

**Aboriginal Peoples Family Accord  
APFA Meeting with Tribal Chairs  
and Political Committee  
Best Western Kamloops ~ Columbia Room  
17 January 2006 ~ 9:45 AM to 2:30 PM**

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**Attendees:** Chief Bob Pasco, Debbie Abbott, Chief Roy Christopher, Cheryl Casimer, Debbie Whitehead, George Saddleman, Chief Joe Dennis, Pauline Terbasket, Susan James, Chief Ervin Charleyboy, Joe Alphonse, Chief Nathan Matthew, Chief Lynda Price, Bob McCuaig, Dave Hodgson, and Robert Shintah

**Staff:** Eliza Terbasket, Jim MacArthur, and Dan Odenbach

**Recording Secretary:** Sandra Young

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**1. Welcome & opening prayer**

Nathan welcomed the attendees to Secwepemc traditional territory. Robert Shintah gave the opening prayer.

**2. Introductions & opening remarks**

Debbie provided an update to the attendees around legislation, the Secretariat, and the protocol agreement between the APFA and MCFD.

The impending legislation, which is to be general enabling legislation, will go forward in the spring. Arn van Iersel does not believe we will be able to achieve full implementation in 2007; therefore we must determine what our priorities are.

The planning committee has defined itself and will finalize the priorities over the next few weeks. At the provincial level, the Provincial Aboriginal Coordinating Office (PACO) is moving forward. PACO will assist the APFA in establishing standards different than the government's.

The protocol between the APFA and MCFD has not been signed by the Interior. The Interior will not sign the protocol until it meets our standards.

Eliza noted the minutes from the meeting on December 13, 2005 will be provided to the attendees as soon as possible. She noted the North want legislation to move forward but are not supporting the process. They have sent a letter stressing the importance of unity. The report from the community gatherings held in the fall of 2005 will be going out within the next week or two, followed by another round of gatherings within the next month. Eliza explained the Board Resourcing Development Office (BRDO) criteria for selecting board members, which the APFA feels is not appropriate. The government will select a chair who will in turn choose board members.

Eliza also noted there will be a CEO coming on but it will be up to the board how it will look. Eliza informed the attendees on the status of Doug Hughes position.

Bob Pasco expressed appreciation for the work the APFA has done since its inception and noted the political committee tries to support this work whenever possible.

**Motion 1:** *to adopt the agenda as presented.*

*Moved by: Chief Nathan Matthew. Seconded by: Chief Joe Dennis. Question called; all in favour. Motion passed.*

### **3. Follow-up to protocol**

The protocol between the APFA and MCFD distributed at the meeting held on Dec. 13 has been edited by the APFA and sent to the Comptroller General for feedback. However, there has been no response to date. Previously the Ministry has proposed wording changes to their version rather than responding to ours. This document resembles a service agreement rather than a protocol. It is the hope of the APFA that the Tribal Chairs will be the ones to push the Ministry for a response as the APFA has not been able to receive one.

#### Overview of Discussion:

- The Political Committee should see what the government is looking for in writing in order to understand how to move forward. The protocol committee has done a lot of work and is asking the Political Committee to push for the bureaucrats to support the protocol as the bureaucrats seem to be avoiding any discussion with the APFA.
- A political body will not sign a service agreement. This issue must be politicized and could be brought to Minister Hagen's meeting with the Four Political Leaders in Vancouver on the 19<sup>th</sup>. The Kelowna Accord could be referenced.
- The Committee must strategize and identify issues to follow-up on with the Minister and Premier, rather than the bureaucrats.
- It was suggested the APFA have a protocol agreement with the province rather than MCFD in order to have a government-to-government relationship.
- The Interior should use the media to show their displeasure with the government.
- It does not make sense to accept any legislation if there is no protocol in place as it sends a message the government is in control. The process and background around the protocol and legislation must be examined. The Committee should know the reasons for not signing the protocol agreement.
- The Four Political Leaders must be informed of everything around the legislation in order to argue on behalf of the Political Committee. The protocol should also be taken to a higher level to improve the working relationship with the system.
- The APFA must take control of the agenda, as there has previously been very little time to respond to government directives. Next steps should be identified in order to influence legislation and avoid being delegated to and becoming another arm of the Ministry.
- The Métis Nation reaffirmed their support for this process.
- It was recommended the protocol go back to the board for follow-up.
- The legislation must be proactive towards Aboriginal jurisdiction over family services. Aboriginal rights must not drop off the table. The protocol could be simplified and negative language avoided, while maintaining Aboriginal rights and establishing a relationship with the Province.
- Legislation must be enabling and provide recognition that we will eventually establish our own laws and a system of child protection.

