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**Innu Round Table Meeting #18**  
**February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Delta Barrington, Halifax, NS**

**Parties in Attendance:**

**Innu:** Grand Chief Anastasia Qupee  
Chief Eugene Hart, SIFN  
Chief John Nui, MIFN

**Canada:** Debra Keays-White, HC  
William McGillivray, HC  
Chris McDonell, INAC

**Province:** Ron Bowles, NL/Lab & Aboriginal Affairs  
Susan Walsh, NL/CSSD

Note: a complete list of participants is attached

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**1. INTRODUCTIONS**

The Executive Director of the IRT Secretariat, Natasha Hurley convened the meeting at 9:30.

All parties were present (see list attached).

The Chair welcomed Chief Nui to his first IRT Meeting in capacity as Chief MIFN.

**2. REVIEW AGENDA**

The agenda tabled was approved with no additional changes.

**3. REVIEW NOTES/DECISIONS/ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

October meeting notes were reviewed and approved with no additional changes. A summary of key action items provided.

**4. OPENING COMMENTS FROM THE IRT MEMBERS**

Grand Chief Qupee spoke to the February 7<sup>th</sup> Innu CYFS Governance Workshop. The meeting reviewed a number of CYFS governance options and factors. A follow up meeting will be required; however, before decisions can be made, the leaders feel it will be critical to have

dialogue with community members. In particular, making note to the need for each of the Innu communities to have the opportunity to gather and tell stories of the past impact and consequences of the Provincial Child Welfare Systems since they have come in contact with the Innu. This Innu will be researching and designing this reconciliation process. The Grand Chief acknowledged prevention dollars made available through INAC to both Innu communities late in 2016/17 is a step in moving things forward for their communities. Hopefully times are changing and governments can continue to support initiatives designed to embrace Innu knowledge by providing the Innu with resources that would allow them to continue to design services to provide the necessary care required to prevent children and families from being involved in the Provincial CYFS System. They will continue to strive to make the communities better.

Chief Hart also spoke of how productive the Feb 7<sup>th</sup> Innu CYFS Governance meeting went and how putting the issues faced by the Innu on the table will get things moving. Challenges will be faced but evidence shows the Innu are taking the necessary steps to address the outcomes of the current child welfare system in his community. He looks forward to what is to come from today's meeting.

Chief Nui says he hopes everyone will work together. He has a lot of work ahead of him and is very optimistic to what is to come. He spoke of the struggles in Natuashish and how they need to be addressed. He would like officials to come into the community and hear the stories of how the Child Welfare System has impacted individuals and their families first hand instead of just from the leaders.

Deputy Grand Chief Tshakapesh acknowledged progress being made and reiterated the fact that if the current prevention funding should have been made available in previous years, the communities would not have been faced with the current fallout of the systemic issues found in CSSD operations. DGC also noted that poor housing and low-income families are factors that need to be addressed in the two Innu communities. He felt there was an absence within the current WRA between the Innu and Province to describe the best approach to be taken with Innu children and youth. He would like to see more progress being made with regards to Innu children and youth having the opportunity to participate in their culture via Nutshimit

Debra Keays-White congratulated Chief Nui on his election. She spoke to a brief side meeting that occurred between her and the Innu chiefs to discuss some of the health priorities going forward in the Innu communities. Debra wanted to remind the group that Treasury Board supplemental funding will end in March 2018, and efforts towards renewal will need to start soon. She is optimistic on the working relationship that is in place at the moment. Debra announced the LHS office was officially closed and all employees have been reassigned or deployed on interchanges. She messaged the addition of a 'Community Wellness and Systems Navigator,' Dominic Rich, to address gaps in mental health and maternal/child health services. An announcement was also made with regards to a new role called Senior Program Officer within FNIHB. Pamela Gough has accepted this new role with a focus on supporting both Innu communities in finalizing their development of Community Health Plans. HC is also working on getting patient vision testing implemented in Natuashish.

