MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, is through the Chiefs-in-Assembly, to devise collective and common political strategies and mechanisms for coordinated action by First Nations and their organizations to:

• Promote, preserve, and project Aboriginal and Treaty rights for First Nation people in Manitoba;
• Preserve and enhance the rights and freedoms of First Nations in Manitoba as distinct peoples;
• Strengthen and restore the foundations of First Nations cultures, traditions, languages, economies, and societies;
• Affirm First Nation rights as peoples to exercise and practice self-determination and self-government;
• Protect the integrity and authority of each First Nation’s customs, laws, and practices; and
• Preserve and enhance the role and equal participation of First Nation women within political, economic and social spheres of First Nation governments and organizations.
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT 2017
Keewaywin – Our Way Home

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Dedication and In Memoriam

The late Henry Skywater was from the Birdtail Dakota Nation in Manitoba. He was a husband, father, Grandfather and Great-Grandfather. Henry practiced Traditional Knowledge for 33 years, and was both a Sundancer and a Sundance Leader. Henry spent 15 years with the Native Drug and Alcohol Program (NDAP) and for the past ten years, was a member of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Council of Elders.

Recently, the AMC Families First Initiative to bring action regarding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was an issue he worked tirelessly on and was dear to his heart. Henry was also a Knowledge Keeper and advisor for the First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM).

In addition to his work with AMC and FNHSSM, he was a member and role model of the Manitoba First Nations Board for Family Violence Prevention, and was also a member of the Knowledge Keepers Circle Seven group for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), which developed the Mikinak-Keya (The Spirit Tour). For the past ten years he had been the main organizer, and a rider, of the Dakota Unity Ride, and contributor to the book, The Journey of the Spirit of the Red Man: A Message from the Elders and The Great Binding Law.

Henry Skywater (Muchpiyamini)
Born: June 24, 1951 Passed: April 25, 2017
determined that although the political apparatus that we use in the Canadian state is far less than perfect, as Indigenous peoples we have always thrived on being practical and effective with the tools that we have, and we must always work with those tools in order to improve the conditions of our families and our communities.

Within our political structure, I have never considered the AMC to be subordinate to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), to take its direction from an AFN national agenda, nor to have our agenda dictated by the fear of losing funding or the popular settler governments of the day. To maintain the integrity of the direction given by you as Chiefs, I have always brought the mandates forward without compromise, that is also informed by the very best of our thought leaders, and guided by our Elders and ceremonies and with unwavering commitment. This is what I believe has distinguished the AMC nationally as a leader in political innovation and strategy. It is not the work of one person, but a group of dedicated people with a diversity of skills that sharpen ideas into tangible actions and activities that advance our collective vision.

I have always felt assured that as long as I carry the Eagle Staff, respect the protocols of our governance ceremonies, live by my teachings and hold true to the visions of our earlier Chiefs and the founding and guiding principles they established (ie. Wahbung), we can accomplish great things and improve the political reality for our people. In this way, during my tenure, AMC was never a mere agent of the policy or legislative agenda of provincial or federal governments. In no way have I ever allowed the AMC to become co-opted by provincial or federal policies. I have made it my task to always watch for co-optation within our leadership structure because it is co-optation that undermines the integrity of our leadership vision.

Throughout my tenure, we have spoken on matters of importance to our families without fear of reprisal,
without fear of funding cuts or losing favour with the bureaucracies that control the course of actions and resources within both provincial and federal governments. Over the course of my tenure, we struggled at times to maintain the organization because of our unwillingness to act as agents for settler governments. Recall in 2013, we lost 85% of our funding because the federal government of the day saw us as providing them with no practical utility in the advancement of their agenda. Our focus was, and continues to be, an agenda that challenges the status quo of the day. This is done by addressing the underlying issues that prevent our families and communities from flourishing in the only homelands we will ever know.

Today, the AMC is recovering from a difficult record with the previous Conservative federal government. We are working hard to ensure that the commitments made by Prime Minister Trudeau’s Liberal federal government are implemented through strategic partnerships and value added activities that translate into tangible and real improvements in the lives of our families. This is being pursued in a variety of ways and driven by a highly competent core of professionals who are expert in Canadian policy and law, while being grounded in our ways as well.

**Indigenous Rights and Climate Change**

The world around us is changing, and our families and communities are the first to experience these changes on the ground in our homelands. Whether it be flooding, short winter road seasons, unpredictable weather patterns or increased evacuations from forest fires, it is our families who experience the immediate and greatest downside of climate change. As leaders in this era of accelerating climate change, we must do what we can to help preserve a future for our families, and take a much more prominent role in the protection of our lands and our waters. In some instances, this includes planning mitigation activities and actions that will prepare us for an uncertain climate future. With that said, we also owe it to our future generations to become much more proactive in challenging unsustainable and harmful fossil fuel based economics.

Industry will always promise short-term employment or contracting opportunities. The real issue is the long-term detrimental effects to our children and grandchildren from pumping more carbon into the atmosphere from burning fossil fuel. This means involvement in the feasibility and regulatory proceedings that deal with unsustainable fossil fuel developments and transportation infrastructure through our homelands. It also means that we hold the federal government accountable to their commitment to work with Indigenous Elders.
and Knowledge Keepers in the evaluation of projects that would have a detrimental impact on our climate and water. Because of this, with the help of the Public Interest Law Centre, the AMC has filed for a judicial review of the government of Canada’s late 2016 approval of the Enbridge Line 3 project. The approval summarily dismissed the issues raised by our Elders and Knowledge Keepers and directly contravened the commitment of the Liberal government to build credibility and confidence in the National Energy Board process.

**INDIGENOUS NIGHT HUNTING**

As original peoples, Kizhay Manitou, the Great Spirit, gave us one universal law - Ogichi Tibakoniaywin, Kihche Othasowewin, or Tako Wakan – a Law that connects us all. Through this Law we are given our relationship to the natural, physical and spiritual world and our duties as stewards of Mother Earth. From this fundamental understanding, I have approached the issue of Indigenous Night Hunting.

With direction from our Elders and Knowledge Keepers and professional experts in Canadian policy and law, the AMC has taken strategic steps with the Province of Manitoba. We have designed a process that engages you Chiefs, the proper representatives of the descendant communities that signed Treaty, who are owed the duty to consult prior to any legislative or policy measures are imposed. Together in the coming months, we may recognize and affirm our food sovereignty and inherent freedom as indigenous peoples to access our ancestral hunting lands.

**ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY**

Part of a comprehensive solution to addressing the energy needs of our communities is re-establishing energy sovereignty in our communities. This means establishing new partnerships towards establishing clean alternative energy solutions for our communities and reducing our reliance on Manitoba Hydro’s energy monopoly in our homelands.

I have always believed that our Treaty rights include the economic rights and initiatives that would help us create economies of sustainability in our homelands. I believe that through the establishment of power purchase agreements under an amended regulatory and statutory relationship with Manitoba Hydro, we can become our own solutions providers for our own communities energy needs. For years, Manitoba Hydro has prevented us from taking back this responsibility however we must continue to move politically towards a new accord on energy creation that gives us room to take back leadership in sustainable energy.

**FIRST NATIONS GAMING**

The past year has been a significant challenge in attempting to re-shape our relationship with the province of Manitoba on gaming related issues. The AMC had historically relied upon a joint gaming table with key executive cabinet members to move the agenda on gaming. With the introduction of a new Conservative government, we have been de-prioritized from partners in gaming development to subordinate participants in the gaming economy. This issue is exacerbated by the already differential treatment we receive as indigenous peoples in the gaming economy. There is a gaming economy that the province has designed for its own benefit and a few of its friends,
and then there’s a subordinate market for indigenous participation that denies our access to the prime gaming market. I have done what I can to help to bring this matter to a proper forum to establish our rights in this space and I now leave this ongoing work to the incoming Grand Chief to ensure that we continue to push the matter forward to ensure that there is space created for successful indigenous gaming economies here in Manitoba.

**KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER**
For centuries, the government of Canada has deliberately used First Nations children to break the family bond by removing children from their communities and placing them in state-centric institutions. This has taken place through the residential school era, the sixties scoop and continues today in the current child welfare system. There is an onus on the federal government to change its policy and procedures when it comes to child welfare, particularly their practice of removing children from their home and community. Most importantly, First Nations need to take a lead role to ensure changes are made to guarantee the safety of First Nations children while respecting the traditional child rearing practices of First Nations. This past year, the AMC undertook regional engagement on reform of the child welfare system and how to implement the full meaning and scope of Jordan’s Principle. First Nations know what is needed in their communities and our engagement sessions sought to capture that knowledge and deliver it back to Canada. The Regional Engagement Report will be available later this year with specific identified recommendations for Canada to consider in responding to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision of First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada (for the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report.

**A WALK TO REMEMBER**
As some commemorated 150 years of Canada, I chose to commemorate family and community and the resilience of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island who continue to survive dispossession, marginalization and a racialized society that limits the potential of everyone living on Turtle Island.

In this life, there are inspirations that must not go unnoticed and/or unacknowledged. Every action I’ve ever taken is because someone has inspired me to act on things I think are important. This understanding is central to the social structure of the Anishinaabeg people to acknowledge inspiration where it exists. The reason for this is not to elevate hierarchy, but to lift ourselves up to the positive things that we do collectively in our communities and our nations. This is particularly important now because we are coming out of our darkest hours with the near complete institutionalization of our families and children in colonial systems in Canada.

The inspiration for this initiative came from my mother and all of my relations who were institutionalized in the residential school system. Often we pretend that because we did not attend residential school, that it doesn’t affect us. This, in my opinion, is wrong. When avoiding the reality of the intergenerational effects of residential school, it leads to other challenges that we experience in this life that we seemingly have no answer for. Denial of our languages, denial of the vitality of our land based communities; these are part of the legacies of residential schools that we fight everyday. With that said, my mom has survived and her strength inspires me to help with the restoration and healing work that I dedicate my life to. I have learned through our ceremonies that the pain experienced by my mother in her life, is my pain too.

On June 16th, 2017, I had a pipe ceremony at the location where my mom was abused in residential school. This place was called the McKay Residential School and it is located in Dauphin, Manitoba, approximately 115 km’s from our front yard on the Pine Creek Indian Reserve. After the pipe ceremony, I walked home. The walk was in honour of those people who never made it home, and to those who are struggling to make it home now.
Once I reached the reserve, I went to the place where the Pine Creek Residential School once stood. Here we walked around the church counter clock wise to undo the harm that was done to the children that attended this residential school. I know that so many children suffered horrible atrocities there and the spirits of those children need to be honoured, respected and acknowledged.

I also want to thank the Wenjack family from Ogoki Post for having the courage to talk about the tragic loss of Chanie Wenjack in 1969. Their call to ensure that there are schools in every remote community that can take a child to the completion of their primary and secondary education is how they have chosen to honour the memory of their beloved lost one. This strength deserves to be respected, recognized and acted upon. If you’re unfamiliar with this families call to action, watch The Secret Path, which was a story piece with song and graphics by Mike and Gord Downie. I’d also like to recognize the inspiration of Gord Downie of the Tragically Hip for helping to extend the awareness of our residential school history into circles of influence, circles of awareness and consciousness that had not previously been involved in this discussion.

MOVING FORWARD
As I end my 6-year tenure as the Grand Chief, I want to thank the Manitoba Chiefs for supporting the work of the Assembly through their direction to tackle the challenging and sometimes complicated issues that First Nations in Manitoba encounter. At the AMC, we strongly believe that decision-making rests within the community and we do our best to ensure that the Chiefs are provided with accurate and thorough information to make the best decisions possible. The AMC has assisted in supporting each First Nation community collectively and at times, independently over the years to understand and provide information about policy developments and statutes that impact our rights in order to advance First Nation interest in the best way possible.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS
This fiscal year, my office has brought in the following proposal-driven funding:

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
- Lifting up our Children in the amount of $120,000 for fiscal year 2016;
- First Nations Child and Family Services Regional Engagement Strategy in the amount of $500,000 for the fiscal year 2016/2017;
- Regional Forum on the Full Implementation Of Jordan’s Principle for the fiscal year 2016/17 in the amount of approximately $203,000;
- Regional Engagement on Jordan’s Principle in the amount of $700,000 for the fiscal year 2016/17 to 2017/18;
- Jordan’s Principle Service Coordination for the amount of $2.2 million for the fiscal years 2016/17 to 2018/19;
- Federal Reviews for the fiscal year of 2016/17
  - Environment Assessment, $81,000
  - Navigation and Protections Act, $43,000
  - Fisheries Act, $43,000
  - National Energy Board, $43,000;
- First Nations Family Advocate Office for the amount of $800,000 for fiscal year 2017.

Again, it has been my honour to serve you the Chiefs and our First Nations for the past two terms.

Meegwetch, Ekosani, Wopida, Mahsi Cho
Grand Chief Derek Nepinak
AMC
A Message from the AMC Council of Elders

Tansi, welcome to my First Nation of Nisichawayasihk – it means, Where the Three Rivers Meet. On behalf of our Chief and Council, welcome to our Territory – Adhesion to Treaty 5.

During this past year, the AMC Council of Elders had several key responsibilities and participated at the Chiefs Assemblies, Executive Council meetings, Grand Chiefs’ table, Chiefs Committee meetings, Quarterly Elders Council meetings and other gatherings and activities to offer our input and guidance, such as:

- AMC Workshop on the Indian Act;
- AMC Tea & Bannock Dialogues;
- The National Energy Board Line 3 Replacement Program Elders meetings and Elders and Traditional Knowledge Holders at the Turtle Lodge in Sagkeeng First Nation on November 18, 2016, entitled “Sharing Indigenous Knowledge on Survival in Times of Climate Change: A Sacred Relationship to the Land”;
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission – University of Winnipeg / University of Manitoba: Pathways to Reconciliation;
- Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM) Treaty Education Initiative Institute;
- National Treaties 1-11 Spokesperson Meetings and Annual Gathering;
- Totem Pole Journey;
- AMC Treaty Commission Workshops;
- Isaac Pitblado Lectures;
- TRCM-Manitoba Museum annual ceremony honoring museum Treaty Exhibit artifacts and Tour;
- Staff meetings and Board Meetings for Nanaandawegimig–Healing Place/ First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba;
- AMC-TRCM Manitoba Treaties Oral History Project – Volume 4 blessing ceremony;
- TRCM First Nation Education Directors on Treaty Education Initiative;
- TRCM general operations, Treaty Education Initiative and Speakers Bureau;
- AMC-INAC Exploratory Meetings on TRCM the Memorandum of Agreement;
- AMC Ownership Control Access and Possession (OCAP) in Child and Family Services Discussion Meetings, Customary Law of the Hunt, and Grandmothers Council; and
- UM Water Gathering.

