

ɬAKISÓNUK FIRST NATION

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



ɬakisq'nuk Mission Statement

Through sound, reasonable leadership we will promote the well being and economic self reliance of our people by encouraging and fostering education and sustainable employment.

Ktunaxa Vision Statement

Tax na kuʔin Ktunaxa ɬuʔkqa ɬaqłəməknik, ku ɬmakqa ɬusuklułak ɬakikaqa silpaxa ɬat kiʔəxa kaʔakłukaqnałəʔis, ɬat ku ɬxaʔł yakxaknałə kuʔinnałə ɬaqłəməknik. Kuskikił qatwiynałə ɬat kuə ɬxanałə kaʔ akłukaqwałə tax na kuə ɬinawismakniyałə naʔs kuə qat ɬitkikəłə ɬałka ɬaqat ɬaqatłałə nas ɬat kəxat hakiwiękit ɬmakis ɬat kəxat qakikawiękikimik kəxat ɬins kinʔins kawiękin qapsins akił ɬaqłəməknikis.

Strong, healthy citizens and communities speaking our languages and celebrating who we are and our history in our ancestral homelands, working together, managing our lands and resources, within a self-sufficient, self-governing Nation.

Contents

ʔakisq'nuk Mission Statement	1
Ktunaxa Vision Statement.....	1
Governance Reports	3
Nasuʔkin Donald Sam.....	4
Councillor Allan Nicholas	19
Councillor Darcy Fisher	22
Councillor Janice Alpine	25
Councillor Faro Burgoyne	28
Director of Governance	31
Administration Reports.....	33
Chief Administrative Officer.....	34
Chief Financial Officer	38
Director of Core Services	42
Director of Lands & Resources	46
Director of Infrastructure.....	55
Director of Health & Wellness	58
Director of Member Services	62

Governance Reports

Nasuʔkin Donald Sam



Councillor: 2014 – 2020

Nasuʔkin: 2022 – Present

donald.sam@akisqnuuk.org

Kiʔsuʔk Kyukyit ?Akisqnuknik- Greetings

Kiʔsuʔk kyukyit ?ał ka knału- Greetings guests and visitors

Kiʔsuʔk kyukyit Ka swu nałła- Greetings all of our friends

Hu sukił kuqni kin wakił, Ɂink'apałtawas- I am happy you came

Hu qałwiyni huł qsamunałamnała. Huń ?it'qawxanułwiynała.

Huʔinata ?akisqnuknik.

I would like for us to help each other to bring our hearts together. We are ?akisqnuknik.

My report format starts with a description of the roles of leadership, then the desired future state (visions) that we have as a foundation, followed by brief updates on various initiatives that have been in the works over the last year. Some may be repetitive as other Council members, so I will be brief.

I hope during our AGA, and as you learn more about the work that is underway, you can feel this optimism as well. I am looking forward to this year's AGA and all of us coming together - ?Akisqnu'nik, community, friends, partners, and allies. We are here reporting on the work of Chief and Council, reporting on work of staff implementation work, and to hear from membership successes and direction. Let's not forget the cultural values of family, Community, Elders, Youth, Stories, and laughter.

Leadership

Historically, the roles of Chief and Council have been blurred with roles of administration- leading to micro-managing, high staff turnover, confusion of our direction. For the first half of my term, a lot of work has gone into redefining how we operate. I like to believe that the work of Chief and Council is progressive- we are in the midst of a shift, and this shift is to evolve our community leadership so we can better represent membership. By demonstrating transparency, fairness and accountability we are practicing good governance. As a result, we are more cohesive as a council, we don't agree on everything, but we can respect each other to have frank discussions. Over the last year, this has been reinforced in many ways including Strategic Planning, Council training and staff supports.

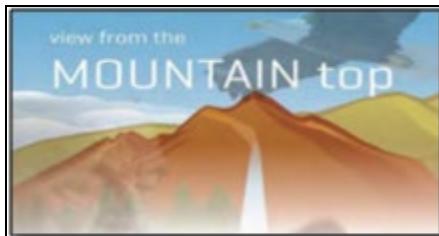
This doesn't mean we are not involved with the Band operations, operations and governance are separate, but they must work together. To do this, Council gives direction through the council table with the CEO, we give direction approving annual workplans, and stronger reliance on our policies.

If you think about it, The Band Office comes from a history of being funded by Indian affairs to implement Federal policies that were aimed at managing poverty and assimilation. Our shift highlights Self-determination. We expect operations to realize the Nation's Vision and to work with us for the prosperity of our entire community. Through the many challenges, we are

making this shift. Hu naʔaʔni Ktunaxa, ɬ sawsaqa ɬakisqnu. ɬmakiłwi. Ktunaxa. We are Ktunaxa, ɬAkisqnu, come from a strong history.

Expect your leadership to understand the importance of protecting our Indigenous Rights and Title; to advance the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to be familiar with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, speak on protecting the inherent wealth of our lands and people, all these while maintaining engagements with membership, supporting the work here.

The following illustration depicts the separation of Chief and Council in relation to the staff of the organization and operations, and how the relationships affect the community membership. It is often called the views from the Mountain top to River's edge. It is not new; we have been trying to implement this since way back in the KNC- Dan George trainings.



THE VIEW FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOPS

This level of the system is occupied by leadership (Chief and Council). It illustrates the duty of leadership entrusted with "making space" for their members to be successful. From this vantage point, we can see the lay of the land, the valleys and rivers. Seeing the high-level opportunity and threats, choosing a direction that will bring us to a place of prosperity.



THE VIEW FROM THE TREETOPS

As we arrive at the place leadership has directed, it is time to "set-up camp" so to speak. Leadership expects staff to know where the tipi poles are, where the food is located, what roles everyone is expected to perform. This level of the system is Senior Management and suggests that the role of senior staff is charged with the task of "defining the space" created by leadership. Ensuring the organization is equipped with the tools to get the job done.



THE VIEW FROM THE RIVER'S EDGE

The expectations membership places on leadership is to get us to a place that improves the quality of life of our people. Our people are at the river's edge. Our people are Past, Present and Future.

This is arguably the most important part of the system(s) in which we operate. Front-line workers and membership occupy this level of the system.

The ultimate goal of those at the Mountaintops, Treetops and River's Edge is "getting results" that proactively address the needs and aspirations of those you are formed to serve.

Figure 1 adapted from ?Akisq'nuk First Nation Strategic Plan- Dan George Report. Also found in 2024 Strategic Plan Adapted from the ?Akisq'nuk First Nation Comprehensive Community Plan- Dan George Report. Also found in the 2024 Strategic Planning Report.

Envisioned Future

To understand our collective direction and guide our decisions, the following envisioned future statements were shared at the strategic planning session. The Chief and council have developed this to help respond to current conditions in the community, at the Ktunaxa Nation level, and the Provincial and Federal political environment, as well as the legal landscape.

Figure 2 from the 2024 Strategic Plan

Governance Goals:

Next are the governance goals of 2024. The following goals for Governance were identified at the Chief and Council Strategic Planning session: These goals are driving the work of AFN the Chief and Council table.

- Contribute to, and support, improving the Nation's quality of life
- Promote recognition of our rights at all government tables
- Establish a political presence
- Enshrine our rights, recognition, and reconciliation in Agreements with governments
- Utilize policies to guide governance matters

- Meaningfully engage the community
- Mentor leaders for the future
- Best practices in financial management
- Adherence to the Financial Administration Law

Personal Goals

I often ask myself are we making a difference? Especially in the reflections of writing an annual report; is this investment of time and energy another example of failed attempts at moving forward? The saying 'Organizational culture eats strategy for lunch' is a risk of not only the organization shift, but also in the growth of our community. I don't want the next generation to be making the same mistakes repeatedly.

I had five personal priorities when I was coming into my term as Chief:

- 1) Investment in Membership-empower our people to flourish. If at the end of the day, our language and culture are to survive, we must invest in the health and wellness of our people. An environment where you are safe, included and valued. Hu natt'a?ni Ktunaxa.
- 2) relationship of employees of AFN - raise the expectations of staff, recognize and retain good workers leading to a professional and passionate team that are here for Membership and can successfully implement the direction of Leadership.
- 3) Governance- Focus our Chief and Council roles; Disciplined, Collaborative, Visionary, Advocacy, mindful decision makers. Leading with purpose and vision as opposed to reactionary and fear based. If we are clear in our processes, and vision, we will forge effective relationships.
- 4) Economic Development- manage prosperity not managing poverty. We can create an economic base where people have meaningful employment, and

our children can dream of their future without having to leave ?amak?is Ktunaxa and not bound by the chains of economic inequality.

I am holding on to these overarching priorities and believe they speak to much historical conflict between the Administration, Council and Membership. Everyone is right but we all have various perspectives. I have reviewed previous Chief and Council strategy sessions and previous AGM reports, Community dialogue and engagement sessions, HR Conflicts, the common themes around serving the members, building capacity strategic decisions, move forward and thrive is woven throughout our history.

When people can listen to each other, and understand each other, share where they are coming from, then we can work towards solutions and resolving issues collectively.