Ron Bowles also congratulated Chief Nui on his appointment. Ron noted that Robin Fowler representing Justice will be joining via conference call during the Justice item on the agenda as he was unable to join in person due to weather-related travel disruptions.

Susan Walsh acknowledged progress being made by the Innu in the area of prevention services and on the WRA between the Innu and the Province.

Chris McDonnell congratulated Chief Nui on his election as Chief of the Mushuau Innu First Nation. Chris also acknowledged the progress being made with CYFS, IA and other important areas and was looking forward to further discussions on these items today.

## **5. ACTION LIST UPDATE**

### **a. IRT Workplan and Budget**

Reviewed the budget and it appears that it will be balanced for the year. Total revenue for the fiscal year (INAC, HC and NL-CYFS) is \$4.2M. The year to date expenditures are showing a balance of \$2M remaining.

### **b. Income Support Program**

Kylie Rose gave an overview of the implementation of the IS program to date noting a current caseload of 159 files, 19 of which are from Natuashish. \$691K in assistance issued since April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. A Community Liaison Officer position has been posted in Natuashish with hopes to have someone hired this month. Integrated Case Management has assisted 16 new clients in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. 6 quality assurance reviews have been completed and the January compliance review rate came in at 99%. Projected expenditures in the area of IS assistance for 2016/17 is expected to reach \$922K.

INAC/Tom Keegan said they are very pleased with the status of the IS program noting this to be the first IS program within the Atlantic region to receive 99% on a program compliance review. Grand Chief Tshakapesh mentioned the high cost of living and fuel costs in isolated communities such as Natuashish and suggested that higher rates be provided to meet the current need. Kylie confirmed that under the provincial policy, coastal communities do receive a higher rate considering cost of living in remote communities. It was suggested for further research to be conducted to compare rates and actual costs in both Innu communities.

Natasha spoke to the income support subcommittee meeting held in Amherst on February 6<sup>th</sup>. She noted the meeting went very well and mentioned how INAC indicated that the Innu Income support program could be used as a model within other First Nations communities. The program transfer is going as planned and the feedback being delivered by provincial and federal counterparts indicate the Innu are well on their way in delivering the IS program with limited oversight previously required of both non Innu governments as per the transition plan.

**Note:** Only one applicant received for staffing the IS position in Natuashish and the applicant was unable to report for an interview. The IS CSM will follow up and re-post the position.

**Action Items:**

- 2016/17 program statistics and funding/expenditures will be reconciled after end-March.
- IRT Sec will coordinate an approach for Income Support research on rates and basic needs costs.

**c. Child Youth and Family Services**

As of end-January, the numbers reflecting Innu children in care and custody of CSSD are noted at 179 between both Natuashish and Sheshatshiu. 115 remain placed in their communities with 64 outside their communities. Lyla noted that the work of the CYFS initiatives is to build better relationships within the communities and to help families live free from the child protection system. Efforts continue around the implementation of the WRA and the pillars that make up the Innu Prevention Initiatives.

CWLC CEO/Gord Phaneuf added it was an honour to be working on the development of practice framework based on the Innu Care Approach (ICA). He noted prevention is the foundation to the well-being of individuals. The ICA is thoroughly Innu based and will take the very best of Innu strengths.

SIFN Social Health Director/Jack Penashue noted the plans to hire 4 new social workers to support the implementation of the WRA in Sheshatshiu. The Social Workers will be working directly with families and CSSD to minimize risks.

Angela Pasteen spoke to how the Innu have been mistreated by CYFS. She has had to assist community members that come to her for help. She told the story of a woman who had lost her children and wanted help but ended up dying in a tragic accident before she ever got the chance to get her children back.

**d. Justice Sub-Committee**

Steve opened the discussion and reported that the IRT Sec staff has been collaborating with the Innu Land Rights negotiating team on Justice issues. In an effort to try and combine the interests, updated terms of reference were redrafted for the Justice Committee and distributed to the parties for consideration. The Deputy Grand Chief signed off on a letter last week to the Federal & Provincial Representatives on behalf of the negotiating team. Justice and Policing has not yet gotten a formal committee set up, but hopes to get that moving and representatives assigned to that committee. They want to focus on four critical areas which are Crime Prevention and Diversion, Policing, the Courts and Corrections.