I would like to remind you that “people have been speaking for us for hundreds of years but now we want to speak and tell our story using our languages; we want them to listen; they have tried to define our history for us, our destiny, our land, our territory but no one can define our destiny but us.”

In closing, we commend the AMC for creating the Grandmothers Council this past year and lifting up the women as we are taught that women are the foundation of our nationhood. The Elders Council looks forward to working closely with the Grandmothers Council as we move forward.
Respectfully, D’Arcy Linklater, AMC Council of Elders

Nehetho Elder
D’Arcy Linklater, Spirit Walker, White Wolf Clan

Dene Elder Joe
Hyslop, Northlands Denesuline First Nation

Ininiew William
Lathlin, Opaskwayak Cree Nation

Anishinaabe Elder
Wayne Scott, Swan Lake Nation

Anishinaabe Elder
Harry Bone, Keesweekoowenin

Anishinaabe Elder
Elmer Coughene, Sagkeeng First Nation

Anishinaabe Elder
Jim Cote, Waywayseecappe First Nation

Dakota Elder
Doris Pratt, Sioux Valley Dakota Nation
Grandmothers Message

First Nations grandmothers occupy a sacred and essential place in our families, communities and Nations. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs’ (AMC) Bringing our Children Home Report recommended that the AMC establish a formal Grandmothers Council by encouraging and supporting Grandmothers from every community to become involved on a regional level and fulfill their role as Ogitchitakweg, including the returning of the Grandmothers to their rightful place within the community to revitalize traditional parenting ways.

This past year, at the AMC Special Chiefs Assembly on Child and Family Services, the First Nations Women’s Committee and the Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters recommended to amend the AMC Constitution to include a Grandmothers Council. Resolution APR-17.01 directed the AMC Secretariat to provide the appropriate notice for an amendment to the AMC Constitution to the Chiefs for consideration at the July 2017 Annual General Assembly to establish a Grandmother Council.

The formal establishment of a Grandmothers Council will reclaim the Grandmothers significant role within our First Nations to share teachings with Manitoba First Nations leadership and communities to take back responsibility for teaching our children, youth, young mothers, young fathers, and parents.

Several of Grandmothers met over the last year to oversee AMC’s engagement projects and provided invaluable guidance as we seek to bring our children home. Through their gatherings, the Grandmothers developed the following Grandmothers Statement:

“The gift of creation gifted to Women by our Creator, a shared blessing and a responsibility, a responsibility to and for the future of our Nations, a responsibility to care for, love and teach our children and grandchildren. Teachings provided by our Creator and our Mother Earth that can only be taught by our Mother.

WE THE GRANDMOTHERS OF OUR NATIONS:

1. Honour the gift, blessing and responsibility of life through our children and grandchildren and our responsibility to insure that our life as a People through our children is honoured and nurtured. That we honour the laws of our language, culture, ceremonies and the natural laws of our land that guide our life, a life filled with beauty, responsibilities and purpose.

2. We Grandmothers of our People with the support of our Men, will not allow the removal of our children from our families and our Nations.

3. We Grandmothers will gather the Grandmothers of our Nations. Through prayer, we will define the actions and process necessary to insure the safety and wellbeing of our children.

4. We honour this gift of life and our responsibility for our Nations and stand together in unity and in strength with the gifts of language and ceremony provided by our Creator to take up our Role as Life Givers, as Mothers, Auntes and Grandmothers. No external entity shall be allowed to remove our gifts from the shelter and love of our homes and Nations.

5. Tunkasila, we humbly ask for your guidance, your blessing, and your strength. Pidamiya ye, Mitakuye Owasin.

The current members of the Grandmothers Council are:

Katherine Whitecloud, Sioux Valley
Karen Swain, Ebb and Flow First Nation
Julia Robson, Peguis First Nation
Florence Paynter, Sandy Bay First Nation
Mary Maytwayashing, Lake Manitoba First Nation
Isabelle Morris, Tataskweyak Cree Nation
Chickadee Richard, Sandy Bay First Nation
Message From the First Nations Women’s Committee

Welcome Elders, Youth, Leadership and First Nations citizens to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs 29th Annual General Assembly. Thank you to Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation for hosting the Assembly in your beautiful First Nation.

The FNWC continues to work to advance the well-being of women, children, families and communities. This includes numerous issues such as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; human trafficking; and stopping the sexual exploitation of children, girls and women; child welfare, domestic violence; and gender equity.

It is essential women re-occupy a sacred place in our families, communities and Nations, and have a strong leadership role within the AMC through the First Nations Women’s Committee (FNWC). This year the FNWC has expanded to 11 members. It is an honour to have these women join the FNWC, and we would like to congratulate the newly elected Chiefs and welcome their participation on the First Nations Women’s Committee:

- Chief Karen Batson, Pine Creek First Nation
- Chief Stephanie Blackbird, O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation
- Chief Priscilla Colomb, Marcel Colomb First Nation
- Chief Vera Mitchell, Poplar River First Nation
- Chief Doreen Spence, Tataskweyak Cree Nation

We would also like to acknowledge two Councillors who recently joined the FNWC:

- Councillor Samantha Folster, Norway House Cree Nation
- Councillor Shawna Henderson, Fox Lake Cree Nation

FNWC looks forward to the continued support and efforts of Manitoba First Nations leaders of the contributions of First Nations women in resolving the issues that affect all First Nations people to ensure healthy and strong individuals, families and Nations. This includes working with the AMC Grandmothers Council.

We hope that this year’s Annual General Assembly is another successful event.

– Chief Francine Meeches, Swan Lake First Nation, FNWC Chairperson

“Here’s to strong women. May we know them. May we be them. May we raise them.”
Executive Council of Chiefs
Chairperson, Grand Chief Derek J. Nepinak

The Executive Council of Chiefs (ECC) receives its mandate exclusively from the AMC Constitution and Chiefs-in-Assembly Certified Resolutions.

In accordance with the AMC Constitution (Article 11), the Executive Council of Chiefs (ECC) shall function as a source of authority between Assemblies and shall be composed of the Grand Chief, 5 Chiefs selected by northern First Nations and 5 Chiefs selected by southern First Nations. Quorum for the ECC shall consist of six members:

SOUTH
Chief McLean, Lake Manitoba, IRTC
Chief Chalmers, Birdtail Sioux, DOTC
Chief Bone, Keeseekowenin, WRTC
Chief Hamilton, Bloodvein, SERDC

INDEPENDENTS
Chief Crane, Fisher River Cree Nation
Chief Henderson, Sagkeeng First Nation

FIRST NATION WOMEN COMMITTEE
Chief Meeches, Swan Lake

NORTH
Chief McDougall, Wasagamack, ILTC
Chief Bland, York Factory, KTC
Chief Genaille, Sapotaweyak, SCTC

INDEPENDENTS
Chief Moody, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
Chief Evans, Norway House Cree Nation
Chief Baker, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation
Chief Merrick, Cross Lake Band of Indians

In 2010, the ECC endorsed the First Nation Women’s Committee (FNWC) request for a seat at the ECC table pursuant to the AMC Constitution – Article 3 Mandate (Article 3.6 – preserve and enhance the role and equal participation of First Nation women within the political, economic and social spheres of First Nation governments and organizations).

Executive Council of Chiefs deliberated and provided a record of decisions on a range of issues as mandated by the Chiefs-in-Assembly certified resolutions.

To promote unity at both the political and administrative levels among the PTO’s, a standing invitation has been extended to Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO), Manitoba Keewatin Okimakanak (MKO) and Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Regional office.

The ECC maintain its linkages to mandated organizations by issuing a call for name process to fill their vacant Board of Director positions. These mandated organizations include Manitoba First Nation Education Resource Centre (MFNERC); First Peoples Economic Growth Fund (FPEGF); First Peoples Development Inc. (FPDI); and, First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM).

STATUS OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2016-2017
The Executive Council of Chiefs held three meetings since the 28th Annual General Assembly: November 28, 2017; January 26, 2017 and April 24, 2017.

- Support the ongoing work of the Personnel and Finance Chiefs Committee;
- Support the work of the First Nation Women Committee (FNWC) in addressing issues impacting women, children, families and communities;
- Support the development of a proposal to deliver an Elders Gathering on Traditional Hunting Knowledge and Food Sovereignty;
- Support the process of engagement with Canada on issues of ceremonial and spiritual bundles that are scared items that represent our Nationhood, our Identity, our Sovereignty and our Treaty;
- Endorse and support the Regional Engagements on CFS, Education and Jordan’s Principle;
• Support St. Theresa Point First Nation and Berens River First Nation treaty right and access to traditional lands;
• Support the application for leave to appeal in the Supreme Court of Canada on the Teulon Day School case;
• Support the ongoing work of the Chiefs Gaming Committee;
• Support the ongoing work of the Chiefs Task Force on Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba and decision to appointment a Treaty Commissioner.

The Executive Council of Chiefs have adopted 27 ECC resolutions to advance the work of Manitoba leadership.

On behalf of the Executive Council of Chiefs a special thank you is extended to the AMC Elders Council for their guidance and continued support in advancing the AMC work. The ECC is also pleased to follow up with the Chief’s resolution to develop a Grandmothers Council and incorporate them into the AMC Constitution with a notice for an amendment to be considered at this year’s Annual General Assembly.

Similar, the ECC is also pleased to see the expansion of the First Nations Women’s Committee with the election of more women Chiefs and Councillors, and to have their named changed finally to the “AMC Women’s Council” as proposed by way of an amendment to the AMC Constitution that will also be considered at this year’s Annual General Assembly.

A special thank you to past members who have dedicated their time and commitment towards the success of the Executive Council of Chiefs.
INTRODUCTION
The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) Secretariat core functions are:

POLITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: Grand Chief; Executive Council of Chiefs; Personnel & Finance Chiefs Committee; Annual, Special and General Assemblies; Chiefs Committees; and Council of Elders.


STRATEGIC POLICY COORDINATION AND ANALYSIS: Inter-departmental policy and coordination capacity including conducting the necessary research, community engagement in the development of AMC policy position/documentation; providing briefings to leadership; and meetings on policy engagement with federal, and where required, provincial departments. Under the direction of the Grand Chief, the AMC Management Team implements decisions made by the AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions and Executive Council of Chiefs motions.

The Management Team continues to meet on operational matters, along with and under the direction of the Chiefs Committee on Personnel and Finance, which includes:

• Approval and implementing AMC Work Plans and Budgets;
• Financial Management (in accordance with AMC policies and procedures);
• Human Resources (in accordance with AMC policies and procedures); and
• Overall performance measurement and evaluation.

The work plan of the AMC Secretariat includes, but is not limited to:

• First Nations Governance
• Education & Skills Development
• Health
• Lands and TLE
• Resource Benefit Sharing
• Climate Change and the Environment
• Economic Development
• Social Development
• Women, Children & Families
• Housing & Infrastructure; On/Off Reserve Housing
• Research Partnerships
• Legislative and Policy Reviews and Development
• Intergovernmental Relationship Building and Partnerships
• Urban First Nations Strategies
• Engagement with First Nations

The Management Team works with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), Health Canada (FNIHB) Manitoba Region, Province of Manitoba Indigenous and Municipal Affairs and the City of Winnipeg, to negotiate annual work plans and budgets in support of First Nations common issues regarding the areas listed above and ensuring the Secretariat is dedicated exclusively to the social, cultural, educational and economic development of First Nations people.

The organization’s annual work plan activities are based on strategic planning by directives to meet First Nations common priorities i.e.:

• Facilitate support to the First Nations inherent right to self-determination through informed participation and decision-making and ratification of outcomes.
• Reflect priorities that deal with First Nation issues at community level in addressing changes to legislation, regulations, policies, procedures and improvements to programs and services.

• Promote opportunities for collaborative partnership with Canada and the Province on basic organizational capacity and support for research activities on common community initiatives and institutional development.

• Provide appropriate timeframes for achieving and measuring strategic outcomes, organizational performance, effectiveness and financial accountabilities.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES
The AMC Secretariat performs a significant advocacy function to support the directives provided through Chiefs resolutions. In 2016/2017, AMC passed 24 Resolutions addressing common issues.

These directives and activities are developed to identify key issues and formulate alternatives to influence changes to existing and proposed federal and/or provincial policies and programs. Meeting timely deadlines requires regular identification of critical and emerging issues with preparation of the relevant documentation for leadership review and decision-making.

Although the AMC continues to work within the reduction to its core funding, it continues to meet organizational and program objectives.

LINKAGES TO FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES
The AMC Secretariat provides relevant, ongoing and consistent updates on the activities of the organization through the Social Media (Twitter, Facebook and live streaming of Meetings and Events via YouTube), distribution of Publications, and “A Vision for All” radio show on NCI FM. The Grand Chief, Management and Staff attend workshops and meetings and participate at various forums with communities, senior officials, working groups and committees to ensure information is gathered, analyzed and reported to the leadership, particularly on issues that may impact First Nations programs and services.

A central goal of the Secretariat is to support and advocate for First Nation community based needs and action plans focused on strategic outcomes. Preparation of briefing materials is regularly completed on a range of issues with various strategies and reports provided to the Chiefs-in-Assembly, Executive Council, and Chief Committees.