Issue	Where are we	What is Progress?
AFN Staffing- confident staff are operating professionally in alignment with a common vision to support you the Membership.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effort to make AFN an employer of choice, attract, recognize, and maintain talent.• We have concluded the Organization chart, Position descriptions are standardized, Council approved the new organization chart, recruitment has been ongoing to complete a healthy responsive organization.• Refine and assess as we go along, right Jobs.• Quality of Service Standards – Serving our members
Staff appreciated and recognized for going above and beyond		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing the right tools, incentives and motivations.• Department Directors that understand the roles of their department to contribute to the whole organization.• Currently revising the AFN HR policy, continued recruitment.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved wage grid and positions descriptions provide consistency and fairness. Foster the expectations that regular Employee Evaluations are completed.
Governance- Strong Council disciplined and reliance on policies,		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational matters go through the one staff- CEO- Council Focus on governance matters such as Rights and Title, Community relations (safety), Neighboring relations- ?Akisq'nuk Profile. Some examples of current work include Justice, Policing and Public Safety Modernization consultation, Federal Child and Family legislation, First Nations Health Authority, International Joint Committee reference for Elk Valley Water Quality, Columbia River Treaty, Provincial Consultation (Declaration act). Hired a <i>Governance Director</i> to support Council strategy implementation Reliance on <i>Governance Policy</i> is the overarching guiding document. Including our roles and responsibilities and ensuring grievances can focus on issues, not personality. Training in Governance models will continue to develop capacity and use of policy and law as your government. Strengthened Chief and Council meetings with briefing notes, focused discussion, decision making. Working on consistent reporting for council meetings Appreciating each other's contributions and time. We recognize and minimize administrative or operational items from creeping into our council meetings.
Community Wellness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting conversations and visits. Safe and engaging. Increasing the number of Community Dialogue sessions for open conversations and inclusion. Open to all ?Akisq'nuknik through in-person and Zoom- Band

		<p>Meetings, IBE, OSR, Master Dev Plan, AFN Enterprise engagement. Treaty and KNC Relations are in the planning stage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive open communications through newsletter and online presence. • OSR- PCD. Membership benefits from the wealth of our Lands. • Language and Culture Position will incorporate language and cultural values into AFN programming. • Proactive Emergency Management Response which in turn minimizes trauma in our community. • Staff developing programs that help create safe spaces and networks for people to heal. • Use our positions to lift each other up • Currently utilizing the Alpine Ranch acquisition for programming • Trauma informed approaches • Celebrate the good things in our community
Economic development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping AFN Limited Partnership become operational. • Economic Development incorporates best practices in vision, procedures, and due diligence, aligned with AFN priorities. • Recreation Center, Campground, management are in operation. • Acquisition of Invermere Property • Community Engagement (Aug 14).

I look back and recall the divergent views of council over the past two (2) years, and despite the challenges, I do believe we are making headway to be a progressive leadership table that puts the membership first. In making decisions, we are conscious of the collective membership- past, present, and future *?akisq̓nuknik̓*. I am optimistic on where we are going and how we are doing it. I hope you feel the progression that is transpiring for our First Nation. The chief and council, supported by our governance coordinator, CAO

and staff can now take actions to protect our rights and title and advocate for you at government tables regionally provincially and nationally.

Priority	Progress?
Contribute to and support improving the Nation's quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved construction of new Health Building, Administration and Atrium Authorized additional housing construction Focus on health and member services in budgeting process OSR policy approved. PCD policy approved Workforce development policy approved. Organization Chart, new positions, and hiring staff Flexinet completes Fiber project offering highspeed internet
Promote recognition of our rights at all government tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended the BCFNLG, met with Education, WLRS, Forestry and, Met with School Board. Meet with Indigenous Relations Minister Rankin Invited and met with MOTI, shared a map of the territory along with a request for turning lanes. IJC - ABMP CRT Highway 1 MOTI
Establish a political presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met with Premiere David Eby Met with provincial leadership at BCFNLG 2023 included Education, Forests, WLRS and MOTI Attended AFN, UBCIC, Interior Health Caucus meetings Meetings with FNHA Kootenay Boundary Local Government annual forum. Columbia Valley Economic Development Advisory Board Meeting with Shuswap Indian Band Salmon Release Making availability as requested.

Enshrine our Rights, recognition and reconciliation in agreements with Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating in Mineral Act Tenure reform, Child and Family Services, Policing and Public Safety, Climate Change, Safe and engaging. Celebrate the good things in our community SEA bridging agreement
Utilize policies to guide governance matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjudication of complaints through Governance Policy and FAL Election Regulations OSR policy, PCD policy Workforce Development policy Membership code
Meaningfully engage community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member participant at Justice Forum Band Meetings Increase member engagements- IBE, Open House, Alpine Ranch, AFN Ltd. Master Plan Development
Mentor leaders for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth and Elder participation at “Our Gathering” with ISC
Best practices in financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hired Director of Finance Engaging with xyntax for accounting needs.
Adherence to the Financial Administrative Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAIC Director of Finance CAO Audits

Updates

Oh, my goodness where is my office? The construction is just getting underway. It will be a year and a half of confusion and inconvenience but at the end of it, we will have a state-of-the-art Health and Administration building connected by an inviting and informative atrium. This multi-year project was initiated before my term, and it is finally breaking ground literally this weekend 😊. Shout out to everyone that has been involved in this project especially Bob for your dedication and determination.

We have had a few new staff join the organization recently as we have approved the organizational chart along with Position Descriptions and wage grid. Our CAO, David Bach is doing incredible things for the organization- I see teamwork and collaboration both internal and external. Work continues with HR and making AFN an employer of choice. I do believe that it is a good time to join ?Akisq̄nuk.

In July Cornel Idoko joined AFN as our new Governance Coordinator. His role will be supporting Chief and Council and the separation of operations from governance. Cornel Idoko just started last month and is getting up to speed and of course, has hit the ground running. Between him and David, I feel like we are going to be successful, no more speaking into a void. The province has provided funding through the New Relationship Trust to support First Nations increase their capacity to engage with the province on the implementation on the Declaration Act. This funding program coincides with us developing our governance capacity.

Over the next while, Chief and Council will have office space in the old Health building. We will be working on office hours and portfolios (duties) with our new Governance Coordinator as well as Salopek. In the meantime, I am in the office regularly and Council are available by phone or email.

This year, we have developed a policy on what we call OSR. We have received community support in allocating revenues to fund operations, savings, and payments to individual members. Since the PCD, I have heard of many wonderful things that ?Akisq̄nuknik have been able to do that they might not otherwise.

Council has approved the construction on the next three (3)-plex #4. Currently our housing department is being assessed for the consideration of whether we continue with the AFN Housing Department or if a Society would be more appropriate. The housing Manager Position is still vacant.

Our RCMP Letter of Expectations includes 5 priority areas. Community Safety, Cultural Education/Awareness, Visibility in community, Road Safety on Highway #3 and Highway 93/95, and Communications with ?Akisq̓nuk.

Community Engagement

Engagement opportunities are held between Band Meetings, and I hope you see the notices in the newsletter, social media and bulletin boards.

Communications is very diligent in getting the word out. AFN held a successful Open House in the spring welcoming membership and neighbors to see what it is we do here. I noticed that it also opened the door to staff collaborating amongst themselves too. Master Development Plan engagement is underway seeking input into what our Band Office area could look like including recreation, commercial and wildlife. We held an information session regarding Indian Beach Estates as the lease is coming to an end soon, we want to be open about the negotiations. Alpine Ranch- Membership was invited out to tour and talk about what the community would like to see it used for. Health and wellness were priority for a lot of these conversations. AFN Limited Enterprises had an information session just last week sharing a few of the successes of our newly formed Business arm- including the Rec Center, Campground, Invermere property, and some upcoming initiatives. It is true, the more we come together the easier it gets.

Public Relations

RCMP 150 years.

Association of Kootenay Boundary Local Government Convention.

?Akisq̓nuk night- Collaboration between Columbia Valley Rockies and our AFN Rec Center

Salmon Mural graces the side of the Recreation Center, Columbia River Salmon Reintroduction Initiative: “Bringing the Salmon Home”.

KNC and the Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce collaboration on interpretive signs.

Flag Raising at Invermere Newly acquired Property Article in the Columbia Pioneer for Ktunaxa literacy day.

Press Releases – Windermere property, Construction of new health building.

KNC

We are still part of the KNCS. Tobacco Plains was preparing to pull out of KNCS however with the work that we have been doing over the past year, they are prepared to stay so that we can make a KNC that we are all part of. I am more comfortable as ?Akisq̓nuk invests in HR and governance, so that we are not relying on KNC, and instead, able to collaborate with KNC and advocate for ?Akisq̓nuk priorities.

