

First Nations Governance Centre

**Summary Report of
Youth Think Tank**

October 4 & 5, 2004

Calgary, Alberta

First Nations Governance Centre

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Think Tank Objectives:

- to provide information and awareness of the First Nations Governance Centre and continue to plan for its development;
- to share views on First Nations governance: where we're at and how to get where we want to be;
- to gain perspective and understand needs from the Centre from the point of view of today's youth as the current and future users of the Centre's services.

Youth from across the country whose names were put forward by various individuals were invited to attend this 2 day Think Tank to discuss the development of the First Nations Governance Centre. Those who accepted the invitation and participated in the forum are listed in Appendix A to this report.

Day 1 – Monday October 4, 2004

Conference Chair Gerald Wesley called the session to order at 9am. He welcomed the delegates from across Canada and thanked the surrounding First Nation for the opportunity to meet on their traditional territories.

Opening Prayer: Elder Mark Wolfleg of the Siksika First Nation.

The First Nations Governance Centre: An Overview and Requirements

(Herb George – Governance Centre Chairperson)

Satsan is presently Chair of the First Nations Governance Centre, a First Nations-controlled initiative designed to help First Nations achieve their inherent right to self-government. He is trained in law and education having attended Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia. Satsan is a Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chief of the Frog Clan and has been a long-time Speaker for his Nation. He has offered advice and assistance to First Nations across British Columbia and Canada on the affirmation and recognition of Aboriginal rights, title and Treaty rights (for 6 years as the elected BC Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations). Satsan was a key figure and strategist in the Delgamuukw-Gisday Wa case, which was the subject of a successful judgment before the Supreme Court of Canada in December 1997.

Background material (see kit): *The Design of a First Nations Governance Centre: An Overview- Sept. 22, 2004*

Herb George (Satsan) stated appreciation for all who have honoured the request to assist in the development of the Centre initiative. Expressed regrets on behalf of AFN Regional Chief Jason Goodstriker who had intended to be in attendance but has been called away to attend to pressing regional business.

Satsan paid tribute to the elders who have been the leaders of our people and now carriers of our history, “they fought the fight for us to be here” and individuals like Elder Mark Wolfleg and Elder Charles Wood continue to be here to assist us today.

Satsan provided some background and rationale to the concept of the Centre:

- the Indian Act took us off our lands and put us on ‘Reserves’
- it took our ability to govern ourselves
- it has suppressed out Aboriginal Rights

Despite the Indian Act, and other acts of government, First Nations people have survived! Our Rights exist and we want the best for our children, we want them to be successful, to be loved and have hope, to live in healthy communities. The Centre is intended to assist in that.

The federal government has said our leadership is not doing the job; that we are not accountable to their standards; that we are not administering our finances properly. To address those issues, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada tried to independently change the Indian Act to ‘make things better’ with Bill C-7. That was an effort that did not succeed because First Nations were not effectively involved. The Centre as a concept was formalized as part of the outcome of our dealings with Canada on effective requirements to First Nations governance.

The Centre is to work with and for First Nations. It will be independent of government and of our own First Nation structures. It will have a 12 member Board to assist in overseeing development and implementation as well as other Advisory Bodies to address specific areas. We hope to be operating in 2005.

The Centre is national in scope. It has been addressed in the federal Throne Speech; it has an initial 5 year commitment from Treasury Board.

The Centre is looking at many issues and approaches including:

- Governance Advisory Services: How do we stand up and strengthen the Inherent Right to Self-Government? e.g. How is it accommodated? How is it compensated? Who leads and practically ‘has’ the right of Self-Government?
- Professional Development Services: Working with leading universities across Canada to change the way they deliver to First Nations, to determine ‘What do we need?’ What should the content be? How might programs be transferable between institutions? How will the Centre assist in training and leadership requirements?
- Land, Law and Governance Research: Addressing research requirements –what is the current status of First Nations Governance and how can it be improved? How will we develop resource and library reference centre requirements?
- Public Education and Communication: How the Centre will ensure broad public access to an increased understanding of First Nations governance.

To the youth in attendance, Satsan expressed appreciation them for the help and strength provided by their participation and called on them to assist in shaping the Governance Centre.

Questions and Discussion:

- What is the overall time-line of this initiative? (When did it start and when will it be operational?)
- What community awareness and promotional work is taking place? (most do not know what the concept is or what its about)
- How do we overcome our own distrust of change? (and is there political buy-in and support?)
- Where will the 12 member Board members come from or who will they represent? (issue of representation, e.g. youth, elders, geographic, political etc.)

Understanding Your Future Through Knowing Your Past

(Professor Patricia Monture)

Patricia Monture is a citizen of the Mohawk Nation from Grand River Territory. She was educated as a lawyer at various post-secondary institutions in Ontario and subsequently taught in Canadian law schools. Since 1994 has been with the Department of Native Studies at the University of Saskatchewan where she is now a Professor in the Department of Sociology and active teaching in the area of Aboriginal justice.

Professor Monture expressed how good she felt with the positive energy in the room and used the word: "Revolution." A revolution is about energy and change; it does not have to be war-like and hurtful, it can be by warriors of peace! The changes First Nations require must come from within; government cannot do it for us. We need to teach our young people to lead and to be part of the solutions.