To ensure projects and initiatives are community driven there are also technical working groups which consist of community and/or regional representatives. Feedback and reports are developed for leadership and First Nations members.

AMC monitors regional information and coordination on national First Nation and federal government initiatives, including but not limited to the following areas: Policy and Legislation, Issues impacting First Nations, Women, Children, Families, Urban Strategy, Social Development, federal government restructuring, Federal Budget, and Federal Election strategy.

STATUS OF ACTIVITIES
The Management meet regularly to discuss overall issues management, financial monitoring and reporting, AMC Constitution, Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions, Executive Council motions and funding agreements.

The Management Team works with the Personnel & Finance Chiefs Committee to review administrative and financial operations. The Personnel & Finance Committee reports to the Executive Council of Chiefs and at the Annual General Assembly on the operations of the Secretariat, including the audited financial statements.

Meetings are held with Senior Officials from INAC (HQ, Region), Health Canada, City of Winnipeg and the Province on key initiatives and projects.

The Management Team also works closely with the Program Managers regarding regular reporting on activities, human resource issues and funding challenges.

One of AMC’s core functions is to communicate with its members. The AMC provides ongoing monitoring and maintenance of AMC’s existing network system.
They also collaborate on projects to ensure efficiency in communications to First Nations/general public. The AMC continues to have challenges with updating the network infrastructure. The IT technician continues to work towards upgrades, creating and revising policies and procedures related to the network infrastructure.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR**

- Approved work plans and budgets for the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year
- Tea and Bannock Dialogues: Totem Pole Journey September 2016
- 28th Annual General Assembly September 2016
- Climate Change and Environment Conference November/December 2016
- AMC/Families First Foundation Co-hosted a Complimentary Pancake Breakfast December 2016
- AMC Assembly on CFS April 2017
- Walk to Remember June 2017
- Tea and Bannock Dialogues #4

Further Accomplishments of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs are outlined within the Annual Report.
INTRODUCTION

The political movement for ensuring the protection and promotion of Treaties Nos. 1 to 11 have existed even prior to Manitoba Indian Brotherhood declaring that the Inherent and Treaty rights are the basis of our rights and as such wrote the manifesto: Wabung – Our Tommorows.

As time moved on the Chiefs became alarmed with the governments “White Paper” agenda to dilute the Treaties and with the pending the Kelowna meeting triggered an inaugural meeting of the Treaty Chiefs in Edmonton on September 27, 28 & 29, 2005. The purpose was to unify the Treaty movement and to safeguard and enforce the Numbered Treaties.

Stemming from the gathering was to solidify the vision of the Treaty Chiefs to unite and meet as sovereign nations regularly and to have one voice for the protection, promotion and enforcement of Treaties Nos. 1 to 11. At the same meeting in Edmonton, the leaders set the structure of the coalition to have a Spokesperson, Spokespersons from each Treaty area, a Treaty Council and a Treaty Secretariat. This vision was officially documented in a resolution and adopted by Treaties Nos. 1 to 11 Chiefs.

Treaties Nos. 1 to 11 has met every year holding annual gatherings to deliberate on Treaty issues. Ovide Mercredi eventually became the second Spokesperson appointed and served until the Onion Lake gathering in 2013.

The gatherings from its inception involved the direct participation 1 to 11 and the leadership. As of September 12, 2016 Eric Tootoois was informally appointed to be the interim Spokesperson for the Governor General visit at Fort Qu’Appelle, Treaty No. 4 Territory. He continues on this capacity today.

The Sovereign Nations of Treaties Nos. 1 to 11 is also a forum to deliberate on matters of common interest and concerns and to discuss the collective understanding on the Treaties and to ensure the Treaty Chiefs have a direct say on the Treaties and its implementation.

Recently, there has been numerous special meetings by the Spokespersons from Treaty Areas and Annual Treaties Gathering. Agenda items discussed were formalizing Treaties Nos. 1 to 11, AFN MOU on Fiscal Relationship in 2016, the Descheneaux Case; s.6 (1) & (2) of the Indian Act and most recent the MOU signing between AFN and Canada regarding the development of the mechanism in Treaty implementation and that has neutralized the Treaties 1 to 11 movement.

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Secretariat and the leadership have been major players and continue to be active in the Treaty movement. At this time AMC houses the Treaties Nos. 1 to 11 Office. The current issue is the MOU between AFN and Canada of June 2017 which has raised issues at the political levels across the prairie provinces.
Gaming Development

STAFF
Chloe McCorrister, B.B.A., Gaming Coordinator

INTRODUCTION
The Department of Gaming Development currently consists of a Gaming Coordinator. The Gaming Coordinator works with a Gaming Consultant on a contract basis and Legal Advisors who work with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Chiefs Gaming Committee and Grand Chief Derek Nepinak. The Department of Gaming Development continues to focus on casino development, First Nations gaming policy and other forms of gaming initiatives.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES
Currently, Manitoba First Nations must conform to provincial gaming legislation and regulations with respect to their gaming establishments. This continues to restrict First Nations access to gaming markets in Manitoba. Further, the Progressive Conservative Government of Manitoba’s limited interest in discussing First Nations gaming has presented an issue and challenge for First Nations of Manitoba.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GAMING DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES
At the June 2016 Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Special Chiefs Assembly, a number of gaming resolutions were passed reflecting the changing dynamics of First Nations gaming in Manitoba. Manitoba Chiefs resolved to reassert First Nations jurisdiction over gaming and to create and promote a level playing field respecting access to the gaming market in Manitoba.

Resolution JUN-16.09, Manitoba First Nations Gaming Strategy, saw the Chiefs-in-Assembly agree to develop a Manitoba First Nation Gaming Strategy which is to include:

1. the development of an Indigenous Gaming Law;

2. continued pursuit of amending the Criminal Code to removed provincial jurisdiction over First Nation gaming;

3. supporting the development of a National First Nation Gaming Association;

4. developing a proposed approach to First Nation gaming with the new Progressive Conservative government of the Province of Manitoba to work on a gaming process, including: Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs); Casino / Gaming Centre development; revenue sharing of existing provincially-run casinos; on-line gaming; and other areas of gaming; and

5. to examine the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority (SIGA) as a model to consider for the development of the Manitoba First Nations Gaming Strategy.

On June 20, 2016 Grand Chief Nepinak sent a letter to Minister Schuler with the hope that AMC and the new Progressive Conservative government could renew the goals set out in the 2005 Letter of Understanding between the AMC and Manitoba by cooperatively working together to discuss First Nations gaming in Manitoba.

Grand Chief Nepinak and Minister Schuler had their first meeting on July 18, 2016 where they discussed, among other things, First Nation VLTs in strategic market locations in the context of Lake St. Martin First Nation (LSMFN) and First Nation participation in the Winnipeg gaming market. As an outcome of their meeting, follow up correspondence was sent on July 19, 2016 requesting to meet with Minister Schuler, Minister Heather Stefanson, and Minister Eileen Clarke to discuss how best to move forward toward planning for future First Nations gaming initiatives.

Minister Schuler responded stating that he had forwarded Grand Chief’s correspondence, specifically the issue of LSMFN to Minister Heather Stefanson for her review as the Minister charged with responsibility of the Liquor & Gaming Authority of Manitoba, which has jurisdiction over all regulations pertaining to provincial liquor and gaming agreements.
Following AMC’s 28th Annual General Assembly, Grand Chief Nepinak requested an immediate meeting with Premier Pallister and Minister Ron Schuler to discuss moving forward on First Nations casino development, provincial VLT policy, VLT partnerships, payments to remote First Nations, and First Nations participation in the greater Winnipeg market. Premier Pallister responded stating that he had directed Minister Schuler to follow up on the request to meet.

Shortly thereafter, Grand Chief Nepinak, the AMC Chiefs Gaming Committee and Chief Adrien Sinclair of Lake St. Martin First Nation met with Minister Schuler to discuss Manitoba’s VLT policy and developing a proposed approach to working with First Nations on gaming related initiatives moving forward. Minister Schuler would not comment on his government’s stance on First Nations gaming policy, but committed to following up with his colleagues, Minister Stefanson and Minister Clarke to discuss the matters and sending a response to AMC within two weeks of the date. Minister Stefanson had responded regarding VLT allocations stating that all First Nation VLTs must be located on the First Nations own reserve land. AMC was not copied on this correspondence.

GAMING DEVELOPMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The AMC Chiefs Gaming Committee was expanded in October 2016 to provide for a more fulsome representation of gaming stakeholders in the development of a Gaming Strategy. The expanded Chiefs Gaming Committee now consists of:

- 1 Northern Chief Representatives – Chief Betsy Kennedy
- 1 Southern Chief Representatives – Chief Cameron Catcheway
- Aseneskak Casino Representative – Chief Clarence Easter
- South Beach Casino Representative – Chief Sheldon Kent
- Sand Hills Casino Representative – Chief Betsy Kennedy
- VLT Holder Representative – Chief Dennis Meeches
- Non-VLT Holder Representative - Vacant

In 2016 the expanded Chiefs Gaming Committee has held a series of Gaming Strategy meetings where they mandated a Gaming Task Force to advance discussions with Manitoba representatives. In December 2016, the AMC invited Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries (MBLL) and the Liquor and Gaming Authority of Manitoba (LGA) to take part in a formal consultation and negotiation process with AMC through their Gaming Task Force with one goal being to negotiate a First Nations gaming framework agreement with the Province of Manitoba.

Despite the formal invite, no meetings were held between AMC and Manitoba representatives. With the overall lack of progress that was being made, Grand Chief Nepinak and the Chief Gaming Committee began looking at legal options to advance the First Nations gaming discussion.

In May 2017, Ministers Schuler and Stefanson responded to Grand Chief stating that they had “limited” interest in developing a First Nations gaming framework agreement and that their government would approach new proposals to gaming initiatives with caution to avoid negative impacts to current programs and services.

In June 2017, the AMC held a one day Gaming Forum in order to develop a Manitoba First Nation Gaming Strategy. Manitoba Chiefs discussed the history of First Nations gaming in Manitoba, the implication of legal action, and how best to move forward. As a result of the Forum, a draft outline of a Gaming Strategy and an Indigenous Gaming Law were developed. Discussions and development is ongoing.

JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE ON GAMING

Since Manitoba’s Progressive Conservative government has come into office, no Joint Steering meetings have been held.

NORTHERN REGION CASINO

There were no proposals received for a northern region casino received by the AMC by the extended deadline date of September 30, 2016.

FIRST PEOPLES ECONOMIC GROWTH FUND (FPEGF)

The FPEGF continues to support First Nation business development in Manitoba and has approved $6 million in loan dollars fiscal year 2015/16. Please see their annual report for further details.
INTRODUCTION

First Nations women occupy a sacred and essential place in our families, communities and Nations. This is not only a First Nations cultural belief, but has evolved into a First Nations political principle.

All the work in the area of Women, Children, and Families have leadership involvement and oversight through the First Nations Women’s Committee (FNWC). The FNWC advocates and advances Manitoba First Nations women’s interests and concerns at the political level to improve educational, economic, health and social status of women, girls, families and communities.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

Families First

In 2009, the AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly passed a resolution to call on the Federal and Provincial Governments for a public inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG).

In 2012, a number of families of MMIWG asked AMC for action. They argued that they were not being heard by leadership or by police. In response, AMC coordinated and participated in a number of rallies on MMIWG. AMC also created the “Manitoba MMIWG Coalition”. It is a forum consisting of advocate organizations and service providers for collaborative dialogue on issues relating to MMIWG in Manitoba. It also provides support, advocacy and caring for families of MMIWG. It seeks to strengthen and build upon existing networks in the areas of advocacy, service delivery and social justice practice and to provide collaborative policy review, strategic analysis, technical support and information and recommendations.

Beginning in 2014, the Assembly of Manitoba has collaborated with the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) and the Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO) and the Public Interest Law Centre (PILC) to address the issue of MMIWG. This led to the “Families First” approach which was created based on engagement with families of MMIWG, youth, Elders and knowledge holders and the MMIWG Coalition.

On November 12, 2014, the AMC Chiefs in Assembly endorsed the Families First approach, and in 2015 endorsed the final report Families First: A Manitoba Indigenous Approach to Addressing the Issue of MMIWG.

The Families First report identifies four main areas of action which must be undertaken:

- **Honouring of loved ones** – done through a variety of ways which would be chosen by families of MMIWG and survivors, acknowledging the sacredness of each journey;

- **Immediate actions** – there are many existing recommendations and reports. Commitments are required and money needs to be spent now to stop further violence.

- **Family Answers Process** – families have a lot of questions about their loved ones and their individual cases which require answers and accountability from agencies and departments such as the Justice System, Winnipeg Police Service, the RCMP and Child and Family Services. A process must be created to address these questions.

- **Research into systemic long-term issues** – there are systemic issues that perpetuate violence against Indigenous women and girls which much be researched and recommendations are required to address these issues.
The AMC has continued to try to have the Families First recommendations implemented. This included in 2016 providing a copy of it to the new Manitoba provincial government, the federal government, and the National Inquiry into MMIWG. Neither level of government nor the National Inquiry has agreed to implement the recommendations.

NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MMIWG

In September 2016, the Government of Canada launched a National Inquiry into MMIWG.

The Commissioners’ mandate is to examine and report on the systemic causes of all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada by looking at patterns and underlying factors.

It is the goal of the Inquiry to provide those sharing their stories with a culturally safe space that they can access with support surrounding them. These hearings will be divided into three parts:

Part I will hear from Indigenous families who have lost loved ones to violent, wrongful or suspicious death and/or inexplicable disappearance. Indigenous women and girls who have suffered, and may still be suffering violence, including sexual violence and members from communities who have lost loved ones. These will be called the “Family and Survivor Fact Gathering Hearings.”

Part II will hear from individuals, and representatives, from institutions and organizations, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, including governments, and government agencies such as police authorities, and other institutions such as child welfare agencies in what will be called the “Institutional Fact Gathering Hearings.”

Part III will hear from experts from different disciplines and will be called the “Expert Hearings.”