Last year, we met a few times specifically to talk about relationships- our relationship with KNC as well as each other. From those meetings, we brought on a governance coordinator to separate the CAO roles from getting into governance. Last fall, changes were made to the by-laws to make all 20 elected Chief and Council Directors of the KNCS. We meet 2-3 days a month which replaces the old Sector Council meeting format. This change allows greater information sharing and equitable decision making. ?Akisq̓nuk chief and Council are preparing to be more active, both at the Nation collective level as well as here in ?Akisq̓nuk. This evolution of governance is happening at the Ktunaxa Nation and amongst the four (4) First Nations individually.

In addition to sitting on the Finance Board, I am also part of the CAO Performance Management Committee. The CAO resigned from the role in June, and we are currently actively recruiting for this position. The CAOPMC also oversees the Governance Coordinator- a new position within KNC.

Other boards I am part of: **International Joint Committee** governance board which is regarding the Kootenay/ Elk valley water quality to addresses

transboundary Water quality. This work includes both Canada the United States of America and the Ktunaxa Nation. This is exciting because it includes the 4 Canadian Ktunaxa First Nation governments in addition to the Confederated Salish and Kootenay tribes as well as the Kutenai Tribe of Idaho.

I sit on the **Columbia River Treaty Leadership Steering committee** and the Redress sub-Committee. Canada and the United States are renegotiating the Columbia River treaty which is within ?amak?is Ktunaxa. The original treaty, signed in 1964 had no First Nation consultation. Through the Ktunaxa Nation Council, we have a negotiating steering committee which includes legal representative Tim Howard and KNC Strategic Initiatives Troy Hunter. They get direction from leadership through the CRT leadership steering committee. We are looking forward in the renegotiations and looking back to address some of the historical grievances of impacts from the dams and original treaty. It is also interesting to note that the negotiations are with the three Indigenous Nations in the Columbia River Basin- Okanagan- Syilx, Shuswap- Secwepmc and Kootenay- Ktunaxa collaboratively.

We are expecting a new Indigenous Justice Center to be opening in the Kootenays. From an information session this spring, it was announced that the BCFNJC were looking at Cranbrook as the location, and we told them that they need to be accessible to ?Akisq?nuk as well. We continue to be in this state of emergency due to opioids. Hold your loved ones close.

I am the representative to NUMCO the shareholder of Ktunaxa Enterprise Limited. KEL has had some successes in its short life, repaying their original loan to the First nation as well as providing a small distribution. KEL is the general partner of Nupqu, Kettle River and amakis transport.

This was just a brief insight into some of the various things Council is working on and some background on how the decision making happens. It is an honor to serve you as Nasu?kin of ?Akisq?nuk First Nation, I carry the title serious. I

hold on to the teachings of the old timers and prays for our future generations. We are the ones our ancestors prayed for. Our blood has been here for over 10,000 years. “Hu na#̄a?ni Ktunaxa” We are ?akis̄qnuknik.

Huyas Hu sukił kuqni ɬapi niskił. Taxa.

Thank you all.

Councillor Allan Nicholas



Councillor: 2010 – 2016; 2020 – Present

allan.nicholas@akisqnu.org

Ki?su?k kyukyit,

Welcome and thank-you to all attending the 2024 ?akisqnu?k Annual General Assembly. I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to Membership for allowing me to serve our community as a member of Chief and Council. It's rewarding to use my experience with economic and civil infrastructure, forestry, wildlife habitat, civil construction, and project management, not to mention my previous terms on Chief and Council to help me serve our community.

I continue to be a part of what was formerly Sectors and is now the 20 Member Leadership team where all of Leadership are involved in all areas of the Nation. My involvement includes attending the scheduled 20 Member Leadership meetings as well as attending both scheduled and unscheduled ?akis?nuk Chief and Council meetings, community meetings, Specific Claims meetings with the legal firm, special meetings for HR legal issues, short notice or emergency meetings within our community with emergency officials.

Hiring and recruiting staff to fill new and vacated positions is an ongoing process where we utilize a Human Resources Firm to aid the Chief Administrator and Directors to optimize position descriptions and organizational structure.

With all the changes we are still committed to providing services to all of Membership whether you live within or outside of the community.

In the past months I have been involved with the following areas: Invermere Property Investment, Windermere Residential Property Investment, Indian Beach Estates Lease, Fish & Wildlife Projects, Wildlife Habitat Restoration Project Review, Water Quality issues, Wildfire Mitigation, Specific Claims, and Emergency situations. All of these are areas that are continuous and ongoing.

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

So far the year has been busy with two new 4-year term council positions that were just filled. It's important for Membership to continue to look ahead at the upcoming elections and think about what needs to be done in our community, what has been accomplished, and who you want to see in Chief and Council that will work for our community.

While challenging and stressful at times and requiring a big-time commitment, being on Chief and Council is a calling and I am proud and honoured to be a part of.

Councillors are required to attend out of town meetings, workshops, and last-minute and emergency meetings. If you are interested in running for Chief and Council I encourage you to take this commitment into consideration.

Our community continues to deal with issues of theft, illegal drug use and overdoses, problems with alcohol consumption, threat of wildfires, and the loss of family, Nation and community Members.

Final Thoughts

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank all of the Staff and Committee Members for all of their hard work and dedication, it does not go unnoticed!

As well thank-you to my fellow Leadership Members and Support Staff for their time, contributions, and hard work!

The importance of having input from Membership is very important and helps us move forward to improve our community. As always Chief and Council are open to having sit downs with Membership as a whole or as individuals to have open discussions and answer questions; as well we encourage Membership to observe our regularly scheduled Chief and Council Meetings (either in person or via Zoom) and attend our Quarterly Membership Meetings. I look forward to having constructive conversations and input from Membership that aid in finding solutions to problems and to making our community a better place for all ?akisqnuuk.

Chief and Council is here to serve and grow our community and I take pride in being a part of that and having the best interests of the ?akisqnuuk First Nation and our Membership at the forefront of all my actions on Chief and Council.

Thank-you to everyone who is attending the ?akisqnuuk Annual General Assembly! I hope you enjoy yourselves and please travel safely!

Councillor Darcy Fisher



Councillor: 2016 – 2020; 2022 – Present

darcy.fisher@akisqnu.org

“Earlier this year the membership code has been reviewed by legal. Recommended changes have been made and a draft will be presented to membership through an engagement process once an Individual Party has been contracted. This process has been ongoing and to my knowledge has been posted in an RFP. Updates to follow via Newsletter, Social Media, and/or the Membership Committee.”

Kiʔsuʔk kyukyit q̓apiniski‡, Hu qak‡ik, Darcy Fisher.

2023/24 has been challenging and exciting in many ways. Our community/membership has grown, we have new faces on Council, we have new staff and we have implemented and filled new positions that will help Pakisqnuuk leadership move towards a common vision. Our efforts, Pakisqnuuknik, over the year have allowed us to transition into a new phase of Governance (Leadership) - Which I think will be greatly appreciated by future generations. Our, Chief and Council, positions – all positions of leadership (Fathers, Mothers, Knowledge Keepers) should be looked upon with admiration, something we aspire to.

This year it seems there has been quite a bit of emphasis on Governance and Leadership at home and within the Nation. ?akisq̄nuk can proudly say that they voted to implement change that will prove to be valuable as ?AFN moves towards self-realization and gaining autonomy. With the move towards Full-time Chief and Council positions membership can be sure to see many positive changes within the coming years.

Some of those changes happened with the changes to the 'Custom Elections Regulations' and when you cast your vote on the New Council members. Additional, changes are happening at the Administrative level, where our CAO has worked diligently to fill positions and assist Council in seeing gaps that need attention. Other notable accomplishments are lands and assets that were acquired through Economic Development, which has allowed ?akisq̄nuk to become more visible within the Valley. Health and Wellness is also making great strides as they bring in more staff and have programs that offer supports through strength based and trauma-informed approach.

Next Steps

Much like our ceremonies and Traditional way of life (Seasonal Round) our work isn't done. Community level will have some upcoming engagement that will shape the landscape of the community. Specifically, the Commercial Development lot that has remained vacant since it was turned into a gravel round-a-about. Much work and forward-thinking input is required to move these upcoming opportunities forward, which will in turn provide economic impact to ?AFN and ?akisq̄nuknik. Additionally, and probably mentioned in the other Council members' reports is the new Admin Building, which brings more prospects for jobs and services. At the Nation (KNC) Level, Leadership has moved to an all 20 Leaders and the chair as a 'Governing' Board.

Other Nation Topics are: International Joint Commission, Columbia River Treaty Redress, etc.

A concerning Nation topic that came up recently was encroachment from other Indigenous Bands harvesting medicinal plants within ?amak?is Ktunaxa. Our best hope for this issue is to have Nation and Individual Band presence in some of our accessible ‘unmonitored/unoccupied’ lands – a conservation/stewardship department.

“Our rights and title are important, our connection to our homelands is inherent. When we neglect or lose our connection to important relationships – we lose our direction, our vision, our values, and disrupt our principles. Everyone is Gifted and has a purpose. Through sound leadership— guided by strong vision, stronger values, and solid principles - each of us can realize our potential (Gift)”.

