

CHIEF AND COUNCIL MEETING

Department Managers Presentation



Meeting Date: Friday, May 09, 2025.
Meeting Time: 10:00 AM.
Meeting Venue: Brunswick Office,
Prince George BC.

Meeting Minutes

Participants: Chief and Council.

- **Attendees In-Person:** Chief Dolleen Logan | Councilor Miranda Seymour | Councillor Kyle McIntosh | Councillor Dominic Frederick | Councillor Clayton Pountney | Councillor Tasheena Seymour | Councilor Jamie Bird | Councillor Doug Olson | Executive Director Towfiq Islam | Executive Assistant Shahid Naseer - minute taker.
- **Attendees online (via Teams):** Councillor Crystal Gibbs

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Actions Items of May 09, 2025, Council Meeting

Serial Number	Action to be taken by	Type	Action Details	Timeline
1	ED Towfiq Islam	Public	Executive Director Towfiq Islam to register Chief and Council for the ICBC event and circulate a calendar invitation accordingly.	ASAP
2	ED Towfiq Islam	Public	a) ED Towfiq Islam to email Kyanna Coe with the selected date (June 6, 2025) to confirm her availability. b) ED Towfiq Islam to send a meeting invite to all Council members for the training session, once confirmed. c) ED Towfiq Islam to prepare and send the Letter of Support to Les Thomas after it is signed by Chief and Council.	ASAP

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3	Zawad Abedin	Public	a) Zawad Abedin to submit a draft contract from SD-57 after proper refining to Chief and Council. b) Zawad to draft a formal proposal with terms of reference to establish a governance board for off reserve housing for council's review	No Timeline was proposed
4	Allan Stroet	Public	Allan Stroet to distribute the full presentation and accompanying summary to all council members.	ASAP

10:04 AM: Chair calls the meeting to order.

Opening of the Meeting

The meeting commenced with a welcome extended to the attendees.

Discussion on Invitation from ICBC

Executive Director Towfiq Islam apprised Chief Logan and Council of a formal invitation received from the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC). The correspondence

extends an invitation to Chief Logan, all members of Council, and the Executive Director to attend an official reception hosted by ICBC. The event is scheduled to occur at the Two Rivers Gallery, located at 725 Canada Games Way, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM on June-11-2025

The ICBC Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer have expressly conveyed their hope that Lheidli T'enneh Nation's leadership will be in attendance. ED Islam emphasized that attendance is not mandatory, but participation is warmly encouraged.

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Action Item: Executive Director Towfiq Islam to register Chief and Council for the ICBC event and circulate a calendar invitation accordingly.

10:08 AM:

Presentation-1: Administration & HR.

Presenter: ED Towfiq Islam.

Executive Director Islam opened his presentation with a formal acknowledgment of the opportunity to address the Chief and Council. He provided both personal and professional context in his presentation.

He outlined his employment trajectory within the Nation since 2018, beginning as an Accountant and subsequently advancing through several pivotal finance roles: Finance Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Director of Finance and Compliance.

Chief Dolleen Logan commended this achievement being one of the highest nationwide by FMB for the certification process, describing it as a significant milestone for the Nation.

Towfiq Islam was later appointed Deputy Executive Director in late 2022 and assumed the role of Acting Executive Director in September 2023. Following a recruitment process conducted by MNP, and a transparent, merit-based selection process involving all Council members, he was formally appointed Executive Director effective January 4, 2024.

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He subsequently enumerated his academic credentials:

- i. Master of Commerce in Accounting
- ii. Master of Commerce in Management
- iii. Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- iv. Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Management Accounting
- v. Completion of CGA Level 4
- vi. Certified Aboriginal Professional Administrator (conferred February 2025)

10:16 AM: Councillor Dominic Frederick Joined In-Person.

ED Towfiq Islam elaborated on his prior professional experiences with Multinational Companies, Airline Industries, Group companies in executive level—collectively comprising over two decades in financial leadership.

Upon his engagement with the Nation, he encountered significant noncompliance within the finance department. Faced with the contradiction of upholding Financial standards by past Finance Manager. Or withdrawing, he opted for the former, and credited Past Chief, Councillors Clayton Pountney and Chief Dolleen Logan for their critical support during that moment.

10:22 AM: Zawad Abedin Joined via Teams

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In 2024, the Nation secured \$68 million in long-term, low-interest financing, requiring no collateral beyond annual gaming revenues. This capital infusion, a direct benefit of FMB certification, underpins various economic development initiatives.

Policy Highlights Introduced:

- A) **Band Member Support Policy:** Established a fair and responsive emergency support system. Requests are first routed to relevant departments. If unmet, the policy allows for \$250 annual support per member, including a \$15,000 funeral benefit, office closure provisions, and compassionate outreach.
- B) **Procurement Policy:** Introduced authorization thresholds—\$3,000 for managers, \$10,000 for directors, \$50,000 for the Executive Director. Expenditures above these limits or outside the council-approved budget require explicit council approval. Preference is given to band-owned companies through a built-in bid discount system.
- C) **Trademark Policy:** Prevents unauthorized use of the band's logo and branding materials. Legal recourse will be taken against misuse unless the party is a verified partner.
- D) **Trade Support Policy:** A \$100,000 fund is set aside annually to support members pursuing technical or vocational education. It is activated only after educational and employment development departments have been consulted.
- E) **Housing Policy:** Developed over six months, this policy standardizes housing allocation and management, removing council from direct involvement. The housing manager now allocates units in accordance with transparent criteria. Monthly updates are provided to the council for their kind information.

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- F) **Health Policy:** Still in development, this policy aims to ensure compliance with provincial health regulations and confidentiality standards. Completion is expected within two months.

Organizational Reform: A new administrative structure, approved by Council, was delineated, wherein the Executive Director oversees key departments and roles, including:

1. Leadership & Oversight: **Executive Director (ED)** – Directly manages:
 - i. Director of Lands, Natural Resources, and Stewardship (Chelton) which in turn manages: Lands, Fisheries, and Natural Resources.
 - ii. Director of Engineering & Operations which in turn manages: Asset Management Analyst, Special Projects Manager, IT, Housing, Maintenance.
 - iii. Finance Manager
 - iv. HR Manager
 - v. Communications Manager
 - vi. **Director of Community Services (Recruitment in progress)** – who Will oversee: Education Manager, Family Support Manager, Health Manager, Job Development.
 - vii. Community Services (Interim Reporting): ED is currently managing Family Support Manager, Health Manager, Social Assistance Manager, Capacity & Development Officer.

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- viii. Corporate / Governance-Specific Appointments (By Council): **Council Direct Appointments:** Executive Director, Finance Manager and Executive Assistant.
- ix. **Tano Separation Initiative:** The Executive Director also emphasized the importance of structurally and operationally separating Tano from the band administration. With the support of the Board of Directors, terms of reference were drafted, and a Corporate Finance Manager was hired to oversee Tano's operations independently.

10:42 AM: Councillor Miranda Seymour Joined In-Person.

Chief Dolleen Logan noted forthcoming changes to the board structure of the Daycare Lodge.

ED Islam shared that Kyanna Coe from the First Nations Financial Management Board (FMB) had confirmed potential dates for Council governance training.

After mutual discussion, Council unanimously selected June 6, 2025, as the preferred date for the training, pending confirmation from FMB.

Action Item: ED Towfiq Islam to email Kyanna Coe with the selected date (June 6, 2025) to confirm her availability.

Action Item: ED Towfiq Islam to send a meeting invite to all Council members for the training session, once confirmed.

Business Request – Les Thomas (E-Bike/E-Scooter Rental)

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Executive Director Towfiq Islam informed Chief and Council of a formal request from Les Thomas, a former employee at Mount Milligan Mines (12 years), who is launching a family-run rental business offering E-Bikes, E-Scooters, and Mopeds in Prince George, located within the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation.

Mr. Thomas respectfully requested a Letter of Support from Chief and Council to operate his business within the territory and expressed his interest in building a long-term, respectful relationship with the Nation.

Council Decision:

After discussion, Chief and Council agreed to issue a Letter of Support for Les Thomas and his business venture.

Action item: ED Towfiq Islam to prepare and send the Letter of Support to Les Thomas after it is signed by Chief and Council.

10:57 AM: Presentation-1 Concluded.

10:58 AM: Councillor Jamie Bird Left the meeting.

10:58 AM – 11:07 AM:

Discussion and Health Break

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11:07 AM:

Presentation-2: Capital Projects & Asset Management

Presenter: Zawad Abedin.

Zawad Abedin commenced his presentation by expressing sincere gratitude to the Chief and Council for the opportunity to address them. He introduced his team and acknowledged the recent promotion of Md Ashikin, formerly the Project Coordinator, to the position of Housing Manager. He proceeded to deliver a comprehensive, high-level overview of the key infrastructure and community development projects under his team's purview.

The first item presented was the Wastewater System Project for the North Side of the reserve. Mr. Abedin reported that the project is now substantially complete, with the remaining task being the connection of individual residential units to the main system. This final phase is projected to conclude by July. To ensure uninterrupted access to basic amenities during this phase, affected residents will be temporarily relocated to hotel accommodations for one to two nights, with all associated costs covered by the project budget. While the current system is confined to the North Side, it has the capacity to service the South Side, contingent on the construction of a bridge — identified as the only feasible method of extension. It was further noted that the project remains both under budget and ahead of schedule, with an overall construction budget of approximately \$5.2 million. Full completion within budgetary constraints remains the expected outcome.

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Mr. Abedin then proceeded to provide an update on the Water System Upgrade, which targets both the North and South Sides of the reserve. Both existing systems are considerably outdated. The project is currently in the design phase, initiated following the completion of a feasibility study and the receipt of design funding in 2024. This phase is scheduled to conclude by August 2025, with construction expected to begin in the summer of 2026, pending the availability of capital and completion of the tendering process. The North Side will again be prioritized for infrastructure upgrades. Potential future integration with the South Side is being considered through either bridge construction or horizontal drilling. While the South Side will receive a temporary upgrade, no permanent infrastructure investments are planned at this time. Addressing concerns regarding the discoloration of water—attributed to manganese leaching from aging distribution lines—Mr. Abedin emphasized that water quality remains within safe health standards. Weekly tests for coliform bacteria and quarterly assessments for total dissolved solids and other minerals have consistently confirmed the potability of the water supply.