There are three types of Standing:

1. **Regional Standing** which will allow the designated applicant to participate in those events which are classified as regional in a manner to be determined by the Commissioners, including fact gathering hearings involving the federal government and federal institutions, and expert panels or individual expert witnesses that are national in scope; or

2. **National Standing** which will allow the designated applicant to participate in those events which are classified as national in a manner to be determined by the Commissioners, including fact gathering hearings involving the federal government and federal institutions, and expert panels or individual expert witnesses that are national in scope; or

3. **Special Standing** limited to a specific issue(s) within the Regional or National Standing category, which shall be identified in the written Application and are relevant to the mandate of the National Inquiry.

With the assistance of the PILC, the AMC applied for standing. On June 22, 2017 AMC received confirmation that it received regional and national standing at the National Inquiry for Parts II and III. The PILC will represent the AMC at the National Inquiry, and the FNWC will provide oversight of the AMC’s participation.

At the Inquiry, the AMC will focus on:

- Child welfare and apprehension, and the ways in which these issues relate to individual and systemic violence within First Nation families;
- Human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and gang involvement, and the ways in which these issues relate to the temporary or permanent transition of First Nation individuals from reserves to urban centres and contribute to high levels of MMIWG in Manitoba;
- The failures of the current justice system to prevent crimes against Indigenous women and girls existing and potential best practices for keeping vulnerable First Nations women (including women and girls, survivors of violence and sexual exploitation, persons with disabilities, Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-gendered and queer) safe at local levels, with a specific focus on Indigenous worldviews, values and legal traditions;
- Commemoration and honouring of survivors, families and MMIWG; and,
- Health and education systems.

It is noted that AMC will address these interrelated issues within the context of exploring the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples and fulfilling treaty promises on a nation-to-nation basis.
While the deadline for application for standing has passed, the Commission has indicated it will continue to accept applications for standing.

In late June 2017 the Commission finally hired a Community Liaison Officer for Manitoba/Saskatchewan, Ms. Morene Gabriel. Ms. Gabriel’s role is to link families and survivors, representatives from various organizations who have relationship with families and/or survivors to the National Inquiry MMIWG office for dissemination of information, register with the National Inquiry office if they are interested in sharing their story and possibility of applying for Standing.

Since the launch of the Inquiry- the AMC has heard that families of MMIWG and survivors in Manitoba have lost confidence in the national process. Families have stated that they are being cut out from the National Inquiry by the Inquiry’s:

- lack of communication with families, survivors and communities;
- lack of regional focus;
- flawed scope;
- lack of transparency; and
- failure to engage in an Indigenous led process.

On July 12, 2017 the AMC hosted a press conference for MMIWG families and survivors. They made it clear that despite the numerous issues and challenges, they supported the National Inquiry taking place. However, the existing National Inquiry process must be renewed by having a regional Indigenous designed and Indigenous led process that listens to families and puts families first and contributes to the National Inquiry; replacing the remaining three Commissioners and Chief Commissioner; and amending the Terms of Reference to explicitly include policing. At the regional level, the activities would focus on honouring loved ones, immediate actions, a family answers process, and research into systemic long-term issues.

On July 12, 2017, the AMC released a press release identifying its support for Manitoba families of MMIWG and survivors in their call for a regional Indigenous designed and led component in the MMIWG National Inquiry.

Over the course of the next few months, AMC will be working with PILC to identify how to implement Families First in Manitoba based on the guidance of the families of MMIWG and survivors.

MEDIA APPLICATION TO BROADCAST THE CASE R.V CORMIER

In April 2017, AMC became aware that a number of media outlets including the APTN were applying to have cameras in the courtroom at the trial of Raymond Cormier, the man accused of the murder of Tina Fontaine. The family of Tina Fontaine objected to the media’s application to broadcast the trial (the “Broadcast Application”).

From its direct engagement with families of MMIWG through the Families First initiative, AMC understands the importance of listening to and understanding the objectives, values and priorities of families of MMIWG.

Working with the PILC, the AMC was prepared to apply to intervene at the Broadcast Application in support of the family. In response to the family’s objections and AMC’s support, the media withdrew their Broadcast Application.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: OUR CIRCLE TO PROTECT SACRED LIVES: MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS RESPONDING TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS – PHASE III

Since 2014, Our Circle to Protect Sacred Lives project has been to build awareness and education on human trafficking and to assist Manitoba First Nations in developing a Community Protection Plan based on cultural and community strengths to combat human trafficking of women and girls.

This was accomplished through facilitating a 2-day workshop to assist First Nations to take action on the issue of human trafficking in developing their community’s protection plans. The workshops were held in Tribal Council territories. Facilitators guided the participants through a Community Protection Plan Workbook in which they could make changes to reflect their community.
Phase I (2014-2015) of the project involved 4 of 7 Tribal Councils (DOTC, KTC, ILTC and WRTC). Phase II (2015-2016) of the project brought the workshop to the remaining 3 Tribal Councils (IRT, SCTC and SERDC). At the request of participants from ILTC territory, the workshop was brought back to their territory for Garden Hill First Nation. A total of 216 First Nations front-line support workers participated in workshops to take the information back to their communities to develop their own Community Protection Plans.

Moving forward on this project, funding has been confirmed by a private donor to carry out objectives for Phase III. AMC staff continues to search with other potential funders.

Phase III remains the same for Independent First Nations to have opportunity to attend workshop to develop their own Community Protection Plan.

On June 2, 2017, AMC staff, Our Circle to Protect Sacred Lives Consultant met with 5 experiential survivors to create a survivor mentorship module on how to safely and meaningfully engage survivors to support communities in developing, implementing their Community Protection Plans.

On June 6 and 7, 2017 10 representatives from Independent First Nation communities, consisting of front-line support workers, and elected councillors attended the workshop held in Winnipeg. AMC invited representatives from Province of Manitoba, Tracia’s Trust: Manitoba’s Strategy to Combat Sexual Exploitation & Human Trafficking, Manitoba Department of Families; RCMP, “D” Division, Missing & Exploited Persons Unit, Winnipeg Police Services, Counter Sexual Exploitation & Missing Persons Unit, Bear Clan Patrol and Portage-la-Prairie Friendship Centre to provide presentations and connect with First Nations to build upon existing and establish new partnerships including resources.

Phase III differs by developing additional tools for protection and safety – a survivor mentorship module; an education curriculum focusing on youth, prevention and safety; and build on efforts in Phases I and II to develop and implement an awareness campaign and network on human trafficking of First Nations women and girls for First Nation communities.

CHILD AND FAMILY MATTERS

In November 2014 by way of resolution of the AMC Executive Council of Chiefs, a Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters was mandated to help guide the overall coordination and development of AMC’s ongoing position on “Bringing Our Children Home”.

On November 28, 2016 at a meeting of the AMC Executive Council of Chiefs, the First Nations Women’s Committee (FNWC) presented that they have been seeking funds to allow for them to hold in-person meetings. The Executive Council of Chiefs discussed their support for the FNWC to oversee both the regional engagement on First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) and Jordan’s Principle.


At the April 2017 AMC Chiefs in Assembly, after considerable discussion, it was agreed by resolution to expand the FNWC’s mandate with the responsibility of oversight on Child and Family Matters, Regional Engagement on Child and Family Services and Jordan’s Principle.

ADVANCING INDIGENOUS GENDER EQUALITY PROJECT

In October 2016, Status Women Canada (SWC) issued a Call for Proposals titled: “Advance Gender Equality in Canada”. Proposal submission deadline was December 8, 2016.

On March 13, 2017, AMC’s proposal, “Advancing Indigenous Gender Equality” was successful in receiving approval from SWC to move forward on project objectives to promote First Nations women in the trades or other non-university certificate occupations through empowering women’s voices in tools for change and partnership agreements for collaborative action.
The project timeline is for the period commencing April 3, 2017 and ending on March 31, 2020.

Part of the project is to identify three key leaders and their communities as the local project sites. The First Nations Women’s Committee identified: Chief Viola Eastman, Canupawakpa Dakota Nation; Councillor Samantha Folster, Norway House Cree Nation; and Councillor Shawna Henderson, Fox Lake Cree Nation.

The key activities of the project are:

1. Community engagement to identify issues and solutions;
2. Establishing partnership with industry and governments for change;
3. Developing and promoting Tools for Change Handbook;
4. Establishing a Supportive Leadership Network; and
5. Key Leaders participation in the Pan-Canadian Network of Women Leaders meetings.

On June 1, 2017, the three key leaders of the project met to discuss and plan for the overall project.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
AMC staff has attended, presented and provided administrative assistance at various meetings, conferences and events throughout the 2016-2017 fiscal year:

- Provides administrative support to the First Nations Women’s Committee.
- Provides administrative support to the Families First Foundation, Board of Directors.
- Assisted Families First Foundation Fundraiser Blanket Dance held June 25, 2016 with 200 people in attendance and raised approximately $3,000.
- “Our Lives Are Sacred”, seasonal pancake breakfast fundraiser for Families First Foundation co-hosted with the Indian & Métis Friendship Centre and Winnipeg Police Service on December 1, 2016, with 600 people in attendance. Fundraising was through sponsorship donations, silent auction, including WestJet raffle ticket sales, for 2 anywhere West Jet Flies and raised approximately $7,000.
- Bringing the awareness and education on the issue of human trafficking to 216 First Nations front-line support workers to develop their own Community Protection Plan for protection and safety of women, girls and communities.
- Advocating and supporting families and survivors of MMIWG by providing information on the issue, especially on the process or lack thereof on the National Inquiry, MMIWG.
- Successful three year proposal submission to Status Women Canada for project, Advancing Indigenous Gender Equality to address and seek solutions of the under-representation and barriers of women in the Trades and other non-university certification that would advance equality for Indigenous women in Manitoba.

“Here’s to strong women. May we know them. May we be them. May we raise them”
Treaty Relations Report

STAFF – Gail Flett, Treaty Relations Coordinator

INTRODUCTION
The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) coordination, facilitation and communication work plan is submitted on an annual basis to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) headquarters as a Special Project. The budget and work plan activities are directly linked to the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM) activities intended to support their mandate to “strengthen, rebuild and enhance the Treaty relationship”.

AMC’s role in the TRCM is to provide political, technical and advisory supports to the Grand Chief, Chiefs’ Task Force, and Manitoba Leadership as it relates to the TRCM. The representatives who participate include: Grand Chief/designate from Grand Chiefs Office (GCO) with Dennis White Bird and Louis Harper assigned; the AMC Chiefs Task Force on TRCM are Chief Arlen Dumas, Chief Norman Bone, Chief Jim Bear and Chief Ted Bland.

The TRCM Joint Senior Officials Committee includes: 1 member from the Chiefs Task Force; the GCO; an Elder; and the Treaty Relations Coordinator. On the TRCM Operational Management Committee, representation is: GCO and Treaty Relations Coordinator. On the TRCM Technical Working Group, the AMC representative is the Treaty Relations Coordinator.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES
The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that created the TRCM is a partnership with AMC and INAC. AMC continues to maintain and uphold its relationship with the Treaty Commission Office. The federal government maintained status quo for the Treaty Commission Office and the TRCM continues with a one year extension for 2016-17 and 2017-18.

The new Treaty Commissioner, Mrs. Loretta Ross was appointed on May 29, 2017 for a one year term. The federal government – INAC – and AMC Chiefs Task Force and Elders met on May 31, 2017 to welcome Commissioner Ross and affirm their commitment as Parties to the TRCM. A formal Rising Up ceremony was held with Elders, Grandmothers and leadership.

LINKAGES TO FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES
A key responsibility associated with AMC’s coordination, facilitation and communication includes bringing Elders together for guidance through the Council of Elders, and ensuring their participation at TRCM key activities, gatherings or meetings. The Treaty Relations Coordinator ensures the Chiefs Task Force is informed of TRCM activities and updates and reports continue to be conveyed through AMC Annual Reports and at AMC ECC meetings. The Treaty Commissioner will provide updates to the AMC ECC and annually to the Chiefs-in-Assembly with the tabling of their Annual Report.
STATUS OF ACTIVITIES

AMC COUNCIL OF ELDERS

The Elders meet on a quarterly basis and provide guidance and assistance. Throughout the year, the Elders Council has participated in meetings to assist leadership, the TRCM and staff of both offices. Although faced with limited funding, the Elders continued to have a presence at the following key meetings:

- AMC Workshop on the Indian Act;
- Tea & Bannock Dialogues;
- AMC Chiefs Committee on Treaties & Self-Determination;
- TRC-UW/UM: Pathways to Reconciliation;
- The National Energy Board Line 3 Replacement Program Elders meetings and Elders and Traditional Knowledge Holders at the Turtle Lodge in Sagkeeng First Nation on November 18, 2016, entitled “Sharing Indigenous Knowledge on Survival in Times of Climate Change: A Sacred Relationship to the Land”;
- TRCM Treaty Education Initiative Institute at Lower Fort Garry;
- National Treaties 1-11 Gathering, Brandon;
- Totem Pole Journey;
- TRCM Information Session on Treaty Education with Leadership;
- AMC 28th Annual General Assembly – September 2016 at Swan Lake First Nation, with a key function in traditional protocols including overseeing the Honouring ceremony for their colleague Elder Doris Pratt. The Elders in attendance included Elmer Crouchene, Jim Cote and Harry Bone;
- Treaty Commission Workshops (October 2017 and February 2018)
- Elders and Leadership MOA Exploratory Meeting with INAC;
- Isaac Pitblado Lectures (Canadian Bar Association);
- Grandmothers’ Meetings (with Grandfathers);
- TRCM-Manitoba Museum Ceremony Honoring Museum Treaty Exhibit Artifacts and Tour;
- Nanaandawegimig-Healing Place/First Nations Health and Social Secretariat;
- AMC Law of the Hunt Gatherings with Elders;
- AMC-TRCM Manitoba Treaties Oral History Project – Volume 4;
- AMC Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) Discussion Meetings, Customary Law of the Hunt, and Grandmothers Council; and
- TRCM general operations, Treaty Education Initiative and Speakers Bureau.