- The Ministry has minimized the APFA activity and provided limited resourcing so our best efforts are falling short. Aboriginal people are always on the reactive mode; however, we must become proactive since reaction has not worked for the other regions.
- As the discussion has been holistic, legal advice should be discussed.
- The legislation working committee has a final meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Although the legislation will be enabling, the Interior hoped to have time to create an authority to meet our needs. The short timeline has made any discussion with the working committee and the Political Leaders difficult.

**Recommendation:** Draft a letter to the government for Bob Pasco's signature stating the Interior needs a protocol in order to move forward and clarify the relationship with the government.

#### 4. Committee Participation

This agenda item is a follow-up from the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. The APFA needs a political representative and committee representative from the North Shuswap, South Shuswap, and Stwix.

Nathan Matthew will sit as the political representative for the South Shuswap. The committee member will be confirmed at the Tribal Council meeting on February 1<sup>st</sup>. The North Shuswap will meet on January 27<sup>th</sup> to confirm their representatives and Stwix will meet on January 26<sup>th</sup>. The APFA requested tribal council resolutions to confirm their representatives.

#### 5. Review Resolution

The APFA staff has drafted a resolution to reflect the unity at the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Some edits must be made to this internal document before it can be signed.

Overview of Discussion:

- Suggestion to change the name of the document as tribal chairs do not have much influence themselves. The document could be a resolution of the political body, which will represent the Interior.
- Recommendation to add: "be it further resolved that we will be guided by the protocol." or "The relationship between the Province and the Interior Aboriginal leadership be guided by the protocol."
- Suggestion to change the name to "The Political Body of the Interior" in order to include everyone.
- The second paragraph should read "our children" rather than "their children".
- The redraft will read "...and children have the right to be raised in our communities."

**Motion 2:** *This document be redrafted and circulated to the committee for review. The final document will be brought to the next meeting for signature.*

*Moved by: Dave Hodgson; Seconded by: Robert Shintah; Question called; All in favour; Motion carried.*

Lunch 12:05 – 12:40 PM

## 6. BRDO Guidelines

The Board Resourcing Development Office is the process from which the planning committee arose. The planning committee had to sign a document stating who they were representing and that they would not be in conflict of interest. However, we want to be sure the BRDO does not interfere with how we have established and organized ourselves in the Interior. The Minister wrote to the Four Political Leaders asking for names for who would be the chair of the new authorities. We feel it should be the regions who decide criteria for selecting the chair in order to meet our needs rather than the needs of the Ministry. One region said they will follow the BRDO guidelines for selecting the chair. However, the only one who can remove that chair is government. The document on the selection process can be made available to the Political Committee. It may also be necessary to have a legal perspective in order to set the tone for our accountability.

### Overview of Discussion:

- What are the compromises that will be made on Aboriginal title and rights?
- We must promote our own nationhood, authority and assert our title and power.
- The BRDO guidelines were part of the legislation for the creation of the health authorities. They will likely be part of the upcoming legislation for the regional aboriginal authorities.
- To avoid a reactive position we must go on record saying we do not want to adopt these guidelines. As a government we have the right to determine who will represent us.
- This could be the driver to move the redrafted resolution forward. It will be difficult to change it if we are trying to move it ahead.
- The process for selecting our chair is not in the protocol.