Robin Fowler joined by conference call. He has reviewed the draft terms of reference and hopes to come to Labrador to discuss the issues further. Existing resources would be used until it is up and running. He hopes to see the locations of court himself and to review concerns with the Innu communities. He also mentioned he would like to see Innu applicants for Law School as the University of Saskatchewan has a First Nations program. He is hoping to get to the communities by March or April.

Chief Hart mentioned there are vacant buildings that could be available for the court circuit if they can get it back in the community again.

**Action Items**

- **NL/ADM Fowler to meet with Chiefs to discuss Justice issues and priorities.**
- **IRT Sec will coordinate a meeting of the re-organized Justice Committee.**

**7. HEALTH UPDATE**

Annie (IRT Health Coordinator) reviewed the IMC/WG status report. An IMC meeting was held on January 20<sup>th</sup>. June Fry, Innu Child Health Coordinator helped coordinate training in Natuashish on January 23-26, called "*Nobody's Perfect.*"

The DWWG (Diabetes) held a meeting December 1<sup>st</sup>. Programs are progressing in Natuashish and Sheshatshiu. Work has commenced on the initial stages of developing an Innu Diabetes Health Strategy. The steering committee is in place and had its 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

The FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) WG had a meeting on January 13<sup>th</sup>. *FASD 101* Training for SIFN delivered by LGH Regional FASD Coordinator Julia O'Brien on February 9<sup>th</sup>. There is interest to attend the FASD Friendly School in Winnipeg for MIFN and SIFN FASD coordinators and school staff.

The MHA (Mental Health and Addictions) had a meeting during the Health Planning Forum with the IMC on January 18<sup>th</sup>. They were given 2 priorities for 2017/18. Chairs and co-chairs were identified and confirmed.

The MCH (Maternal Child Health) Working Group had its first meeting in Sheshatshiu on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. The ToR was adopted and new members added. A meeting has been scheduled for Natuashish.

The HiM (Health Information/Data Management) Working Group has 3 priorities for 2016/17: Health Status Report, Collaborating with WG's to provide support and Education and Training, and the development of an MOU between LGH & SIFN & MIFN. The MOU has been established and the other objectives are progressing well.

On Health Capacity projects, the LCCM/ALCCM programs are wrapping up this year. There are more sessions later this month and graduation to follow. The IMC Health Planning Forum was held January 17-19, 2017 in Goose Bay. 40 participants attended and included presentations from the Youth. An event report is being prepared. The IRT-coordinated Youth Health Initiative in MIFN and SIFN is going great. Sonja is beginning the Innu Guardians Program in Natuashish which is a girl guides/brownies type program will Innu culture used. Kids will get a piece of traditional clothing instead of the usual badge. In Sheshatshiu youth health activities are being coordinated in conjunction with the established youth network at the new Youth Center. The Performance Evaluation Program

includes developmental evaluations on the Mental Health and Addictions and Maternal Child Health programs. The work is being done in association with DPRA and the evaluation reports will be completed end-March.

Dominic Rich spoke to the lack of understanding in the communities regarding NIHB benefits. FNIHB was invited to present at a recent meeting in Sheshatshiu. People have issues regarding medical and prescription benefits. An Innu patient navigator would be very helpful in St. John's as people have problems navigating the city when out for medical appointments.

William said they will meet in the next few weeks to see what the priorities are and the successes for the next year regarding capacity development as we begin the work toward program renewal. He indicated that priorities, outcomes, gaps and investment opportunities need to be discussed prior to the application phase to ensure alignment between chiefs. Natasha will follow up with chiefs and health directors to make sure proposals are beneficial for all communities and signed by all.