TRCM GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE - COMMITTEES

In accordance with the MOA, AMC participated in the following meetings:

- Technical Working Group: merged into Operational Management Committee by consensus of the partners;
- Operational Management Committee: meetings were held on July 5, 2016; December 9, 2016; February 16, 2017 and March 1, 2017;
• Joint Senior Officials: held in abeyance until the Treaty Commissioner is appointed; and

• Other sub-committees include: Treaty Education Initiative, Oral History Project – Volume 4 ceremony and book launch held November 2, 2016; the Atlas Project - will be left to the discretion of the new Treaty Commissioner on next steps and publication.

AMC COMMUNICATION WITH INAC
INAC headquarter officials assigned to work with AMC and TRCM include Debra Alivisatos, Suzanne Dorma, and Penelope Epp, Manitoba Region. AMC- INAC meetings were held on July 4, 2016; December 7, 2016; and February 27, 2017.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING TO MANITOBA LEADERSHIP
Immediate issues and direction can be filtered through the Grand Chiefs’ Office and the AMC Executive Council of Chiefs. Annual reporting is conveyed at the AMC Annual General Assembly.

RENEWAL PROCESS OF THE TREATY COMMISSION (TRCM)
Briefing meetings held with Chiefs Task Force in April, August, September, November 2016, March and May 2017.

In reporting to AMC ECC and Grand Chief on November 28, 2016, INAC accepted the recommendation of the Chiefs Task Force to appoint Loretta Ross as Treaty Commissioner for a one year term. This was communicated to Minister Bennett. The federal Order In Council from Privy Council Office took more than one year to appoint Mrs. Ross; the Treaty Commissioner took office on May 29, 2017. The Office of TRCM continued with status quo for one year. The term for Treaty Commissioner will expire May 29, 2018 as will the office.

The parties met on the TRCM renewal on three separate occasions, including dialogue through two special workshops on Treaty Commissions and a third workshop specific to the future mandate and MOA. The following are the workshop highlights:

WORKSHOP ONE
• Generated great interest by the participants who, for the most part, are supporters of the Treaty movement and the implementations and protection of the numbered Treaties.

• The formation of a Treaty Commission in Alberta was a priority of the participants as well as the formation of a National Treaty Commission. The need to tie the Governor General of Canada to Treaty implementation was also a priority to participants. The need to expand the mandate and to have similar mandate was strongly expressed. It is highly recommended more collaborative workshops be held by the Treaty Commissions and the Parties.

• The Workshop clarified government’s position in terms of where the Parties stood on the Treaty Commission and, more importantly, on the interpretation of the Treaties. In order to achieve understanding, reconciliation, relationship and partnership, forums such as the Treaty Commission Workshop should be encouraged.

• The role of Elders proved to be invaluable in the work of the Treaty Commission, not only of their traditional knowledge but also of their own empirical knowledge. The workshop achieved its objectives by identifying the limitations of Treaty Commissions, highlighting the successes, reviewing the current mandate and recommending how to move forward with the work of the Treaty Commissions. There were twenty recommendations that came out of the workshop.

WORKSHOP TWO
• Hosted by the TRCM, this workshop included three days of ceremonies and interactive informational dialogue. Most of the attendees were from Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Elders from each of the Treaty Territories participated and provided invaluable historic insight on the Numbered Treaties.

• The youth from St. Theresa Point First Nation participated in the workshop and breakout sessions. The technicians from First Nations organizations also participated including leaders. Treaty No. 1 to 11
representatives led most of the discussion on the current political issues on Treaty implementation, enforcement and protection. Representatives from INAC were also present and participated in the ceremonies and dialogue, most of which centered on Treaties as a foundation of renewed Nation-to-Nation relationship.

- Treaty implementation was most often referred to by the participants, with the need to go beyond the Indian Act and to implement alternative government regimes.

- Joint discussion on Treaties and governance is highly recommended and encouraged, including the participation by youth. There was a genuine interest by participants to reach consensus on main issues of governance and Treaty implementation. Most of the participants expressed their views from a sovereign perspective and the understanding that the Treaties did not extinguish self-government or cede and surrender their lands.

- The participants felt that improvement of the socio-economic conditions of First Nations must be the main goal, with attaining own source revenue, building successful economies and attaining financial self-sufficiency as key elements to self-government. Since the workshop, the TRCM visited St. Theresa Point First Nation (STPFN) to deliver Treaty Education to the youth as requested by the STPFN.

WORKSHOP THREE

- The leadership was very interested in the discussion of the MOA and mandate of the Treaty Commission. The main point for consideration in moving forward is to revise the MOA and to reflect the expansion of the TRCM mandate to include implementation of Treaties and creation of a Treaty Table or Treaty Tables and to also continue with the existing mandate. It was noted that the TRCM should take the role as facilitator at these tables.

- The governance of TRCM is a concern to the Elders and the leadership, such as funding of the TRCM and reporting mechanisms. More importantly, a recommendation is being proposed to replace the MOA with something more “concrete” such as a contractual agreement between Canada and AMC or a legislation that requires the reporting of TRCM to the House of Commons. To this end, in going forward a decision is required to revise the MOA to include a Treaty Table(s) to discuss on the items as described in section 5.3 of the MOA including Treaty implementation. The Chiefs Task Force has recommended there be follow up meetings.

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS TREATY IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

AMC continues to monitor AFN’s Treaty Implementation discussions. A National Chiefs Committee on Rights, Title and Treaty Implementation was recently established. The AFN Regional Chiefs are to assist with identifying a representative from each Region. AFN recently hired Mr. Craig Gideon as the Director of Treaties and Implementation of Rights. For additional information, see Regional Chief Kevin Hart’s report.

NATIONAL TREATIES NO.S 1-11 GATHERING

The National Treaties 1-11 Annual Gathering was co-hosted by three First Nations: Waywayseecappo First Nation, Rolling River First Nation and Keeseekowenin First Nation along with AMC from August 29 - September 1, 2016 in Brandon, Manitoba. Throughout the year, several Spokespersons Meetings and Technical meetings were hosted in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. The National Gathering will be hosted by Treaty 9 Territory in Timmons, Ontario on August 29, 30 and 31, 2017. The poster and agenda will be shared with Manitoba First Nations later this summer. For more detailed information on the Gathering and meetings, see the report prepared by Louis Harper.

CANADA’S EXPLORATORY TABLES PROCESS NOW CALLED RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS RIGHTS FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT DISCUSSION TABLES

Mr. Joe Wild, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Treaties and Aboriginal Government, INAC is leading the Table process with a mandate to renew the relationship with Indigenous Nations as directed by PM Trudeau in his letters to Cabinet, dated November 2015.
These Table discussions are intended to be open and transparent. The goal is to enter into new relationships with government outside the Indian Act, government policy and legislations and to deconstruct colonialism. Currently, there are 46 Tables with the various Treaty groups. In Manitoba, Treaty 4 First Nations are linked to the Table in Saskatchewan; Treaty 2 and Adhesion to Treaty 4 Island Lake Region have also expressed interest for a Table. AMC met with Mr. Wild and there was no commitment by INAC to enter into further discussions with the AMC Secretariat on an Exploratory Table for the Indian Act.

RESOLUTION – (SEPT-16.05) MANDATORY REQUIREMENT OF A MANITOBA HIGH SCHOOL COURSE ON TREATIES AND THE TREATY RELATIONSHIP

In January 2017, AMC Grand Chief and MFNERC met with Minister Wishart and Deputy Minister Strain to discuss the resolution. Minister Wishart counter-proposed that Treaty Education be incorporated into the revised Grade11 History of Canada course instead of creating a new high school course on Treaties and the Treaty Relationship. Other issues emerged on First Nations language and culture programming, recommended to establish a working group to follow-up with meetings to advance the work of the Treaty Education Initiative and other matters that impact First Nations education in Manitoba. The representatives from TRCM and MFNERC are to participate on the revision of the Gr. 11 high school course History of Canada 30F to strengthen the components. Elder Harry Bone and Connie Wyatt Anderson from TRCM have agreed to participate and Shirley Fontaine and Olga McIvor from MFNERC have been assigned. While the resolution calls for a new high school course, this continues to remain as the long term goal; however, as an interim, AMC will seek out a new resolution in July to reflect the revision of the History of Canada course to include Treaties and Treaty Relationship including working with the Province of Manitoba to address other issues that impact First Nations education in Manitoba.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

• Co-Host of the National Treaties 1-11 Annual Gathering;
• Honouring of Elder Doris Pratt for her lifetime achievement and commitment to education and languages;
• Inclusion of the Grandmothers at the Elders Council table;
• Manitoba Treaties Oral History Project (OHP), Treaty Elders’ Teaching Series and the completion of Volume 4 “Gakina Gidagwii’igoomin Anishinaabewiyang – We Are All Treaty People” with copies sold at McNally Robinson, Grant Park. This concludes the four volume series of the Treaty Elder’s Teachings;
• Gathering of Elders and Traditional Knowledge Holders at the Turtle Lodge in Sagkeeng First Nation on November 18, 2016, entitled “Sharing Indigenous Knowledge on Survival in Times of Climate Change: A Sacred Relationship to the Land” including a submission to the Standing Committee;
• Treaty Commission Workshop I - Relationships and Obligations: Working Together on Treaties, Treaty Relationship & Treaty Implementation Report;
• Treaty Commission Workshop II – Information Sharing and Understanding Treaties Report;
• Memorandum of Agreement – TRCM Exploratory Discussion Workshop Report;
• Appointment of the Manitoba Treaty Commissioner; and
• Budget increase for 2017-2018 fiscal year.

MOVING FORWARD

Treaty Commission Renewal discussions will be a priority for the Chiefs Task Force and Elders from now until March 31, 2018.
Eagle Urban Transition Centre and Eagles Nest Resource and Recreation Program

INTRODUCTION

The Eagle Urban Transition Centre is a program within the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs mandated by the Chiefs in Assembly to provide transitional supports and programs to First Nations (Indigenous) citizens who are relocating and/or living in Winnipeg. Current supports include; counseling, advocacy, education, training and employment referrals, youth resources and workshops tailored to client needs. The EUTC provides assistance to approximately 1,500 to 1,700 individuals, youth and families on a monthly basis for an estimated total of 17,500 clients annually.

The best way to describe the EUTC is that it acts as a compass to find the most appropriate urban supports available to address single or multiple transitional issues. Our First Nation/Indigenous staff work with clients to help identify their needs and help them navigate existing resources that will respond to their situations. Building trust is a critical first step with our clients, our organization and staff are non-judgmental and we emphasize that we are here to help and provide support. Over time, the EUTC has built and maintained an up to date inventory of resources, programs and services available to assist First Nation (Indigenous) clients with day to day issues including; housing, social assistance, addictions, resources for youth and services/programs in the areas of training/employment and education. Resources may be used with the assistance, support and advocacy of counselors or clients may exercise their option of self-help.

The EUTC offers the following programs:

FRESH START PROGRAM
Bonnie Harper – Service Coordinator
Jody Lake – Follow-up Support Worker
Christina Keeper – Follow-up Support Worker

Fresh Start is a Housing First Program funded by the City of Winnipeg’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy that assists chronically or episodically homeless, particularly Indigenous youth. Our team works quickly to move homeless individuals into stable, permanent housing and supporting participants to maintain housing and self-sufficiency.

This last year our Fresh Start team was able to house twenty-four (24) people from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 by facilitating access to housing; help set up apartments; provide landlord tenant services as well as assisting them to access services through Case Management.

NEW BEGINNINGS PROGRAM
Bonnie Harper – Service Coordinator
Paywapan Colomb – Youth Housing Transition Counselor
Chris Prince – Mental Health/Addictions Counselor
Marty Boulanger – Adult Housing Transition Counselor
The New Beginnings Program is funded by the City of Winnipeg’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy and offers services to Indigenous individuals and families who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Activities of this program include housing placement, connecting clients to income supports, life skills development, supports to improve clients’ social integration, connecting clients to education and supports success and basic urgent needs services.

**PATIENT ADVOCATE UNIT**

Kevin Fontaine – Program Manager  
Rosalie Ouskan – Patient Navigator  
Valerie Olson – Patient Navigator  
Cheryl McKenzie – Administrative Assistant

The EUTC has increased client supports and resource staff with the amalgamation of the AMC Patient Advocate Unit (PAU) – a project funded through a Service Purchase Agreement with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. This amalgamation added specific urban health patient navigators to our office. The Patient Advocate Unit Staff and EUTC work in cooperation as needed to assist and support all clients attending the EUTC.

For this fiscal year, the Patient Advocate Unit logged 882 cases with a great majority of these were referred by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs whether by self-referral (walk-ins/call-ins), referrals by First Nation (such as Chiefs/Counsellors, nursing stations, health centres, etc), local organizations, or internal to AMC/EUTC.

This past year the PAU has encountered many challenges and barriers to equitable health care for First Nation patients. Medical relocation case files were again the most prevalent and pressing issues that PAU received through the WRHA referral system. Part of the process incorporates initiating an application via Housing Authorities, short-term accommodations having to be approved and extended, and appropriate identification is required. Majority of First Nations clients do not possess personal or photo identification, which is criteria needed for qualification and the first step to start the medical relocation process. All of these key factors contribute to staff conducting additional follow up, which often results in increased workloads.

**SPECIAL NEEDS ADVOCATES UNIT**

Ryan McKay – Special Needs Advocate  
Darlene Curci – Special Needs Advocate  
Patrick Berthelette – Special Needs Advocate  
Sharon Wilson – Special Needs Advocate  
Carmen Letexier – Administrative Assistant

In July 2016, the Government of Canada announced a new approach to implement Jordan’s Principle. This approach is to put the needs of children first and ensure that First Nations children living on-reserve receive the health and social services they need in a timely manner.

The Government of Canada has committed up to $382 million in new funding to provide support to this new approach and broader definition of Jordan’s Principle. This funding is to be used to enhance service coordination and ensure service access resolution so that children’s needs are assessed and responded to quickly.