In preparing, Patricia asked a basic question: What is Self-Government? Her view of Self-Government is: healthy Indians who are living in peace! Professor Monture stated First Nations must know where they come from before they can get to where they want to be, and asked:

- What has the residential school system done?
- What is Canadian Law – what has it done to us? Canadian Law is about conflict, how to resolve disputes and fights; it is not consistent with First Nations philosophy of harmony and peace. Our traditional rules were based to point out 'how we live nicely together'.

She feels acts of resistance or opposition are only elements of 'hanging on', by itself is not an action to move us forward. "*Resistance is only a reaction; a reaction that merely guarantees our survival ... we deserve more!*"

Patricia stated we need all of our people and all of your skills acting together if we are to be successful. Our fully functioning societies will have artists, athletes, historians etc., all of those people have a role that is of benefit to us all. She addressed the youth in attendance as individuals who are already leaders ... "the people who are your age and younger than you are watching you and what you are doing more than they are looking

at us 'older folks'. It is important that you know how you carry yourself and how you act – that is key of true leaders.

In closing, Professor Monture urged delegates, “take us further, build better dreams!”

Inherent Right of Self-Government: Emerging Directions for Legal Research

(Dr. Kent McNeil)

Kent McNeil has taught at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto since 1987. He specializes in Indigenous rights, especially in Canada, Australia, and the United States. He is the author of numerous works on this subject, including Common Law Aboriginal Title (1989) AND Emerging Justice? Essays on Indigenous Rights in Canada and Australia (2001). He has also acted as an advisor on Aboriginal Land claims and treaty negotiations in various parts of Canada.

Dr. McNeil opened with his opinion that the role courts have played in an effort to determine or 'clarify' Self-Government has not been productive. What they could/should do is to recognize that First Nations were autonomous and sovereign. That is a necessary starting point. He felt international law has not been of benefit either, mainly on the basis that, for the most part, international law is based on the European nations view of how they would divide the 'new lands' and did not take into account existing structures and governing authority.

In addressing research and action areas, Dr. McNeil felt several key areas should be covered:

- The relevance of treaties to Self-Government: existing treaty implications or questions as well as the current federal approach to negotiate Self-Government outside of treaty.
- Who has the right of Self-Government? (Is it the individual? Nation Groups? All First Nations together?) A subset of this issue is how does the Indian Act association of government interact with Self-Governance?
- What is the jurisdiction that the Inherent Right of Self-Government exercises? (Geographic? Over people & citizenship? With other levels of government? Is it exclusive or shared?)
- First Nation Citizenship: who has authority to determine its citizens?
- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: does it or should it apply?
- Administration of Justice & the Judicial System: How is it exercised in First Nations Governance?
- Federal Fiduciary Obligations & Capacity Building: What are impacts of fiduciary responsibility to First Nations as they develop their own meaningful Governance? Dr. McNeil felt that at minimum, the government should maintain a fiduciary responsibility to provide for the emerging capacity for Self-Government.
- Financial Issues: any government requires financial resources and capacity to function properly (who controls the purse? What are revenue sharing options?)

(During subsequent question period, Kent McNeil was asked if there is a priority attached to the list of items addressed? His response was no, however the very first step is to organize!)

In closing, Dr. McNeil stated a need to create awareness and educate the general population and various structures e.g. the courts, about Self-Government, its meaning and the Rights that go with it.

Question & Discussion to Satsan, Professor Monture and Dr. McNeil:

- How do we realize traditional values within good governance e.g. accountability?
- What legal recourse is available if treaties are not being fulfilled, or if they are interpreted in a fashion adverse to the First Nation? Is there a legal issue surrounding the validity of Crown Sovereignty over First Nations Sovereignty?
- What effort or how will the Governance Centre address the urban reality of First Nations citizens living away from home?
- Is the Governance Centre working cooperatively with other institutions and structures?

Nation Building: What is it and Why Does It Matter

(Dr. Stephen Cornell)

Stephen Cornell is professor of sociology and of public administration and policy at The University of Arizona. He has taught at Harvard University and at the University of California, San Diego. While at Harvard, Professor Cornell and Professor Joseph P. Kalt founded the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development; Dr. Cornell continues to co-direct that Project today. He also serves as a Faculty Associate with the Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management, and Policy at The University of Arizona. He has spent much of the last twenty years working with indigenous nations in the U.S., Canada and, more recently, Australia and New Zealand on governance and development issues.

Background material (see kit): *PowerPoint presentation: Nation Building: What is it and Why Does it Matter?*

Dr. Cornell's opening comments included his perspective that the First Nations Governance Centre is an indication of 'new thinking, new strength and will provide new results' ... all an exciting prospect!

Dr. Cornell provided a summary outline of the Harvard Project in Indian Economic Development, a long term research project involving a number of American Native Nations with the objective to determine "*What explains the success that some Native Nations have had in building sustainable, self-determined economies?*"

The Harvard Study determined some keys to success:

- **Practical sovereignty** with genuine self-rule. (Requires decision making by the people which will ensure that priorities to reflect real needs)
- **Capable governing institutions.** (You have to do it well, which generally means you also find the way to get everyone investing in your future. You have stability. You have the ability to make decisions and to get things done.)

- **A cultural match** to historic or traditional practices. (The governing structure and process must be historically legitimate to the community. There needs to be a fit between formal governing institutions and the political culture/structure.)

