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March 12, 2025

COMMUNIQUE – FROM THE OFFICE OF DEPUTY CHIEF ARMSTRONG

Aanii Kina Wiya M'Chigeeng First Nation Community,

As the Interim representative for Gimaa Hare, I wish to share an update on the recent initiatives being undertaken by M'Chigeeng. Additionally, I want to reassure the community that, in the light of recent changes, we are committed to maintaining a smooth continuity of operations and wish Gimaa Hare well during his leave.

First, I would like to share that my first few days in the office have been exciting and with the full support of our councillors as well as the operations team, we have some great initiatives on the horizon for M'Chigeeng and we can't wait to share more of these updates with you in the coming weeks.

FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

I am pleased to announce that Forrest Schut will serve as the interim Fire Prevention Officer. Forrest has been a dedicated volunteer firefighter with the MFN Fire Department for several years. With the support of our Capital Projects Public Works Department Manager, we are confident that Forrest will provide outstanding leadership to the volunteer fire department during this transitional period as M'Chigeeng First Nation prioritizes safety within our community. In addition, our Enaagdenjged has been working with the UCCM Police on some safety initiatives for the community. More exciting news to follow shortly on what this entails.

M'CHIGEENG OUTREACH PROGRAM UPDATE

Since 2020, the M'Chigeeng Outreach Program has been a key initiative, supported by a successful funding opportunity. As we approach the program's conclusion on March 31, 2025, we are reflecting on the data collected and the needs of the community. This will guide us as we explore the possibility of a similar program with a broader scope. We are grateful for all we've learned through this program and the valuable support from the ISN team. Stay tuned for updates in the coming weeks as we continue to work towards enhancing community support. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment.

In addition, we will soon share exciting news about all the other initiatives that the Council and operations are pursuing. One favourable initiative is the commencement of quarterly open houses in the evenings. We are hoping to start in early April to showcase our programs and services that are offered to the community. We encourage the community to attend and ask questions! Keep an eye out for more information.

Below are a few other quick updates on the different projects:

MANITOULIN PROJECT

Quick Background: The Manitoulin Project Phase 3 claims allege that the Crown: sold the lots of land at below market value, thus reducing trust deposits to the First Nations ("the Lots Claim"); improperly diverted the First Nations' Trust monies into roads-building for the benefit of other parties ("the Roads Claim"); and, used Indian Land Management Fund monies derived from Manitoulin land sales for purposes unrelated to the First Nations ("ILMF").

Pursuant to the terms of the Manitoulin Project Trust, the Trustee can only distribute the compensation and interest from the Trust if they have received a *Unanimous Leadership Resolution* evidenced by a written directive signed by the Chief of each First Nation. This stipulates that the First Nations are required to come to a consensus regarding the utilization and distribution of the compensation. Until such an agreement is established, the funds will remain within the Trust. **"This means that the First Nations must reach an agreement amongst each other as to how the compensation should be used and distributed"**. Until that decision is reached, the money will remain in the Trust. Please see attachment from UCCMM regarding the Manitoulin Project.

POST OFFICE RELOCATION

While we recognize that space at our current Post Office location has been challenging with the increasing packages arriving daily, we are actively working on relocating to the BDC adjacent to the Grocery Store (Freshmart). This development is indeed exciting, as we will be updating the receiving process to align with civic addresses in the future.

HIAH PROJECTS

Currently, HIAH Corp is working on EV charging stations that will be located at few locations: BDC and the Community Complex. We are looking at a venture with Lafarge and relocating HIAH Corp office to the BDC building.

FINANCIAL LAW

Council of M'Chigeeng First Nation will be looking into enacting a Financial Administration Law *working with* Financial Management Board ("the FMB"). We are looking forward to working with FMB during this process. First Nation's achievement of FMB certification resulting in sound financial management practices, financial stewardship, accountability and transparency.

GOVERNANCE

Dissolvement of the Department Committees, due to challenges such as lack of attendance. Council recommends seeing more community consultations/input on some of the initiatives being the focus.

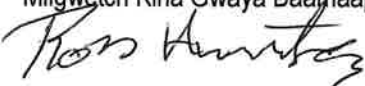
We have met for two planning session thus far and out of these two sessions, we are developing an action plan which include:

- 1) Revisiting the Constitution, which was drafted with the community in 2012 -2015 and bringing that to the community for more input.
- 2) Revisiting the past work from previous consultations with the community, establish a Community Comprehensive Planning for our First Nation, along with input and review of M'Chigeeng Codes.
- 3) Enhance the process for Chief and Council meetings
- 4) More gatherings and community engagements.

Chi Miigwetch for taking the time to review the update and I would like to take this moment to say "GO M'CHIGEENG THUNDERBIRDS' and I hope you all are enjoying yourselves in the LNHL Tournament and for those that didn't go, hope you are enjoying your time with your young ones. My door is always open, if you would like to stop in at the Administration Office and say Hello.

Aabdeg wii-aasgaabwitaadying, wegdiwendig go ezhchigeyingwenh wii-wiidookaazying.

Miigwetch Kina Gwaya Baamaapii,



Ross Armstrong, Deputy Chief



UNITED CHIEFS and COUNCILS OF MNIDOO MNISING

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Re: Manitoulin Project Settlement

On October 26, 2024 a ceremony was held to acknowledge the historic Manitoulin Project settlement between Canada and Aundeck Omni Kaning, M'Chigeeng, Sheguiandah, Sheshegwaning and Zhiibaahaasing First Nations. The settlement resolved claims dating back to the late 1800s. As compensation for its past wrongs, Canada provided a total of \$447.9 million to be shared among the five First Nations.

As directed by the elected Chiefs and Councils of the five First Nation, the UCCMM settled a Trust where the compensation is currently being held, and where the money is earning interest for the benefit of the First Nation members. The corporate Trustee is BMO Trust Company.

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Discussions among the First Nations' leadership is ongoing and we will continue to provide the communities with periodic updates, and any new information as it becomes available.