Councillor Janice Alpine

Councillor: 2023 – Present

janice.alpine@akisqnuuk.org

(250) 417-7895

“Colonial society will continue to influence our families and community and I recognize we need to ensure we have the necessary mechanisms in place to create a community that is safe and sustainable.”



Ki?su?k kyukyit Ɂapi niskit

First of all, I would like to thank the membership for re-electing me back into Council and thank my nominator and seconder for having the confidence in me to run for Council.

This is the beginning of my second term and happy to acknowledge that so much has been accomplished during my tenure with many, many promising changes: including Human resources, Capital projects, ?AFN Enterprises, property and land acquisitions, and Chief and Council positions. What I'm particularly proud of as a Councillor, the changes in our Governance structure. We are making a lot of headway when it comes to separating operations from governance.

We hired a Governance Director to support us in the governance changes that include Policies, Rights and Title, Justice and Enforcement, Land, Emergency Preparedness, Community Safety, Economic Development, Ktunaxa Culture and Language importance.

Changes at the Ktunaxa Nation Council Society have also included redesigning the governance structure. KNC has hired a Governance Director to support the 20-member Leadership on the demands that require the attention of Leadership. There are so many initiatives put on First Nations Leaders not only as *?akis̓qnuuknik* but also as Ktunaxa with the many legislative changes, the drug crisis, infringement on our Rights and Title, Child Welfare, Violation on our Homelands, Regional Land Management, along with our own *?akis̓qnuuknik* matters. This list is not complete because there is always something requiring our attention. When we separate Governance and Operations, we will be in a better position to address the demands.

Regardless of external tasks, I continue to direct my attention to Social Programs that include Health and Education. I'm extremely impressed with the direction Member Services is heading. Granted we still have work to do, but our staff is off to great new start and as we move forward, we ask our members to be patient as we navigate through what we have inherited.

My interests as a Councillor are related to Social aspects that include Education, Child and Family, Healthy living, Policing, Community Safety, Ktunaxa Customs, Land Base Healing, Land Management Remediation, Repatriation, Community Development and Rights and Title and issues that involve the international border. And connecting with the national indigenous organizations in relation to the many external impacts we are faced with that affect our community.

Last year we were addressing communication and am glad to say membership is recognizing that facebook is not Council's main source of communication.

Don't forget if you need repairs to your home, you may qualify for the Homeowner Grant. And, if you are in the Trades, there is a scholarship titled, the Brandon Alpine Memorial Scholarship offered through the College of the Rockies. Even though I'm located in another Ktunaxa community I can be found in the community. I'm not far at all.

Taxas!!

Councillor Faro Burgoyne



Councillor: 2024 – Present

faro.burgoyne@akisqnu.org

Ki?su?k kyukyit Ɂapi niskit,

Thank you for putting your trust in me this year as a new councilor. So far it has been a learning curve. As I have become more familiar with this position, I feel confident that this is where I belong. Here are my reports and reflections of my experience so far.

- Attended seven (7) Chief and Council meetings till date
- Participated in two (2) KNC Leadership meetings
- Participated in SEMLP annual report meeting
- Appointed to KKCFSS and Lands committees
- Took part in Governance training for Chief and Council
- Chaired the KNC AGA

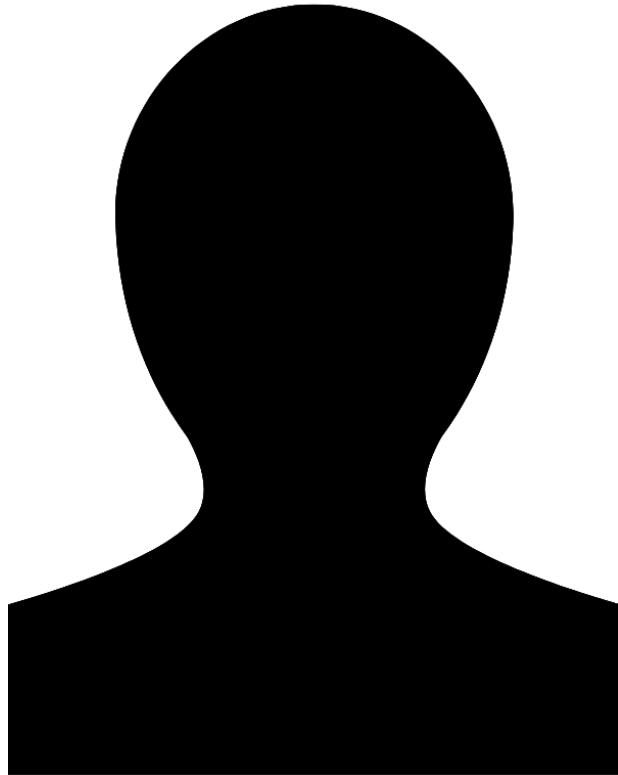
- Hosted the bringing the Salmon Home kickoff event
- Was the master of ceremony at the Flag Raising event
- Attended one (1) Band Meeting so far as a Council member
- Was present and spoke at the Yearend celebration for the students at Lake Shore
- Have been participating in ad hoc meetings regarding Indian Beach Estates, ayute threat, construction of the new multipurpose building, and future projects in various development stages.
- Have been keeping up with daily email correspondence regarding a wide scope of topics and issues.
- Have been actively engaged in corresponding with community members
- I have been learning a lot about ?AFN's organization and governance such as: roles, policy, structure, government to government relations and the traditional history of ?AFN in general.
- There is a wide scope of topics that are discussed at the Council table during the Chief and Council meetings, and I often have that feeling where the more you learn the more you realize you need to learn.
- Some of the topics I find most interesting are: Indian Beach estates, new construction in our community, public safety, health and wellness, land acquisition and Industry relations.
- I have observed there are so many things that require our attention like, territory encroachment in all of ?amak?is Ktunaxa, pollution from coal mines, ongoing traditional territory claims with neighboring Nations, inter government relations, and call outs for representation at many different boards, comities and information sharing events.

- I know everything is important and it all comes together in the bigger picture, but sometimes it's hard to give so much attention to these things when there is so much work to do in our own home.
- I am grateful for the training and support that I have received so far, and I look forward to learning more and gaining the tools and knowledge to help better our community.
- The ?AFN organization is building its capacity and so is the Chief and Council. We are still developing our portfolios and the framework for full-time council positions.
- In my opinion, the current role of the council and the workload that comes with it is full-time.
- The amount of time, energy and focus required to stay on top of everything and to work towards building capacity significantly takes away from my personal life and business, this is the commitment I have made and I am content with it.
- Please understand that figuring out how to report on the work being done and the proper compensation for it, that will be accepted by the membership and council is no easy task.
- The reorganization of ?AFN and new full-time roles are taking some time to complete. I believe that it is crucial that these things are well thought out and done correctly considering they are part of the foundation of our community. Like the building of anything new, the foundation is the most important for structural integrity.
- I believe in the new organization, and I enjoy working with the Chief and Council. We all have our own strengths and wisdom and work well as a team. I believe we are heading in the right direction, and I know with patience, we will accomplish our goals of making our community a better place and to set up a successful future for the next generations.

Taxas.

Director of Governance

Cornelius Idoko



Joined Staff: 2024

cornelius.idoko@akisqnuk.org

First, I would like to thank the Chief Administrative Officer and the Chief and Council for the opportunity to work for the Nation. Second, I would also like to thank the staff and esteemed members of ?akisq'nuk First Nation. I have just started this role in July 2024 as the Governance Director where I will be working closely with the Council in advancing conversations and strategies with British Columbia and Canada with respect to United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDRIP) and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA).

Furthermore, we shall be espousing other governance mechanisms for the betterment of ?akisq'nuk First Nation leadership and citizens and by extension, Ktunaxa Nation. In the light of the foregoing, serious work lies

ahead and cannot wait to see how this would impact reconciliation and other important topics that relate to self-governance and Section 35 Rights.

Focus of what I would be working on in addition to other priorities as set out by the Council.

- Update ?AFN consultation strategy and template in collaborating with various government Ministries and agencies.
- Focus on ?AFN governance module and developing portfolios for Council members who are now transitioning to fulltime council.
- Interpret and Implement ?AFN's governance frameworks.
- Drive engagement and collaboration through record-keeping.
- Support implementation of governance strategies and initiatives.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to advance governance initiatives.
- Assist with interpretation of ?AFN agreements and laws.
- Facilitate and support ?AFN's committees and consultations.

Administration Reports

Chief Administrative Officer



David Bach

Joined Staff: 2022

Senior Leadership Team

Chief Financial Officer – Vacant

Director of Core Services – Donna Melnychyn

Director of Lands & Resources – Lorne Shovar

Director of Infrastructure – Vacant

Director of Health & Wellness – Rachel Bach

Director of Member Services – Laurie Parsons

Director of Governance – Cornelius Idoko*

*Sits in the governance function.

This year's AGA theme is *?usmik Kuktqapnam*, or *New Beginnings*.

You'll see in this year's report, this has truly been a year of evolution and growth – *?usmik Kuktqapnam*.