The Harvard Project also identified other important elements:

- **Think strategically** and make decisions on the same basis;
- **Public spirited leadership** is an important 'buy-in requirement – stop the in-house fighting!

One of the summary findings of the Harvard Project is that once political issues are resolved, economic opportunities will follow.

Stephen then presented overview of his (Udall Centre for Studies in Public Policy) experience in Canada involving four First Nations/Nation groups with similar objective as the Harvard Study.

Dr. Cornell acknowledged the research base is more limited than the American study but even so, some findings of the Canadian research are clear and included:

- **Political institutions** of the First Nation are important – how the nations have organized their government.
- **Bureaucratic structures** including what policies govern how the administration and other community based structures work are important.
- **The wise use of resources** is another valued consideration. What is done with financial, human and natural resources, and for whom?

External to the First Nations research, it was clear that some non-native governments and officials think self-administration is actually self-government – it is not! Self-administration is administering someone else's decisions and when that happens, the government does not function very well.

True government involves political organization, law making, and decisions about the nation. Self-administration is service delivery which is about delivering programs.

Good governance will address:

- Jurisdiction
- Core functions
- Revenue issues
- Accountability
- Inter-governmental relations and ...
- It will implicate the non-native governments.

In closing, Dr. Cornell stressed the need to invest time and energy in building effective governing capacity; to govern well or not at all; and provided a quote from Ronnie Lupe former Chairman of the White Mountain Apache Tribe in the US:

“If you want to be sovereign, act like a sovereign!”

Current and Future Initiatives

(Chief Strater Crowfoot, Siksika Nation and Chair, Indian Taxation Advisory Board)

Strater Crowfoot is Chief of the Siksika Nation in Alberta. He has been a member of the Indian Taxation Advisory Board since its inception in 1989 and was appointed in November 2003 as Chairman. Prior to that, he served for over seven years as the Executive Director of Indian Oil and Gas Canada.

Chief Crowfoot opened with reference to the struggle of First Nations – in fact similar to being in a war (of survival) – how do we come and compete within the world as it has grown around us?

It is time for First Nations to think outside the box – and the Indian Act is our box! We will continue to address the larger political picture but we must also address social issues of today and you cannot do that if you ignore personal and family values.

There is a need for First Nation Institutions; concepts such as the Indian Taxation Board can greatly assist overall efforts. Chief Crowfoot feels successful institutions will lead to a successful economy. There is a need to give yourself the proper tools to proceed.

Strater advised efforts of First Nations leaders have been involved with in order to establish those institutions (unfortunately, the process and necessary legislative effort died in the federal house of parliament with this past years federal election) Bill C-23 had 4 components:

- 1) Tax Institutions to enable First Nation controlled tax rights – especially related to property tax and revenue generation;
- 2) Finance Authority – to enable provisions that allow First Nations to raise capital for example, bond issues or various protection and leverage provisions;
- 3) A Financial Management Board to assist in the building of First Nation governing structures (as a potential complement not competing structure to the First Nations Governance Centre);
- 4) A Statistics Institute to fairly capture First Nation census and survey information, without full awareness, First Nations will not get true government financial transfer requirements.

Chief Crowfoot closed with two thoughts:

“Reform is about scrapping bad laws and creating new ones with new institutions”

He urged all to keep moving ahead ... *“tell the stories and be the shining light”*

Question & Discussion to both Strater Crowfoot and Stephen Cornell

- Are there definitive indicators of health and wellness vs. economic opportunities?
- Will Bill C-23 proceed with this new federal government?

- Is the Aboriginal population difference between the U.S. and Canadian research findings a factor?

An Elders Perspective

(Elder Charles Wood, Saddle Lake First Nation, Alberta)

Charles Wood was the first ever Tribal Administrator for the Saddle Lake First Nation, setting up the entire administration in 1968. He worked in the private sector for a number of years to learn about that realm and also worked with the federal government to learn as much as he could to help in his future plans. After being a Tribal Administrator, Charles was elected into Council and afterwards from Councillor to Chief. In 1980, he was appointed by the Chiefs of Canada to be the first Chair for the Council of Chiefs of Canada and was the Chair during the transition of the National Indian Brotherhood to the Assembly of First Nations in 1981-82, a major undertaking at that time in the history of First Nations polity. Mr. Wood is extremely proud to be the founding Chair of the North American Indigenous Games.

Satsan took pleasure in introducing Mr. Charles Wood, pointing out he has been a long time advocate for his people and all Aboriginal people across Canada. Satsan felt it is important for the youth to be connected to their elders and on that basis, asked Mr. Wood to reflect on his experience and the needs before us.

Elder Charles Wood stated First Nations people have always had organization, if not, how else could we have survived?

Mr. Wood confirmed that First Nations still need to find the way to mobilize our people and our communities. In doing so, he feels some the challenges faced include:

- Alcohol and drug abuse,
- Dependency and demands as a 'right',
- The loss of personal values.

He urged everyone to live a life of purpose! Learn as much as you can, in order that you gain strength and wisdom, and in turn you can help others make good decisions. Charles also urged people to find the way to work together, it is easier than working as an individual.

Two of the areas he felt the Centre can effectively contribute to are:

- In addressing 'how do we choose our leaders' in order that is not just a popularity contest;
- To provide understanding and structure that will respect the cultural differences amongst us.

