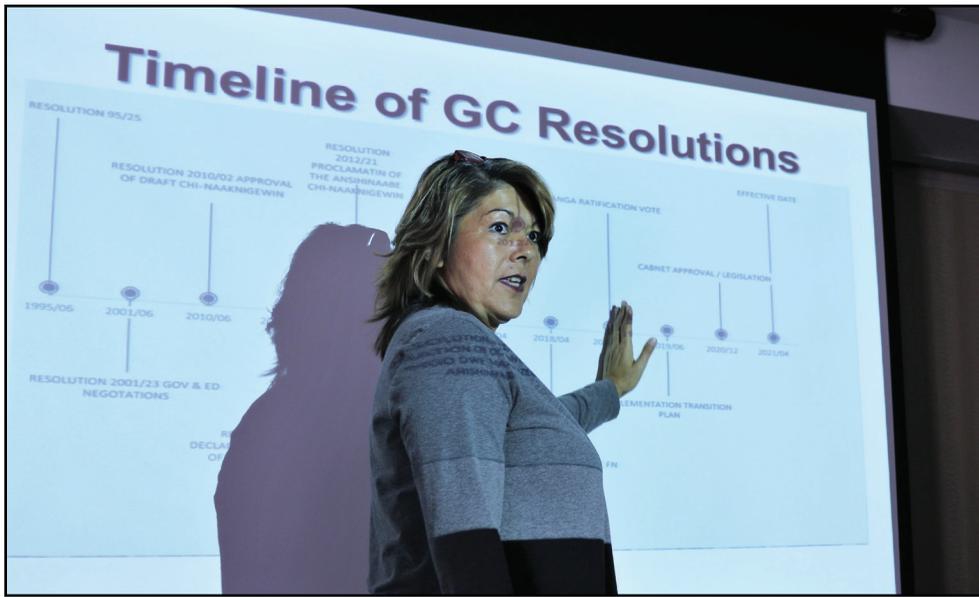
“Reclaiming and proudly embracing our Anishinaabe ideal and restoring our way of doing; our identity as a proud Anishinaabe is fundamental to our future,” he says. “We need to strengthen our cultural attachment to ensure a solid future of Anishinabek.”

“There are no other alternatives that anyone is advancing, beyond the status quo.”

The citizen vote on the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* is scheduled to run between February 1 and 29, 2020. Eligible Voters can cast their Ballot by electronic vote, or Mail-In Ballot, or in-person in their First Nation. Polling stations will be set up between February 25 and 29. A Ratification Vote Manager and a Ratification Committee are in place to oversee the vote. Some First Nations have already hired, or appointed, First Nation Ratification Officers.

Grand Council Chief Hare invokes the memory of past leaders who began the road to Anishinaabe governance more than 25 years ago.

“Get out and vote. Encourage your family and friends to come out and help us. This was their vision. Let’s finish it. Miigwech!”



Lisa Restoule, Lake Huron Regional Communications Coordinator and citizen of Dokis First Nation.

'The time is finally here to do what we have been saying we wanted for so long,' says Dokis citizen

By Lisa Restoule

DOKIS FIRST NATION— Over the last nine years, I have worked as the Anishinabek Nation Governance Administrative Assistant. I have worked with the Anishinabek Nation negotiation team which includes Martin Bayer, Governance Chief Negotiator; Fred Bellefeuille, Anishinabek Nation Legal Counsel; Jide Afolabi, Fiscal Relations Support Advisor; and many other dedicated individuals over the years. I could not be more proud to have been a part of this amazing team and this historic process.

In my role as assistant, I saw firsthand the negotiations, the hard work, the long hours, the traveling across the Anishinabek Nation, and the commitment the negotiation team put into this process. All of this done on behalf of the Anishinabek

Nation as directed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly and all for the betterment of the Anishinabek Nation. Although I was part of the negotiation team and currently am in the capacity of the Lake Huron Regional Communications Coordinator,

I am still a citizen of the Anishinabek Nation. My unique situation allowed me to ask questions and give opinions that, I believe, reflect those of the Anishinabek Nation citizens. Their voice, their concerns were with me and the negotiation team as the Governance Agreement evolved and shaped into what we have today.

The majority of the negotiation team has been made up of Anishinabek Nation citizens.

So as the late great Chief Joe Dokis once said, "Who but an Indian knows what's best for an Indian?"

