

**MINUTES OF THE 20th ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL
TSIIGEHTCHIC, NT. AUGUST 11 - 14, 2003**

Monday, August 11

A. CALL TO ORDER/RECOGNITION OF QUORUM

Acting Chair Grace Blake recognizes quorum and calls the meeting to order at 10 a.m.,

1. OPENING PRAYER - ELDER

Rose Clark (Tsiigehtchic) leads the group in an opening prayer.

2. WELCOMING ADDRESSES

a) Gwich'in Tribal Council - President

President Fred Carmichael welcomes Delegates and others present to this year's Assembly. This is where the leadership of the GTC takes direction from the people for the coming year. In addition, the GTC's officers and departments will report on their activities since we last met. He recalls the friendly atmosphere of the 2002 Assembly, and hopes the group can deliberate in an equally friendly and respectful manner this time.

b) Gwichya Gwich'in Council - Chief

Chief Peter Ross welcomes all present to Tsiigehtchic, this year's host community. He outlines the entertainment scheduled for the week and expresses his hope that everyone enjoys the community's hospitality.

B. CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT - 2003 GENERAL ELECTION

Agreement to defer this item, in the absence of the Chief Returning Officer.

C. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSONS

Fred Carmichael says the GTC Board has agreed to recommend Grace Blake and Barry Greenland as Co-Chairs.

Robert Bourque (Inuvik) says Inuvik would like Barry Greenland to speak on behalf of his community during the Assembly. Would Joe Tetlichich be willing to serve as Co-Chair?

Joe Tetlichich (Porcupine Caribou Management Board) responds that since he is leaving on Wednesday, he must decline.

Be it Resolved That

Grace Blake and Barry Greenland be appointed as Co-Chairs of the 20th Gwich'in Annual General Assembly.

Moved by: John Norbert (Tsiigehtchic)

Seconded by: Tom Wright (Inuvik)

Carried. (Resolution #01/2003)

Grace Blake assumes the chair and outlines the rules for the Assembly.

D. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Agreement to declare as any conflict as it arises.

E. WAIVER OF NOTICE

Tom Wright asks for an explanation of waiver of notice.

Jack Williams (FieldLaw) explains that a waiver is required if due notice has not been given of the meeting and the agenda. The provisions for due notice in the Bylaws have been complied with, and no waiver now seems to be required.

F. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Grace Blake informs the group that since Joe Tetlichy departs on Wednesday, his presentation will be moved to Tuesday, following the appointment of the auditor.

Robert Bourque asks if “oil and gas” can be added.

Grace Blake replies that Fred Carmichael’s report will address oil and gas issues. If further discussion is needed, this can be added to “Other Business.”

Be it Resolved That

the agenda of the 20th Annual General Assembly be approved as amended.

Moved by: Melba Mitchell (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Rose Clark (Tsiigehtchic)

Carried. (Resolution #02/2003)

1) Selection of Resolutions Committee

Be it Resolved That

Jack Williams, Bridget Larocque and Richard Wilson be appointed to the Resolutions Committee for the 20th Annual General Assembly.

Moved by: Robert Bourque (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Johnny Kay (Ft. McPherson)

Carried. (Resolution #03/2003)

G. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2002 ASSEMBLY

Barry Greenland assumes the chair.

Be it Resolved That

the Minutes of the 19th Annual General Assembly be approved as presented.

Moved by: Frank Firth (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Tom Wright (Inuvik)

Carried. (Resolution #04/2003)

H. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE 2002 ASSEMBLY

Maureen Clark (Tsiigehtchic) draws the group's attention to the discussion of the Land Use Plan on p. 17. She asks if the Minister of INAC has signed it.

Fred Carmichael replies that Minister Nault is scheduled to sign the document on a forthcoming visit to Yellowknife on, he believes, August 22. He adds there will be a celebration of the Plan's signing tomorrow evening.

Tom Wright asks what action has been taken on Resolution 16-E, which appears on p. 73.

Tom Williams (GTC Chief Operating Officer) replies that when GTC legal counsel conducted their comprehensive review of the Bylaws, they looked at this matter, and we will discuss it later. Until the Bylaws are changed, the GTC encourages each DGO to bring a youth to Board meetings.

Tom Wright asks what has been done regarding of Resolution 16-H, which is on p. 73.

Tom Williams adds that legal counsel will address this later as well.

Barry Greenland reminds the group that under tab 3 of the conference binder there is a status report, setting out actions taken to implement last year's Resolutions.

Robert Bourque notes the Resolution on the Transboundary Agreement on p. 64. What is happening on this file?

Tom Williams replies that Fred Carmichael and the four Chiefs met with Premier Fentie and other members of the new Yukon Government, who seem to be interested in forming a more cooperative relationship with the GTC. Deb Bisson will address the matter further in her report.

Chief James Firth (Inuvik) points out that on pp. 84-87 there are a number of what would normally be individual Resolutions, in the form of a composite Resolution. Some of these treat important matters, and would merit individual discussion.

Robert Charlie (Inuvik) says the status report on the Resolutions refers in many cases to lobbying efforts and letters sent by the GTC to various governmental departments and agencies. He would appreciate clarifications on any other actions by the GTC, as well as responses to the GTC's representations.