Attention then turned to the Fraser River Bridge Crossing initiative. Mr. Abedin described ongoing efforts to secure design funding through collaboration with multiple federal and provincial entities, including Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Infrastructure Canada, and relevant provincial ministries. A formal request for \$2 million in design funding was submitted in November 2024. While this request has cleared regional approval, it is currently pending authorization from ISC headquarters. Mr. Abedin highlighted that ISC's commitment is pivotal; without it, access to supplementary funding from other agencies will be significantly constrained. He emphasized the necessity of sustained political advocacy from the Council to secure ISC's endorsement.

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Regarding the Family Centre Project, Mr. Abedin informed the Council that a feasibility study had been finalized earlier in 2024, and an application for design funding was subsequently submitted under Jordan's Principle. The envisioned facility will incorporate office space for Children and Family Development, a multipurpose community gathering hall, a commercial kitchen, shower facilities, and protective services apartments. The gathering hall is designed to accommodate up to 500 individuals. During the presentation, visual schematics were shared, illustrating the spatial division for communal assembly, administrative functions, and residential quarters.

Councillor Dominic Frederick inquired about the proposed location for the Family Centre. Councillor Tasheena responded by identifying three potential sites on the North Side: adjacent to the health center, a field opposite 1002 Landooz Rd residence, and a site at the terminus of the road.

Councillor Frederick raised a subsequent concern regarding the adequacy of the facility's size considering a potential increase in population, citing current figures exceeding 800–900 individuals. Councillor Tasheena responded by explaining that the original design accommodated 250 individuals, later expanded to 500 based on input from previous Council members. Enhancements also included the addition of a second apartment and the inclusion of a commercial kitchen to support large-scale events. Mr. Abedin further clarified that while indoor seating is limited to 500, the facility's design allows for future expansion, particularly at the rear of the assembly hall, and the inclusion of outdoor accommodations for larger gatherings. However, any significant increase to the building's initial footprint could jeopardize the project's funding eligibility and approval status.

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11:25 AM: Md Ashikin joined the meeting In-Person.

Mr. Abedin provided an update on the Ancient Forest Enhancement Project. Initiated in 2020, the project experienced considerable delays and was adversely affected by inflation, which diminished the effective value of the original funding. Consequently, the project's scope has been revised to exclude previously planned elements such as trails and sweat lodges and now focuses solely on the construction of the Interpretive Centre and boardwalk infrastructure.

A construction management model is being utilized in lieu of a traditional general contracting agreement (CCDC2), due to the project's complexity and a lack of qualified responses during earlier procurement efforts. The work has been segmented into discrete tender packages—such as electrical, mechanical, and concrete works—to facilitate procurement. At present, the project has secured \$8.7 million in funding, though a shortfall of \$3 million remains. The project team has successfully obtained \$300,000 from the Northern Development Initiative Trust and has submitted additional funding applications to Tourism BC and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. Although early indications have been positive, no formal commitments have been secured. Mr. Abedin concluded by reiterating that addressing the existing funding gap remains an urgent and critical priority.

Chief Dolleen Logan courteously informed Mr. Zawad Abedin that the external partners from Colliers were present and awaiting their scheduled representation. She requested, with appreciation for his understanding, that the Colliers' presentation be delivered first, following which Mr. Abedin could resume and complete the remainder of his presentation.

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11:30 AM:

Presentation-3: Centre of Excellence

**External Presenters from colliers Via Teams: Khan Omar (Health Adviser),
Gray Darcy (Project Lead),
Pawlak Adam (Advisory Manager)**

The meeting commenced with a formal welcome extended by Chief Dolleen Logan, who graciously acknowledged the external presenters and facilitated a round of introductions among all attendees.

Darcy Gray initiated the formal proceedings by expressing sincere gratitude to the Chief and Council for their time, receptiveness, and commitment to advancing this important initiative. He conveyed the presentation team's intention to provide a succinct yet substantive briefing while reserving space for constructive dialogue. He opened by respectfully acknowledging the traditional and ancestral territories upon which the meeting participants reside and reaffirmed Colliers' commitment to reconciliation and community-centered development.

Mr. Gray contextualized the current initiative as a natural progression of the foundational work established in the "A Better Tomorrow" study. The present feasibility study is intended to build upon the insights and momentum generated by that previous initiative, with a concentrated focus on addressing critical service delivery gaps for children and youth through the development of a proposed Centre of Excellence (COE).

He further highlighted the exemplary leadership demonstrated by the First Nation community, Chief, Administration, and supporting partners, noting how exceptional it is to

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witness such cohesive and forward-thinking collaboration in the realm of regional and community development.

The principal aims of the project were outlined as follows:

- i. The establishment of an inclusive, non-stigmatizing, and culturally responsive service environment tailored to community-specific needs.
- ii. The identification and recommendation of transformative programs and services that address the broader regional context, extending beyond the geographic confines of Prince George.
- iii. The enhancement and scalability of existing service delivery models for children and youth.

The project, Mr. Gray emphasized, is envisioned as an inherently collaborative endeavor, spearheaded by Colliers Project Leaders in partnership with LTFN, and reporting directly to the Chief and Council. The core values guiding this initiative include transparency, accountability, cultural alignment, and the centering of community voices.

Adam Pawlak provided an in-depth overview of the study's four interrelated scopes:

- a) Service Program Planning – Anchored in engagement and community needs assessment.
- b) Facility and Building Assessment – A comprehensive analysis of current infrastructure and envisioning future physical requirements.
- c) Site Feasibility – A technical review of land viability, access to essential services, and developmental parameters.
- d) Final Reporting – An integrated and cohesive presentation of findings, structured for deliberation and refinement.

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Mr. Pawlak elaborated on the foundational role of Scope 1, particularly the Engagement and Needs Analysis Strategy, which is rooted in the prior findings of the “A Better Tomorrow” study. This component employs a tripartite engagement model:

- a) **Phase 1:** Individual and small-group virtual interviews aimed at cultivating relational depth and gathering preliminary insights.
- b) **Phase 2:** An in-person "World Café" style workshop designed to unify a spectrum of stakeholders through interactive, solutions-driven dialogue.
- c) **Phase 3 (Optional):** A broad-based online survey to further community input, contingent on earlier phase outcomes.

He explained that the World Café model is intentionally designed to dismantle silos among service providers, infrastructure stakeholders, and community actors, enabling co-creative and inclusive discourse to inform shared priorities.

The list of stakeholders identified thus far encompasses healthcare professionals, provincial ministry representatives, First Nations service organizations, community members, elders, youth collectives, educational institutions, and other emergent partners. Mr. Pawlak noted that the list remains adaptable to ensure inclusivity and responsiveness to evolving community dynamics.

He outlined the imminent next steps for Scope 1, which include the finalization of stakeholder identification, the preparation and dissemination of outreach correspondence under the Chief's authority, and the scheduling of Phase 1 interviews.

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Brief commentary was also offered on Scope 2 activities. Mr. Pawlak reported that a Request for Information (RFI) has already been disseminated regarding potential site locations, which will be prioritized in forthcoming phases.

Khan Omar underscored the critical need for close collaboration with the Chief and Council to refine the stakeholder framework. He advised that overlap with other concurrent projects be carefully mapped to ensure role clarity and to avoid redundancy or operational misalignment in the scope and mandate of the proposed Centre of Excellence.

In closing, Mr. Gray reiterated that this presentation served as an initial engagement touchpoint, and that the Colliers team is committed to sustained collaboration, iterative feedback, and deeper integration with community leadership throughout the project's lifecycle.

The meeting concluded with discussion of scheduling a follow-up session involving the full Council to facilitate additional updates and to formally initiate broader stakeholder engagement. All participants expressed appreciation for the dialogue, and newly elected Council members were congratulated on their appointments.

11:49 AM: **Presentation-3 Concluded.**

11:50 AM: **Presentation-2 Continued.**

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Zawad Abedin continued his detailed presentation on the Camp Trapping facility, informing Council that the site is now suitable for partial operational deployment following the implementation of immediate upgrades and renovations necessary for baseline functionality. Despite this progress, he emphasized that additional enhancements remain essential for full operational readiness. Mr. Abedin formally sought strategic guidance from Council regarding the governance and operational management framework for the facility.

He further noted that School District 57 had previously expressed interest in utilizing the Camp Trapping site for day-based experiential education programs, including canoeing, camping, and archery. These proposals had initially been brought forward to the former Council. Mr. Abedin also mentioned that exploratory discussions had taken place concerning potential collaboration with Northern Health to provide complementary programming, consistent with Council's broader vision for the site's future use.

In this context, Mr. Abedin formally posed the question to Council:

"May we proceed with School District 57 so they can begin executing their proposed activities starting in July?"

In response, Councillor Crystal Gibbs endorsed the proposal, highlighting the facility's current underutilization—occupied only by the on-site caretaker—and advocating for its activation in a manner that could yield immediate benefit to local youth. It was further reported that School District 57 is expected to appear on the subsequent Council agenda, having secured dedicated funding for improvements to the facility's water infrastructure.

Councillor Miranda Seymour raised a critical inquiry regarding liability, specifically asking:

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"What is the liability for having school children at the site, and what coverage is in place?"

Mr. Abedin responded that, should the partnership with School District 57 proceed, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be executed between the parties. The MOU would establish delineation of liability, under which:

- a. Commercial General Liability insurance would be apportioned according to which party is utilizing the facility at any given time.
- b. All activities facilitated by School District 57 would fall under the purview of their institutional insurance coverage.
- c. A comprehensive contractual agreement would outline all legal and operational provisions, including liability allocation, programming logistics, transportation funding, food service arrangements, and kitchen access protocols.

He added that a draft contract had already been received from School District 57, but no further action had been taken pending explicit Council direction. If authorized, the next procedural steps would involve forwarding the draft to legal counsel for review and engaging the community's insurance provider to conduct a thorough risk analysis.

Following this discussion, all Council members expressed conditional support for moving forward, unanimously affirming that the community must not bear liability for any student injuries that may occur. With this safeguard acknowledged, the Council appeared to reach a consensus in favor of proceeding. Mr. Abedin committed to refining the contractual draft in alignment with these stipulations and returning it to Council for formal review and ratification.

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Action Item: Zawad Abedin to submit a draft contract from SD-57 after proper refining to Chief and Council.

Mr. Abedin subsequently provided updates on several infrastructure and administrative initiatives currently underway:

- I. The wastewater system was reported to be nearing substantial completion, pending the finalization of critical connections.
- II. The design phase of the water system is projected for completion by the fall.
- III. An application for design funding for the Fraser River Bridge has been submitted. Mr. Abedin urged Council to continue its advocacy efforts to ensure the procurement of necessary financial support.
- IV. The Family Centre feasibility study has been concluded, with a corresponding funding application submitted for the design phase.
- V. The Ancient Forest Enhancement Project is scheduled to commence construction by the end of the current month.
- VI. The Camp Trapping facility is projected to achieve full operational status by March.