This is very true in that who but Anishinaabe knows what's best for Anishinaabe?

This Agreement is one step forward in moving closer toward self-government and getting out of the *Indian Act*. Over my lifetime, I have heard and I have been taught that this is what Anishinaabe people wanted, to look after ourselves and to make our own decisions for our own people and to exercise our inherent rights—the rights we never gave up. Well, under this Agreement with Canada, Canada is recognizing our inherent right to make our own laws, meaning that they have been educated to understand that we never gave up our inherent right to govern. And Canada has agreed to the funding amount that was negotiated by our team to operate our First Nation governments.

This has been a long time coming and so many First Nation citizens have been involved in this process over the years, many of which have moved on to the Spirit World. But they are the ones who laid the ground work for the future. Well... that future is here. That future is NOW.

It is time for all Anishinabek Nation citizens to come together, to ask questions, to get informed and to vote. The time is finally here to do what we have been saying we wanted for so long, to look after ourselves.

The *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* is an opportunity to move forward. Now it is up to each and every one of us to have a say, to VOTE.

For more information, please visit the website: govenancevote.ca or call the toll-free number: 1-833-297-9850.

'We're 28 First Nations strong,' says Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief as self-government vote nears

By Cindy Males

LONDON — Anishinabek First Nation citizens have an important decision ahead of them when they vote on a self-government agreement with Canada this coming February. With a little less than two months to go before the vote, Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Glen Hare is encouraging citizens to vote 'yes'.

The vote on the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* is scheduled for February 1 to 29, 2020, for First Nations that have authorized a vote through Band Council Resolution (BCR). Last week, when Grand Council Chief Hare addressed the Anishinabek Nation Chiefs-in-Assembly in London, more than half of the 40 Anishinabek First Nations had

authorized a vote on the proposed Governance Agreement.

"We're 28 First Nations strong on this Agreement, and there are meetings happening as we speak yet in our communities."

Once the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* is ratified, the Government of Canada will formally recognize Anishinabek First Nation law-making power and authority over how their First Nations are governed.

The four parts of the Indian Act that deal with governance will no longer apply to the Anishinabek First Nations who ratify the proposed Agreement.

The First Nations will make their own decisions and laws about leadership selection, citizenship (E'Dbendaagzijig) government

operations, as well as how best to protect and promote Anishinaabe language and culture.

Anishinabek Nation staff are now preparing to help the First Nations who ratify the Governance Agreement transition from Indian Act governance.

"We have a plan, it's called a Transition Plan, and it's for the 13-month window after the vote," says Fred Bellefeuille, Anishinabek Nation Legal Counsel. "It's about developing the four template laws, making sure that the culture is integrated. We don't have to do everything overnight. We have high expectations of ourselves, but it doesn't all have to be done really quickly. We have to transition things."

The draft Transition Plan includes

First Nation representative working groups for the four law-making areas, the development of fiscal transfer arrangements and financial authorities, an implementation committee, and the development of a registry and repository of laws.

Of the Anishinabek First Nations who agreed to run a vote on the Governance Agreement, most are already in a self-government agreement with Canada and Ontario, respectively, for Anishinabek education. Part of the Transition Plan includes the coordination of the *Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement* and the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement*.

For more information, please visit: governancevote.ca or call toll-free 1-833-297-9850



Former Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee.

– Photo by Laura Barrios

Open letter to Anishinabek citizens

I offered to write this letter to the people in our First Nations on behalf of the Restoration of Jurisdiction Department about the *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* for the people in our First Nations.

You should know that I retired as Grand Council Chief a year ago June after working on First Nation issues for 46 years. I have been asked to participate in the community meetings explaining the Agreement. It is a process I first started hearing Chiefs and Councils talking about more than 40 years ago. Most times, they were complaining about the control the Indian Act has on our people from cradle to grave. Over two decades ago, the Chiefs directed the Anishinabek Nation to work on four areas as the foundation to restore governance and take back Jurisdiction. The four areas are Elections, Citizenship, Language and Culture, and the Management and Financial Operations of Government, which has to do with providing Band support services TO YOU.

I want to tell you upfront, if I did not believe in this I would not be championing this to you. I have not fought for our rights all of my adult life to take us down a treacherous path. Besides myself, I have family, fellow community members, and all of you, that I would never betray by promoting something if I did not believe would move us further down the path to taking more control of our lives.