Last year, I reported to you as *Interim Senior Administrative Officer* and *Fiscal & Economic Director*. I am honoured that Chief & Council has since entrusted me to fill the, now re-named, *Chief Administrative Officer* position on a full-time basis.

I am committed to building a strong and resilient organization to best serve the interests of ?akis?nu?nik and ?akis?nu?k First Nation, as well as all Ktunaxanintik and the Ktunaxa Nation; honouring our ancestors; and respecting and strengthening ?amak?is Ktunaxa.

There have been a number of changes and milestones at ?AFN this past year.

Highlights include:

- The election of two council members;
- Capacity building in the governance function, including transitioning to full time Council positions and hiring a Director of Governance;
- Growth in registered membership to 475 members, the largest of the four Canadian Ktunaxa nations, and ongoing integration initiatives, such as the recent Coming Home Event;
- An organizational review and restructure of administration operations, utilizing an independent human resources firm to redevelop our organizational chart and all position descriptions;
- The adoption of an updated compensation philosophy, developed by an independent human resources firm, based on an assessment of the compensable factors underlying each of our positions and market benchmarking;
- A refocus on procedures and professional development, including organization wide trainings on, among other things, complex trauma and governance;
- Increased capacity throughout the organization, particularly in Health & Wellness, and Culture, Language & Elder Programs;
- The formation of AFN Enterprises Limited Partnership, and its purchase of property in each Invermere and Windermere (establishing ?AFN as the landlord to the Province in Invermere);
- Final approval of our new Health Centre, Band Hall and Renovated Administrative Offices building project, and the associated re-accommodation of staff in offices on reserve and in Invermere;
- The implementation of our new OSR Allocation Policy, including the establishment of a \$35million trust fund and monthly member distributions;

- Development of our Emergency Programs Group, and ongoing wildfire mitigation initiatives such as fuel reduction projects both on and off reserve, and FireSmarting individual properties;
- Partnering with Columbia Valley Pride through hosting a pancake breakfast and table at the festival;
- Hosting a successful Ktunaxa Flag Raising ceremony and celebration at our newly purchased offices at the entrance to Invermere's main street; and
- Hosting the larger Ktunaxa Nation at the Ktunaxa Nation Council Society's Annual General Meeting held at ?akisq̓nuk this last July.

I am excited about all we have accomplished this last year, and the foundation these provide for *new beginnings*. It is not lost on me that change and evolution comes with learnings and growing pains – thank you, all ?akisq̓nuknik – for your patience and support as we work together to raise our game; build the organization; and turn from being reactive to proactive as an organization.

I'm truly proud to be part of these *?usmik Kuktqapnam*.

Organizational Review and Restructure

Over the last year, we've worked with an independent human resource firm, Salopek, to review and restructure our operations. This work has resulted in a revised organizational chart, including the addition of four new Directors, and updated position descriptions for each role.

There have been a number of changes in roles, and the addition of new people to the organization. This last spring we held an open-house to assist in introducing the roles and individuals to membership. We are also working on a new directory, which should be released in short order.

We have also had a refocus on capacity development and filling roles to better serve membership. We have a number of jobs posted at the

akisqnu.org website and I'd encourage all ?akisqnuknik to review these and join us as we work to strengthen the organization.

Chief Financial Officer

Vacant

Joined Staff: N/A

Fiscal & Economic Team

Controller – Vacant

Accounts Payable/Receivable – Gayle Michel

Bookkeeper – Vacant

Economic Development Officer – Lisa Cannady

KNC Economic Secondee – Jose Galdamez



Submitted by David Bach, *Chief Administrative Officer*.

Finance Group

The finance group has continued to be marked by turnover and change over this past year. In the face of this – I'm proud of the nimbleness, dedication and resiliency demonstrated by the team to ensure vital functions and essential controls and safeguards remain unaffected.

Earlier this year our Controller left the organization to return to family in Calgary. After a long and thorough recruitment process, ?AFN hired a new Director of Finance. However, due to personal reasons, the successful applicant resigned after only one month.

Following the departure of the Director of Finance, we have developed a new Chief Financial Officer position and are currently recruiting. We are also developing succession plans, including having two CPAs in the organization with the Controller position, to bring stability and continuity to this department.

During this period of transition, we have engaged an external accounting firm, Xyntax, who have been providing day-to-day Director of Finance and Audit Preparation support. Xyntax is the same firm that assisted with getting our previous audit caught up and was quickly able to jump in to support the organization.

Once we have raised the capacity of the Finance group, with strong in-house CPA support, we intend to work with the First Nations Financial Management Board to complete our Financial Management System certification.

2023-2024 Audit

Unfortunately, with the turnover in the Finance Department, we have been unable to complete the audit and present financial statements for this AGA. The presentation of these statements is a priority for Council as part of its fiduciary duty to Membership, and the organization expects to have these in short order.

While the financial statements are not presently completed, Xyntax has completed audit preparation and our new Auditors, MNP LLP, conducted their onsite work in the week of August 19. MNP are continuing their work and expect to have draft financial statements ready for our review in mid-September.

While the audit continues and financial statements need to be confirmed, the trial balances prepared to date depict a very solid financial year - ?AFN is in a strong position to continue member distributions, deliver programs, and save for the future.

Own-Source Revenue (“OSR”) Allocation Policy

At last year’s AGA, the Fiscal & Economic Department kicked off membership engagement on an OSR Allocation Policy (the “**OSR Allocation Policy**”). I am particularly happy, and proud, to report that following an extensive engagement process that saw over 100 ?akis̑nuuknik take part, that Council approved the OSR Allocation Policy in March, 2024.

In accordance with the OSR Allocation Policy, our OSR is now being allocated: 1/3 to membership distributions; 1/3 to services (operations/capital); and 1/3 to savings.

We are in the final stages of setting up the Prosperity Fund as a trust to house the savings. The trustee, FNB Trust, will be presenting as part of the AGA.

I am truly proud of ?AFN for taking the steps to put this policy in place, which helps membership now and sets us up for a bright future.

At the time Council directed staff to begin developing the OSR Allocation Policy, they had also asked staff to work on developing a Land Acquisition Policy to guide Council as it considers purchases going forward. We will be kicking off engagement on a Land Acquisition Policy at this year’s AGA.

Economic Development

This has been a very busy year for Economic Development, including the formation of ?AFN Enterprises Limited Partnership as ?AFN’s business arm; continued negotiations, alongside Council, on a new Indian Beach Estates headlease; developing a master plan for the northern portion of the reserve; and background work on a new Comprehensive Community Plan.

AFN Enterprises Limited Partnership

In October, 2023, ?AFN established AFN Enterprises Limited Partnership (“**AFN Enterprises**”) as its new business arm.

Managed by Robert Thomas, General Manager, AFN Enterprises has taken on the operation of the Recreation Centre and the Campground. In addition, AFN Enterprises has purchased commercial property in Invermere and development property in Windermere.

AFN Enterprises operates as a separate entity from the administration and will be holding its own quarterly updates and annual meetings, separate from this AGA.

Master Plan

This year, AFN has engaged an urban planning firm, Ground Cubed, to assist in developing a master plan for the commercially designated lands, as well as neighbouring administration, residential and conservation lands, at the north part of the reserve. Initial plans were presented to membership for feedback, and revised drafts will be presented to membership for additional feedback at the AGA.

Comprehensive Community Plan (“CCP”)

A CCP is a foundational document formed through extensive community engagement that is intended to guide the strategic planning and decision making of Council.

AFN’s CCP was developed in 2016, and updated in 2018. Generally, these have a lifespan of approximately five years and Council has directed staff to begin work on developing a new CCP. Staff are finalizing a work plan and we expect to roll out the process this fall.

Director of Core Services



Donna Melnychyn

Joined Staff: 2024

Core Services Team

HR Coordinator – Cherrie Burke

Events Coordinator – Vacant

Communications Coordinator – Vacant

Communications Assistant – Jesse Nicholas

Design and Communications – Theresa Kains

Grants & Procurement – Lauren Nordquist

Administrative Assistant – Renee Campbell

Receptionist – Glynda Joseph

Receptionist – Roberta Nicholas

IT Contractor – Dieter Soellner

As the Director, Core Services, I find myself embarking on a '*New Beginning*' within Ḷakisq'nuk First Nation. Since onboarding in June 2024, I have embraced the challenge of building a new department intended to offer support services to the operational needs of our organization. This leadership role oversees and guides the essential core services central to AFN's operations. The Director of Core Services (DCS) coordinates these services across all AFN departments, ensuring they meet project needs and support business operations. The DCS aims to foster collaboration and integrate these services to enhance efficiency and effectiveness throughout the organization

The following areas of responsibility fall under my purview:

Human Resources

The Human Resources department manages all HR documentation and personnel records, ensuring accurate control and updates to internal

databases. This department administers payroll, handles accounts payable, and provides essential HR-related data to employees and leadership. Additionally, HR works cross-functionally to support all organizational HR needs.

Grants and Procurement

Responsible for the entire lifecycle of grants and contracts, from planning and preparation to post-award administration. This includes sourcing new grants, managing deadlines, maintaining records, ensuring procurement quality, and reporting.