Office of the Chairperson – First Nations Governance Centre

(Herb George)

Herb expressed his regret to participants that due to the loss of one of his community and family members he was returning home early. In departing however he offered thoughts of the efforts to date.

You can tell the state of the nation by the stories it tells: if what you hear is negative in nature, you face despair; if it is happy and funny, you have success. We want success!

The Chairperson repeated his opening comment: Tell us what you need and how we might assist for you to contribute to the Centre's development and operation. We need your help to put new memories in the mind of our children!

Discussion Group Process: (Chris Robertson, Facilitator)

Chris provided an overview of "Group Discussions" which would be accommodated through a form of *Open Space Dialogue process* in which participants form their own discussion groups, identify their own topics and establish their own outcomes. Participants are encouraged to move between groups – contribute ideas to as many topics as possible. The topics identified for discussion were [reference in square brackets is to the report number in Appendix B]:

- Addressing Health Issues in the First Nations populations
- Issues affecting aboriginal youth in remote northern rural communities thereby affecting leadership in northern communities [B1]
- Bill C-31 and potential impacts on self governance – Brenna Grafton [B1]
- Governology: Governance + Technology = Connectivity [B2]
- Traditional Chiefs and Clanmothers are they involved? Where? [B3]
- "Ayaawxgm Sm'gyiget" "Laws of true hereditary chiefs" Recognition of traditional authority of hereditary leadership in historical, contemporary, and future leadership [B4]
- How to Address Barriers in Post-Secondary Institutions Dealing with Aboriginal Curriculum – i.e. (Eurocentric Dealing with Social Barriers) [B5]
- First Nations and the Prison System – Health and Safety
- Strategic Planning – 1, 5, 25 years [B6]
- Inner City Gang Prevention amongst aboriginal youth [B7]
- Community communication with leadership
- Impact on Youth Services
- Uniting Urban and on-Reserve First Nations to address Governance [B8]
- Education/communication [B9]
- Culture and traditions how do we effectively build them into the FNGC [B10]
- Native Identity – specific, regional, national, international?
- Counter-acting a "culture of dependence" on government [B11]
- Publicly spirited decision on good governance. A First Step? [B12]
- The Role of Young People in the Governance of the FNGC [B13]
- Self-Sustainability [B14]
- Aboriginal Policing – "Community approach and creating partnerships" [B7]
- Women's Leadership
- Creating a Successful Band Administration [B15]

Day 2 – Tuesday October 5, 2004

Opening Prayer: Delegate Dustin Johnson, Tsimshian Nation, Kitsumkalum, B.C.

Chair Gerald Wesley provided a **brief review and summary of day one discussion**.

Elder Charles Wood requested opportunity to present some additional thoughts to his day one reflections including:

- Begin on time! Come in advance of your business; value your time and that of others around you.
- Attitude – your own and of others, how do we affect ones attitude? Personal traits such as how you pay attention, how you show your respect to others when they speak or when meetings are in progress are important indicators of ones attitude.
- Elder Wood re-iterated his pride of looking forward to the day when this group of participants are the new leaders. “When you make the government shake with apprehension knowing you are coming!”

Discussion Group Process

Facilitator Chris Robertson reminded participants of the objective of the exercise and the time-frames to be considered. He suggested that because there are a number of topic areas, participants may wish to combine some topics.

Participants then broke off into dialogue groups for discussion, debate and development of summary statements. Reports on the following discussion groups were submitted and are included in Appendix B of this report.

Think Tank Summary & Closing Comments:

Upon the conclusion of the discussion group exercises, a general round table closing discussion was held with all participants expressing their thoughts on the two day opportunity. Comments included:

- Excellent ideas, appreciate the opportunity and ideas of how to move us all forward
- Value in meeting new people
- Inspiring, want more, want to complete my teachings and want to have our paths cross again
- Sharing is a first step. We can create a network and move together. We must be accountable and share the information we have gained. This has helped renew a passion – got me out of a rut
- Opens new doors of opportunity and thinking. Recognize the strength of our elders
- You’ve honoured us (youth) by giving this opportunity but we need more time to interact
- Hope this isn’t the end of the process to involve youth, use our ideas etc.
- The stories of where we are going help keep my mind clear

- Feel proud, seeing the path we are all pushing for
- Sometimes we walk two roads (culture) but before we do that we must stand up – this is a part of that
- Don't lose your passion, don't let the teachings get pushed onto the back burner
- Empower me! Seek new challenges; help my people achieve socio and economic success and well being. 'We' now have the gauntlet to run with. There is hope, we just have to answer the call.
- There is interest and attention to our needs. There is enthusiasm and energy, lets carry on the excitement, recognize the urgency of our needs.

Elder Charles Wood provided closing prayer as well as expressing appreciation and happiness for the opportunity to sit with so many informed and responsible 'leaders'.

Meeting Adjourned: 3pm.