I also say upfront that this does not have anything to do with Indian Affairs Inherent Right Framework

Policy, nor does it have any impact on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights protected by Section 35 of the Constitution, Aboriginal and Treaty Rights on their own, and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This was the INSPIRATION of Past and Present Leaders, the PERSPIRATION of working on this, and now the IMPLEMENTATION of the path forward.

Yes, there are those that believe this is not good for us. They are usually academics, consultants and critics—most of whom have never been on Band Council, never lived on a First Nation or ever been involved in operating anything on a First Nation. Armchair experts are everywhere, just look at social media. Yet you ask them what the alternatives or options are and they have no idea. On the other hand, it is hypocritical to criticize people that are trying to improve the way we do business, when they themselves have done nothing but maintain the status quo of Indian Act Bands. This Agreement does not get us totally out of the *Indian Act*. It merely lays the foundation to build on.

There has been negotiated a process called the Intergovernmental Forum, which is unique to the Anishinabek Nation. This Intergovernmental Forum will establish a new government-to-government relationship on matters of concern to our First Nations.

This Agreement does not do away with the Federal Fiduciary Obligation of the Crown, nor does it impact our taxation exemption.

What is now possible is the following:

1) Election reform: We can decide what the ideal length of the term of office is for Chief and Council. We can decide, if it is felt to be necessary, guidelines for who can run for office, to eliminate the nastiness of the election process, and determine the size of your government without any Indian Affairs involvement. I ask you: What bureaucrat dreamed up this nonsense of one Councillor for every 100 people, or developed a short two-year term to create instability in our Governments? That bureaucrat has likely never stepped foot on YOUR land.

2) Citizenship: If we continue to operate with the *Indian Act* registration system, we are helping the government to get rid of us. It is outright genocide to do this. Only we know who belongs to our First Nations. We need a healthy discussion of good old common sense to make the call as to who belongs. We know our people.

3) Language and Culture: It goes to the heart of our identity as Anishinabek people. I heard Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau say: “If you do not know your language and culture, you are just like ordinary Canadians.” Why do you think he fought so hard for the French language and culture?

4) Management and Financial Transparency and Accountability: This process provides an opportunity for YOU the citizens to help Councils set the priorities relevant to YOU. YOU need to be involved in looking

at the budgeting of YOUR money for those priorities and then to assess the outcomes. This will allow you to see what is being spent by whom and if it has been spent wisely on your priorities. This all means better results. ACCOUNTABILITY and TRANSPARENCY.

For the First Nations that approve the *Anishinabek Nation Fiscal Agreement*, it provides for substantially more money for governance activities, seven-times more funding than we receive now under the *Indian Act*, to support the law-making authorities that come with the Governance Agreement. It will be an annual increase and the Anishinabek Nation Government will not keep any of it.

These opportunities only come along rarely, where we can change things. If not, we can't complain about outside control for another 152 years of the Canadian Government in our face. Beware the Trump-style attitude that is seeping northward. Sadly, not all of our citizens will have a say on this Governance Agreement as their First Nations leadership have not submitted a Band Council Resolution allowing a vote on the Governance Agreement. But, for those of us who do have the opportunity to change our future, we need to act now by supporting this governance process. Do not expect outside Governments to do it for YOU. YOU make the choice.

Miigwetch,


Patrick Wedaseh Madahbee

‘The voice of the people is what I carry’

By Cindy Males

SUDBURY – Michipicoten First Nation Gimaa Kwe Patricia Tangie believes Anishinabek First Nations must work together if they are to remain strong and independent communities.

“We see that with other cultures all over Canada,” she says. “But we as First Nations, we still have a lot of the residential school and government policies and laws that held us back. It’s difficult for us to go back to the way our ancestors intended us to be. And that was strong, independent people who could survive on their own and survive in a group. We have a lot to learn to get back to that place in time.”

Gimaa Kwe Tangie believes the laws set out in the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement could work towards creating strong First Nation governments “if we have a strong plan”.