Additional topics addressed during the meeting included several key Operations and Maintenance (O&M) initiatives:

A new digital service request system has been implemented for tenants, supplemented by user instructions. This platform facilitates improved tracking of requests, response timelines, and overall service efficiency. While not all tenants may engage directly with the portal, staff will manually enter service requests submitted via phone, email, or text to ensure full system integration.

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A recycling program is under active development in partnership with Indigenous Services Canada and Recycling BC. Planned components of the initiative include:

- a. A centralized sorting facility utilizing a retrofitted tube van.
- b. The distribution of recycling bins and carts to individual households.
- c. A targeted rollout timeline set for the coming months.

The asset management system has undergone significant updates. Recent condition inspections have been incorporated, and a Level of Service document is being prepared for presentation to Council. This document is intended to define service delivery benchmarks—such as snow removal thresholds—and to foster consistency and transparency for residents, thereby reducing confusion and dissatisfaction.

IT services continue to be delivered through a hybrid staffing model that combines internal resources with external consultants. At present:

- a. Approximately 60% of day-to-day IT operations are outsourced.
- b. Around 80% of network infrastructure responsibilities are managed externally.
- c. Roughly 70% of service tickets are resolved by external consultants.

While it was noted that not all internal staff are currently utilizing the service ticket portal, adoption is being actively encouraged. The resulting data will be instrumental in assessing the comparative value of internal versus external IT resources and will guide future staffing and budgeting decisions.

The meeting concluded with an understanding that the Camp Trapping initiative and associated administrative projects are moving forward under clear strategic direction and oversight, with Council's full engagement and continued oversight.

12:00 PM: **Presentation-2 Concluded.**

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12:01 PM: Chief Dolleen Logan and Councillor Doug Olson left the meeting

12:05 PM:

Presentation-4: Housing

Presenter: Zawad Abedin & Md Ashikin.

The presentation was formally initiated by Md Ashikin, the newly appointed Infrastructure and Housing Manager, who commenced by introducing himself and delivering a thorough briefing on the current state, strategic direction, and ongoing initiatives of the Housing Department. He reported that the department has applied to the CME CEO Internship Program in pursuit of funding to support the hiring of a Housing Intern. The intern, targeted to be between 15 and 30 years of age, would be responsible for assisting with service requests and administrative documentation. The department is currently awaiting confirmation and intends to follow up accordingly.

Md. Ashikin proceeded to underscore the significance of the 2024 Housing Policy and Procedures Manual, which he described as the principal governance instrument underpinning departmental operations. This comprehensive policy delineates the operational structure, articulating clearly the roles and responsibilities of housing staff, the scoring metrics for applicant prioritization, rental processes, and protocols for maintenance and inspection. He reiterated the department's unwavering adherence to this document in its daily decision-making processes.

An illustrative case was provided concerning domestic pet ownership, which has emerged as a recurrent issue. The policy permits each household to own a limited number of pets, contingent upon a formal application and an upfront deposit. Furthermore, pet owners are held accountable for ensuring their animals do not disrupt the community. Section 7e of the manual prescribes the enforcement measures to be undertaken in cases of non-compliance.

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The overarching purpose of the policy is to uphold principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability in all housing-related determinations.

12:14 PM: Chief Dolleen Logan joined the meeting.

Subsequently, Ashikin offered a statistical overview of the housing assets currently under the department's stewardship. This includes 23 units situated on the north side, 17 units on the south side, 31 homes owned by the Band, and 9 properties held under mortgage with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The projected annual rental income is approximately \$176,000. Additionally, elder housing is subsidized by the Band in the amount of \$65,000, while CMHC contributes an estimated \$70,000 in subsidies. Conversely, the Band is obligated to remit approximately \$73,000 to CMHC annually. Nevertheless, Md. Ashikin noted that the department is contending with an outstanding rental arrears balance of approximately \$85,000. He articulated his personal target to reduce this figure to \$10,000 or less within the current fiscal year.

12:16 PM: Councillor Kyle McIntosh left the meeting.

To address arrears, the department has initiated a communication campaign directed at tenants to promote constructive dialogue and cooperation. Tenants are being offered alternative, flexible pathways to resolution, such as reasonable payment plans and engagement in employment opportunities tied to community projects, including the Ancient Forest Enhancement Project, which offers income-generating roles such as timber framing.

Further Md. Ashikin mentioned renovations constitute a major area of expenditure for the department. For the present fiscal year, ten housing units have been prioritized for comprehensive interior and exterior upgrades. These include enhancements to siding, doors, windows, painting, mechanical and electrical systems, flooring, and appliance replacements, with a projected budget allocation of \$800,000. Renovation work has commenced at 1030A T'ughus, a unit identified for immediate intervention during an extensive inspection of all reserve properties.

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Councillor Clayton Pountney inquired as to the frequent necessity of renovations and the preventative measures being instituted to curtail recurring deficiencies. Md. Ashikin responded by citing aging infrastructure and historically subpar workmanship as root causes. He assured that a higher standard of quality will guide contractor selection this year, emphasizing past issues such as faulty cabinet hinges which contributed to premature degradation.

Councillor Pountney further asked how the Housing Department manages cases where tenants persistently damage property. Md. Ashikin affirmed that the department employs a structured enforcement framework as codified in the housing policy, which mandates tenant accountability and outlines procedures for repeated infractions.

The current contractor selection process for renovations is being managed through a Request for Proposal (RFP), open to Band member contractors. Walkthroughs have been conducted to determine the scope of work, and proposals are expected from four contractors. Final decisions will be made in collaboration with leadership to ensure high standards of workmanship. This RFP process is also a prerequisite for accessing external funding sources for renovation projects.

12:23 PM: Councillor Doug Olson joined the meeting.

Councillor Domonic Frederick queried the credentials of those conducting housing inspections. Md. Ashikin explained that recent inspections were carried out internally by him Zawad, and the former housing manager. In response to follow-up questions, he clarified that while he is a civil engineer (EIT) with construction experience, he is not certified to seal architectural drawings. Zawad, however, holds a (PEng) designation and is qualified to approve the types of inspections being conducted, which primarily relate to renovations and utilities. He assured that certified third-party inspectors would be retained for the comprehensive inspections required every 3–5 years.

Looking toward future initiatives, Md. Ashikin introduced a major capital project—a proposed fourplex development on the north side of the reserve, projected to deliver twelve

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new residential units. The Housing Department is actively collaborating with Indigenous Services Canada and CMHC to secure an estimated \$8.2 million in funding. Environmental and geotechnical assessments are underway, with a submission deadline of May 16. Pending approval, construction will commence immediately.

In addition, he referenced the Housing Accelerator Fund, through which the community is set to receive \$738,000 in four installments. The first payment of approximately \$170,000 has already been received. However, subsequent planning has been paused due to federal caretaker period restrictions. Once lifted, further updates will be shared. The fund is intended to support housing research and community-led pilot projects that address localized needs.

Md. Ashikin also unveiled a forthcoming community recycling initiative, being developed in conjunction with Recycling BC and Indigenous Services Canada. This fully funded program will include vehicles and specialized equipment, such as hydraulic lift systems (“dumper trucks”). Although originally scheduled for early June, the launch has been deferred to July due to electoral timelines. A community dinner, also fully funded, will precede the launch to promote resident education around recycling practices.

An update was provided on the revitalized natural gas project for the south side of the community. After a period of inactivity, the initiative has been reactivated, with a recent planning meeting held with FortisBC. The department is currently compiling a complete mechanical inventory of the south-side housing units, to be submitted by the end of the month. FortisBC has committed to delivering a comprehensive cost estimate and subsidy proposal by late June. This will facilitate the presentation of a finalized plan to Council, outlining total project costs, FortisBC contributions, and any remaining funding shortfall.

Councillor Domonic Frederick inquired who would bear the operational cost of the natural gas. Chief Dolleen clarified that, consistent with current propane arrangements, tenants will be responsible for paying for their own natural gas usage, with considerations in place for individuals receiving social assistance.

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Councillor Frederick further inquired about the inclusion of solar energy in this initiative. Md. Ashikin noted that while clean energy grants are available and will be considered, the FortisBC initiative is exclusively focused on natural gas infrastructure at this stage.

Council members collectively expressed interest in exploring BC Hydro's battery programs and the acquisition of commercial-grade backup generators for medically vulnerable residents. The suggestion to investigate a large-scale, secure generator to serve the broader community was met with unanimous support and will be pursued further.

Md. Ashikin also shared details of FortisBC's infrastructure upgrade on the north side, scheduled between July 7 and July 11. The initiative involves replacing existing meters with advanced metering infrastructure capable of remote reading, leak detection, and shutoff—all at no cost to the Band. Residents will be notified prior to the installation.

Additionally, FortisBC will engage a mechanical contractor to assess the retrofit requirements necessary for conversion to natural gas. The utility will assist in identifying and securing applicable grants to address any budgetary deficits. Current propane expenditures for the south side are estimated at \$40,000 to \$45,000 annually; transitioning to natural gas is expected to reduce this to \$10,000–\$12,000—a potential 75% cost saving.

Progress was also reported on the wastewater system project, which is nearing completion. Lot servicing is scheduled to commence on May 20, and while initial work will avoid disruption, temporary service interruptions will occur during the final connection phase. These will be carefully managed in coordination with Council. Septic pump-outs are scheduled for the following week, pending favorable road conditions, with the more cost-effective of two received quotes selected for execution.

The meeting then focused on asset management enhancements. The administration is working to strengthen its systems by integrating Geographic Information Systems (GIS), allowing for more efficient identification and maintenance of infrastructure, including underground valves and septic systems. A full inventory of appliances is also being

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maintained, utilizing QR codes to facilitate warranty tracking—an important tool in both grant compliance and insurance processes.

Service requests and work orders are now systematically logged from initiation to completion, ensuring transparent tracking of expenditures, improving grant reporting, and supporting better budgeting and contractor accountability.

Zawad Abedin posed a proposal to Chief and Council to establish a governance board for off-reserve housing to enable access to BC Housing funds. The proposal received favorable feedback, and the administration committed to drafting a formal proposal with terms of reference for Council's review.

Action item: Zawad to draft a formal proposal with terms of reference to establish a governance board for off reserve housing for council's review.

The meeting concluded with a return to the Housing Accelerator Fund, where it was reported that CMHC has approved \$738,000 for research-driven activities, including a pilot modular housing initiative. Due to current contractual constraints, active implementation is delayed; further engagement will occur once permissible.

