

PARTNER LETTER

At SN, we understand that 2020 so far has been quite challenging as everyone has had to adjust to the new COVID-19 reality as well as flooding and other natural occurrences that impact our day to day. Working remotely is something we have been doing for a longtime; please watch our social media channels as we share our current best practices around working remotely and staying productive as a team. Additionally we are sharing a success story from Brokenhead Ojibway Nation holding an election using social distancing practices, as well as sharing current funding measures in place for COVID-19 and other projects. We hope that you and yours stay safe and know we are here business as usual to

support in any way we can. Take care, wash your hands, and stay safe.



Anna Bailey

Finding new ways to engage

We excited to announce that we are now offering a new online community engagement initiative for our clients through Civil Space. This initiative provides our clients with an accessible online space to connect with their community members. In the spirit of increasing access for all who look to participate in community engagement events; the platform extends beyond our in-person engagement sessions, allowing for a consistent, easy-to-use online experience that is mobile friendly and enables participants to engage at a time that works for them.

TRUSTED SOURCES FOR COVID-19 INFORMATION

Public Health Agency of Canada

@CPHO_Canada (Dr. Theresa Tam)

@GovCanHealth

@HealthyCdns

Government of Canada

@CanadianPM

@Canada

@PattyHajdu (Canada's Minister of Health)

@CanadaAndTheWorld

World Health Organization

@WHO

First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

@fnha

@firstnationshealthauthority

HOLDING AN ELECTION DURING COVID-19



(Photo submitted by Chief Deborah Smith)

On April 18, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (BON) held their band election with COVID-19 precautions in place, re-electing Chief Deborah Smith for a two-year term. Community Analyst Lauren McIvor spoke with Chief Smith (CS) and Burke Ratte (BR), BON Electoral Officer, to learn more about the precautions they took.

Answers have been shortened for clarity and length.

LM: What influenced your decision to run for chief?

CS: I grew up in the community. I've always really contributed to the development of Brokenhead and wanted to continue to contribute positively.

LM: What was the motivation to run for a second term?

CS: I didn't want all of the effort that we've put in to stop because we're finally getting momentum, and I think that's the challenge with a two year term. Thankfully I was given another strong mandate to continue.

LM: The COVID-19 crisis has changed a lot for

everyone. What has your experience been so far?

CS: Right now, COVID-19 has really slowed the whole world. We're not as busy going to meetings as before, a lot of our events have been canceled so for me, it gives me enough time to catch up on all those things that I don't necessarily have the time to do when we are in full swing.

LM: In terms of the election, a lot of communities are wondering how to go ahead, if at all, so who made the decision to go ahead with the election for Brokenhead?

CS: Council made the decision. Council received feedback from the emergency response team and from members individually and then we made the decision to proceed. The rest is history.

BR: We utilized mail-in voting, so that was really why this was a successful event and it was safe. Brokenhead holds elections under the Indian Band Election regulations, so in our case every member is allowed to get a mail-in voting package. I provided a kit to every in-person voter which consisted of a pen, a mask, gloves and a two-ounce sanitizer bottle. Deputies were behind plexi-glass, and we had Bear Paw Security in the parking lot controlling traffic. We live-streamed the entire poll and ballot count so scrutineers could look online and watch.

LM: Did you have limits for the number of people who could go into the voter building at a time?

BR: We could allow in 3-4 voters at any given time, because the maximum was 10 in one area with the province of Manitoba on April 18. We monitored that to make sure we complied with the 10 or less.

Interview continues on next page

LM: *Other than mail-in voting, did you offer any alternatives for Elders or people who are compromised?*

BR: Under the Indian band, it's my discretion. There's no real cut off. So that's how we accommodated, through mail-in,. There were a few situations like that.

LM: *Are you considering implementing live-streaming in future elections?*

CS: We have membership all across the country, so we include them in the process by giving them a means to participate, so I really thought that it worked well. I would strongly encourage this practice to continue going forward.

LM: *It sounds to me like it was quite successful. Have you heard any feedback from members who participated?*

BR: The voter turnout was actually 70 voters more than 2 years ago.