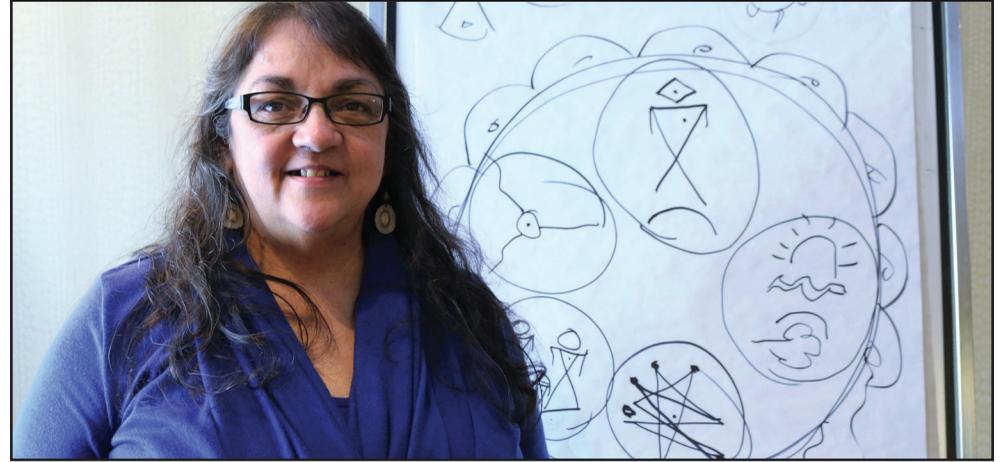
“The citizenship, language and

culture, elections and First Nations government management, these are critical pieces that we as First Nations need to re-learn. It’s really sad when we see a lot of our people are not fluent in the language anymore. We don’t often understand what the culture is. And, it’s hard to be a good government when you don’t know those basic things.”

She was unsure about the proposed Governance Agreement, at first.

“I see the need for the Governance Agreement. I understand the reason we have to come together and we have to be united. But, I am still struggling with some of that colonial mentality. I have to see ourselves as a Nation, not First Nations but the Ojibway Nation, the Anishinabek Nation. And, I work hard to do that,” she explains.

“It will be the people that will make the decision, whether or not Michipicoten is really involved in the Governance Agreement. What we have to help our citizens understand



Michipicoten First Nation Gimaa Kwe Patricia Tangie at a Governance Working Group meeting in Sault Ste. Marie, 2018.
– Photo by Laura Barrios

is they’re the actual leaders. We are here to serve them. Me in particular as the Chief, it’s my responsibility to make sure that the voice of the people is what I carry.”

“I never lived on a reserve when I was growing up. Our house was the ‘off-reserve reserve’. People used to come from all directions on the train and come to Chapleau. The language was so vibrant. I loved it because you could hear people laughing every time they spoke. I would sit there and I would listen to them,” recalls Gimaa Kwe Tangie.

“I’d ask my Dad to teach me how to speak the language. He never wanted to because he had a really difficult life being who he was, an Anishinaabe man. He didn’t want that for his children. He didn’t want

us to be ridiculed and to have the racist comments put towards us. I believe if he would have known at the time what the alternative was and what it would bring, he would have taught us the language.”

Her childhood experience has helped lead Gimaa Kwe Tangie to focus on laws to strengthen language and culture as one of her priorities moving forward.

“I think that is absolutely primary,” she says. “I have 1,200 citizens who have to reclaim their voice because of the residential school system and the government policies and laws — their voices were very stifled for a lot of years. Now it’s helping them to realize this is your voice and you have every opportunity and responsibility to speak it.”

‘Our governance is our way of life,’ says Anishinabek Nation Kwe-Wuk Council Member, Marina Plain

By Cindy Males

AAMJIWNAANG FIRST NATION – As a member of the Anishinabek Nation Kwe-wuk Advisory Council, Marina Plain is looking forward to the upcoming citizen vote on the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* and what it could mean to the betterment of Anishinabek Nation leaders and citizens.

The vote period is scheduled for February 1-29, 2020. So far, 28 Anishinabek First Nations have signalled their intention to run a vote in their community.

“Our governance is our way of life and to strengthen and reinforce commitments for the work we do is imperative,” Plain says. “The Governance Agreement has been reviewed by the expertise of the Anishinabek Nation Leadership, Restoration of Jurisdiction staff, Leadership Councils and the Legal Team. I believe in the Anishinabek Nation and all the great work that everybody does. I believe in the idea of all of us being One Anishinabek Family. I’m happy to be part of

such a supportive and knowledgeable community.”