Councillor Miranda Seymour sought clarification on whether the pilot project involves actual construction. Md. Ashikin confirmed that following community engagement and design processes, modular housing construction will indeed proceed as part of the pilot initiative.

The presentation concluded with a collective reaffirmation of the commitment to sustainable development, infrastructure modernization, data-informed asset management, and the continued pursuit of funding to enhance housing services and community well-being

12:48 PM: **Presentation-4 Concluded.**

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12:49 PM – 01:02 PM:

Lunch Break

01:03 PM: It was decided by Chief and Council that all the forthcoming Chief and Council meetings will be held at BSO.

01:04 PM:

Presentation-5: Education

Presenter: Chelsey Hardy, Beverly Tiljoe

At the commencement of the session, Education Manager Chelsey Hardey extended her heartfelt gratitude to Chief and Council for the opportunity to present on behalf of the Education Department. She was joined by Education Assistant Beverly, a respected member of the Wet'suwet'en Nation, who also expressed her appreciation for the privilege of serving in her role over the past three years. Beverly warmly welcomed the newly appointed council members and acknowledged the presence and contributions of community members, underscoring the vital importance of collaborative engagement in advancing educational goals.

The Education Team, currently operating from the south side, provided a comprehensive update highlighting both the substantial workload being managed and notable strides made across multiple initiatives. A central development discussed was the Post-Secondary Partnership Program (PSP), which had initially encountered delays. However, a significant achievement was the successful acquisition of funding in late 2023. These funds are designated for the restructuring of three Early Childhood Education (ECE) courses—ECE 150: Development Practices, ECE 156: Care and Guidance, and ECE 172: Health and Wellness—in partnership with the College of New Caledonia (CNC). The course redesign will embed LTFN

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pedagogical principles. Upon completion, participants will become eligible for assistant licenses through the BC Early Childhood Education Registry.

Chelsey emphasized that this initiative not only seeks to infuse Indigenous knowledge systems into the ECE curriculum but also aspires to cultivate greater community interest and participation. Active engagement with community members is underway, and it is anticipated that the revamped courses will yield higher enrollment and broader involvement.

Further developments included the progression of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CNC, the terms of which were the focus of a constructive meeting involving Crystal and Dr. Jesse King. The MOU is expected to be finalized by June, with the aim of facilitating the enrollment of ten students in September—five in trades and five in academic streams. Six of these positions are currently ready for assignment. A remaining logistical challenge concerns CNC's housing guarantee, given that the application deadline is set for May 15. A revision of this policy will likely be required in future agreements.

In a concurrent advancement, an MOU with the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) is scheduled to accommodate four students beginning in September 2025. Moreover, the Local Education Agreement (LEA) with School District 57 is slated for renewal by July 1. The Education Department has recommended transitioning to the Ministry of Education's model LEA, which offers improved alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and features enhanced clarity and accessibility in both language and structure.

Chelsey acknowledged the dedicated efforts of the Education Committee, which includes members Laura Young, Jennifer Scott, Jamie Holden, Amber Brown, and Keilani Rose. This committee has played a pivotal role in reviewing existing post-secondary policies. Feedback has already been received from three committee members. On May 1, the committee approved sixteen new post-secondary applications. Additionally, eight students are currently confirmed to graduate, with the potential for that number to rise to eleven pending final academic assessments.

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Tutoring services, provided by Alexa on Tuesdays and Thursdays, have yielded positive results, particularly through integration into community events. This has led to increased student participation. Chelsey also announced the upcoming Education Celebration, scheduled for Saturday, June 28th, from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., which will honour the achievements of 24 Grade 12 graduates, 31 Grade 7 transition students, and 12 students advancing to Grade 1. Projections for the 2026 academic year suggest an additional cohort of 23 to 24 Grade 12 graduates.

Chelsey sought approval from Chief and Council to increase the number of graduation hoodies ordered, proposing an expansion from 100 to accommodate the full total of 186 students on file. The Chief responded affirmatively, granting approval for the request.

01:20 PM: Councillor Jamie Bird joined in-person

A matter of pressing concern was then raised regarding the persistent decline in student attendance, a trend significantly worsened in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite efforts such as implementing attendance incentives and collaborative work with school district officials, the issue remains prevalent across numerous Indigenous communities and is rooted in long-standing systemic inequities that predate the pandemic. Compounding this issue are various challenges experienced within individual households, including food insecurity, substance abuse, and lack of consistent daily routines. It was noted that some students attend school primarily to receive meals. In response to these pressing needs, the Education Department has absorbed the costs of a hot lunch program and has taken proactive measures by providing direct grocery support to affected students.

The meeting concluded with collective acknowledgments of the unwavering dedication and achievements of the education team. Commendation was directed toward both Beverly and Chelsey for their exceptional commitment to student success and community development. Their efforts continue to serve as a foundation for educational progress and cultural revitalization.

01:22 PM: **Presentation-5 Concluded.**

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01:23 PM: Zawad Abedin left the meeting.

01:25 PM:

Presentation-6: Finance

Presenter: Finance Manager Nasir Ahmed.

The meeting commenced with an introduction to the Finance Department. The Finance Manager formally introduced the structure and composition of the department, which comprises a team of three professionals. He currently holds the position of Finance Manager and is supported by Jamaica, serving as Finance Officer, and Constance Mekwunye, also serving in the capacity of Finance Officer.

The Finance Manager proceeded to provide an overview of his professional background, stating that he commenced his tenure with the Band in October 2021 and was subsequently appointed as Finance Manager in January 2024. His academic credentials include a master's degree in accounting, a bachelor's degree, and a Certified Management Finance (CMF) designation. He brings a cumulative experience of over 15 years in the fields of finance and accounting, having held a range of positions including Senior Accountant, and Finance Manager across diverse sectors such as manufacturing, electronics, and construction.

Jamaica, appointed in June 2024 as an Accountant, was next introduced. She holds a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation from the Philippines and a Certified National Accountant (CNA) credential from the United States. With a professional background spanning seven years, she has held key roles such as School Controller at an automotive dealership and contributed her expertise within the real estate sector in the Philippines.

Constance Mekwunye, appointed as Finance Officer in March 2023, was also formally introduced. Her academic qualifications include a Post-Degree Diploma in Accounting and a Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Studies. She brings four years of professional

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experience, having worked with organizations such as the Prince George Public Library, Eagle Nest Community and Aboriginal Services, and Thompson Community Services.

Following these introductions, the Finance Manager delivered a comprehensive analysis of the Band's financial performance over the past five fiscal years. Key financial figures were presented as follows:

1. **2020–2021** : Revenue – \$22.01M ; Expenditure – \$12.664M ; Surplus – \$9.37M
2. **2021–2022** : Revenue – \$18.47M ; Expenditure – \$14.43M ; Surplus – \$4.04M
3. **2022–2023** : Revenue – \$28.81M ; Expenditure – \$21.94M ; Surplus – \$6.87M
4. **2023–2024** : Revenue – \$27.15M ; Expenditure – \$20.55M ; Surplus – \$6.61M
5. **2024–2025** : Revenue – \$26.32M ; Expenditure – \$15.2M ; Surplus – \$11.12M

A visual graph illustrating the annual surplus trend was presented to enhance clarity and interpretation.

The subsequent segment addressed the financial position of the Band during the same five-year period. The Finance Manager provided an in-depth explanation of the figures relating to total assets and equity, describing these metrics as key indicators of the Band's net worth, calculated as the difference between total assets and liabilities. Notable figures presented were:

1. **2020–2021:** Current Assets – \$14.31M; Liabilities – \$4.5M; Adjusted Current Assets – \$9.81M; Equity – \$20.16M; Fixed Assets – \$13.49M; Net Assets – \$43.46M
2. **2021–2022:** Net Assets – \$49.71M
3. **2022–2023:** Net Assets – \$57.01M
4. **2023–2024:** Net Assets – \$68.17M
5. **2024–2025:** Net Assets – \$79.32M

A graphical illustration depicting the growth in net worth over the five-year span was also shared.

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Attention then turned to the Liquidity Ratio, a key performance metric reflecting the Band's capacity to meet its short-term financial obligations. Executive Director Towfiq Islam provided a simplified yet clear explanation of this ratio for the benefit of Chief and Council.

The Finance Manager also highlighted the Band's Sustainability Ratio, which compares income to expenditure. It was noted that the Band's performance in this area is approximately threefold higher than the acceptable industry benchmark, indicating strong fiscal health and sustainability.

The meeting proceeded with an overview of the Budget and Budgetary Control framework for the fiscal year 2025–2026. The budget has been officially ratified by the Chief and Council, and all approved financial plans have been made publicly available via the Band's official website.

ED Towfiq Islam elaborated on the operational procedures underpinning the budgetary control process. He clarified that, for instance, if the Council allocates \$500,000 to a department, this amount is distributed across designated expenditure categories such as personnel costs and vendor services. The financial system actively monitors departmental spending, and once the expenditure approaches the budgetary threshold, an alert is automatically issued to the corresponding program manager.

In cases where a department is projected to exceed its allocated budget, two corrective options are available: the suspension of program services for the remainder of the fiscal year, or a formal request by the program manager for a supplementary budget, which must be presented at a Council meeting for approval. If endorsed by Council, the additional funds are incorporated into the system accordingly.

The Finance Manager reiterated the critical importance of adherence to this budgetary control framework, which is uniformly applied across all departments to uphold financial discipline and governance standards.

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The meeting concluded with expressions of appreciation directed toward the Finance Manager for his thorough and informative presentation. Attendees acknowledged the clarity and depth of the financial insights shared and extended gratitude for his continued leadership.

01 :41 PM: **Presentation-6 concluded.**

01 :42 PM:

Presentation-7: Family Development

Presenter: Tasheena Seymour

The meeting commenced with a formal presentation delivered by Tasheena Seymour, who recently assumed the position of Family Support Manager. She began by extending sincere acknowledgments to her colleagues, Samantha Seymour, Assistant to the Family Support Manager, and Shelby Nome, Youth Coordinator. Both individuals were commended for their unwavering dedication and essential contributions to family engagement and service delivery within the community.

Tasheena proceeded to delineate the financial framework underpinning the department's operations. Most of the programmatic funding is provided through Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), while the salaries for both herself and Samantha are supported by the provincial Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). Shelby Nome's role as Youth Coordinator is likewise funded through ISC.

A key strategic development highlighted was the active recruitment of a Family Support Worker. This position is envisioned as a pivotal link between families and the Ministry, with responsibilities including conducting home visits, coordinating family cases, and engaging in regular interagency meetings. Until the successful onboarding of a candidate, these responsibilities are jointly managed by Tasheena and Samantha. The prospective worker will

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also represent the department in monthly collaborative sessions with MCFD social workers to evaluate and respond to the shifting needs of client families.