***Action Items***

- ***Dominic to speak with contacts in St. John's regarding Innu Patient Navigator***
- ***IRT Sec will coordinate a Capacity Development planning meeting in Goose Bay to finalize plans, proposals and projects for 2017/18 which will be approved by the Chiefs.***

**8. INAC Integrated Community Approach**

Chris noted INAC is trying to work in a more cohesive collaborative way to better support First Nation communities. When there are many programs and activities ongoing at different paces it is hard to coordinate the efforts of government and it's hard for councils to stay focused on the objectives that they set for their communities. Based on extensive external feedback INAC will be making some internal adjustments to the regional office organizational structure. It's an approach to support the Innu communities in a more coordinated and strategic manner. This would apply within the IINAC region and also in close cooperation with other government departments.

INAC Atlantic will create or shift resources into a unit to facilitate the Integrated Community Approach (ICA). This unit will be the central point of contact within INAC for the Innu communities. They will be available and know what's currently happening in the communities and help in making sure things get done as planned. Tom Keagan has been appointed as the INAC lead in working with the Innu communities using the Integrated Community Approach.

Some issues this will assist are projects slowing down and not getting completed in time. When this happens, money has to be given back, often when the money has already been spent already. INAC wants to make sure the money gets out to the communities and prevent the need for future recoveries. ICA can also assist with planning (especially for the next 12-24 months) setting priorities and sequencing of events.

In addition, things are often very complicated on the financing front and with various funding partners. If the ICA concept is used to align the available resources with the needs of the communities there is a much better chance things will get done and results will be achieved.

If the Innu communities, INAC and other partners are able to work closely together in a strategic manner using an integrated approach focused on the community needs then there is a much greater probability of success.

**9. NEXT IRT MEETING**

It was agreed that the IRT Meeting #19 will take place on June 9<sup>th</sup> in St. John's, NL. Pre-meetings will be conducted on June 8<sup>th</sup>. ***Update: Delta St. John's Hotel and Conference Centre has been booked for IRT meetings.***

Prepared By: Alicia Penashue

Reviewed By: Natasha Hurley

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

Agenda

List of Participants

IRT Sec Operational Workplan and Budget 2016-17

Income Support Program – presentation

IMC Report

2016/17 Capacity Development Status Report – February 2017

IRT MEETING February 9<sup>th</sup> 2017 – List of Participants

Name	Organization	Phone	E-mail
Jack Penashue	SIFN Health		
Annie Picard	IRT Secretariat		
Kylie Rose	IRT Secretariat		
Lyla Andrew	IRT Secretariat		
Chief John Nui	MIFN		
Steve Joudry	IRT Secretariat		
Natasha Hurley	IRT Secretariat		
Chief Eugene Hart	SIFN		
Mary Jane Nui	SIFN Council		
John Higham	Chignecto		
Ron Bowles	LAAO		
Tom Keagan	INAC		
Susan Walsh	CSDD		
Debra Keays-White	HC		
Chris McDonell	INAC		
Nick Paradisis	MIFN		
Mary Janet Hill	SIFN		
Dominic Rich	IRT		
Elena Andrew	MTIE		
Bart Jack	MTIE		
Alicia Penashue	IRT		
Gord Phaneuf	CWLC		
Mathias Rich	MIFN		
Len Rich	MIFN		
Prote Poker	MIFN		
Nachelle Poker	MIFN		
Kathleen Benuen	MIFN		
Angela Pasteen	MIFN		
Peter Pasteen	Innu Nation		
Deputy Grand Chief Simeon Tshakapesh	Innu Nation		
Penash Rich	MIFN		
Agatha Pone	SIFN		
Ruby Tshakapesh	Innu Nation		
Karen Penunsi	SIFN		
Shannon Chambers	INIHB		
Chris Appleby	LAAO		
Cynthia King	AESL		
Michelle Hawco	Blue Sky		
Melinda Wellsman	Blue Sky		
William McGillivray	HC		

personal information

A/ ADM Robin Fowler via conference call	LAAO/Justice and Public Safety
Grand Chief Anastasia Qupee	Innu Nation