Engagement is another important part of the new approach to Jordan’s Principle. Both Health Canada and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

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**Client Issues for the period of April 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017**

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<th>Financial</th>
<th>Home Care</th>
<th>Housing / Accomm.</th>
<th>Med. Recov.</th>
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<th>Mental Health</th>
<th>TRU</th>
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are actively engaging with First Nations, and jurisdictional partners to establish what supports are needed as well as to find ways to enhance service coordination and prevent delays in receiving health care and social services.

In the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs/EUTC received funds from First Nations and Inuit Health Branch to create 2 Special Needs Advocate/Case Coordinator positions within the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs’ EAGLE Urban Transition Centre.

These staff have been working over the last year to:

- Support Manitoba First Nation families and/or special needs children/adults requiring multiple services and resources through discussions with key contacts of the provincial and federal government departments and agencies together with local and regional First Nations and other resources;
- Develop care and support plans involving the families and health care professionals;
- Coordinate the activities with other health and social disciplines in implementing the individual discharge and follow-up plans for selected children/adults (Nursing Stations, Health Centres, NIH, Patient Transportation Unit, Home Care, Education, Child and Family Services, etc.);
- Maintain full documentation and data collection of the process and resulting policy development, case conferencing and dispute resolution with specific cases, including notes of meetings where applicable;
- Pursue ongoing communication with all aspects of external health care systems including First Nation health and social services, federal and provincial systems, and governing areas of responsibility and community based agencies;
- Ensures the best interest of the client and family, and best practice models and evidence based treatments are respected and employed; and
- Undertake follow-up with clients and families and key contacts to ensure the child/adult/family is receiving and maintaining the services required.

EAGLE’S NEST PROGRAM
Sandi Starr - Program Coordinator
Tyrone Schroeder - Assistant Youth Coordinator

EUTC continues to operate the Eagle’s Nest Project as a resource for Indigenous youth who are out-of-school and unemployed. The Eagle’s Nest project activities are delivered at the St. John’s Leisure Centre at 601 Aikins Avenue in Winnipeg’s North End. The City of Winnipeg has been a tremendous supporter contributing to the success of the Eagle’s Nest. This project offers a safe environment, Monday to Friday programming, supportive staff, daily nutrition, cultural education and an abundance of developmental opportunities. The objective of the Eagle’s Nest is to assist 75 Indigenous Youth annually toward personal and professional goals that will ultimately see them gain the confidence to return to school or obtain employment. Eagle’s Nest activities include presentations, workshops and activities such as:

- Food handler certification level 1
- Non-violent crisis intervention
- Volunteer experience
- Goal setting and PATH Workshop
- Portfolio development
- Sports and recreation
- Access to computers and the internet
- Cooking classes and Nutrition
- Healthy lifestyles and Addictions awareness
- Individual counseling
- Resume writing, interview skills and education tours
• Literacy, group reading and public speaking

• Cultural awareness, teachings and ceremonies; sweat lodge, sharing circles, medicine wheel, medicine gathering, wild game preparation, drumming/singing, crafts, language, etc.

As part of all our programming, the EUTC also provides holistic treatment based on the four aspects of personal wellbeing: spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental components of the individual. The EUTC provide support to clients using the medicine wheel philosophy and teachings as our guide. We accomplish this by bringing awareness/education to our clients that the belief that there are four elements to one’s self; mental, physical, spiritual and emotional. And to achieve balance/wellness first of all, we must be aware and these four elements must be supported/present in a positive manner. Counseling staff meet in person with our clients to identify their issues/challenges, strengths and what supports/resources are best suited for their circumstances. EUTC clients work with our staff to develop plans of action including client responsibilities, identified resources and course of action. It is expected that the proposed course of action and engagement of supports will lead our clients improved circumstances and personal wellness. The medicine wheel philosophy is not imposed on our clients, however the teachings of the medicine wheel are principles that guide our staff including; wisdom, love, respect, truth, humility, honesty and courage.

Through financial support from other year to year program areas offered by the EUTC we were able to offer Elder teachings and a variety of workshops that address the four aspects of personal well-being.

One of the main reasons for our success as an organization is that the EUTC provides a safe culturally appropriate environment that recognizes both traditional and contemporary healing methods. The EUTC Office is staffed by 100% First Nations/Indigenous staff who are knowledgeable and have personal experience with the issues and resources required to successfully transition to life in Winnipeg.

Service by and for First Nation (Aboriginal) clients cannot be over-emphasized enough, EUTC staff genuinely care, understand and empathize our clients circumstances. Many of our staff have personally endured or have family situations similar those of our clients. Building trust with our clients is also critical as helpers.

The EUTC Elders provides teachings and leadership conducting ceremonies such as; prayers, sharing circles, smudges, medicine teachings, feasts, sweatlodge ceremonies, healing, etc. The Elders are also a tremendous resource to EUTC counseling staff and provides supportive ceremonies as a means of re-strengthening and revitalizing their spirits.

CHALLENGES
The EUTC receives funds from a variety of sources on a yearly basis. The EUTC answers calls for proposals, and submits yearly proposals to various funders such as the Government of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg.

On-going and sustainable funding is the main challenge at EUTC, financial resources are crucial to the operations if the EUTC is to remain a reliable and
effective resource. The EUTC is reliant entirely on proposal writing and receives a tremendous amount of in-kind support from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Secretariat and lobbying from the Grand Chiefs Office. Financial uncertainty places strains on staffing, programming and limits organizational planning.

The EUTC has plans to incorporate but this is difficult to do with time limited resources and relying on proposal submissions with funds that are not guaranteed or are secured late in the fiscal year. A common and growing challenge experienced by the clients attending the EUTC and other urban Indigenous organizations is access to safe affordable housing. Winnipeg’s housing and rental market is very competitive and limited, leaving the most vulnerable people with the fewest options. Racism and discrimination are also frequent barriers to housing, employment, training, education, sports, etc.

**ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Eagle Urban Transition Centre continues to be a valuable resource to Manitoba’s sixty four Nations communities and urban Indigenous citizens. It is becoming recognized as a primary source of service and referrals to individuals re-locating to Winnipeg for reasons such as; housing, education, employment, addictions, legal, family, health, etc.

In this reporting period, the EUTC established and maintained several formal partnerships with employers, Aboriginal Organizations, training institutions, schools, health service organizations, housing agencies and many community-based social organizations. Relationships were also formed with government, through funding relationships and social development projects.

Identified partners include:

- **Manitoba Justice (Corrections)** – promotion of urban resources and cultural education;
- **Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development** – referring agency;
- **Urban Circle Training Centre** – referring agency and staff development;
- **Kanikanichihk** – referring agency and hosting of work placements;
- **St. John’s Leisure Centre** – in-kind support/office space for Eagles Nest;
- **Manitoba Tipi Mitawa** – board representation;
- **North End Community Renewal Corp.** – referring organization/housing;
- **University of Manitoba (Health and Social Sciences)** – research;
- **Downtown Biz** – working relationship/clients supports;
- **Winnipeg Regional Health Authority** – funding and working relationship;
- **City of Winnipeg Housing First Program** – funding and working relationship;
- **Citizens Bridge** – referring organization;
- **Build Inc.** – referring organization;
- **John Howard Society**;

The Eagle Urban Transition Centre also hosted a one day Urban Indigenous Service Provider Forum in January 2017. The purpose of this Forum was to inform the community on what is Autism and what services and resources are available within Manitoba. Invited presenters highlighted current social issues and challenges related to Autism both on and off reserve. Over 75 people attended this event and positive feedback was provided by all who attended on this important topic impacting our Indigenous citizens.
INTRODUCTION

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs First Nations Family Advocate Office supports and advocates for Indigenous families involved in the CFS system by challenging existing jurisdictions, policies, laws and organization. We use Indigenous knowledge, customary laws, traditions and belief systems to create positive change for children, families and communities. Cora Morgan is the First Nations Family Advocate, and Cheryle Dreaver is the newly-hired Assistant Family Advocate.

In two years of operation, the Advocate Office has opened 593 case files and has advocated for families, where we have seen over 100 children returned home. This number is expected to be higher as we are currently conducting a file review.

The Advocate Office has positioned itself in the Indigenous community as a trusted alternative for children, youth, parents, families and community members seeking support and advocacy outside of a CFS system that has treated many people unjustly and that many people deeply distrust. With over 10,000 children in CFS care and 88 percent Indigenous, it is a solution that must be supported.

The TRC called upon all governments to implement Jordan’s Principle fully, and the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ordered Canada to stop applying a limited and discriminatory definition of Jordan’s Principle and to reform the First Nation CFS Program. In response, the federal government announced new funding to implement a “new approach” to Jordan’s Principle in July 2016 to assess children’s needs and ensure they are responded to quickly. While political will to respond to the ruling was welcomed, the new approach proposed was a unilateral decision—First Nations were not involved. The AMC proposed Manitoba First Nation input be included in the government’s new approach, starting with a forum on Jordan’s Principle.

From December 12-13, 2016, two hundred and forty-two participants representing different First Nations, tribal councils, First Nations service organizations and provincial/territorial organizations attended a forum to discuss how Manitoba First Nations would design full implementation of Jordan’s Principle in Manitoba and to identify current challenges in the child welfare system. Among other things, participants asserted First Nations must lead implementation in Manitoba in design, mandate and delivery. Report recommendations were provide to the Government of Canada.

The Advocate Office conducted the Keewaywin: Our Way Home regional engagement on First Nation CFS reform and Jordan’s Principle Implementation. Engagement sessions ran from December 2016 to June 2017 and are a part of the consultations between the Federal Government and First Nations, Inuit and Métis stakeholders to reform the First Nation CFS program and implement Jordan's Principle. The project plan included engagement sessions in 20 communities, four town hall sessions, a youth session, two CFS agency/authority sessions, provincial and federal government sessions and meetings with the Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters and Grandmothers and Grandfathers.
In January 2017, the AMC was granted intervener status in a Court of Appeal case where a non-Indigenous family waited up to a year without a child protection hearing in order to have their child returned. The judge determined current delays are intolerable and unacceptable, indicating cases would now be heard within weeks rather than months. This was an important decision for Indigenous people due to the high number of Indigenous children in care. Prolonged child protection hearing wait times create undue hardship on children and parents and simply add to the trauma of CFS system involvement.

During the AMC Chiefs Assembly on Child and Family Matters held in Winnipeg, Manitoba from April 25-27, 2017, AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution APR-17.02, supporting the recommendation from the Grandmothers Council, the First Nations Women’s Committee and the Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters to amend the AMC Constitution to include the Grandmothers Council. The AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly directed the AMC Secretariat to provide the appropriate notice for an amendment to the AMC Constitution to the Chiefs for consideration at the July 2017 Annual General Assembly. The Grandmothers Council will take a leading role as Manitoba First Nations seek to reform child welfare in their communities.

The AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution JUN-14.01 calling for a file-by-file audit of CFS agencies to ensure that those children where there is no real concern for protection are immediately sent home to parents or home communities. These audits have the potential to dramatically reduce the number of children in care.

In June 2017, the First Nation Family Advocate Office submitted a proposal to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada requesting funding to support the Office’s work, including the CFS file-by-file audits. The proposal has been tentatively approved for six months in 2017 and for fiscal years 2017-2019.

CHILDREN SPECIAL ALLOWANCE

The First Nations Family Advocate Office is working closely with the Public Interest Law Centre on exploring options on how to deal with the Children Special Allowance (CSA). The CSA is a monthly payment provided to child welfare agencies by the federal government for each child in their care. The Children Special Allowance Act requires that CSA be paid for each child who is both “maintained” by an agency and who resides in the care of an institution, foster home (either group or private) or the private home of a guardian or tutor.

Since 2006, the province of Manitoba has required CFS agencies to remit the Child Special Allowance amount that they receive from the Canada Revenue Agency back to the Provincial Government. That includes non-indigenous and indigenous children who do not normally live on reserve.

Manitoba and British Colombia are the only provinces that claw back the money. In 2015-16, the remitted amount was a total between $32 and $34 million. This leaves agencies with the dilemma of either complying with the provincial directive and possibly violating of the Children Special Allowance Act, or refusing the provincial directive and having essential funding clawed back. The clawback of CSA has direct and negative implications for First Nations children and families.
The preliminary legal options include:

• Applying for a judicial declaration that the Funding Guideline which forces the remittance of CSA funds to the Provincial General Fund is unlawful;

• Applying for a judicial declaration that the forced remittance of CSA funds to the Provincial General Fund as well as the clawback of funds from agencies that do not remit is inconsistent with the Honour of the Crown;

• Seeking a determination that the forced remittance and clawback of CSA funds is discriminatory under the Manitoba Human Rights Code on the grounds of race, family status, social disadvantage and source of income;

• Seeking a determination that the forced remittance and clawback of CSA funds is contrary to s. 15 (equality) and s. 7 (security of the person) of the Charter;

• Filing a lawsuit seeking damages and alleging that the Province has unlawfully induced a breach of statutory and fiduciary obligations relating to the CSA funds (which could potentially be certified class action).

These preliminarily legal options were presented to the Chiefs in Assembly on April 25, 2017. Further legal research is being conducted and an update will be provided to AMC by PILC before the end of August 2017.
Implementation of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Decision

STAFF
Marcel Balfour, Senior Policy Analyst
Cora Morgan, First Nations Family Advocate
Hilda Anderson-Pyrz, Engagement Coordinator
Chickadee Richard, Engagement Coordinator
Kyra Wilson, Engagement Coordinator
Jaron Hart, Engagement Liaison
Vanessa Tait, Engagement Liaison
Sandra Starr, Engagement Liaison
Erica Martin, Administrative Support
Heidi Stranger, Administrative Support

FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REFORM
In response to the CHRT Decision, Canada informed that it will fund reform of the FNCFS Program through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). This is additional funding and not regular INAC funding.