Communications

Communications is dedicated to managing and enhancing the organization's internal and external communications. This team crafts, designs and delivers clear, consistent messaging across all platforms, including digital, print, and social media. By fostering strong relationships with stakeholders and the community, Communications ensures that the organization's voice is effectively represented, and that key information is communicated to the right audiences.

Event Coordination

The Events Coordinator oversees the planning and execution of events, activities, and projects for all AFN departments. Acting as the central hub for event coordination, this role collaborates across departments to develop, organize, and execute a variety of events and cultural activities. The coordinator is key in fostering community engagement, preserving cultural identity, and promoting unity among ?akisq̓nuk members by celebrating and honoring the community's traditions and heritage.

Information Technology (IT)

Our IT department provides technology solutions that drive efficiency and support the growth of our organization. We ensure secure, reliable, and scalable IT infrastructure, while delivering exceptional support to meet the evolving needs of our teams. By leveraging cutting-edge technologies, we empower our employees to achieve their goals and enhance overall productivity.

Executive Assistance

The Executive Assistant provides high-level administrative support to the CAO and Council, handling duties that are highly confidential and sensitive in nature. This role involves managing complex situations and multiple tasks simultaneously while ensuring the smooth operation of daily administrative functions.

Administrative Assistance

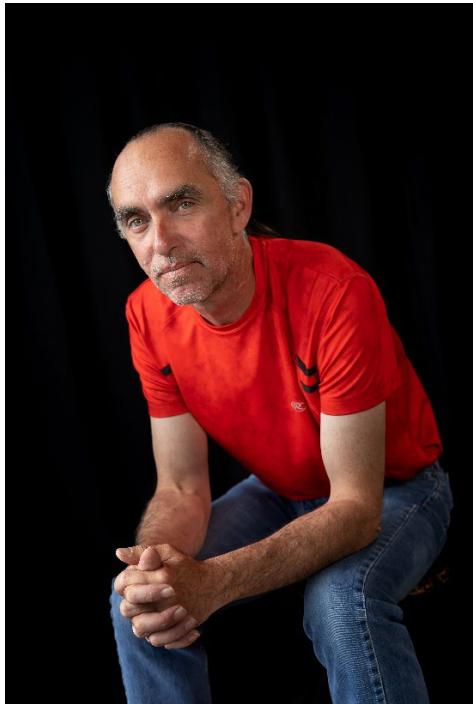
Administrative Assistants offer high-level support to various departments and the Council, playing a crucial role in the day-to-day operations of the Pákitšnuk Administration Office. They handle a wide range of administrative and clerical tasks, including maintaining records, coordinating schedules, and ensuring effective communication both internally and with external parties. Working closely with Directors and staff, they help ensure the smooth functioning of their assigned departments.

Receptionists

As the first point of contact for members and the public, this role represents the office and its culture. Responsibilities include managing the front office, greeting visitors, handling mail, processing payments, preparing boardrooms for meetings, and supporting general administrative tasks to ensure the smooth daily operations of the office.

Collectively, the Team and I look forward to offering on time, reliable and effective support to both Operating Departments as well as the membership community.

Director of Lands & Resources



Lorne Shovar

Joined Staff: 2017

Lands & Resources Team

Lands & Environment Manager – Vacant
Regulatory Engagement Coord. – Tyra Joe
Land Stewardship Planner – Kerri Garner*
Natural Resources Manager – Grant Glessing
Forest Technician – Chris Joseph
Industry Engagement Coordinator - Vacant
Emergency Programs Coord. – Janice Dallaire
Firesmart Representative – Kevin McNab
*KNC Secondee

Over the past year one of the main priorities for the lands department has been to develop and fill vacant positions in the department. In the past year we brought on various positions these include the Regulatory Engagement Coordinator, a Forestry Technician as well we had an Emergency Program Coordinator. The emergency program coordinator was filled and they took on a larger role with the Windermere fire department and since that time we have filled that position again. We have also developed some other positions that we are seeking to fill in the very near future.

Lands Committee

There was an initial call out for members to the committee and there were several interested members to the committee. Since that time several have withdrawn their applications and we are now accepting new applications. If you are interested there are currently 3 positions open and you can submit your resume and cover letter to the lands department.

Community engagement

We had several on the land session planned for members to come out and talk about land issues, however these had to be cancelled for various reasons. we are working on rescheduling these for the fall. We would like to have topic specific discussion as well as general discussions at each of the sessions.

Additions to Reserve

We have 2 additions to reserve that we have been working on for sometime and each has posed many challenges mostly with the Province of B.C. The Island property is ready to be transferred however the province needs to obtain fair market value for this. I have been working on obtaining grants for this but have not been successful yet. The old gravel pit in the middle of the reserve has also has some challenges. We received approval from MOTI to transfer back to reserve however there were conditions on the transfer. We had further testing completed in order to determine if the conditions could be removed. The results from the testing came back clean and we are waiting on MOTI to remove the conditions.

Windermere/ Columbia Lake stewardship

We have been in discussion with the Province about starting a Columbia and Windermere lake stewardship plan. They are working internally to determine who should be at the initial discussion. This also include other organization like the Lake Windermere Ambassadors as well as possibly other levels of Government like RDEK and District of Invermere. We are hoping to develop a management plan that will ensure the future of the lakes.

Climate Change Adaptation Plan

We tried to begin engagement with ?akisqnuuknik this spring but due to circumstances, all events were postponed. We will restart in the fall with some on the land opportunities and will be looking for ?akisqnuuknik

participation and engagement in these events to ensure the plan is reflective of community needs and aspirations.

Guardian Program

We will be posting for Guardians in the fall or winter in hopes that the program will be up and running to be ‘boots on the ground’ in the summer. We have lots of different projects going on and partners to work with from various forestry initiatives (bringing fire back to the landscape, monitoring, pre and post harvest surveys), to be involved with. We are also working on the Elk Camera Project to get a better understanding of Elk numbers and migration on the reserve, Big Horn Sheep monitoring etc. There will be lots of great projects and activities for Guardians to be involved in and we hope to get lots of ?akisqnuknik interest!

Traditional Use and Interest Study

We have begun working to update our Traditional Use and Interest study. This will be an important project to ensure we document knowledge from ?akisqnuknik about historical and current use of the land, stories, things that are important etc. both to inform the work that we do, but more importantly to capture this important knowledge for future generations.

We have established a working group to guide this work and will be hiring community researchers to be the ones championing the work, getting ?akisqnuknik involved and conducting interviews and other forms of engagement.

?akisqnu Water Governance

We have heard from ?akisqnuknik their concerns about the health and conditions of Lake Windermere and Columbia Lake and water in the Valley in general. We are going to be doing some work on understanding the historical and modern cultural values and uses of the lakes. This important work will inform future discussions on Collaborative Governance we hope to pursue

with BC and other local governments and entities. Again, we look forward to ?akis?nuknik involvement in this important work.

Referrals

In March of this year, we hired a Regulatory Engagement Coordinator to manage the large volume of referrals that we receive from the Government and various proponents. We receive a variety of referrals from 2-lot subdivisions to updates on federal legislation to mining permit applications. Since March, 165 referrals have been reviewed to ensure that they respect the Nation's inherent rights and title within ?amak?is Ktunaxa. The referral review process entails engaging with Government Liaison's and/or proponents to gather the necessary information about their proposal/engagement, consulting with the Lands staff at KNC, and addressing any environmental concerns, cultural concerns and potential impacts to rights and title. Throughout this process we have begun to form relationships with proponents and tenure holders critical for long-term stewardship of the Territory; however, the referrals process has also brought forth many flaws in the current consultation system that we hope to address moving forward.

Elk Habitat Restoration Project

We are conducting a forestry-based ecosystem restoration project on reserve that is predicted to greatly improve forest health and benefit the local elk population. The target area will be strip-thinned: cut into 15 m wide strips, followed by 15 m retention strips, and the retention strips will be hand thinned to open up the grown-in, dense forest. This treatment will reduce the fuel load, encourage the establishment of grasses and improve browse for the local elk. We are using camera traps to figure out how this forestry treatment will affect how often elk use this block and we have contracted a vegetation biologist to see how the understory plants change after the forestry treatment.

Chronic Wasting Disease

We have been sitting at the Ktunaxa-BC Government table for Chronic Wasting Disease, the fatal ungulate disease that was detected in two deer south of Cranbrook in January 2024. We have been actively participating at this table to ensure that Ktunaxa voices are heard at all stages of the response and management of this disease within the Territory. Most recently, the Ministry of Water, Lands and Natural Resource Stewardship has begun research into better understanding how deer move across the landscape, especially between rural areas and towns, as this will help us to better understand how the disease spreads. If you are a hunter or an avid deer/elk/moose watcher we would love to hear your thoughts on ungulate movement in the Valley, if this is something that you would be willing to share.

Caribou Recovery

We will be working with the BC Government on Caribou recovery efforts in the North Selkirk Mountains. The team is hoping to implement habitat protection measures as soon as possible and they are looking for our involvement with Caribou management, including intervention measures and ecosystem restoration. This is another long-term engagement where we are working to ensure that Ktunaxa voices are heard and respected when it comes to wildlife management within the Territory.