Prepared by Conference Chair and Conference Organizer

First Nations Governance Centre

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APPENDIX “A” - Participants

First Nations Governance Centre Youth Think Tank
October 3 & 4, 2004 – Calgary, Alberta

Participants

Jaime Battiste	Mi'kmaq – Nova Scotia	regulater33@hotmail.com
Shelby Blackjack	Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation – Yukon, residing in Victoria, bc	sblackjack@hotmail.com
Darren Courchene	Sagkeeng First Nation, residing in Winnipeg Manitoba	dcourche@mts.net
W. Joe Derrick	Gitxsan, Ojibway, currently residing in Ontario	wjerrick@gmail.com
Shelby Desjarlais	Metis, residing in Abbotsford, BC	shelby10@telus.net
Autumn Eaglespeaker	Born in Seattle, Washington, residing in Alberta	autumns@hotmail.com ; or autumn_eaglespeaker@yahoo.ca
Brenna Grafton	Sagkeeng First Nation, Manitoba	b_grafton@hotmail.com
John Jack	Huu-ay-aht, Pachena Bay, BC, Nuu-chah-nulth Nation	john.jack@shaw.ca
Ashley Jacobs	Mohawk Nation, Six Nations	ashley_j_34@hotmail.com
Otis Jasper	Soowahlie First Nation, Sto:lo Nation, residing in Vancouver, BC	otisjasper@msn.com
Dustin Johnson	Tsimshian Nation: Kitkatla, Port Simpson, Kitsumkalum, residing in Vancouver, B.C.	tsimshiandustin@hotmail.com
Reg Linski	Pinaymootang, Manitoba	hexxmark@yahoo.com or; rlinski@hotmail.com
Lee McAdam	Big River First Nation – Saskatchewan	lrmcadam@sasktel.net
Shelly Martin	Millbrook First Nation, Mi'kmaq – Nova Scotia	smartin8@dal.ca

APPENDIX “A”

Naiomi Metallic	Listuguj Mi'kmaq FN, residing in Halifax, NS	nmetalli@dal.ca
Nicole Minde	Ermineskin, Hobema, AB	nminde@ualberta.ca or; cnikc1@hotmail.com
Brandon (Justin) Monture	Mohawk (Grand River); Cree (Thunderchild), residing in Saskatoon, SK	jbmonture@shaw.ca
Troy Myers	Cold Lake First Nation	lazareca@yahoo.ca
Nelson Rabbit	Blood Tribe, Alberta	kainai_jedi@yahoo.ca
Sheila Redsky	Shoal Lake, Ontario, residing in Winnipeg, MB	sredsky@mbox.rrc.mb.ca
Jamie Restoule	Dokis First Nation, Ontario	resjam@anishinabek.ca
Candace Russell	Non-status Mi'kmaq, residing in Newfoundland	candace@fni.nf.ca
Richard Samuel	Ahousaht, Nuu-chah-nulth residing in Victoria, BC	rsamuel@bcaafc.com
Cowboy Smith	PiiKainai	cowboy_smith@hotmail.com
Crystal Sutherland	Ahousaht, Nuu-chah-nulth Nation	youth@bcfn.ca or; ahous_angel@yahoo.com
Robin-Lee Twigg-English	Piikani Nation, Brocket Alberta	ndn2728@hotmail.com
Jamie Vacon	Halifax, NS	javacon@eastlink.ca
D'Arcy Vermette	Metis, residing in Ontario	dver@sympatico.ca
Ora-naja Wah-Shee	Dogrib Rae Band – Rae Edzo, NT	nwtycsectres@hotmail.com
Curtis Wilson	Laichwiltach Nation, Campbell River BC	CurtisW@magma.ca

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APPENDIX “B” – Discussion Group Reports

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic(s): Bill C31 and its impacts on self government

Issues affecting aboriginal youth in remote northern communities, thereby affecting leadership in northern communities

Participants: Oree Wah-Shee, Brenna Grafton, Shelby Blackjack, Ashley Porter

[Report B1]

Discussions:

- Bill C-31 – 1985 → removed section 11 → basically a way to keep native people from breeding with other people
- traditions and the way you live your life, count more than how much blood you have
- racism
- everyone has a spirit inside

6(1) + 6(1) = 6(1) (full status)

6(1) + 6(2) = 6(1)

6(2) + 6(2) = 6(1)

6(2) + non status = 0

6(1) + non status = 6(2)

FN and the prison system health and safety in Yukon
98% prisoners in prison system (male)
100% prisoners in prison system (female)

Take the best of both worlds. Redefine your own.

Recommendations on Next Steps and Future Action:

Education is key!
Don't want to get
Redefine status
Redefine by way of community

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Governology: Governance and Technology = Connectivity

Participants: Ora-Naja Wah-See, Jamie Restoule, Brenna Grafton, Sheila Redksy, Joe Derrick, Shelby Blackjack, Ashley Jacobs, John Jack, Jamie Vacon

[Report B2]

Discussion:

- No internet access
- No sharing documents,
- No mail/websites,
- No links to other communities,
- Lack of IT people,
- Lack of knowledge/fear of internet,
- Creation of a First Nation presence,
- Listing of community events,
- No computers/no funds,
- Costs go down,
- Free up time for other tasks,
- Present websites
- Conference calls,
- Cut down of travel costs,
- Logistics of travel,
- Q & A sessions on line,
- Video conferencing,
- Equipment pays for itself,
- Training for present administration,
- Creation training centres/on job training,
- 1800 phone lines
- Able to connect globally to other Indigenous cultures.

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- Yukon to be included,
- Update section of current events/issues for FNGC,
- Outside forums

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Traditional chiefs and clan mothers are they involved? Where?