Ngo Dwe Waangizid translated into English is “One Anishinaabe Family”. It is included as the preamble to the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement*. The Agreement is the result of more than two decades of negotiations between the Anishinabek Nation on behalf of its 40 First Nations, and Canada. Once the Agreement is ratified, the Government of Canada will formally recognize the law-making powers and authority of Anishinabek First Nations who vote in favour of it in the areas of the preservation of language and culture, who their citizens are, how they elect their leaders, and how their First Nations are managed. First Nations who vote in favour will be removed from the Indian Act governance in those areas.

“It is my view that all pillars are interdependent and equally important to bring the members to a place we should be, in front, leading the way while we assist each other in the best possible way,” says Plain. “In my view, the broad focus of the



Anishinabek Nation Kwe-Wuk Advisory Council member Marina Plain at the 2019 Anishinabek Nation Fall Assembly in London.
– Photo by Laura Barrios

Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement is a collective approach to advancing our nations. The method seems to be focused on Anishinabek principles, unity and progress.”

Plain looks forward to what is possible once the proposed Governance Agreement is ratified.

“Creating our own laws and the resources to effectively administer them,” she says.

Anishinabek Nation leaders past and present have stated they want-

ed to get out of the Indian Act. Plain believes it is important to honour those leaders.

“If you believe in the work of our ancestors and the commitments they have made to advance us this far, please vote!”

Marina Plain responded to the questions for this story as a member of the Anishinabek Nation Kwe-wuk Advisory Council. She is also a citizen and councillor in Aamjiwnaang First Nation.

Seeing beyond the *Indian Act* through self-governance

Notes for an address by Lance Copegog, Beausoleil First Nation Anishinabek Nation Governance Gathering July 30th, 2019

Good afternoon, youth, Elders, leadership, delegates and community members, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for that very kind introduction. I certainly acknowledge the sacred items in this room.

Noodin-e-giigidood n'dizhinikaaz. Mkwa n'dodem. Chimnissing n'donjiba. Anishinabe nini n'dow.

My name is Lance Copegog. I am the Anishinabek Nation's Youth Representative for the Southeastern Region, serving the communities of Beausoleil, Rama, Georgina, among others. I currently sit as a member of the Ontario First Nations Young Peoples Council. It has also been my honour to have served as the Deputy Youth Chief of the Beausoleil First Nation Youth Council.

For the past number of years, I have worked alongside Quinn, Pierre, and many of you in this room. It has been a great privilege to represent you – the youth of the Anishinabek Nation – at the provincial level with the Chiefs of Ontario and the national level with the Assembly of First Nations. I am looking forward to learning more about the needs of your community and how I can better amplify your views at these different tables.

I would like to begin by thanking our hosts, Batchewana and Garden River First Nations, for welcoming us to Sault Ste. Marie this week. I want to affirm that the land on which we are gathered is Anishinabe territory.

It is a great privilege to have been invited to speak on governance today.

When the European settlers first arrived, they imposed their interpretation of the law on our pre-existing legal traditions. They brought with them their institutions and proceeded to colonize our people. At the same time, they did not recognize that we already had our own laws, systems of governance, and institutions. Despite our treaties and the two-row Wampum belt, over time, Western legal traditions and the dominance of settler society overpowered our own systems of governance.

By the end of the 19th century, we had been moved onto reserves and governed, in large part, by the federal government. The *Indian Act* solidified the government's role in the lives of our people, and still affects us to this day.

There isn't anyone in this room who doesn't see the *Indian Act* for what it is – a patriarchal, colonial document that has no place within the lives of Indigenous people. But for some, the

idea of repealing the *Indian Act* is a daunting – and often frightening – concept.

Some people associate the *Indian Act* with guaranteeing the rights of our communities, that it is a modern legal tradition that must be protected in this country. Many of our nations, particularly those that suffer with severe socio-economic issues, are dependent on the *Indian Act* for the survival of their communities. This is because Canada still has a fiduciary responsibility to our people.

In the late 1960s, Canada attempted to abolish the *Indian Act* in a proposal laid out in its White Paper. The proposal was to assimilate Indigenous people into mainstream Canadian society and to strip us of our identity as a distinct group. The White Paper had no plan beyond the *Indian Act* and no recognition of our right to self-determination. Our leaders of the day stood up accordingly and stopped the White Paper's plan.

Today, across the Anishinabek Nation, and indeed across the country, Indigenous communities are taking back control of our systems of governance. We are beginning to envision a world after the *Indian Act* – one where our people are free from its constraints.