Forestry Report

Current activities happening at ?Akisq̓nuk Forestry

On-Reserve Ecosystem Restoration and Wildfire Risk Reduction Treatments

- Funded by ?Akisq̓nuk, Columbia Basin Trust, and Indigenous Services Canada.

- Treatment areas are planned and set to be laid out for field crews.
- Many are ready for hand treatments. ‘Request for Proposal’ will be sent out in the coming months with goal for work to be complete before next fire season.

Off-reserve Wildland Urban Interface Wildfire Treatments

- Work on-going at the south end of the ?Akis̓q̓nuk Reservation.
- Funded by ?Akis̓q̓nuk, Canfor, and Forest Enhancement Society.
- Mechanical harvest complete.
- Log hauling complete.
- Hand Treatment On-going throughout the fall and winter months. Work to be completed by Nupqu Corp.
 - Nupqu Corp. seeking ?akis̓q̓nuknik to employ for this work.
 - Hand-faller and danger tree assessor needed.
- Slash piles to be burnt throughout the winter months.

Logging Information Sharing

- Local Major Timber License Operators include – Canfor, BC Timber Sales, Pacific Woodtech/Louisiana Pacific, Stella - Jones, Downie, Revelstoke Community Forest, Interfor, NACFOR
 - Cultural Conservation Value Forest (CCVF) Surveys Contribution Agreement talks on-going.
 - Licensees contribute funding and expertise to Preharvest assessments and Post-harvest monitoring of Ktunaxa cultural values.
 - CCVF Surveys are on-going
 - BCTS, Canfor, and PWT are currently contributing to these efforts.
 - Opportunity for ?akis̓q̓nuknik to be involved as surveyors and observers.

- Minor Tenure holders
 - Include but not limited to Heli-ski operators, Firewood Sales, Small scale salvage, Christmas Tree Farm, etc.
 - Discussions between ?Akis̓q̓nuk and Tenure holders regarding Ktunaxa Cultural Practices (ie. hunting and gathering, spirituality, recreation) on-going.
 - Site visits to Heli-ski operations are being planned by Lands Staff.
- Woodlots
 - Info-sharing between Woodlot owners and ?Akis̓q̓nuk on-going.

Employment

- Actively seeking job opportunities, Full-time and Seasonal, as well as funding for forestry and other Lands and Resources based work for ?akis̓q̓nuknik.
- Whitebark Pine Recovery is mandated by the BC and Canadian Federal Governments, and they are putting out grants for those wanting to help. Grants can fund items including equipment, safety gear, wages, planting gear, a work truck, and arborist training. Other training such as plant ID and forest health may also be accepted for funding. Arborist training is required for gathering cones and could lead to further opportunities. Due to the low number of Whitebark Pine trees seeds are not always readily available.
- Woodland Caribou Recovery is mandated by the BC Provincial government and Canadian Federal government. Opportunities to get involved are there for ?akis̓q̓nuknik. A maternity pen in the Nakusp area requires on-site Aknusti to help with feeding, maintaining the complex, and observing potential predators.

Future Endeavors

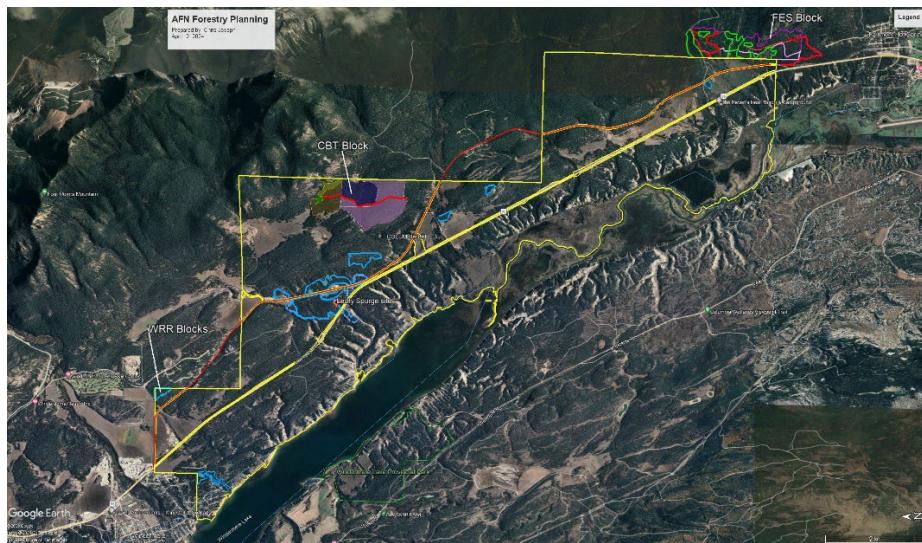
- Seeking timber volume for ?Aakisq'nuuk to utilize for local building and sale and trade.
- Forest Landscape Planning to modernize the BC Forestry Laws to further reconcile with Ktunaxa and integrate Ktunaxa Laws and cultural practices such as cultural burning and plant usage.
- Columbia Lake Eastside Ecosystem Restoration.
- Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Corridor development between Provincial and National Parks.
- Annual Allowable Cut and Apportionment discussions.
- Forest Tenure redistribution.
- Whitebark Pine Recovery
- Logging waste utilization – Bioeconomy – Hydrogen Energy – Biochar generation
- Old Growth Management Area Redeployment
- Qatmuk Indigenous Protected Area Establishment
- Carbon Sequestration/Capture

Forestry News:

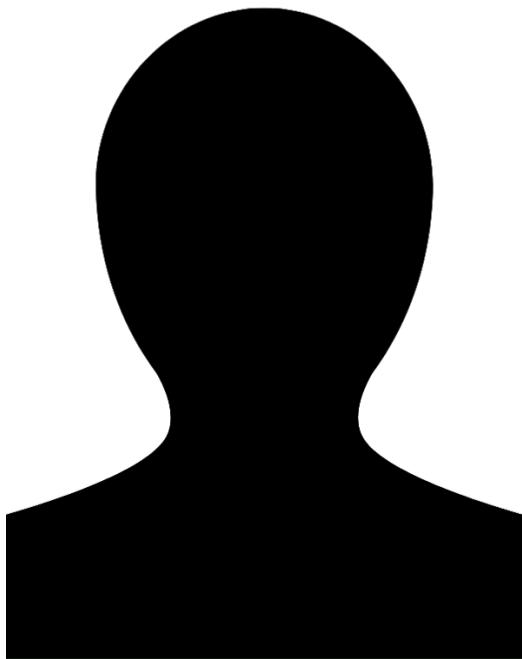
- Many Area Restrictions are in place in ?Aamakiis Ktunaxa due to large wildfires. Be sure to check where these restrictions and fires are. You can find this info at:
<https://wildfiresituation.nrs.gov.bc.ca/map>
or from your ?Aakisq'nuuk Lands Staff.
- In 2023 Ktunaxa Nation worked hard to have its Revenue Sharing of Timber Resources Doubled to over 6% and its tenure in the Cranbrook and Invermere Timber Supply Areas increased to over 10% while lowering the regional Annual Allowable Cut and Deferring Old Growth Forests to better prepare for Forest Landscape Planning and better support ?a·kxam̄is q̄api qapsin!!

- For more information, please visit our website and register:
<https://ktunaxahakqyit.org/>
- We are looking for interest in Forestry Gatherings/Community Dinners to provide a visual of logging activities proposed, on-going and post-harvest as well as discuss ideas new and old.

**Ktunaxa Forestry Standards development requires input from
Ktunaxanintik!**



Director of Infrastructure



Vacant

Joined Staff: N/A

Infrastructure Team

Public Works Manager – John Nicholas

Water Operator – Quentin Nicholas

Groundskeeper – Peter Nicholas

Maintenance Worker – Russel Nicholas

Casual Labourer – Owen Carlson

Capital Project Manager – Bob Cotterall

Facilities & Fleet Manager – Vacant

Submitted by David Bach, *Chief Administrative Officer*.

The Infrastructure Department is a newly independent department in the organization.

Until now, Infrastructure existed within the larger Lands, Resources & Infrastructure Department (“LRID”). Through the organizational review, it was identified that the former LRID department was too large and should be split into two, each with the oversight of their own director.

We are in the late stages of recruiting a Director of Infrastructure and expect to announce a hiring in short order.

The new Infrastructure Department is intended to be organized into three divisions: (i) Public Works; (ii) Capital Projects; and (iii) Facilities & Fleet.

It is our expectation that through separating Infrastructure into its own department, we will be able to bring greater organization and purpose to implementing a robust infrastructure asset management system.

New Multi-Purpose Building

Following a thorough tendering process, ?AFN has selected Scott Builders as the primary contractor for the new Health Centre, Band Hall and Administration Building (the **“New Multi-Purpose Building”**).