**Recommendation:** Reference the BRDO in the letter regarding the protocol agreement.

## 7. Impending Legislation for Aboriginal Authorities

The people working on the aboriginal side of the legislation committee are Maureen Chapman, Tracey Michelle, David Stevenson, and Glenn Parker. The legal representation is Art Pape. The information coming from the first committee session will go to the region representatives for feedback. This feedback will be brought to the next committee session on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and then to the House on Feb. 16 or 17. There will be a debate from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> on the budget for the new fiscal year. There will be a National Child Welfare Conference in Kelowna on June 4 to 8; we should have a BC presentation on our process and challenges.

### Overview of Discussion:

- This legislation will be specific and there is little we can do, even if we do not sign. The government will say they accommodated us.
- We should engage public institutions and other levels of government through other media such as PowerPoint presentations and videos.
- The directors of the delegated agencies would be a strong group to interact with. They represent a majority of bands and take care of child care issues at the community level.
- Nathan volunteered to review the legislation committee's work as it is the most important piece of work. We want to avoid restrictive legislation.

- The Political Committee would like to see the work done by the legislation committee to ensure it won't impact the work being done in communities or infringe on our rights.
- Government will not allow any work done by the legislation committee to be circulated as they are concerned the information could get out.
- The MLAs and their oppositions should be briefed on our expectations to establish a dialogue.
- A timeline should be given on the legislation process to know when we must provide input.
- Since there is no Interior rep on the legislation committee and this process has been imposed, we must say we won't recognize this legislation.
- We need to be involved in a meaningful way as this involves our children, rather than having someone else draft this legislation.
- Under the new relationship, the Minister should be reminded to engage us in a meaningful way.
- It is disrespectful for the Ministry to say they are afraid of a leak. If we are to make decisions and be responsible for our children, we need to know what is going on.

Copies of the North region's concerns around legislation were provided to the attendees.

**Recommendation:** Note in the letter to the Minister that government should honour the MOU.

Overview of Discussion continued:

- The letter should be copied to Shawn Atleo, AFN Vice Chief. The letter Hagen sent referencing the CLBC model should be referenced in this letter. The Political Committee must address communication gaps with the political leaders.
- The government must adhere to their principles in the new relationship and involve us in the implementation of those principles.
- Suggestion to add "this is in opposition to the *Tsawwassen Accord*, the new relationship initiative, etc.", "as referred to in your correspondence dated...", and "prior to the implementation of the impending legislation and policy enactment..."
- We must make it clear we will not be part of this process if the Ministry does not adhere to the MOU.
- The government must adhere to our own agenda, rather than us adhering to theirs.
- The group agreed another letter may be necessary.

### **8. Follow-up to Chief Saddleman's Recommendation**

George Saddleman feels there is an opportunity for collective political support for the APFA and the MOU. Our title and rights need to be strengthened and we must all move in the same direction in order to have credibility. The leadership council must recognize us as a political group. Then when we bring something forward to the leadership they will pay attention and assist us. Our issues can then be brought to the forefront of the agenda. The Political Committee and the leadership council must support each other and their positions.

Overview of Discussion:

- We could have a document that illustrates to the government how we want to address child welfare issues.
- The political council needs a plan to support what the APFA is doing. The two political tables need to communicate with each other and have a shared vision. This could be a guide for the political leaders to follow.

The attendees reviewed the letter drafted to the Minister and made additional changes. A timeline for the Minister's response was asked to be included. The attendees will be added to the copy list. The Ministry should also see the protocol agreement to know who the Political Committee is.

George Saddleman agreed to meet with the APFA to clarify and articulate his recommendation in a document to present at the next meeting. Some of the meeting attendees agreed to set up a meeting with Charlie Wyse.

Dave Hodgson noted the Métis Nation will be having a meeting on Feb. 10 to 12 and asked the APFA to give a presentation.

Next Meeting: February 13, 2006 at 9:30 AM  
Location to be determined.

**9. Closing Prayer**

Chief Roy Christopher provided the closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.