That is why this *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement* is so vital.

Last week in my community of Beausoleil First Nation, we voted to ratify our custom Land Code. This means we have freed ourselves from certain aspects of the *Indian Act*, especially as it relates to how we control and care for our own territory.

In moving beyond the *Indian Act* and taking back control, I believe that our communities must take bold actions.

If we actually want to make transformative change – the change that is required – we must truly lead the way in building capacity in our nations and doing the hard work. This means taking a good look at the state of our communities and asking ourselves hard questions.

Bringing about transformative change will mean revitalizing our culture and language...

Ending the culture of dependency on the federal government through innovative economic development means...

Doing away with colonial laws, and writing our laws based on cultural beliefs and the needs of our people...

Taking back control of our institutions and systems of governance...

And finally, organizing ourselves in a manner that is consistent with our role as rights and title holders.

Ultimately, I believe that it is the youth that will do the hard work.



Anishinabek Nation youth representative for Southeast Region, Lance Copegog, gives his keynote speech at the Eshekenijig & Getzidjig Governance Gathering in Sault Ste. Marie on July 30, 2019.
– Photo by Laura Barrios

And we're seeing it already. Having served as a young leader in my community and in at different levels, and having worked alongside other young leaders – I can say with full and complete certainty that we are willing, ready, and able to move our communities forward.

Instead of allowing ourselves to be complacent, we are moving to bring about changes in our communities. Instead of being scared to venture into a world beyond the *Indian Act*, we are thinking of ways to create systems of governance that truly reflect who we are as Anishinabek.

Not only are the youth leaders of today demonstrating a generational shift, but we are demonstrating a complete shift in thinking.

We know what needs to be done. We know how to get to where we need to go. And most importantly, we have the solutions. We have the tools.

When we think of where we need to go – we look to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Report, and studies upon studies that have been done on our nations. Section 35 of Canada's Constitution is a full box of our rights. *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* sets a global standard for engagement with our people.

In Canada's own courts, we have won in case after case. The Tsilhqot'in case set a major legal precedent in this country – industry must consult with our people. Our challenge now is to translate the legislation that supports us, the court cases that affirm our rights, and our knowledge of our inherent rights and responsibilities into meaningful progress on the ground in our communities.

The work that we are already undertaking in our communities – whether it be moving out from under the *Indian Act* or undergoing other transformation processes – must accelerate. Each of our communities must come up with our own ways to improve our governance and make it our own. It is up to us to think outside of the box – or outside of our own Band Office.

Most importantly, our communities must overcome their fear of life beyond

the *Indian Act*. Another challenge that I see when moving beyond the *Indian Act* are those people who – in the name of protecting our rights – oppose any effort to move forward, even if that advancement means a better future for their community.

These are the people that foster fear and mistrust among our community members – pitting those who want a better future versus those that only use inflammatory rhetoric for their narrow-minded goals.

We must reject those that seek to stop our progress. So, I stress that unity – seeking to build consensus, bridging divides, and coming up with common solutions – will be a major component in the governance work that we are undertaking.

It is gatherings like these – where we have the opportunity to come together to share ideas – where that unity will be built. And it is gatherings like these that will build capacity among the youth to go back to our communities to do the hard work.

Our goal must be this – transforming *Indian Act* governance into our own governance. We must also ensure that our own governance is good governance. And it will be up to each individual nation to – mine included – determine the path forward – on our own terms.

But let us not forget – moving beyond the *Indian Act* is not the end in itself, but rather a means to an end. That end being more prosperous nations, where all of us are playing active roles in our systems of governance, with our people enjoying a better quality of life, and where our culture and language thrives. Let us not lose sight of this objective. While considerable work remains, I know that we are well on our way to realizing the vision of our ancestors – a world beyond the *Indian Act*.

I wish you all well in our deliberations over the next few days, and I hope that we will emerge with outcomes that can be implemented back home in our communities. I look forward to working with all of you, and I want you to know that I remain committed to doing the hard work.

Miigwech.



Fiscal Relations Support Advisor Jide' Afolabi updates Anishinabek Nation Chiefs-in-Assembly on the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement at the Grand Council Assembly in Chippewas of Georgina Island. — Photo by Laura Barrios

Fiscal offer released to Anishinabek First Nations in June, significant increase

By Cindy Males

CHIPPEWAS OF GEORGINA ISLAND FIRST NATION— Anishinabek Nation Chiefs attending the Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Assembly were provided with more information about the fiscal offer that will come with the draft *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement*.