Construction of the new Multi-Purpose Building is ready to start, and we will be having a ceremonial groundbreaking for the project on the first day of the AGA (Friday, August 23, 2024). Construction is expected to take approximately a year and a half, and occupancy is expected early 2026.

Once completed, the New Multi-Purpose Centre will provide a state of the art and culturally relevant facility for Ɂakis̑nuuknik to gather, hold ceremony, and receive services. Its centerpiece will be the Band Hall, a large open gathering place for community events.

New Housing Four-Plex

Over the last few years, ɁAFN has undertaken a number of housing projects that has seen the construction of 15 housing units (including the six-plex building, and three, three-plex buildings). This month, construction has started on an additional housing project consisting of four one-bedroom units (the four-plex building), located on Kootenay Road 3.

North Community Water System Upgrades

This past year, the designs for upgrades to the north community water system were completed and submitted to Indigenous Services Canada for review and approval. During this process, there were some changes to the requirements in the design and we are working on making the changes. We expect to have the revisions submitted to ISC in the next few weeks for construction funding.

South Community Water System

We have begun an investigation for a new water system for the south end of the community. Once the initial investigation is completed, this will be brought to Council for direction.

Director of Health & Wellness



Rachel Bach

Joined Staff: 2023

Health & Wellness Team

Clinical Lead – Colleen Simon (RN)

Home Care Nurse – Vacant

Home Care Aide – Danny Burgoyne

Home Care Aide / Food Sovereignty – Yvonne Stanley

Medical Office Assistant – Taylor Langridge

Community Wellness – Sharla Mark

Healthy Child Development – Ashley Killin

Community Driver – Solo Nicholas

The 2023-24 fiscal year was truly a time of *New Beginnings* for the Health and Wellness department. I joined the team in November 2023 after Pasty Nicholas retired from her role as Health Manager. Patsy brought over 30 years of service to the community, and we are grateful for all she accomplished.

As part of the organization review and restructuring, Health + Wellness became its own department and is no longer under Member Services. Our team has grown substantially with the addition of Yvonne Stanley as both Registered Care Aide and Food Sovereignty Facilitator, Solo Nicholas as Community Driver, Colleen Simon as Clinical Lead, Taylor Langridge as Medical Office Assistant, Sharla Mark as Community Wellness Coordinator, and Ashley Killin as Healthy Child Development Coordinator. Of course, Danny Burgoyne remains steadfast in his role as Registered Care Aide.

Expanding the team will continue to expand the services we are able to offer to all membership. We were pleased to offer the services of Andrea Sakamoto, Registered Therapeutic Counsellor and Hayley Wilson, Certified Nutrition Coach – both of whom offer group and individual sessions, in-person or virtual. These are in addition to the services of Dr. Shannon Page, Kate Kittmer (foot care), Lyn Koan (massage), and Heather Fischbuch (acupuncture).

New Health Centre

Construction has officially begun on the new Health Centre and Multipurpose Building. During construction, the Health and Wellness department remains located in the original Health Centre and has been joined by the Member Services department to remain accessible to members during this time of change and growth. You will also notice that we are currently making some upgrades to the existing Health Centre as well.

Health Plan

The Health Plan outlines priorities identified by membership and will guide the delivery of health and wellness services. It also serves as a foundation for the community wellness strategy that is currently in development. The Health Plan was also needed to move ?AFN from a SET funding arrangement (the strictest model) to a BLOCK funding arrangement (the most flexible). A requirement of our new block funding arrangement is to conduct an evaluation. As such, consultants Jennica Nichols and Maya Lefkowich from AND implementation inc. have developed an Evaluation Framework. The evaluation will work to (a) measure progress, capture learning about, and refine the Health Plan to ensure it maintains relevance over the five-year period and (b) maintain relationship accountability, transparency, and trust with the intended beneficiaries of the Health Unit -- members. The evaluation work is also exciting as it will support us in our work towards achieving data sovereignty.

Community Wellness

Almost three years ago, the governments of the Ktunaxa Nation declared a mental health State of Emergency amid the ongoing opioid crisis in the region. Community Wellness, including harm reduction and mental health remain a key priority for the Health and Wellness team. Council has approved a budget amendment to privately pay for treatment facility fees, allowing us better support members to more rapidly access essential services. The team is also committed to the development of aftercare in the community. The cottage and acreage on Alpine Road previously purchased by ?AFN is quickly becoming a hub for community wellness. The new sobriety support group (Recovery Circle) is held at the cottage weekly and the property is the future home of futher food sovereignty and land-based healing programming including the preparation of freezer meals, Prep n' Learns, canning, butchering elk, and equine therapy.

Healthy Child Development

Another substantial change in our department is the development of a full time position devoted to Healthy Child Development. The Healthy Child Development Coordinator continues to collaborate with EJLCS to deliver the Head Start programming but with an expanded scope. This position collaborates within the health team and with internal departments including education, social development, and culture and language, as well as with external partners including KKCFS and Jordan's Principle in order to expand services and supports to ?akisqnuuk families.

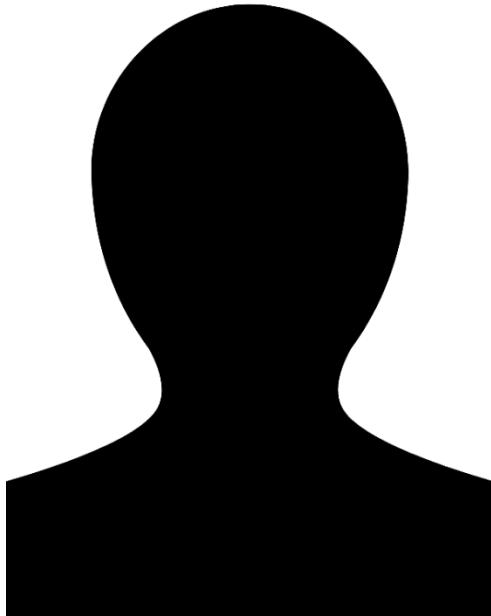
Regional Health Survey

The Regional Health Survey (RHS) is a Canada-wide survey for First Nations people living in community. The survey is planned and funded nationally by the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) and the First

Nations Health Authority (FNHA) carries out the survey in British Columbia. ?AFN participated in Phase 1 (2003) and Phase 3 (2008). Council has approved ?AFN participation in the RHS4 and data collection has already commenced. The data from these surveys helps us to measure the effectiveness of our programming and inform future planning. When Council was presented with the option to participate in the survey, they raised a number of important issues to the FNHA – one of which was exclusion of members who are not living in community. Well we are excited to announce that ?AFN will be the first community to include Urban and Away from Home ?akisqnuuknik in the RHS4. Data Collection for this phase of the survey will commence in the fall. I do encourage everyone to consider participating as your input is invaluable and supports the development of meaningful Health and Wellness programming for all membership.

Director of Member Services

Laurie Parsons



Joined Staff: August, 2024

Member Services Team

Language, Culture and Elder Programs

Manager – Eldene Stanley

Education and Workforce Development

Coordinator – Kevin Morall

Social Development & Social Programs

Coordinator – Trisha Clowers

Housing – Vacant

Submitted by Rachel Bach, *Acting Director of Member Services* (March-August, 2024)

In addition to my role as Director of Health and Wellness, I have been filling the role of acting Director of Member Services until Laurie Parsons assumed the role on August 19th, 2024. She will be working remotely until she is able to secure permanent housing in the valley.

This department has seen substantial renewal this past year. The organizational review and restructuring have established four distinct groups within the Member Services Department, invigorated by the presence of newly appointed staff.

Trisha Clowers joined the PAFN team in October 2023 and is the Social Programming and Social Development Coordinator. Kevin Morall joined the team in November 2023 as the Education and Workforce Development

Coordinator. Eldene Stanley joined in August 2024 as the Culture, Language, and Elder Programs Manager.

Housing remains vacant. Housing has been a challenge for our Nation and Council has requested a review to identify the issues and make recommendations, with particular attention to whether housing should stay within our administration or become a separate authority or society. Despite this, the three-plex was completed and is fully allocated. Construction on the four-plex has commenced.

As we move forward, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for the Member Services Department. With the recent restructuring and the addition of new team members, we are well positioned to enhance our programming and better serve membership. We look forward to developing innovative initiatives and expanding our services, ensuring that we continue to meet and exceed the needs of our community.

Coming off successful programming such as the Coming Home Event that bought 50 new members home to ?amakis Ktunaxa, the implementation of a monthly “Good Food Box”, four members successfully completing of the Summer Work Experience Program, teepee pole harvesting, and language lessons for staff and community; the Department is also pleased to be sponsoring 8 post-secondary students and celebrates 2 high school and 2 post-secondary graduates.

The new fiscal brings initiatives such as the Pathway to Trades program, further support with financial management and Wills & Estates, and a Maker Space. With an estimated \$1.5 million internally restricted for Culture and Language, we have a lot to look forward to including the reinvigoration of the Elders’ Steering Committee, Culture Camps, gatherings, among other critical cultural preservation and language revitalization work. One exciting way we are doing so can be seen at this year’s AGA and the inclusion of traditional games on Sunday.

Taxas!