In her report, Tasheena drew attention to the recent accomplishments of Shelby, who has successfully initiated monthly youth group programming and led a contingent of eight youth delegates to the Gathering Our Voices conference in Kamloops. This prominent annual event provides invaluable opportunities for Indigenous youth to engage with representatives from government, fish and wildlife services, and a range of professional sectors through a comprehensive career fair. The experience has proven instrumental for youth navigating the transition into post-secondary education and the workforce, with many describing the event as formative and empowering.

Addressing infrastructural priorities, Tasheena underscored the critical necessity of incorporating safe housing units into the design of the forthcoming family center. She cited recent instances necessitating emergency relocation of families due to unsafe living conditions. The inclusion of secure, short-term accommodations will substantially enhance the department's capacity to provide immediate and effective support during crises.

She further reported on recent staffing transitions within MCFD, noting the appointment of new social workers and a new lead contact. She is actively engaged in relationship-building with the incoming personnel to ensure procedural continuity and adherence to established protocols in the provision of family services. She reaffirmed her commitment to ensuring that MCFD maintains a high standard of transparency and collaboration with the Band, particularly in matters concerning family intervention and engagement.

A significant component of Tasheena's professional duties involves active participation in family court proceedings. She routinely attends court hearings and mediations, where she advocates for the best interests of the child. Her work involves close coordination with legal counsel, parents, extended family members, and Band representatives, with the collective objective of safeguarding child welfare throughout all deliberations.

Additionally, she noted the department's ongoing collaboration with the Health Department, particularly in the delivery of cultural programs. This interdepartmental partnership

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facilitates cohesive service delivery and mitigates challenges arising from staffing constraints.

Following the Family Support Manager's report, Executive Director Mr. Towfiq Islam provided an update on the Youth Mentorship Program—an initiative launched the previous year with notable success. This program offers senior secondary students, particularly those in Grades 11 and 12, the opportunity to gain hands-on experience within various departments of the Band administration over a two-week period. The initiative aims to foster career exploration and inspire Indigenous youth to consider future employment within Band operations.

ED Towfiq Islam stated that the 2024 iteration of the program was implemented on a modest \$9,000 budget. For 2025, through effective collaboration with the Tano team and confirmed contributions from corporate partners such as CN Rail and Canfor, the program's funding has been significantly expanded to \$20,000. This enhancement will enable the program to accommodate approximately 13 to 20 students over a two-to-three-week period.

Tasheena supplemented this update by clarifying that, in contrast to the half-day structure utilized in 2024, the 2025 program will adopt a full-day format. This modification is intended to alleviate logistical challenges related to transportation, which had previously been the responsibility of participating families. The full-day schedule is expected to foster improved attendance consistency and streamline the program's daily operations.

In conclusion, Tasheena expressed her profound appreciation for the sustained support of the Council. She reaffirmed her unwavering commitment to the enhancement of services for youth and families and reiterated the department's collective dedication to the continued well-being and empowerment of the community.

01:50 PM:

Presentation-7 concluded.

01:50 PM – 01:58 PM:

Discussion and Health Break

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01 :59 PM:

Councillor Crystal Gibbs Joined in-person

Presentation-8: Social Assistance

Presenter: Wendy Jael

The session commenced with a formal welcome and commendation extended by Ms. Wendy Jael to the newly elected councillors, setting a tone of collegiality and respect. Following the introductory remarks, the meeting transitioned into a comprehensive briefing, with a particular focus on the status and strategic direction of the Social Development Program.

Ms. Jael commenced her report by delineating the confidential and sensitive nature of her department's operations. Given the welfare-based orientation of the Social Development Program, she affirmed unequivocally that she is unable to share any client files or personal information. She noted that her caseload currently comprises 19 clients, of whom 14 are beneficiaries under the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Program. She elaborated that two clients are temporarily ineligible for benefits until January due to surpassing the annual allowable earnings threshold of \$16,000. However, she assured that their classification as individuals with permanent disabilities guarantees ongoing eligibility without necessitating reapplication.

Ms. Jael highlighted a significant reduction in client volume—from 32 to 19—attributable to coordinated interdepartmental efforts, particularly with colleagues such as Ms. Barb. These collaborations have facilitated long-term employment placements and access to educational advancement, underscoring the department's commitment to sustainable outcomes. Despite many clients, especially those within the PWD category, possessing limited vocational skills, targeted interventions are underway to enhance their employability through structured education and skill-building programs.

Introducing the Life Care Program as a new initiative, Ms. Jael described its objective as the provision of in-home support services tailored to individual needs. This may include

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assistance with domestic tasks such as laundry, dishwashing, and mobility. Trained home care workers conduct bi-weekly visits, each lasting two hours. Beyond physical assistance, the program addresses social isolation, with some elderly clients requesting companionship for shared conversations over coffee, exemplifying the holistic approach of the initiative.

Further, Ms. Jael discussed the In-Home Care Program, which offers part-time summer employment opportunities to youth. Though modestly remunerated, these positions serve to instill a sense of autonomy and responsibility among participants. Funding for this program is currently drawn from the 303 Program, with active efforts underway to explore supplementary financial sources in collaboration with the Finance Department.

In addressing broader departmental collaboration, Ms. Jael emphasized a triadic support framework between herself, the health office, and program colleagues. She outlined an established protocol wherein clients are referred seamlessly between departments to ensure their needs are comprehensively addressed.

She also provided clarification regarding her prior involvement in housing, explaining that she has since transitioned exclusively to Social Assistance (SA). Correspondingly, her previous email address related to housing has been decommissioned, underscoring the formal reallocation of her responsibilities.

Councillor Tasheena Seymour inquired whether Ms. Jael's newly launched program intersects with the work of Ms. Jennifer, particularly regarding nursing care. Ms. Jael responded that no registered nurse has yet been required, as current clients have not expressed medical care needs and are primarily satisfied with basic in-home support and companionship.

Executive Director Mr. Towfiq Islam elaborated on the procedural integrity and confidentiality of the Social Assistance intake process. He explained that all applications undergo a structured evaluation based on an official policy manual. If approved, benefits commence in the subsequent month. Additionally, the program includes provisions for utilities and groceries, contingent upon income level and assessed need. Mr. Islam reinforced

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that while individual identities cannot be disclosed, all programmatic actions are governed by comprehensive band policies.

Ms. Jael reinforced the importance of stringent reporting protocols, citing the direct correlation between accurate reporting and the release of funds. She underscored that funding allocations are subject to audit scrutiny and are historically based on population metrics which may no longer align with current realities.

When asked by Councillor Tasheena Seymour whether Social Assistance funding is contingent on the on-reserve population, Ms. Jael confirmed that such metrics directly influence budgetary allocations. Councillor Tasheena Seymour recommended enhancing the accuracy of population reporting by encouraging members who have relocated on-reserve to update their addresses formally. She noted that Ms. Tammy possesses a specific form designed to facilitate this process, which differs from the rental documentation currently maintained by Ms. Jael.

ED Towfiq Islam provided a detailed exposition on the concept of Own Source Revenue (OSR), describing it as internally generated funds derived from band-operated enterprises, such as Tano. He emphasized the distinction between OSR and externally sourced grants, noting that OSR is utilized to subsidize underfunded departments. As a case in point, the Education Department, while receiving approximately \$300,000 in external funding, operates on an annual budget of \$1.1 million, with the remaining \$800,000 derived from

OSR. Similarly, Social Assistance funding is supplemented through OSR as approved by council. The Housing Department was identified as the largest consumer of OSR, with rental income accounting for only 15% of maintenance and renovation costs.

The meeting concluded with a mutual acknowledgment of the need to uphold client confidentiality, enhance interdepartmental cooperation, and persist in securing adequate and sustainable funding to support community welfare initiatives.

02 :13 PM:

Presentation-8 concluded.

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02:15 PM:

Presentation-9: Capacity Development

Presenter: Barb Allan

The session commenced with a presentation by Barb Allan, centering on departmental progress, program evaluations, and fiscal considerations. The meeting was characterized by comprehensive contributions from various team members, with a prevailing emphasis on strategic updates and funding initiatives.

A focal point of the proceedings was the presentation on the compilation of program binders, which served as an archival and evaluative tool for the preceding fiscal year. Barb expounded upon her detailed case file summaries, which were formulated based on direct interventions and corresponding data meticulously recorded in the ARMS database, an integrated system aligned with provincial records. She reported conducting 295 interventions over the period, each necessitating a formal application and discrete data entry. Of these, 137 case files were formally initiated, culminating in the successful employment of 58 individuals. This figure represents a marked improvement compared to previous years, which averaged between 40 and 50 annual cases.

Barb also delineated her extensive advocacy efforts on behalf of community members, particularly through the Trade Support Program. She highlighted her formal submission to the Chief and Council recommending structural supports for those adversely affected by systemic gaps in educational policies. This initiative led to the establishment of a dedicated support program, exemplified by the case of a second-year heavy-duty mechanic who received tuition and textbook support from his employer, with supplementary funding secured through the new program.

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Further, Barb informed the Chief and Council of a grant proposal submitted to Beadazzle's to continue a youth engagement initiative that achieved measurable success the previous year. The program targets youth aged 11 to 19, having previously served 24 participants,

with an aim to expand outreach to between 25 and 30 individuals this year. An additional highlight included the coordination of driving instruction programs through "Place George Driving for Life," facilitating access to 7L, 7M, and Class 5 licenses. Included at the conclusion of the binders was a comprehensive list of trades program participants. Barb noted that while some individuals did not access the trimming kits due to prior receipt of learning materials, one participant had notably attained Red Seal certification. She further described initiatives to preserve cultural heritage through the bulk procurement of beading kits from Beadazzle in Vancouver—the only supplier capable of meeting community demand. These kits were distributed among elders and other community members and paired with opportunities for interpersonal engagement to reinforce cultural continuity.

Executive Director Towfiq Islam provided a subsequent update regarding the Staff Retreat, acknowledging Chantelle's assistance in consolidating data from the previous year's event. It was noted that Barb had successfully secured full funding for the inaugural retreat through the Ministry of Education, specifically under the MSFP budget allocation.

In response to an inquiry from Councillor Clayton Pountney regarding the origin of the funding, Barb affirmed the Ministry of Education as the funding source.