CS: I think people are generally happy. The voter turnout, they were surprised with and I think they were happy with all of the safety precautions and the accommodations that were made, and I think people were happy with the results of the election.

LM: *What advice would you give to other communities who are looking to move forward with their elections right now?*

CS: My advice would be: understand your community, reach out to your community, get that feedback and make the decision based on the needs of your community.

BR: As an electoral officer, be sure you have the necessary equipment. Work with the community. Mail-ins are key, but it depends on what process you use. Practice social distancing and work with recommendations from ISC to have a safe event for the membership.

CS: I've also heard of electronic voting systems.

BR: That's something to talk to ISC about, to try to implement or introduce electronic voting. I'm confident it works. I've done a few referendums on that and in one particular case we had it all; we had electronic voting, we had mail-ins, we had in-person, we had advance polls, everything.

CS: One statement that stuck in my head from an early briefing with health experts is that COVID-19 is just the start of what is ahead and I think that we have to be responsive on so many levels for our communities. I think this is going to be become the new normal. What comes after COVID-19, I don't know. It's a lot to think about, and a lot of planning has to go into place so that we are effective in how we govern, how we administer, and how we deliver programs and services.

LM: *What is your strategy coming into your second term to deal with this new normal?*

CS: I think COVID-19 is going to teach us a lot of lessons and help us really identify where our gaps are. There's just a wealth of things that I've learned through COVID-19 and a lot of it is just being open to planning and being adaptable.

LM: *I really appreciate you both taking the time to talk to me, it's been really insightful.*

CS: The last thing I'll add is that you really have to look at this is a collaboration between all of your managers, because we have so many different departments that work in the community. Those are our experts and they have to be at the table making those decisions alongside leadership. ●

To learn more about the safety precautions used for Brokenhead's election, contact Burke Ratte, Electoral Officer and President of Turtle Nation Holdings at muskrat3854@hotmail.com or through their website:

<https://www.turtlenationholdings.com/>

YUKON ARTS FUND

The **Yukon Arts Fund** aims to develop the arts and engage the public in the Yukon. The intended results and outcomes of the Arts Fund are to encourage activities of communities, arts collectives, non-profit groups and First Nations in the performing, literary and visual arts in the Yukon. This funding is ongoing during the COVID-19 pandemic and will cover up to 70% of eligible project expenses.

Eligible projects can vary but include:

- Festival development
- Special initiatives
- Training
- Performance;
- and event production

Details:

The deadline to apply is **June 15, 2020**

This fund will cover a maximum of 70% of eligible costs on reasonably priced projects. This stream generally funds 50-70 projects each year.

For more information, visit:

<https://yukon.ca/en/apply-arts-fund>

TALLCREE TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

Our May client profile is Tallcree Tribal Government!

Situated in rural northern Alberta, Tallcree Tribal Government (TTG) is an Anishinabe First Nation made up of seven Reserves who all keenly focus on establishing effective governance, institutions and partnerships. They are a healthy and independent Nation who provides their members with everything they need to become self-sufficient. Tallcree Tribal Government continuously works to ensure a bright future for its members by working cooperatively with administration, members, and other partnerships. They strive to look for innovative and new ways to bring prosperity and health into the community. They are passionate about their heritage, culture, and language and are focused on preserving and continuing their cultures and beliefs on their traditional territory in northern Alberta.

To learn more about Tallcree Tribal Government, visit <https://www.tallcreefirstnation.ca/>

COVID-19 FUNDING

KEY DATES

Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)

For Canadian employers whose business has been affected by COVID-19.

75% of employee wages for up to 12 weeks, retroactive from March 15 to June 6, 2020

Employers must have had a CRA payroll account on March 15

Small Business Wage Subsidy (SBWS)

Equal to 10% of remuneration paid during the eligible period, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer

Eligible period is March 18 to June 19 2020, inclusive.

May 18: Victoria Day

Statutory Holiday

June 1: Manitoba Capital Assets and Equipment Program

Deadline to apply

June 15: NDIT Connecting BC

Deadline to apply to Phase Three of the program

For more info on federal funding available to businesses and individuals affected by COVID-19, visit :

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>