Participants: Ashley Jacobs, Jaimie, Robin, Troy, Dustin and Joe

[Report B3]

Discussion:

Yesterday I didn't hear anything about traditional chiefs or clan mothers. How can a self governance centre not involve tradition, traditional chiefs, clan mothers.

Band chiefs or council is all based on economics and politics. Hereditary chiefs are based on traditions, family and community awareness surrounding the longhouse ceremonies. Also keeping our language and ceremonies are mandatory.

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

More community events involving traditional chiefs and clan mothers, youth involvement. Both sets of chiefs brought together. Get the best of both worlds based on the community. Immersion classes are in process. Do need to learn the white language in school, but need to keep tradition.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Recognition of traditional authority in hereditary leadership
"Ayaawxgm Sm'gyiget: Laws of True Hereditary Chiefs"
(Dustin Johnson)

Participants: Dustin Johnson, Otis Jasper, Crystal Sutherland, Kent McNeil, Joe
Derrick, Ashley Jacobs

[Report B3]

Discussion:

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- security measures ensuring recognition and protection of traditional leaders from oppressive and undermining influences
- encouragement of using one's own language to conduct meetings, language through action not institutional
- empowering youth to familiarize themselves with who the traditional leaders are and their significance in a cultural context
- promote more positive community events that instil cultural pride in youth, particularly youth groomed to leadership positions
- FNGC provide space for youth (future traditional/hereditary leaders) to network and discuss peoples concerns
- foreign governments (Canada, Provincial) cannot exploit or use the knowledge of traditional teachings from hereditary leadership and not used against them
- mentorship/grooming systems from traditional leaders and respected chiefs for youth, instilling pride and certainty in people at the community level that this will work as it has always worked for thousands of years

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: How to Deal with Barriers in Post Secondary Institutions

Participants: Otis Jasper, Robin-Lee Twigg-English, Brenna Grafton, Troy Myers, Richard Samuel, Charles Wood

[Report B5]

Discussion:

- curriculum is mostly Eurocentric, and it perpetuates racism since it doesn't teach our views, so people still live the way they are taught
- many histories are not ours; one example was the [?] theory, a woman was taught she never knew if she should bring it to the faculty or teach the students herself about her history
- elitist attitudes
- an obstacle has been the transition from rural into the city
- feel they get swallowed (consumed) by the school experience (dropping out, bad grades)
- housing
- lack of cultural support

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- self governance courses need to be geared for an Aboriginal Perspective, and programs reviewed
- prepare students better before they get there to help eliminate barriers
- write our own curriculum in programs, also develop them to address issues in the community. Be involved in course content in in-school programs
- get cultural sensitivity training for instructors
- strengthen community support in the city for transition
- have aboriginal instructors this way students will have a good foundation and world view – having an aboriginal view is much better to identify with
- have elders around the classes and campus
- start taking back the information by writing our own books and reports (as it stands many scholars writing about us are white)
- aboriginal housing like dorms could be around, or aboriginal co-ops could help the students (Councils can help put funds toward this)
- have aboriginal associations in the local institutions work together (i.e. funding, workshops)
- students could become a legal entity to find funding
- tackle elitist attitude in associations

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Strategic Planning for 1, 5 – 25 years

Participants: Jamie

[Report B6]

Discussions:

- Communities need clear short and long term vision (strategic plan)
- Outlining these visions and making them available to community members are essential for development,
- All initiatives undertaken by the leadership and administration should be consistent with the visions (or strategic plan),
- Having a strategic plan will identify future needs of the community in terms of educational and employment needs,
- Economic development will also have that long term strategic plan, adding to the financial opportunities available to the community,

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- Information, workshops, etc. made available to provide opportunity for communities to develop viable strategic plans with short and long term goals,
- We must plan for the future generations, to ensure development and prosperity.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

- Topic:
- 1) Inner City Gang Prevention with Native Youth (Brandon Monture)
 - 2) Aboriginal Policing – “Community Approach and creating partnerships” (Jamie Vacon)

Participants: Jamie A. Vacon, Brandon Monture, Lee McAdam, Sheila Redsky, John Jack, Robin-Lee Twigg-English, Troy Myers

[Report B7]

Discussion:

- the issues that we face with gangs in the city
- our youth need to have more interaction with good role models
- lack of community understanding (get involved with community events)
- there has to be an awareness of gangs and aboriginal crimes
- conflicting views of RCMP policing on reserves
- more support workers / networks

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

1. There should be a representative from the police force reporting to both the governance centre and the police commissions.
2. There should be recruiting officers who specifically seek participants to enter the police force
3. Training for all issues and situations for people who are becoming police officers in both tribunal and RCMP for Aboriginal Peoples
4. There should be more community based programs such as Citizens on Patrol assisting with keeping their communities safe
5. Joint ventures of policing and tribunal council amalgamation of resources of both police forces (Nova Scotia example)
6. There should be an Aboriginal commission looking into issues that involve the police and aboriginal people.
7. More aboriginal people that know what is going on with youth and have youth centres with understanding of youth problems

There was a lot of discussion around how the RCMP has to adapt to Aboriginal communities to successfully police the communities. This must be addressed at a high level of the RCMP and firm commitments must be reached to ensure that issues are dealt with in accordance with the people that are affected.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Uniting urban and on reserve First Nations to address governance (Autumn Eaglespeaker)