The AMC is a member of the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) on FNCFS, which has representatives from First Nation CFS Agencies, Northern and Southern Authorities, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO), Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO), Manitoba and Canada. At a July 2016 RAC meeting, Canada announced that it had funding available for regional FNCFS Program reform. As a result, RAC developed a work plan for regional engagement. The AMC made a submission for regional engagement on FNCFS reform, that included engaging on Jordan’s Principle. However, INAC stated the Jordan’s Principle component had to be taken out because Health Canada was administering funds for regional engagement on Jordan’s Principle.

At the September 2016 AMC Annual General Assembly, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed resolution Sept-16.08 Regional Engagement on First Nations Child and Family Services that mandated the AMC Secretariat to conduct regional engagement on FNCFS Program Reform, with oversight to be provided by the Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters. At the April 2017 AMC Chiefs in Assembly, oversight of the project changed to the First Nations Women’s Committee.

AMC proposed that the approach to regional engagement on FNCFS Program Reform would support Cindy Blackstock and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society by pursuing regional engagement using “Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth and Families.” The Touchstones of Hope is a set of principles to guide a reconciliation process that is transferable across a variety of areas, including health care, education and research.

THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL DECISION
In the January 2016 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada (for the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) (the “CHRT Decision”), the CHRT determined Canada discriminates against First Nations children. It ordered Canada to, among other things:

- Reform the First Nation Child and Family Services Program (FNCFS);
- Cease applying the narrow definition of Jordan’s Principle; and
- Take measures to immediately implement the full meaning and scope of Jordan’s Principle.

In September 2016, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) Chiefs-in-Assembly passed a resolution that called for “Immediate Implementation of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Decision Re: First Nations CFS and Jordan’s Principle Program” and identified First Nations directives on Jordan’s Principle.
In response to the CHRT Decision, Canada informed that it will fund implementation of Jordan’s Principle through Health Canada, First Nations Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB). This is additional funding, not regular FNIHB funding.

For over ten years, the AMC has had a mandate to advocate for the implementation of Jordan’s Principle. The AMC has been consistent in advocating for a broad approach to Jordan’s Principle that applies to education, child welfare, health, childcare, recreation and language and culture.

The AMC proposed to conduct regional engagement on Jordan’s Principle and the Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters agreed to oversee the regional engagement of Jordan’s Principle, as they would already be engaging regionally on the First Nation CFS Program Reform. Implementation of Jordan’s Principle is intimately connected to FNCFS reform as many children on reserve are placed in care in order to receive services.

**REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

Keewaywin: Our Way Home was AMC’s engagement initiative in response to Manitoba CFS reform and full implementation of Jordan’s Principle.

Manitoba First Nations engagement was a First-Nations-led initiative to develop FNCFS reform options that respond to the CHRT decision, Canada’s acceptance of the Tribunal decision, the TRC Calls to Action related to child welfare and the AMC resolutions related to child-welfare reform. Regional Engagement was also conducted to identifying from a First Nations perspective how to fully implement Jordan’s Principle in Manitoba.


**PROCESS OF KEEWAYWIN: OUR WAY HOME**

**REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS - TOUCHSTONE OF HOPE AND PATH EXERCISE**

The Regional Engagement session utilized the Touchstones of Hope toolkit which uses the five principles of self-determination, culture and language, holistic approach, structural interventions and non-discrimination. Within these principles a number of programs, services, ways forward, and action items were identified.
The PATH exercise was also utilized to define participant dreams for First Nation CFS reform and full implementation of Jordan’s Principle. They then defined first indicators that would show their dream is becoming a reality. With goals and goal benchmarks set, participants then discussed their current state—where things are now. The next step in the PATH process involves defining who will need to enroll in order to achieve their dreams and what resources will be needed to achieve their dreams. Participants then defined how to build and sustain strength over time as they work towards achieving their dreams. The final step involved identifying small or large-scale steps achievable within six months that will help them to realize their dreams.

FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REFORM
Keewaywin: Our Way Home regional engagements sessions on First Nation CFS reform began in December 2016 and ended June 2017. The engagement sessions included 20 First Nation communities, a youth session, two CFS Agency/Authority sessions, provincial and federal government sessions and meetings with the Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters and Grandmothers and Grandfathers. AMC completed a final report that contains the results of the AMC First Nations Family Advocate Office Keewaywin: Our Way Home, Manitoba First Nations Engagement on First Nations Child and Family Services. The report contains the main findings and recommendations from engagement sessions and meetings. The First Nations and participants that attended the engagement sessions will be provided a copy of the final report and also their individual PATH for the engagement sessions they were involved in. The following recommendations were developed:

- Restore First Nation jurisdiction of children.
- Deconstruct a child welfare system whose preference is the easy solution of child apprehension, rather than the more difficult solutions needed to prevent child apprehension at all costs.
- Provide basic human rights to Indigenous children and families living on reserve in terms of adequate housing, medical services, community resources and education and employment opportunities.
- Establish customary care/kinship care in all communities to ensure Indigenous children in need of CFS protection stay with their families and in their communities.
- Establish a Grandmothers Council in each community to take an active role in FNCFS reform and in implementing and guiding development of customary/kinship care.
- Restore traditional culture practices and language in our families and communities.
• Change justice system practices to include restorative justice options.
• Eliminate poverty on reserves to prevent, in part, the high numbers of Indigenous children in CFS care.
• Inject infrastructure funding for all First Nation communities —poverty is one root cause for the high number of Indigenous in care.
• Design a new funding model to support a model of care based on prevention, reunification and strengthening of families.
• Funnel prevention dollars towards bodies independent of the CFS system to minimize any real or perceived conflict of interest in agencies tasked with both child apprehension and child protection.
• Direct prevention funding dollars to Manitoba First Nations, rather than to agencies, to allow communities to build their visions for child welfare that focus on models of care based on prevention, reunification and strengthening of families.
• First Nations must take the lead in designing and implementing a system based on First Nation original systems of child rearing, education and nurturing of spirit in order to break cycles of past failed child-welfare policy and to restore spiritual, physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.
• Develop a range of First-Nation-led options to reform FNCFs using recommendations contained in this report.

For further information, please see the draft First Nations Child and Family Services Regional Engagement Report provided to all Chiefs in the Chiefs Packages for the July 2017 Annual General Assembly.

The AMC has proposed to Canada to move forward on FNCFs program reform through the AMC First Nations Family Advocate Office (please see the First Nations Family Advocate Office report for additional information).

FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF JORDAN’S PRINCIPLE

Keewaywin: Our Way Home regional engagements sessions on full implementation of Jordan’s Principle began in December 2016 and ended June 2017. The engagement sessions included 20 First Nation communities, a youth session, two CFS Agency/Authority sessions, provincial and federal government sessions and meetings with the Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Matters and Grandmothers and Grandfathers.

AMC completed the Keewaywin: Our Way Home Regional Engagements report identifying the information on how to fully implement Jordan’s Principle in Manitoba, which will be submitted to FNIHB and the Chiefs-in-Assembly. The First Nations and participants that attended the engagement sessions will be provided a copy of the final report and also their individual PATH for the engagement sessions they were involved in. The following recommendations were developed:

• Restore First Nations’ jurisdiction of children, especially in areas such as family law, health services and social services, and draft JP implementation into First Nation constitutions.
• Deconstruct a child welfare system whose preference is the easy solution of child apprehension, rather than the more difficult and costly solutions needed to prevent child apprehension at all costs.
• Establish a JP resource, program and service medical centre in each First Nation to build capacity and to equip First Nations as they seek to end voluntary surrender of children into CFS care related to receipt of medical services.
First Nations take the lead in designing and implementing a JP system based on First Nation original systems of child rearing, education and nurturing of spirit in order to promote spiritual, physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.

Educate and train First Nation people living on First Nations, establishing a professional workforce dedicated to caring for and providing services for children with special needs. Until this capacity is built, ensure non-Indigenous service providers have knowledge of First Nation cultural practices and languages.

Create an education and awareness campaign about the challenges children with special needs face and how to best care for them and create a resource booklet outlining how to navigate the CFS system and access supports and services under the JP program.

Provide basic human rights to Indigenous children and families living on reserve in terms of adequate housing, medical services, resources and education and employment opportunities.

Inject infrastructure funding for all First Nations – poverty is one root cause for the high number of Indigenous children in care.

Funnel prevention dollars towards bodies independent of the CFS system to minimize any real or perceived conflict of interest in agencies tasked with both child apprehension and child protection.

Design a new funding model to support a model of care based on prevention, reunification and strengthening of families, directing prevention funding dollars to Manitoba First Nations, rather than to agencies, to allow First Nations to build their visions for JP implementation.

Establish customary care/kinship care in all First Nations to ensure Indigenous children stay with their families and in their First Nations.

Develop a range of First-Nation-led options to implement JP using recommendations contained in this report.

For further information, please see the draft Jordan’s Principle Regional Engagement Report provided to all Chiefs in the Chiefs Packages for the July 2017 Annual General Assembly.

Going forward, the AMC has proposed to operationalize the Jordan’s Principle Regional Engagement Report though a Jordan’s Principle service coordination project. With oversight by the First Nations Women’s Committee, this approach will work from a broad interpretation of Jordan’s Principle, and pursue immediate service coordination activities including identification of options for a First Nations specialized entity to be responsible for implementing Jordan’s Principle. This includes exploring potential provide First Nation professional services to First Nations on reserve.
Youth Secretariat

INTRODUCTION
The AMC Youth Secretariat has been functioning as the provincial coordinating body for First Nation youth initiatives since 2001. The objectives of the Youth Secretariat include:

1) Youth voice - ensure there is a youth voice providing direction and advice in different program areas under the AMC;
2) Youth active - youth have an opportunity to learn and develop leadership skills;
3) Youth engagement - youth are involved in various activities offered through the Youth Secretariat; and
4) Building stronger communities - in order to make real change within our communities, change has to be done at an individual level to establish healthy communities.

BACKGROUND
In September 1994 the AMC Chiefs-in-Assembly (CIA) recognized that new programs were needed to support the development of on and off-reserve First Nations youth, and that addressing the needs of First Nation youth is a basic goal of self-government. It was resolved to have the AMC Secretariat develop a strategy and plan of action for addressing this through the dismantling / self-government process.

In September 1998 Manitoba First Nations youth requested the CIA to establish the Manitoba First Nations Youth Council (MFNYC) with the AMC that would provide a recognized forum through which First Nations youth can bring issues to the table. The CIA resolved to “support their youth through the creation of two youth positions within the Secretariat to establish a functioning youth council.”

In April 1999 the three Grand Chiefs were to negotiate a new Human Resources Development Agreement with Human Resources Development Canada that included a new a youth component. The CIA resolved that the ECC consult with the youth planning group of the Manitoba First Nations Youth Council to ensure youth funds received from the negotiated agreement are identified for priority youth areas prior to distribution to SCO or MKO.

In November 2000 the ECC passed a motion granting the MFNYC an honourary, non-voting place at the table of elected representatives from the AMC at all Chiefs Assemblies. Later the same month, the CIA resolved to support the ECC motion.

In May 2003 the CIA resolved to support the inclusion of the Manitoba First Nations Youth Secretariat and its components within the AMC Constitution.

NAYSPS AND ASSIST
A longstanding and main component of the AMC Youth Secretariat has been to further educate First Nations youth about suicide prevention, eliminate the stigma within communities, offer intervention training opportunities, and to support those touched by suicide. The AMC Youth Secretariat created the AMC Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative, which included developing and implementing prevention strategies in the First Nations communities in a timely and coordinated manner. The term Suicide Prevention was changed to Youth Health and Wellness as identified by youth that in order to address suicide First Nations need to focus on strengths, empowerment and creating change.

Subsequently, the AMC was chosen as 1 of the 6 mental health promotion pilot projects in Canada as part of the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy. As an Aboriginal Representative Organization (now “IRO”), the AMC was in a position to have the AMC Youth Secretariat develop and enhance a five-day training session for youth to become a facilitator of the INAC-funded Culture, Economic, Political, Social (CEPS) Youth Leadership
Development curriculum. This five-day session provides the trainer with an introduction and general orientation to delivering CEPS, overall preparedness and responsibilities of being a facilitator and the concepts and approaches to delivering the CEPS curriculum.

The CEPS Youth Leadership Development Training is intended for First Nations youth between the ages of 15 and 30, their parents and other educators who influence youth throughout development. Those trained in delivering CEPS will be able to train First Nations Youth the leadership curriculum.

Over the years, AMC has approached NAYSPS and ASIST funding from FNHB as integral with CEPS funding from INAC as being integral to a holistic approach to First Nations youth suicide in Manitoba, and consistently reported to the AMC Chiefs in Assembly and to FNHIB in order to fulfill its original mandate to ensure that the AMC Youth Secretariat continues to act with and for youth that includes a strong youth suicide prevention component.

THE AMC YOUTH COUNCIL
In 2004 the AMC Chiefs in Assembly created the AMC Youth Council Initiative. The purpose of this initiative was to increase youth representation within AMC, and to provide a voice and to create positive opportunities through which youth issues could be addressed. Three main components of Youth Council Initiative was:

(1) The Youth Advisory Committee and Manitoba First Nations Youth;
(2) Provide opportunities for Manitoba First Nations Youth to attend the Annual Regional Youth Gatherings; and
(3) The AMC Youth Secretariat to support the work of the Youth Council and Youth Advisory Committee.

In October 2004 the ECC passed a motion “to adopt a youth representative as an ex-officio member under each of the set out portfolios to provide an opportunity for youth representation within regional initiatives/issues to teach the youth how the current system operations, and to include the youth ex officio in the technical working groups, to provide a mentoring relationship on the understanding that the Youth Council solicit funding for the Action Plan from various sources, but not AMC.”

In July 2011 the CIA resolved to support Manitoba First Nations youth leaders participation on the ECC by providing one permanent ECC seat and that the CIA support amending the AMC Constitution to provide voting status for the youth representative.

KEY ACTIVITIES, ISSUES AND CHALLENGES
FUNDING
Core funding to the Youth Secretariat remains the largest challenge. The Youth Secretariat continues to only operate on a proposal for project-specific activities.

