



WALKING INTO LEADERSHIP

Candidate Orientation Guide



"Leadership is not a position of privilege. It is a commitment to service,
accountability, and future generations."

TFN Governance & Administration Department

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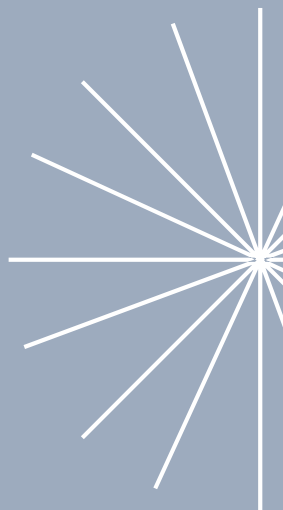
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WELCOME

Kukwstsétsemc

Thank you for considering service to the Tsq̓ésceḥ First Nation.

Seeking election to Chief and Council is both an honour and a responsibility. Leadership requires courage, humility, integrity, and a willingness to place the interests of the Nation above personal interests.

This guide is designed to help prospective candidates understand the realities of governance, leadership responsibilities, and the expectations associated with elected office.

Whether you ultimately choose to run or not, your interest in serving your Nation is valued and appreciated.

SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

Respect
Listen first.

Integrity
Do what is right, even when
difficult.

Accountability
Own your decisions.

Courage
Address difficult issues.

Service
Put community first.

Humility
Continue learning.

Stewardship
Think seven generations ahead.

Seven Principles of Leadership



Respect



Integrity



Accountability



Courage



Service



Humility



Stewardship

WHAT DOES A COUNCILLOR ACTUALLY DO?



COUNCIL PROVIDES DIRECTION

- ✓ Establishes priorities
- ✓ Approves budgets
- ✓ Develops policy
- ✓ Protects Nation interests
- ✓ Represents membership
- ✓ Oversees organizational performance

ADMINISTRATION PROVIDES OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- ✓ Manages programs
- ✓ Supervises employees
- ✓ Delivers services
- ✓ Implements Council direction
- ✓ Manages day-to-day operations
- ✓ Provides professional advice

**Council governs.
Administration manages.
Together they serve the Nation.**

WHAT EFFECTIVE COUNCILLORS DO

REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY

- Community meetings and events
- Northern Shuswap Tribal Council (NSTC) meetings
- Annual General Meetings
- Regional leadership tables
- Provincial and Federal government meetings
- Meetings with Ministers and government officials
- Partner and stakeholder engagements

RECEIVING FEEDBACK AND CRITICISM

Leadership often means hearing different perspectives.

Councillors should be willing to:

- Listen respectfully to concerns
- Accept constructive criticism
- Remain calm during difficult conversations
- Seek understanding before responding
- Focus on solutions rather than conflict

Not every decision will satisfy everyone, but all members deserve respect and consideration.

LEADERSHIP ON COUNCIL FILES

- Health and Wellness
- Education and Training
- Child and Family Wellbeing
- Housing
- Culture and Language
- Lands and Resources
- Economic Development
- Governance

While Councillors do not direct staff or manage departments, they may help champion priorities, bring information back to Council, and support strategic discussions in these areas.

PROFESSIONALISM

Effective leaders:

- ✓ Come prepared to meetings
- ✓ Read briefing materials in advance
- ✓ Ask thoughtful questions
- ✓ Respect differing opinions
- ✓ Maintain confidentiality
- ✓ Communicate professionally
- ✓ Support collective decisions

Leadership requires balancing personal perspectives with the responsibility to serve the Nation as a whole.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A COUNCILLOR

*Leadership is more than meetings.
It is a continuous commitment to service.*



1. COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Listen to members, attend community events, and stay connected. Bring community voices and perspectives to Council discussions.



2. LEARNING & PREPARATION

Review agendas and briefing materials. Stay informed on Nation priorities, legislation, and emerging issues. Continue developing governance knowledge and skills.



3. LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

Participate in Council discussions and decision-making. Champion strategic priorities and take leadership on issues that strengthen our Nation.