The fiscal offer was released on June 4, 2019, at the Grand Council Assembly, and it is significant.

The fiscal offer includes a significant increase in the overall amount of governance funding received by member Anishinabek First Nations; this global amount will be about seven times higher than the existing governance funding under the *Indian Act*.

Each Chief learned of the amount their First Nation will receive if it ratifies the Governance Agreement.

Those amounts were not released publicly.

The *Anishinabek Nation Fiscal Agreement* goes along with the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement, a self-government agreement with Canada that recognizes law-making powers in four areas, including elections, citizenship, language and culture, and the operations of government.

“Everything you see here before us is to benefit our First Nation communities,” says Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Glen Hare.

There is one-time implementation

funding for First Nations to transition out of the *Indian Act* sections related to governance activities.

Over 25 Anishinabek First Nations have passed Band Council Resolutions (BCRs) authorizing and confirming a vote will be held by their citizens on the Governance Agreement.

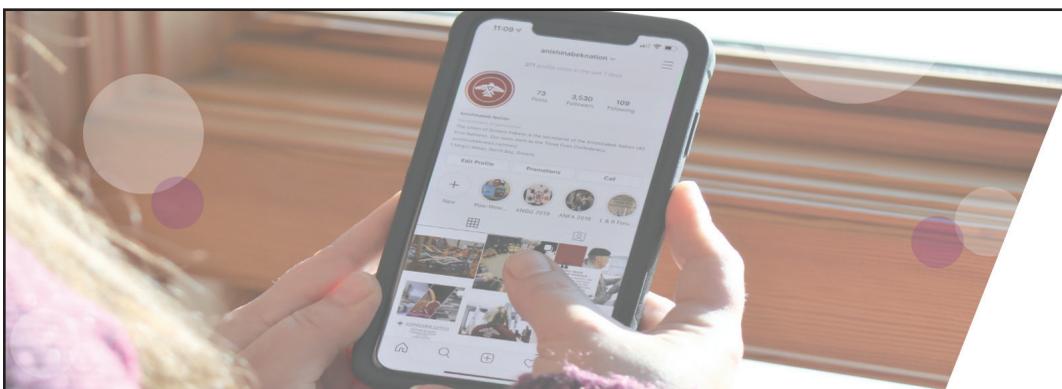
Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinabek was one of the first communities to pass a BCR, and Chief Melvin Hardy said, “This Governance Agreement gives me and my community something to at least start to gather some kind of honour for my First Nation, so we can start establishing the laws we need to establish.”

Nipissing First Nation Chief Scott McLeod says that the draft Agreement is a first step out of the *Indian Act*.

“We can’t go back. We can only move forward.”

“Do we stay in our familiar Indian Act existence or do we choose to strengthen and restore our own ways of governance?” says Grand Council Chief Hare. “We are now at the point in time where the choice must be made by our people.”

Anishinabek Nation eligible voters will vote February 1-29 on the proposed Governance Agreement through e-vote, mail-in ballot or in-person at a polling station.