The retreat was strategically structured to facilitate both team cohesion and forward-looking planning. It spanned a full day and a half-day session, with the latter dedicated to collaborative development of the organization's strategic plan. This process engaged all departments—including language, housing, and capital projects—within an inclusive brainstorming framework that incorporated community feedback and adapted to evolving member priorities. These deliberations fed into the iterative refinement of the 2021–2025 strategic plan, which undergoes annual review and recalibration in response to community-driven directives.

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The significance of collective planning and staff recognition was emphasized, particularly considering the historical absence of such initiatives. The retreat featured ten working groups across the two-day agenda. Originally budgeted based on a cost projection of \$250 per person for 17 participants, the retreat was executed within budget through prudent fiscal management, achieving its intended outcomes without compromise.

The meeting concluded with expressions of appreciation directed toward Barb Allan, acknowledging her pivotal role in securing resources and orchestrating the staff retreat with exemplary foresight and dedication.

02 :24 PM:

Presentation-9 concluded.

02:24 PM – 02:35 PM:

Discussion and Health Break

02 :35 PM:

Presentation-10: Health Department

Presenter: Tamara Seymour

The meeting commenced with a formal and gracious introduction by Ms. Tamara Seymour, who warmly welcomed the newly elected Chief and Council members and extended her heartfelt congratulations on their appointments. She formally introduced herself as the Health Manager of the community's Health Center and proceeded to deliver a substantive and detailed presentation on the operations, mandate, and structure of the Health Department.

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Ms. Seymour began by providing historical context regarding the naming of the Health Center, “Naje Baiyoh,” a name bestowed by community Elders following consultation prior to the formal establishment of the society. The late Edie Frederick recorded the name, which is now visibly and proudly displayed on the Health Center facility, which has been operational since approximately 2022.

The presentation elaborated on the mission of the Health Department—to promote holistic wellness among Lheidli T'enneh First Nation members through the provision of health services, disease prevention strategies, and the facilitation of self-directed health management. While the department's services have traditionally been focused on on-reserve members, recent efforts have expanded programming to include urban-based members through outreach at the House of Healing and the Brunswick office. This strategic expansion aligns with the Council's directive to inclusively serve all Lheidli T'enneh citizens, irrespective of their geographic location.

Ms. Seymour also addressed the Health Department's funding parameters, acknowledging that current financial provisions, primarily through the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), are designated for status members residing on-reserve. However, the department is actively pursuing strategies to broaden its service reach, particularly to encompass urban-residing members, necessitating comprehensive structural planning and developmental groundwork.

During the session, Councillor Tasheena inquired whether funding was currently accessible for non-status members residing off-reserve. Ms. Seymour responded candidly, explaining that although current FNHA guidelines do not extend to non-status individuals, the department has established an internal protocol for exceptional circumstances. These cases are jointly reviewed by herself and Executive Director Towfiq Islam. She cited the consideration of children in the process of acquiring status as a typical example where discretionary support may be applied.

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A comprehensive enumeration of the Health Department's current services was provided, which includes continuous communication support, daily medication distribution, patient advocacy and medical navigation, cultural and mental health programming, assistance with medical travel logistics, bereavement support, and the coordination of health-focused community events and campaigns.

Ms. Seymour emphasized the operational integrity and collective strength of her team. While her leadership duties include fiscal management—overseeing more than 40 budget codes—daily financial administration, and reporting, she credited her ability to delegate effectively to the proficiency and dedication of her staff.

She formally introduced the Health Department team and outlined their respective roles:

- a) **Phyllis Seymour**, Health Assistant and Elder-in-Residence, who provides cultural mentorship, assists in event planning, and offers culinary support during programming.
- b) **Jennifer Coleman**, Community Nurse since 2019, who delivers essential primary care and cultivates meaningful relationships with community members.
- c) **Kyle White**, Medical Office Assistant and Receptionist, who manages the medical travel program and front-line communications.
- d) **Jennifer Isaac**, Indigenous Social Navigator, a social worker funded by the Primary Care Network and Northern Health, who offers healthcare system navigation and accompaniment.
- e) **Teal House**, Mental Health Clinician, responsible for delivering therapeutic programming.
- f) **Kristine Seymour-Mackie**, Language Coordinator, recently appointed to implement a comprehensive language revitalization initiative.

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- g) **Patricia Seymour**, Cleaning Technician, who maintains the facility and provides auxiliary support during emergencies and events.
- h) **Dr. Todd Alek**, Community Physician, who serves the community once per week under PCN/Northern Health funding. Due to high demand, efforts are underway to expand his availability.

The department's financial framework was delineated as follows: the principal funding source is an Annual Contribution Agreement with FNHA, currently structured under block funding with the aspiration of transitioning toward a more flexible model. Supplementary grants are secured from entities such as the First Peoples' Cultural Council, Northern Health, and the Elder Medical Fund, which supports uncovered elder healthcare expenses. During periods of operational strain, including staffing shortages, strategic interventions such as consulting hires have been implemented to ensure funding optimization.

In terms of service provision, the department offers extensive primary care services (including weekly clinics, diabetic support, and harm reduction workshops), cultural programming (such as beading, Elder teas, community kitchens, and grief workshops), and special events (such as the upcoming Moccasin Walk on June 7, Truth and Reconciliation Day observances, and National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations). Ms. Seymour underscored the emphasis on healing, engagement, and cultural joy within all health programming.

Despite the department's successes, Ms. Seymour noted several enduring challenges, including the Health Center's physical remoteness—located 26 kilometers from the urban center—which poses logistical challenges for transportation. Although community engagement has improved post-pandemic, further outreach is necessary. Additionally, demand for expanded access to medical practitioners and transport solutions remains high. Ms. Seymour concluded her presentation by reaffirming the Health Department's steadfast commitment to evolving its service delivery to comprehensively support the health and well-being of all community members. She informed the Council that the Health Policy document

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is nearing finalization and will soon be formally presented, with Ms. Nicole designated to lead the policy presentation.

The meeting concluded with acknowledgment of the depth and dedication of the Health Department's work and an affirmation of the Council's support for its ongoing development.

03 :06 PM: **Presentation-10 concluded.**

03 :09 PM:

Presentation-11: Economic Development

Presenter: Allan Stroet, CEO Evan Salter.

The meeting was formally convened with introductory remarks from CEO Evan Salter, who expressed his appreciation for the contributions of Economic Development Manager Allan Stroet and acknowledged that the meeting marked the commencement of his fourth week in the role. He emphasized the strategic importance of the discussions to follow and underscored the Nation's ongoing commitment to sustainable and inclusive economic advancement.

03 :12 PM: Councillor Kyle McIntosh joined via teams.

Mr. Stroet initiated the core presentation with a comprehensive overview of the Nation's economic ventures. He highlighted that the Nation owns and operates several corporate entities, including LTN Contracting, LTN Environmental, and a joint venture with EDI. These businesses collectively provide employment opportunities for a significant portion of the Nation's members, particularly within the construction and environmental sectors.

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A pivotal update was presented regarding the Nation's participation in the acquisition of equity in the West Coast Energy infrastructure—a substantial pipeline network extending from the vicinity of Fort Nelson to the southern reaches of the province. Mr. Stroet explained that in September 2023, the energy company Enbridge extended an invitation to the Nation, along with 45 other Indigenous communities, to acquire a 12.5% equity interest in the pipeline. Remarkably, the investment required to secure this stake was nominal—\$200—yet the projected annual returns range from \$250,000 to \$500,000 per community. Importantly, the Nation assumes no operational liabilities under this arrangement.

Inquiries from Council were addressed throughout the presentation. Councillor Clayton Pountney sought clarification on the financial outlay for the equity acquisition, to which Mr. Stroet reaffirmed the minimal cost of \$200. Further, in response to concerns regarding risk exposure, Mr. Stroet elaborated on the structured ownership model designed specifically to shield the Nation from liability. He delineated a multi-tiered framework whereby the Nation owns Tano, which in turn owns an interest in Ston lasec 8, a limited partnership representing five Indigenous groups. Ston lasec 8 ultimately holds the equity interest. Each entity owns 99.99% of the one beneath it, thereby establishing layered legal and financial safeguards. In the event of a fiscal or legal disruption, only the lowest-tier entity—Ston lasec 8 LP—would be exposed.

Councillor Pountney raised a further question regarding asset depreciation, specifically whether an independent valuation had been conducted to assess the true value of the infrastructure. Mr. Stroet confirmed that thorough due diligence was undertaken. He has served on the transaction committee overseeing this deal since September 2023, in collaboration with reputable advisory firms such as MNP, TD, and others. The costs of these consultations were fully borne by Enbridge. He emphasized that all compensation for committee involvement was directed to the Nation and not individual representatives.

He further compared an earlier proposal from Enbridge, which offered a 10% equity stake coupled with higher maintenance costs, yielding a significantly lower return of approximately \$76,000 per annum. In contrast, the revised agreement not only offers superior financial returns but also eliminates operational obligations. Notably, the project leverages the

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federal Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program, allowing for debt financing at a preferential interest rate of approximately 3.5%, in contrast to prevailing commercial rates of 7%.

Upon further inquiry from Councillor Pountney regarding the total borrowing associated with the project, Mr. Stroet clarified that while the total financing amounts to \$715 million, the Nation itself bears no direct liability. This obligation resides solely with Ston lasec 8

Holdings, the entity structured for the investment. Additionally, in response to concerns about revenue continuity in the event of pipeline inactivity or catastrophic failure, Mr. Stroet confirmed that a minimum revenue clause was embedded in the agreement. This ensures baseline payments of approximately \$177,000 annually, even in adverse scenarios, and applies across the entire infrastructure network.

With respect to future opportunities, Councillor Pountney queried whether the Nation would be included in the forthcoming Sunrise Expansion Program. Mr. Stroet affirmed the Nation's participation, noting that the expansion affects approximately one-third of the Nation's traditional territory. While a Project Benefit Agreement (PBA) had been received, he disclosed that it would be summarily rejected due to its inadequacy. A revised counterproposal is currently under development to better reflect the Nation's interests. Additional insights were provided by Allan, who noted that financial analysis conducted by Rowan (absent due to family obligations) revealed that Enbridge stands to profit by approximately \$4.5 million annually from the expansion on the Nation's land, while their initial offer to the Nation amounted to a one-time payment of only \$1.5 million.

In response, Councillor Pountney voiced unequivocal disapproval of the offer. Mr. Stroet acknowledged the frustration and reiterated the necessity for tactical and informed negotiation, underscoring the propensity of large corporations to obscure long-term intentions while preparing rigorously behind the scenes.

Councillor Miranda Seymour inquired whether provisions addressing impacts to specific regions—such as Merit—could be incorporated into the PBA. Mr. Stroet clarified that equity agreements and PBAs are entirely distinct instruments. While the equity structure is fixed, regional concerns would indeed be reflected in the negotiated terms of the PBA.