4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Build relationships and trust throughout the Nation. Listen respectfully, support community initiatives, and help connect members with information and resources.



5. REPRESENTING TSQÉSCEN

Represent the Nation at NSTC, AGMs, regional forums, meetings with Provincial and Federal government, Ministers, and partners. Speak on behalf of Tsqéscen with professionalism, respect and confidence.



6. OVERSIGHT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Review budgets, policies, reports and strategic priorities. Monitor progress and ensure transparency, accountability and sound decision-making.



7. COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

Speak confidently and respectfully. Represent Council's collective decisions. Participate in public events and gatherings, and be open to questions and feedback.



8. REFLECTION & FUTURE THINKING

Reflect on decisions and outcomes. Follow up on commitments and consider long-term impacts. Think seven generations ahead in every decision.



**SERVING
TSQÉSCEN**

With Integrity.
For Our People.
For Future Generations.

GOVERNANCE BOUNDARIES

Council Should

- ✓ Set vision
- ✓ Approve budgets
- ✓ Approve policies
- ✓ Monitor performance
- ✓ Represent the Nation

Council Should Not

- ✗ Supervise staff
- ✗ Direct employees
- ✗ Approve vacation requests
- ✗ Manage departments
- ✗ Interfere in operations

AT EVERY STAGE, LEADERSHIP MEANS



LISTENING
Hear all voices.



SERVICE
Put community first.



RESPECT
Honour people,
culture and the land.



COURAGE
Address difficult
issues.



ACCOUNTABILITY
Own your decisions
and actions.



HUMILITY
Continue
learning.



STEWARDSHIP
Think seven
generations ahead.

PROTECTING TRUST

Confidentiality

Some information must remain confidential:

- Personnel matters
- Legal advice
- Negotiations
- Financial information
- Sensitive community matters

Trust is built through discretion and integrity.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict may arise when personal interests intersect with Council duties.

When in doubt:

- ✓ Declare it
- ✓ Discuss it
- ✓ Step back when necessary

LEADERSHIP IS NOT SIMPLY
ABOUT MEETINGS AND
MOTIONS:

It is about:

Caring for the people
Protecting the land
Honouring culture
Supporting future generations
Serving with humility



IMPORTANT TO KNOW



COUNCILLORS ARE NOT EMPLOYEES

Councillors serve as elected leaders and are not employees of the Nation.

Councillors receive honoraria for participation in:

- ✓ Council meetings
- ✓ Committee meetings
- ✓ Community events
- ✓ Approved Nation business
- ✓ Governance-related activities



THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF

The Chief serves in a full-time leadership capacity and carries additional responsibilities on behalf of the Nation.

These responsibilities may include:

- ✓ Government-to-government relations
- ✓ Political advocacy
- ✓ Intergovernmental meetings
- ✓ Strategic leadership
- ✓ Nation representation
- ✓ Emergency leadership responsibilities



LEADERSHIP IS SERVICE

Whether serving as Chief or Councillor, elected leaders are entrusted to:

- ✓ Serve the people
- ✓ Represent the Nation
- ✓ Act with integrity
- ✓ Think beyond today
- ✓ Work collectively



WHY THIS MATTERS



The role of Council is governance.



The role of Administration is operations.



Understanding these distinctions helps ensure strong governance, accountability, and effective service to Tsq̓escen̓i members.



REFLECTION

Take a moment to consider:

Why do I want to serve?

What strengths do I bring?

What do I hope to accomplish?

Am I prepared to:

- ☐ Read hundreds of pages of briefing materials?
- ☐ Attend evening and weekend meetings?
- ☐ Maintain confidentiality?
- ☐ Work respectfully with people I disagree with?
- ☐ Make decisions that may not please everyone?
- ☐ Represent all members fairly?
- ☐ Continue learning and growing as a leader?

The strength of our Nation depends on leaders who are willing to listen deeply, act with integrity and make decisions for those who are yet to come.



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