**Stay informed. Stay connected.
Join the conversation.**



Anishinabek Nation



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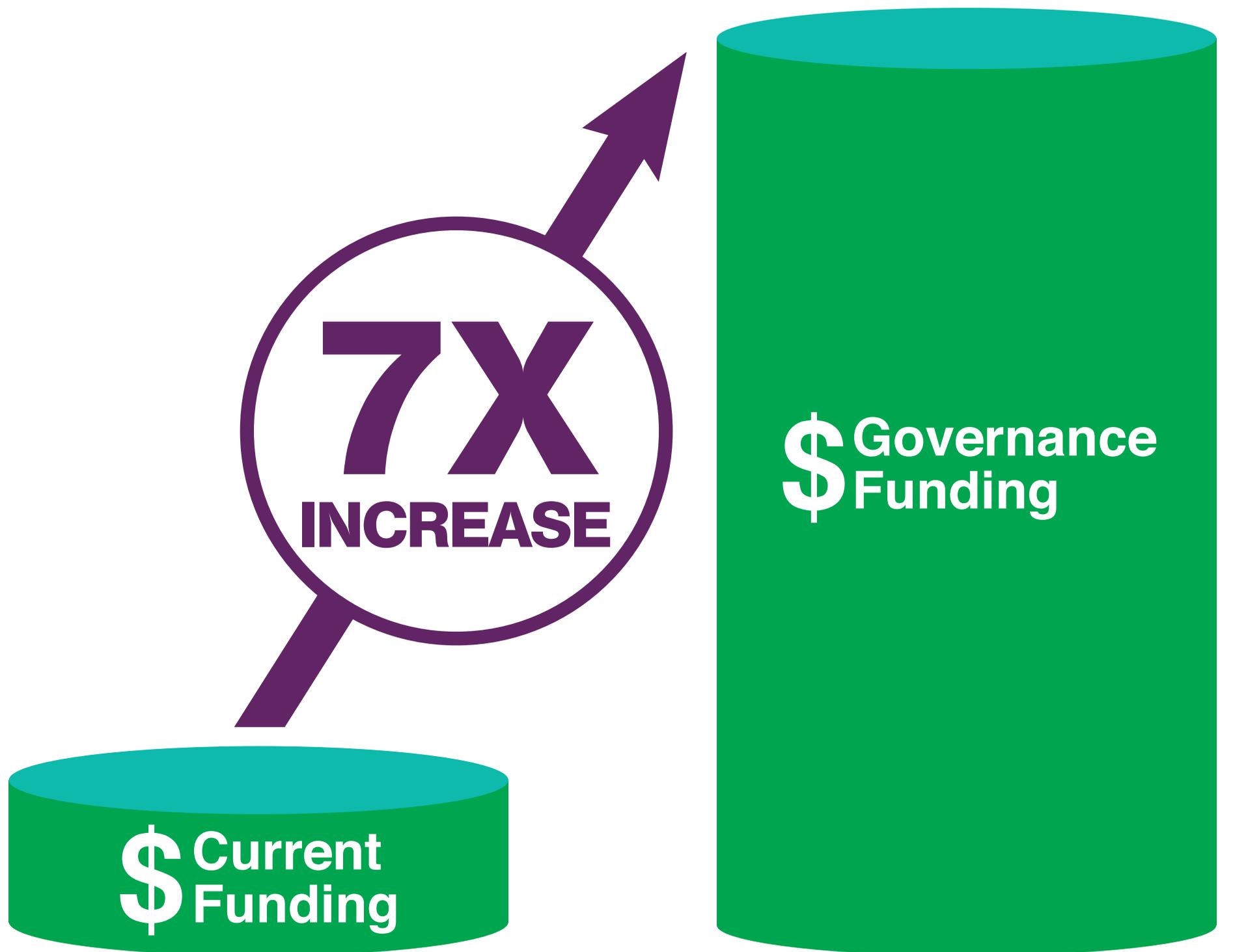
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Anishinabek Nation



Anishinabek Nation Fiscal Agreement
**FISCAL OFFER
FOR GOVERNANCE**



HOW TO VOTE

Vote Period
February 1-29, 2020

All Notices of Vote will be posted by January 2, 2020

WHO CAN VOTE?

- A person from a First Nation that has submitted a Band Council Resolution (BCR) authorizing a vote on the proposed *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement*
- A person who is on their First Nation's voters list
- A person who is, or will be, at least 18 years of age by February 29, 2020

HOW DO I VOTE?

There are three (3) voting options:

- **MAIL-IN:** First Nation Ratification Officer will send Mail-in Ballots to off-reserve Eligible Voters on or before January 2, 2020.
- **IN-PERSON:** Polling stations will be set up in the participating First Nations from February 25, 2020 to February 29, 2020, between the hours of 9:00 am and 8:00 pm. (Check with your First Nation Officer for exact dates in your First Nation)
- **ELECTRONIC VOTE:** As of February 1, 2020, Eligible Voters can log onto <https://onefeather.ca/nations/anishinabek> to receive instructions on how to vote and to initiate the electronic voting process.

Have your 10-digit Status Card Number (Registry Number), Date of Birth and personal e-mail ready.

For general voting information and inquiries please contact:

Joe Endanawas
Ratification Vote Manager
Anishinabek Nation
Phone: 705-497-9127 ext. 2329
Toll-free hotline: 1-833-297-9850
E-mail: joe.endanawas@anishinabek.ca

For local First Nation information please contact your First Nation Ratification Officer.

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