Participants: Dustin Johnson, Richard Samuel, Justin (Brandon) Monture, Otis Jasper, Kent McNeil, Troy Myers, Robin Twigg-English

[Report B8]

Discussions:

- In other cities Aboriginal council represent urban
- Distanced from communities
- Custom Code for governance, instead of Indian Act
- Liaison between Urban from Chief and Council – what’s happening in communities
- Implement better communication strategies – independent media; to address urban issues and on reserve issues
- Bands need to unite (Reserves) together to create stronger bonds through a confederacy (smaller groups need to work with larger to press issues)
- Erase stereotype mentalities that exist within our own communities → gaining back the respect for each other
- Detailed contact lists of people who belong to reserves ... who’s who, who relatives are in different cities
- Satellite offices in different cities – despite on/off reserve confusion
- People get lost away in urban centres → forget the path home; constant contact with community when away
- People don’t want to go to reserves because they’re not a good place – “crab syndrome”
- Reserves not ready for self-government → Chief and Councils not capable to tackle such issues
- Community is not just the reserve where you’re registered → look beyond and acknowledge sense of community
- Sharing is like governance
- By just staying from your reserve, living within the means of the Indian Act
- Communities need to work with each other to help build stronger communities
- Leadership roles need to be clearly defined within the communities
- Communities aren’t just the reserves
- Issues that affect on reserve may not affect off-reserve → goes back to custom codes; who votes/who doesn’t
- Federal government need to accept custom codes of the people

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

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DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Education/Communication (Sheila Redsky)

Participants: Charles Wood, Reg Linski, Jamie Vacon, Nicole Minde,
Shelby Desjarlais

[Report B9]

Discussion:

- undoing stereotypes
- communication = limited info in Reserves/city
- information is power
- how we get the word out
- education is the key to communicating our concerns and voicing our solutions
- creating a family environment
- sharing circles/strong moderator
- creating support group in school/post-secondary
- newsletters
- e-mail
- websites
- creating incentives (schooling)
- get mentors for non-aboriginals professionals
- up to date newspapers
- getting resources
- what type of federation uses a criteria
- counselling
- types of training
- urban type training
- use of technology
- use of culture in the tech field

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- clear policies/accountability
- getting the youth involved/role modelling
- get the family involved
- creating partnerships/pooling resources
- host a forum, create newsletters, website
- looking at areas of need and informing the people

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Culture & Traditions: How do we effectively build them into the FNGC

Participants: Lee McAdam, Crystal Sutherland, Shelby Desjarlais, Richard Samuel, Curtis Wilson, John Jack, Candace Russell

Discussion: **[Report B10]**

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

Recommendation #1:

To have the FNGC fully acknowledge and accept the principles and values of all First Nations people and to ensure that these cultural traditions are built into the governing structure of the FNGC. The FNGC must always hold the morals and traditions of the people as a whole at the forefront, but also work to intertwine modern society as in economic development, technology, etc. with the traditional culture and values. There must also be a role for our Elders to play whether the process follows a Hereditary Chieftainship or by appointment. The main objective being that our Elders act as Advisors to the people. The method by which the FNGC should address the issues of individual communities must follow cultural sensitivity and ensuring that the values of each First Nation are respected. The issue of cultural sensitivity can be defined through research on Hereditary Governance structures and development of a database of protocol for communities.

Recommendation #2:

To begin a process by which Elders and Youth begin working together on issues and building a relationship of trust and security. The importance of the Elders passing on their knowledge and wisdom to the youth must be emphasized as future leaders are being formed. This process will be taken one step at a time to ensure relationships are built on trust.

Recommendation #3:

To ensure the concept of a "Healthy Indian", the FNGC must work to address the issues that are presently affecting First Nations people and preventing them from furthering their development and growing into strong individuals. Once the issues are identified, a process by which the FNGC will seek to guide and strengthen future leaders as "Health Indians" will follow with the new developments fostering clear minded, healthy spirited First Nations people.

Recommendation #4:

To have the FNGC create a framework by which it will provide resources to communities who seek guidance in their individual issues and challenges. The FNGC will provide advice to First Nations people who ask for help, keeping in mind that the FNGC not be in a position to dictate but rather, provide a sense of clear, positive direction based on the research, facts, and expertise of the FNGC and it's staff and advisory committees.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Counter-acting a “culture of dependency” (Naiomi Metallic)

Participants: Shelly Martin, Kent McNeil, Jaime Battiste, Shelby Desjarlais, Autumn Eaglespeaker, Otis Jasper, Reg Linski, Jamie Vacon

[Report B11]

Discussion:

- why changing our mindset resulting from Indian Act is important → it may be the only way to effect self-government
- like Strater said yesterday – status quo not fulfilling our needs
- what is needed to counter-act the “culture of dependence”
- support for each other in effecting change – sometimes hard to get support from community members – especially if you left for education
- rediscovering our roles in the community
- need alternatives to being a victim

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- target the youth / focus on role modelling
- provide information – why the status quo is so bad for us; show what there is to gain is important than what they might lose
- foster personal development (i.e. life skills program) – this will foster community development and economic development
- best practices on development should be developed so that community will accept what we have to say
- getting away from “wait and see approach” – waiting for government to help us
- strategies to help people get over victimization
- FNGC could have a role in this, re: costs, training regional workshops
- Networking – getting communities who have succeeded
- In personal, community or economic development to work with those who are struggling / contact information / resource people

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: A First Step? Publicly spirited on good governance.