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Subsequently, the presentation turned to the North Coast Transmission Line (NCTL). Phase One of the project, which extends from Prince George to Glenannan, is being executed in collaboration with the Saik'uz First Nation. Mr. Stroet referenced the involvement of Natural Resources Manager Gbenga, who is leading the environmental component of the initiative. Ongoing negotiations with BC Hydro are addressing routing, equity participation, and procurement policies. Mr. Stroet remarked on the Province's persistent reluctance to confront historic injustices, a sentiment echoed by Councillor Pountney, who criticized the intransigence of both the Province and BC Hydro on such matters.

He also referenced Bill 15, characterizing it as a potentially disruptive infrastructure bill and mentioned Natural resources Manager Gbenga Ayansola will cover the same during his presentation.

Attention then shifted to a prospective partnership with Tyrod Industries to establish a HydroVac slurry processing facility. Mr. Stroet explained that new legislation mandating testing of all HydroVac waste has expanded the market exponentially—by as much as twenty-fold. The facility would process only non-contaminated material and offers compelling prospects for rapid capital recovery. Despite some reticence about discussing the matter in an open forum, Mr. Stroet acknowledged the strategic merit of the opportunity and suggested that further discussion be continued in private. He also committed to circulating supplementary materials via email for council review.

To conclude, Mr. Stroet provided a concise update on the DFO hatchery project, located adjacent to the water treatment plant. IDL has been designated the prime contractor, with initial clearing already completed by local firm Glenn's. He emphasized the technical complexity of a river-based hatchery, noting the need to simulate natural water flow and turbulence to ensure successful fish acclimatization. Councillor Pountney acknowledged the increased challenges posed by river hatcheries, citing hydrodynamic factors as a key distinction from lake-based systems.

The meeting was adjourned with a formal request for distribution of the presentation materials and a summary breakdown for further consideration. Mr. Stroet agreed to circulate the documents and assured all present that the matters discussed, while conversational in tone, would be meticulously documented and appropriately followed up.

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Action Item: Mr. Allan Stroet to distribute the full presentation and accompanying summary to all council members.

03:33 PM – 03:52 PM:

IN CAMERA SESSION

In Camera minutes have been incorporated separately at the bottom of this meeting minutes.

03 :53 PM – 04:01 PM:

Discussion and Health Break

03:48 PM:

Councillor Dominic Frederick left the meeting.

04 :00 PM:

Councillor Dominic Frederick joined.

04 :01 PM – 04:27:

IN CAMERA SESSION

In Camera minutes have been incorporated separately at the bottom of this meeting minutes.

04 :30 PM:

Presentation-12: Lands Department
Presenter: Chelton & Agnes

The meeting commenced with an introduction from Agnes Mastin, the newly appointed Lands Manager and Tax Administrator. Ms. Mastin provided a comprehensive overview of the Lands Department's current operational structure and strategic priorities. She acknowledged the continued contributions of Janice Shannon, Land Coordinator, and noted that the department is actively seeking to hire a Lands Assistant to accommodate the growing scope of responsibilities.

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Ms. Mastin detailed that the department's principal source of funding is provided by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), with a current allocation of \$348,744. This funding is delivered under the auspices of the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management, which supplants 44 sections of the Indian Act with the Nation's own land code. She underscored the critical importance of increasing registered leaseholds within the First Nations Land Registry System, as this directly correlates to increased funding and enables the strategic expansion of leasable land assets.

Additionally, Ms. Mastin articulated the department's long-term aspiration to acquire land under fee simple tenure—non-reserve land that may serve as collateral in future financial undertakings. Current lease revenues total approximately \$20,000, originating from property taxes. Supplementary income is derived from local revenue agreements, including grants and infrastructure arrangements such as the rural grant and the BC Hydro pipeline agreement, which is presently undergoing transitional changes.

Councillor Clayton Pountney inquired about the efficacy of these agreements, voicing concern over their limited evolution:

"Aren't these agreements still not providing much more than they did years ago?"

Ms. Mastin acknowledged the modest financial returns but emphasized the indispensable role these agreements play in the Nation's own-source revenue strategy. They contribute substantively to the delivery of vital services and enhance the Nation's environmental planning capabilities.

Ms. Mastin elaborated on the incremental funding model provided by the Lands Advisory Board and Resource Centre, which is based on the successful completion of specific strategic milestones. Among these is the Environmental Management Plan (EMP). Although the department had originally intended to delay the EMP's implementation until the Land Code could be revised, the unavailability of the BC Law Foundation's Willow Grant necessitated proceeding with both the EMP and the Land Use Plan to sustain operational momentum.

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She clarified that the Nation currently operates under a 2009 Land Code developed with the assumption of an impending treaty—an outcome that ultimately did not materialize. The resultant outdated legal language now requires substantial revision. A particular challenge lies in the existing legislative quorum requirement: 25% of the membership must participate, with a simple majority vote required to pass land laws. Ms. Mastin emphasized that lowering this threshold is essential for legislative efficiency and governance agility.

The forthcoming Land Use Plan will serve as a cornerstone for the development of a Comprehensive Engineering and Infrastructure Plan, a framework essential to enabling Zawad's department to implement infrastructure projects on reserves. This plan will be further bolstered by the formulation of zoning bylaws, lease agreements, and a Development Procedures Manual, all of which collectively aim to promote sustainable and forward-looking community planning.

Looking ahead to the 2026–2027 fiscal cycle, the department envisions introducing a Community Protection Plan. This initiative will incorporate a restorative justice model designed to address interpersonal and community issues—such as animal control—through voluntary engagement prior to involving formal enforcement mechanisms. Ms. Mastin underscored the non-punitive nature of this approach, aimed at nurturing communal harmony.

In tandem with this initiative, Ms. Mastin emphasized the necessity of implementing several key regulatory instruments: an Enforcement Law, a Trespass Law, and an Animal Care and Control Law. These laws will align with provincial and federal frameworks and will operate on a cost-recovery model. For instance, the cost of providing a doghouse may be recuperated through a modest rental increase, thereby preserving departmental budget integrity.

Taxation was another subject of considerable focus. Ms. Mastin outlined the Nation's authority under the First Nations Fiscal Management Act to levy property taxes—not on residents but on commercial leaseholders, utility easements, and businesses. The revenue generated supports community services such as waste management and animal welfare. She referenced the Property Taxation Law and Property Assessment Law, both enacted in 2013, and explained the processes by which annual Tax Rate Laws and Expenditure Laws

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regulate fiscal governance. Furthermore, she spoke to the prospective development of additional financial instruments, including Business Activity Taxes, Fees Laws, and Licensing Laws.

Ms. Mastin also discussed her engagement in ongoing professional development through a range of certification programs, including the Professional Land Management Certification Program and training offered by the National Aboriginal Land Managers Association. These programs, particularly those focused on commercial leasing, are frequently subsidized in terms of tuition, though associated travel costs may need to be internally budgeted.

Councillor Crystal Gibbs inquired about the structure of the training:

“Is the training one week a month done online or in person?”

Ms. Mastin responded that although online attendance is technically feasible, in-person participation is strongly encouraged to avoid the common distractions associated with remote learning.

Councillor Clayton Pountney raised a further question concerning succession planning within the department:

“I know Janice wants to pass her knowledge on to an intern or a younger band member. Has there been any movement on that?”

Ms. Mastin confirmed that this initiative remains a departmental priority. She highlighted

Ms. Shannon’s longstanding interest in mentoring a young band member with a genuine commitment to land stewardship. A formal posting for this mentorship opportunity is currently under final review.

The discussion then shifted to the importance of expanding interdepartmental collaboration, particularly with the Economic Development office. Ms. Mastin noted that such synergies would enhance the Nation’s taxation framework and drive long-term revenue growth. A productive exchange followed, during which participants cited successful examples of economic corridors—such as Evans Road in Chilliwack and developments in Westbank—as case studies in effective land management and taxation.

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Councillor Tasheena Seymour offered a proactive recommendation regarding community safety:

“Can Lands look into offering ATV safety training for children in the community?”

She articulated concerns regarding helmet use, insurance awareness, and safe practices when operating vehicles in communal areas. Ms. Mastin recognized the gravity of the issue, referencing a tragic youth fatality, and expressed full support for implementing such training programs. She welcomed additional contacts to facilitate coordination with existing service providers, including those operating through camp trapping programs.

The meeting concluded on a collegial and forward-looking note, marked by a shared commitment to mentorship, institutional capacity building, and the proactive evolution of land governance in alignment with the Nation’s strategic vision.

04 :50 PM:

Presentation-12 concluded.

04 :52 PM:

Presentation-13: Fisheries

Presenter: Chelton & Dominic Frederick

The meeting was formally convened with an acknowledgment of the indispensable role of interpersonal engagement in nurturing effective collaboration. Following this brief opening reflection, deliberations transitioned seamlessly into a comprehensive review of ongoing initiatives related to fisheries operations, hatchery development, ecosystem restoration, and training and capacity-building efforts.

04 :53 PM:

ED Towfiq Islam left the meeting

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1. Fisheries and Hatchery Operations

Fisheries Manager Mr. Dominic Frederick commenced by presenting a detailed retrospective of the previous year's fisheries undertakings. He highlighted the successful implementation of projects on the Willow and Chilako rivers, while noting that a salmon-specific initiative was obstructed due to the non-cooperation of adjacent landowners. Nevertheless, the fisheries team successfully installed two salmon egg and sperm collection fences. These genetic materials were cryogenically preserved and subsequently transferred to hatcheries, possibly in Quesnel or the Chilako region.

Despite operational constraints brought about by reductions in airport-related funding, supplementary financial and logistical support was obtained through the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). A salient point of emphasis was the strategic application of the Nation's Declaration to reinforce territorial sovereignty and assert stewardship over aquatic resources throughout the Nation's traditional lands.

Mr. Frederick further reported that construction is underway for a new hatchery facility located across the Nechako river. This facility integrates traditional architectural elements and will feature an amphitheater-style cultural laboratory, envisioned as a site for education, community engagement, and cultural knowledge transmission.

04 :59 PM:

ED Towfiq Islam joined the meeting

2. Economic Development and Infrastructure Expansion

Subsequent discussions centered on the prospective use of a contiguous 10-acre tract for future infrastructure supportive of fisheries and economic development. This includes potential office space for fisheries administration. Mr. Chelton provided a financial outline of the hatchery project, establishing a projected budgetary envelope ranging between \$36 million and \$49 million. The initiative is delineated into two phases: Phase One comprises land clearing and subterranean infrastructure—currently contracted to IDL—while Phase Two, which pertains to the superstructure, remains untendered.