Information sharing remains a challenge. While information is sent to all First Nations and social media is used, due to inconsistency with Internet access in many First Nations (lack of access or poor access), youth still are challenged with receiving information directly.

FROM YOUTH SUICIDE TO YOUTH HEALTH AND WELLNESS
The AMC Youth Secretariat continues the work of Youth Health and Wellness (Suicide Prevention). The focus is on strengths, empowerment, culture and tradition. Part of this includes presentations and workshops on the promotion of health and wellness, resiliency and protective factors. The goal is on to empower young people by strengthening identity and well-being to overcome risks to completing suicide. Some of the workshops are based on CEPS Youth Leadership Development.

From March 13-16, 2017, the annual Traditional Youth Gathering “Indigenous.Strength.Inspire.” connected youth with Knowledge Keepers to learn about their identity, culture and traditions. This also connects them with youth from other First Nations communities.

Trainings are also provided to youth and those who work with youth. Trainings include Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training with cultural enhancements, “Suicide- signs, the helper and resources”, Mental Health First Aid- First Nations version and Little Cub Training. An important aspect of the training is the
continuous connection with the communities after the trainings are done. The trainings are used as a way to create stepping stones to build capacity.

A Train the Trainer session for CEPS Youth Leadership Development was developed by the Youth Secretariat and was featured as one of the best practices across Canada when looking at Mental Health Promotion.

Partnerships are important with various organizations and First Nations communities to carry out the work of Youth Health and Wellness and to create opportunities for youth to take part and to express their views. Youth are encouraged to take part on committees or initiatives.

FROM FIRST NATIONS YOUTH COUNCIL TO YOUTH ADVISORY

The Manitoba First Nations Youth Council has been restructured. The new structure has omitted the word Council which is the new movement nationally. Now the First Nations Youth Advisory, it is and is geared towards individuals 18-25 years of age.

The Advisory is in the beginning stages of sorting out the Terms of Reference and setting up a new process to elect the two National representatives- one female and one male. The Advisory has held a few meetings.

The Youth Advisory is open to all youth in Manitoba and serves as an advisory to the Youth Secretariat and the hope is to other initiatives under the umbrella of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. The goal is to give a youth a platform to become more involved with our First Nations communities.
INTRODUCTION

ENBRIDGE LINE 3

In 2015, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs intervened in the Enbridge Line 3 Replacement Program before the National Energy Board (NEB). The AMC was represented by the Public Interest Law Centre (PILC).

The participation of the AMC was not about opposition to a pipeline project, rather its intervention was based on the premise that relationships between First Nations, the environment, governments, proponents and regulators are badly out of balance.

For the first time, the AMC sought direct guidance from a group of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho (Cree) and Dakota Elders in the formal hearing process. The Elders felt it was important for them to prepare a Statement which could be used as a teaching tool and as a means of improving relationships. The Statement prepared by the Elders is entitled Ogichi Tibakonigaywin, Kihche’othasowewin, Tako Wakan: The Great Binding Law.

In April 2016, the NEB released its recommendations report pertaining to the Enbridge L3RP. At the same time, Environment Climate Change Canada (ECCC) also published its draft review of related upstream greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for the Project. ECCC invited comments and input on the draft upstream GHG assessment until 25 May 2016.

On behalf of the AMC, the PILC submitted comments to the ECCC on 25 May 2016.

In December 2016 the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs filed an application for leave to file for judicial review before the Federal Court of Appeal to challenge the approval of the Enbridge L3RP.

Neither the Attorney General of Canada nor Enbridge took a position on whether AMC should receive leave of the court to file its application for judicial review.

In challenging the approval of the Enbridge L3RP, AMC is taking the position that:

• Canada relied on a flawed NEB process as a key element of the Governor in Council’s decision. For example, the NEB:
  - failed to acknowledge the existence of The Great Binding Law,
  - ignored and disrespected the expertise of Elders and Knowledge Holders,
  - twice refused AMC’s invitations to listen and experience the Great Binding through attendance at a sacred lodge (Turtle Lodge at Sakgeeng First Nation)
  - unilaterally imposed a hearing process based on western legal systems despite explicit objections from AMC, and
  - significantly limited participant’s ability to effectively participant in the public hearing process and denied AMC its right to be meaningfully heard.

• Canada unilaterally imposed a consultation process on First Nations that failed to live up to Canada’s obligations under UNDRIP, its honour of the Crown and section 35 of the Constitution.
Canada completely failed to obtain free, prior and informed consent relating to Enbridge Line 3.

Despite the AMC’s active participation in the NEB process, Canada’s Order-in-Council did not address the relationship between The Great Binding Law and the Western legislative framework. Both the NEB Report and the Consultation Report are also silent on this relationship.

AMC argued that the honour of the Crown, nation-to-nation relationships and UNDRIP all require Canada to:

- acknowledge that the Great Binding Law exists,
- respect Indigenous laws as equal, and
- understand that the Great Binding Law must be heard in ceremony, sacred lodges, and in Indigenous languages.

In January 2017, Justice Pelletier of the Federal Court of Appeal issued an order granting AMC leave to commence their application for judicial review. The AMC subsequently filed its application for judicial review of the Governor in Council’s order. In March 2017, the Federal Court of Appeal issued an order granting leave to intervene to the National Energy Board.

The only other Indigenous group to seek standing was the Manitoba Metis Federal (MMF) who was granted leave to also commence an application for judicial review. The MMF discontinued their action on July 4, 2017. As a result, the AMC is currently the only party challenging the Enbridge L3RP approval in court. The matter will likely be heard sometime in 2018.

The timetable for remaining activities in preparation for the hearing of the judicial review before the Federal Court of Appeal includes:

- July 17, 2017 - AMC shall service its supporting affidavits and documentary exhibits and file proof of service;
- September 1, 2017 – the Respondents shall serve its supporting affidavits and documentary exhibits and shall file proof of service;
- September 29, 2017 – Cross examinations on affidavits must be completed by all parties;
- October 27, 2017 – AMC shall serve and file its record;
- December 8, 2017 – the Respondents shall serve and file their records;
- December 18, 2017 – the Applicant shall serve and file a requisition requesting that a date be set for the hearing of the application.

ENERGY EAST

Energy East is a 4,500-kilometre pipeline proposed by TransCanada to carry 1.1 million barrels of crude oil per day at high pressure from tar sands in Hardisty, Alberta to refineries in Saint John, New Brunswick. The scale of the proposed project is larger than any other tar sands project proposed, including the recent Northern Gateway and Keystone XL proposals.

The proposed project includes the conversion of a 40-year old existing natural gas pipeline to an oil transportation pipeline from Saskatchewan, through Manitoba, to Ontario and connecting it with new pipeline through Quebec and on to Saint John, New Brunswick. The proposal also includes construction of new pipeline in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec and New Brunswick to link up with the converted pipe; and construction of associated facilities, pump stations and tank terminals required to move crude oil, including marine facilities that enable access to other markets by ship. The pipeline is expected to lead to massive tanker exports from the Atlantic coast to send crude to Europe, India, China and the U.S.
The proposed route of the pipeline would be crossing 2,963 identified waterways and countless smaller streams and wetlands along the way, including the Assiniboine River just upstream of the Portage Diversion, and the entire length of the Winnipeg drinking water aqueduct from Shoal Lake to the Deacon Reservoir in Winnipeg.

In March 2016 the AMC submitted an Application to Participate as an Intervenor in the NEB hearing into the Energy East Project (“Energy East”). Owing to an allegation that the Panel had engaged in improper behaviour, in September 2016 the Panel recused themselves and the process for Board consideration of the Application was suspended. The process began anew from the outset with a new Panel appointed in January 2017 and the new Panel said they would consider all applications to participate that had already been submitted and therefore AMC did not need to re-submit an Application to Participate.

In May 2017, the NEB released two documents related to the Project:

• A draft List of Issues; and,
• A Draft Factors and Scope of the Factors for the Environmental Assessment.

The NEB Panel stated that it was interested in hearing comments and feedback on these documents. In May 2017, the AMC submitted comments on the new draft list of issues. The AMC comments focused on the fact that the issues included were inadequate and out of step with the need to respect Indigenous legal orders.

The AMC and PILC will be meeting over the next month or so to discuss next steps with regards to AMC’s involvement in the Energy East hearings.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT MODERNIZATION

In June 2016 the federal government launched a review of environmental assessment ("EA") processes in Canada, including among others the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 ("CEAA 2012"). The AMC worked with the PILC on these reviews.

To this end, an Expert Panel conducted a review of CEAA 2012 and the federal EA process. After receiving extensive guidance and teachings from a group of Anishinabe, Neheto and Dakota Elders, on 23 December 2016 the Public Interest Law Centre filed a written submission on behalf of AMC. Grand Chief Nepinak also made an in-person presentation in November 2016 to the Expert Panel.

The basic tenet underlying the written and oral submissions of AMC was a call for the federal government to use the federal review of environmental assessment processes, to expressly acknowledge, respect and renew relationships. AMC expressed that relationships have been badly damaged, including: the nation to nation relationship between the Crown and Indigenous peoples in Canada and the relationship between human beings and all other relations.

“The relationships between all relations are badly out of balance – Indigenous people, settlers, Mother Earth, the water, animals, fish, etc.”

In April 2017 the Expert Panel submitted a report with recommendations to with The Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change (“Minister McKenna”). The report acknowledges and contains excerpts from both the oral and written submission of AMC as well as some of the recommendations contained within.

In June 2017 the Federal Government released a discussion paper which outlines a series of changes the government is considering to modernize Canada’s EA and regulatory processes. The government is seeking feedback on their proposed approach until August 28, 2017.

On July 24, 2017, Minister McKenna will participate in ceremony with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Holders at Turtle Lodge in Sagkeeng First Nation to learn about The Great Binding Law – Ogichi Tibakonigaywin – including Indigenous laws and worldviews relating to the environment.
Education Liaison

STAFF – Shirley Fontaine, AMC/MFNERC Education Liaison

INTRODUCTION

In March 2016, in response to recommendations of the 2006-2014 organizational review of the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC), the AMC Executive Council of Chiefs directed the AMC Grand Chiefs Office and Secretariat to develop an Education Liaison Officer position to be funded by MFNERC. The purpose of this position is to allow for the MFNERC Senior Management staff to implement the Management recommendations of the Final Report, with key responsibilities to include developing and implementing of the MFNERC Evaluation Strategy and Workplan; and liaise between AMC and MFNERC.

In November 2016, the MFNERC Board decided the MFNERC Policy Research Analyst would carry out the role of the AMC Education Liaison.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The job draft description for the AMC Education Liaison was drafted by the AMC Secretariat and provided to the MFNERC Board. The MFNERC Board unilaterally changed the job description. The draft job description still needs to be reviewed and finalized. The MFNERC Board also unilaterally decided to have the Education Liaison position located at the MFNERC. Further discussion between the MFNERC and AMC needs to take place.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The MFNERC Policy Research Analyst role has included:

- Preparing updates for the AMC Executive Council of Chiefs (ECC) – briefing notes on appointments for AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages and AFN Chiefs Committee on Education, Treaty Education – Mandatory Treaty Education;
- Preparing speaking notes for AMC Grand Chief for the signing of the Education Governance Agreement;
- Attending political gatherings – AMC Chiefs Assembly, AFN Chiefs Assembly, Treaties 1-11 Gathering;
- Assisting with preparation of AMC resolutions, Briefing Notes, and Executive Council motions related to the Treaty Education Initiative and Special Education funding;
- Assisting with AMC and Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO) National Engagement process – working closely with MFNERC communications staff to develop engagement posters, schedule, and materials for AMC community engagement sessions;
- Attending meetings with AMC and SCO regarding National Engagement process and training MFNERC facilitators for the National Engagement process;
- Liaison with First Nations political leaders – attending meetings with Chiefs involved or interested in the Manitoba First Nations School System and responding to enquiries regarding education political matters;
- Providing briefing notes for AMC representatives on Assembly of First Nation (AFN) Chiefs Committee on Languages on the status of the proposed Indigenous Languages Act and other national language developments;
- Providing briefing notes and updates for AMC representatives on AFN Chiefs Committee on Education on national First Nations education developments;
• Attending a meeting with AMC Grand Chief and Minister of Education and Training & Deputy Minister on Mandatory Treaty Education and other education matters;

• Participating in teleconference calls and in-person meetings with provincial Assistant Deputy Minister of Education and Training & Director of the Aboriginal Education Directorate regarding Treaty Education Initiative and First Nations education matters;

• Contacting Red River College to respond to enquiry from Brokenhead First Nation on changes in Indigenous education programming;

• Attending meetings and participating in teleconference calls of the AFN National Indian Education Council and Chiefs Committee on Education to provide regional input into national developments;

• Attending AFN/INAC meetings on Statutory Funding and Post-Secondary Education to promote and ensure additional, equitable and sustainable federal funding is provided for First Nations education authorities, schools and students in Manitoba;

• Liaison with Manitoba regional representatives on Joint AFN/INAC Task Teams – Early Childhood Education, Measurement and Mutual Accountability, Funding Mechanisms, Post-Secondary Education, and participating in discussions on the potential establishment of two new Task Teams – Northern and Isolated, and Education Infrastructure;

• Coordinating and chairing AMC/MFNERC Education Directors’ meetings;

• Providing updates on regional and national First Nations education developments for First Nations Education directors and facilitating regional input into national developments;

• Coordinating and participating on MFNERC Systems & Funding Working Group and assisting with overseeing research on development of a new regional First Nations Education Funding Model and a new regional First Nations Education Funding Formula;

• Reviewing MFNERC Review and preparing briefing notes on status of implementation of recommendations;

• Reviewing feedback from Manitoba First Nations education directors from 2014-2017 to identify regional priorities and future education directions; and

• Serving as a regional representative on the development of a new INAC Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) on First Nation Education Funding.

Going forward, AMC and MFNERC will arrange regular quarterly meetings to discuss education matters that require political support and direction.
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