Participants: Lee McASam, Shelby Desjarlais, Curtis Wilson, Mr. Charles Woods, Jaime, John Jack, Crystal Sutherland

[Report B12]

Discussion:

- Reporting Mechanisms – for Leadership and Delegates,
- Hold leadership accountable to "lip service",
- "If you believe it enough it can be so?"
- Silent majority Is there to support change,
- Open meetings,
- Transparency – finances,
- Best practices across Canada,
- Don't be afraid to delegate (by leadership)
- Providing examples of other successes,
- Passive approach time is over,
- Support group of like minded individuals,
- People recommend FNGC to assess their leadership,
- Corporate structure model with accountability and reporting applied a top traditional governance model.

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- Gather and form a support group to discuss governance issues,
- Initiate momentum; even at the smallest levels,
- Trust in silent majority.
- Demand accountability from leadership
- Ultimately, the realization was discovered that if an accountable, well-run, productive and healthy governing body was to appear, the catalyst, idea, discussions and finally demand must come from the people.
- They have to want the improvements and qualities that they are entitled to. They also have to realize their role and responsibility in attaining those desires

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: The role of young people in future development and planning of the First Nations Governance Centre.

Participants: Naiomi Metallic, John Jack, Otis Jasper, Brandon Monture, Nelson Rabbit, Shelly Alartim, Crystal Sutherland, Candace Russell, Jamie A. Vacon, Jaime Pattiste, Shelby Desjarlais

[Report B13]

Discussion:

To achieve less tumultuous politics; political institutional structures
"must reflect community ideas."
(Cornell, Stephen: PowerPoint presentation; Oct. 4, 2004).

1. *ISSUE:*

A community is comprised of young people, women, men and Elder's yet current leadership primarily consists of men. As the FNGC undertakes its developmental work, an Elders Advisory Committee has provided direction. Diversity of community must be represented in higher decision making processes for the people to increase their trust and participation in the institution

OPPORTUNITY:

Stephen Cornell's systemic evidence show's that by increasing the FNGC's legitimacy with the people is one of the 'Keys to Success'. Satsan's presentation acknowledged a movement for change from Indian Act to our own. Indeed, including diverse community representatives reflects traditional processes where everyone is represented in our houses/institutes of governance. This provides a natural/traditional way of mentoring and raising young leaders to continue the work of current leadership.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Include young people in the future development and planning processes of the FNGC.
- b) Have three 'expert' and qualified young people represented on the Board of Directors of the FNGC.

2. *ISSUE:*

Determine 'Selection Criteria' for three National Youth Representatives on the FNGC Board of Directors to ensure they have the capacity, skills and knowledge to represent ALL 'aboriginal' youth and their issues. The youth representatives will need to be accountable to their peers. Build a National Youth structure that the Youth Representatives are accountable to.

OPPORTUNITY:

Build Regional Youth Committees to ensure the voice and issues are aligned with the representatives on the Board of Directors as well as the National Youth Council. Conduct work in a for youth by youth format with guidance and expertise of adult support.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Research Best Practice models of existing National Youth Councils so that youth involvement in the FNGC is productive and effective and works for all.

3. *ISSUE:*

Revenue is needed to support work of the FNGC National Youth Council and Regional Committees. Need to have continual resources to sustain activities of youth in the FNGC. Young people acknowledge that revenue is generally limited and they are willing to find other sources of revenue for their initiatives.

OPPORTUNITY:

Inventory on the Best Practices of existing National Youth Councils, development and implementation of a functional youth council and regional youth committees.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A portion of the FNGC resources be allocated to youth initiatives. The FNGC support young people in their quest to find alternate sources of revenue.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Self-Sustainability

Participants: Otis, Brandon Monture, Sheila Redsky, Reg Linski, Joe
Derrick, Jamie Vacon, Shelby Desjarlais (facilitator)

[Report B14]

Discussion:

- fishing, logging, natural resources
- don't delegate; do the leg work, work the land ourselves
- safety of people; Canada health and safety
- implement best practices from other organizations i.e. Millbrook
- commercial services
- business plans
- training for employment; with contracts to work in the community
- create revenue to eliminate the imbalance at the negotiating table so we have negotiation without restrictions
- support from community and other nations

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- look at the land and see what resources are available and train people in those areas to work the land, i.e. fishing, logging
- business plans train for business and bring in commercial revenue i.e. Super 8, Mac's (look at Millbrook)
- do the groundwork; send out researchers to look at best practices, gather information and talk to communities where revenue generation works

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Topic: Creating a Successful Band Administration

Participants: Shelby Desjarlais, Reg Linski, Naiomi Metallic, Shelly Martin, Jaime Battiste, Lee McAdam, Curtis Wilson

[Report B15]

Discussion:

- administration independent of politics
- hiring and firing policy (progressive disciplinary)
- job description and duties necessary
- situations might call for personal grievances (ADR)
- code of conduct
- "there is no future in managing poverty"
- housing, welfare, and individual hardships of community members should be taken care of by committees
- separation of administration and politics
- councillors have portfolios
- open band meetings (motions to removal of office)

Recommendations on Next Steps and Futures Action:

- accountability in quarterly divisions