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Mr. Frederick underscored the critical importance of finalizing all foundational documentation, most notably a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), which had initially been inadvertently omitted. Moreover, concern was raised regarding the underrepresentation of Nation-owned companies among principal contractors, a shortcoming which inadvertently constrained potential employment and revenue retention within the community.

In response to inquiries from Councillor Mr. Clayton Pountney—specifically, how neighboring Nations have come to assert territorial claims over portions of the Bow River and its tributaries—Mr. Chelton expressed clear dissatisfaction, likening such claims to arbitrary declarations lacking historical legitimacy or prior consultation. Mr. Frederick acknowledged the geopolitical complexity of these overlapping claims, reaffirming his commitment to fostering collaboration while safeguarding territorial integrity.

3. Capacity Building and Employment Initiatives

The discourse advanced to matters concerning workforce development and employment generation. Mr. Frederick confirmed that \$3 million had been allocated to restoration efforts over a triennial period, with the program now entering its final operational year. Presently, 15 technicians are engaged, with seasonal employment peaks reaching up to 25. The episodic and seasonal nature of the work was candidly addressed, as many technicians must supplement their income through alternate employment or by accessing Employment Insurance during the off-season.

Mr. Frederick also introduced the launch of a sturgeon DNA tracking initiative, co-funded by DFO. This entails the live capture of sturgeon for DNA sampling, tagging, and weight monitoring. A new field team is scheduled to commence operations within the next fortnight. Two concurrent field teams will conduct monitoring activities, focusing primarily on juvenile sturgeon populations using hook-and-line methods.

When queried about the advisability of administering anesthetics to Chinook salmon during live-capture and release protocols, Mr. Frederick voiced significant reservations. He cited

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evidence of post-release trauma and elevated mortality rates, advocating for rigorous standards to ensure the protection and survival of the species.

A broader technical discussion ensued regarding ongoing DNA analysis efforts aimed at tracing the genetic origin of both smolt and adult salmon populations—including sockeye and Chinook—via tissue sample analysis.

4. Sonar Surveillance Program and Fisheries Monitoring

Mr. Chelton provided an update on the sonar monitoring program, originally initiated as a DFO pilot and now in its third operational year. The program was launched with an initial capital investment exceeding \$2 million, facilitating the acquisition of three sonar units, which remain under the full ownership of the Nation. Ongoing annual operational costs are estimated at \$139,000. These units are strategically deployed in the Upper Fraser region, particularly in the vicinity of Penny, with the next deployment scheduled for the first week of July.

Councillor Pountney inquired as to the technical functionality of the sonar equipment—specifically whether the devices monitor sturgeon or salmon. Mr. Chelton clarified that the sonar units discern species based on morphological silhouettes, effectively identifying Chinook, sturgeon, and other fish. Winter operations are dedicated to the meticulous analysis of sonar footage, during which technicians catalogue and quantify fish passages by species. He further commended the crew's steadfast reliability and high attendance levels, noting that staff turnover has been negligible across the past two years.

5. Training Programs and Strategic Collaborations

Mr. Frederick elaborated on targeted training programs intended to prepare youth for hatchery employment, with a broader aspiration of motivating interest in post-secondary biological sciences. However, it was clarified that university accreditation is not requisite for most hatchery positions; rather, practical, module-based training is sufficient. To date, seven instructional modules have been developed, with an additional training session scheduled for June.

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Institutional collaboration has been fortified through direct contractual partnerships with DFO and UNBC, enabling the Nation to exercise greater autonomy in personnel deployment and resource allocation.

6. Financial Overview

Mr. Frederick presented a synopsis of key funding streams supporting ongoing operations:

- a) Restoration Program: \$3.25 million over a three-year period
- b) DFO Fisheries Stewardship Program: \$165,000 annually
- c) Hatchery Operations: Approximately \$121,000
- d) Sturgeon Monitoring Program: Over \$160,000 annually
- e) Environmental DNA (eDNA) and Genetic Tracking Initiatives: Approximately \$150,000

Conclusion

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the Nation's commitment to operating its fisheries and hatchery programs on a revenue-neutral basis, with a central emphasis on sustainability, ecological stewardship, and community benefit rather than profit. Acknowledgment was extended to all contributing members of the fisheries crew, alongside recognition of the pivotal oversight and support provided by Chief and Council.

Further discussions are anticipated in subsequent sessions, with a particular focus on the advancement of DNA tracking protocols and the negotiation of inter-Nation fisheries accords.

05 :20 PM:

Presentation-12 concluded.

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05 :23 PM:

Presentation-14: Natural Resources
Presenter: Chelton & Gbenga

The meeting was formally convened with opening remarks by the Chair, setting the tone for a focused and structured dialogue. Mr. Gbenga Ayansola, Natural Resources Manager, delivered a comprehensive and articulate briefing that encapsulated both current undertakings and prospective initiatives in the realm of land and environmental stewardship. He introduced his team and reiterated their primary responsibility as the lead custodian for all land and natural resource referrals directed to the Nation.

Mr. Ayansola provided an analytical overview of the breadth of referrals received, which span a multitude of sectors including mining, oil and gas, cultural heritage (specifically archaeology), energy development, land use, and forestry. He outlined the procedural workflow: each referral undergoes thorough vetting for completeness, followed by proponent engagement where necessary. Decisions on escalation to Chief and Council are made on a case-by-case basis, and legal counsel is involved in select matters requiring interpretive guidance.

Major Project Updates

The BC Hydro Transmission Line initiative—extending from Prince George to Terrace—was addressed in detail. The Nation's active participation in Phase One, alongside the Stellat'en, Nadleh Whut'en, and Saik'uz First Nations under the collective banner of Nechako First Nations," was highlighted as a model of collaborative governance. The Natural Resources Manager emphasized the merits of this multi-nation engagement and noted a community update follow-up session scheduled for May 29 discuss the BC Hydro NCTL Project.

The Wind Energy Project is progressing steadily. Key procedural elements such as a Traditional Use Study (TUS) and Socio-Economic effect Study, both commissioned through FireLight is underway. Supplementary studies include raptor habitat assessments and

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analysis of viable road access routes. Gbenga acknowledged the contributions of Chelton in facilitating key stakeholder engagements with the forestry company owning TFL-52.

Green Energy Training Initiative

A significant opportunity was brought to the fore: a free eight-week Green Energy Installation Training Program hosted within the community. The curriculum focuses on wind turbine installation and maintenance, targeting long-term employment prospects. Mr. Ayansola urged Council to promote the initiative, particularly among secondary school students and community members, noting the strategic importance of building a local workforce in anticipation of the wind project's operational phase.

Territorial Boundary and Shared Space Considerations

Concerns were raised about the territorial delineations relevant to the wind project, particularly regarding turbines situated within shared lands. Of the turbines assessed, 16 are sited within exclusive territory, one rests on the territorial boundary, and one falls within shared space traditionally linked to the Lhtako Nation.

Councillor Clayton Pountney inquired, "So how new is this shared territory? Are Lhtako Nation reasserting claims or has this always been the case?"

Mr. Ayansola clarified that while the shared boundaries are not a novel development, their interpretation remains fluid. He reported limited progress in engaging Lhtako leadership, noting that prior outreach to Chief Clifford by a Chief Dolleen Logan had not yielded constructive dialogue. Strategic divergence between the nations appears to persist.

In a subsequent inquiry, Councillor Pountney asked, "Does the one turbine in the shared space have to be there?"

Gbenga responded that turbine placement is governed by wind optimization data, and relocation is not currently deemed viable. He further cautioned that under Bill 15, the

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provincial government may proceed with development without First Nations' consultation, thereby limiting the Nation's veto power.

This prompted a broader discussion on Bill 15 and the Renewable Energy Project Act. The legislation potentially enables the province to bypass environmental assessments and Indigenous consultation protocols for major projects. Legal opposition is currently in motion, with formal communications submitted by both the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFM), in concert with legal counsel.

Additional Project Updates

- a. The **Sunrise Expansion Project** is being assessed under the Canada Energy Regulator (CER) regime, which follows a judicial-style hearing format. Community Elders have actively participated in Oral Indigenous Knowledge sessions. A community project to digitally map Cultural Modified Trees (CMTs) is currently on hold due to a transfer of project ownership to KPMG, prompting data sovereignty concerns.
- b. **Vitro Mineral's Angus Project**, though geographically outside the core territory, falls within the Regional Assessment Area and is being monitored closely. Meanwhile, **Exodus Minerals** continues exploration efforts for gold extraction.
- c. **CO₂ Lock Corporation** is advancing a proposal for sub-surface carbon storage utilizing brucite. Discrepancies in the company's disclosures to various communities were noted. A further engagement session is scheduled for May 15, with presentation to Council forthcoming.

CHIEF AND COUNCIL MEETING

Department Managers Presentation



Meeting Date: Friday, May 09, 2025.
Meeting Time: 10:00 AM.
Meeting Venue: Brunswick Office,
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- d. The **Longboard Land Transfer Project** remains classified due to its sensitive nature, with details restricted to select personnel.
- e. Other emerging or active files include the Mount Wilson Silica Project, Metro Lake Wildlife Management Initiative, and oil and gas development activities. Regarding Placer Mining Project, a potential collaboration with neighbouring nations, remains in early-stage conceptualization, with the purpose to jointly review the Mineral Tenure Act which is outdated.

Additional Remarks

Councillor Pountney reiterated his discontent with the Mineral Tenure Act, characterizing it as archaic and enabling unregulated exploitation of resources. Mr. Ayansola concurred, advocating for legislative reform to address contemporary environmental and Indigenous governance realities.

In closing, Mr. Ayansola referenced a funding proposal for a collaborative research initiative with an Alberta-based institution exploring Kawka park guardians. The project could serve as a capacity-building platform for community land guides and youth interested in environmental sciences.

The meeting adjourned with consensus to revisit unresolved issues in the forthcoming week's session.

05 :39 PM:

Presentation-14 concluded.

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05 :40 PM – 05:50:

In Camera Session

In Camera minutes have been incorporated separately at the bottom of this meeting minutes.

Adjournment: **The meeting was adjourned at 05:51 PM.**

Motion050925.01 To adjourn the Chief and Council at 05:51 PM, Moved by Councillor Crystal Gibbs | Seconded by Councillor Clayton Pountney| Chair Recognizes All in Favor | Motion carried

Minutes Prepared By: Shahid Naseer.
Position: Executive Assistant.
Date of Preparation: May-13-2025.