Tom Williams says that in some cases the lobbying efforts are ongoing. In a number of instances, the GTC has received responses and its representations have borne fruit; the Elders' facilities for Tsiigehtchic and Ft. McPherson are examples, and we are making progress regarding the youth centre for Ft. McPherson. In the case of the firearms legislation, we have received no response yet from the Federal Minister of Justice, but raise the issue in our meetings with Cabinet Ministers and MLAs, as well as through the Dene Nation.

I. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

1) President

President Fred Carmichael informs the Assembly that he will deal with some of the "high-lights" of GTC activities this year, while the heads of the various departments will discuss their own areas in detail. He begins by noting that the organization now has a solid team in place. The GTC does not discriminate, but it has tried over the last two years to put Aboriginals, and Beneficiaries in particular, in positions of responsibility. The team consists entirely of Beneficiaries with the exceptions of Tom Williams, Greg Cayen and Deb Bisson.

One of the central accomplishments of the last few years is the improved control of finances: "our books are back where they should be." Now, any Beneficiary can come in to see Greg Cayen, our CFO, and within minutes have comprehensive and up-to-date information on GTC finances. This is only right, because "it's the people's money." Since his return, Greg has worked hard to help us keep our spending within budget and run a lean, efficient operation. Our improved finances have earned us the respect of the Federal and Territorial Governments and allowed us to forge cooperative relationships on a number of issues, and to access funding for various projects.

Yet the shortage of funds remains a problem. The GTC's budget is still fixed where it was seven or eight years ago, while the cost of almost everything has gone up substantially. The GTC struggles to give people the programs they ask for. Our staff must seek additional funding, and our strong financial position helps us do that. We raised another \$3.6 million in the last year, and devoted a good deal of it to self-government operations.

The GTC continues to work to provide benefits to the people. Our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the GNWT, whereby we are able to negotiate up to 50% of contracts in the GSA, gives any Gwich'in business the opportunity to negotiate with the GNWT. We also negotiated an access and benefits agreement with Imperial Oil, the first pipeline-related agreement, which will serve as a model for future agreement. Our improved deal with First Air, including lower travel and freight rates, is one example. We are also pressing CIBC to provide better service, and encouraging other banks to acquire a presence in the GSA.

Following the Sahtu Royalty settlement, the GTC Board approved \$2 million in additional education and training funds, \$2 million for community development, \$1 million for language and culture, \$2 million in capital for the GDC, \$1 million for GTC operations, and \$1 million for our first payout to Beneficiaries.

Several years ago, the Assembly made the decision to separate business from politics in the workings of the GDC. It took time to do so, but this decision has been implemented. The GDC established its own independent Board, including Beneficiaries and others with particular business expertise, and also has its own Chair and CEO. The GDC has been busy over the past two years, accomplishing a great deal. "The evidence is on the main street of Inuvik", where Beneficiaries can take pride in seeing our logo on the buildings we own.

But he doubts that people have really accepted the separation of business and politics. He sees this in the many complaints that come to him at the GTC from people who are unhappy about something the GDC has done. If you take the GDC out from under the GTC's control, then you should not turn around and yell at the GTC when you don't like what the GDC does. This Assembly must decide if it really wants to keep the GDC. If we do wish to keep it, then we must give it the money it needs to grow.

The Inuvialuit had to invest millions in the IDC for it to grow, and it is now a great success. It is true that the GTC is the GDC's sole shareholder. But the GDC is normally required to report to its shareholder only once a year. Last year the GDC had its first ever shareholder's meeting, and almost nobody showed up. The GTC has other investments, and people don't 'phone up to yell about them. We need to think of the GDC in the same way. We should require that it generate the stipulated Return on Investment (ROI) as our other investments do, and beyond that leave it alone.

Improving communications remains a priority, and we continue with our quarterly newsletter in addition to our new web site and 1-800 numbers for Education and Training, the Enrolment Board and the main office. He is aware of the feeling that he should get out into the communities more often. This will be easier now with a Vice-President to share the workload. Mary Ann has taken over a number of portfolios, and the Executive is committed to more frequent community visits.

There has been concern over his role in the Aboriginal Pipeline Group (APG). The Chair rotates, and the Deh Cho, Sahtu and Inuvialuit made it clear this time that they wanted him as Chair. While this entails a good deal of work, he does not think it takes him away from GTC responsibilities. Most APG meetings are on weekends. When they are not, the APG reimburses the GTC for any lost GTC workdays. The APG's job is not to sign any deal, but to find money. In 2001, 31 Chiefs met in Ft. Liard and agreed that if any pipeline were to cross our land, we wanted an equity stake. That's why we formed the APG. Before he took over as President, the group tried to get a federal loan guarantee and was turned down. He shifted direction to bring in commercial lending agencies on the grounds that if the commercial sector won't finance a venture, it's probably not worth doing. In June we found the money was in fact there. Concluding the financial agreement does not obligate us to go ahead with a pipeline; it just means that if we decide to go ahead, "the down payment is there."

Now that the funding is in place, the focus has shifted to access and benefits agreements. Following the agreement with Imperial Oil for a small Winter geotechnical program, there were concerns about the need for more community representation in the negotiating process. We want the Chiefs on the negotiating committee for each subsequent agreement. There has been much talk of the need for some ratification process for any pipeline decision. A ratification process is necessary, although it is arguable that when you conclude an access and benefits deal, you have also answered the question of whether you want a pipeline.

Following his reelection, he will continue to work for the best possible deal for the people. He is glad to welcome Mary Ann as Vice-President, having seen from her good work as Executive Assistant how capable and committed she is. He thanks all for their ongoing support.

Elizabeth Hansen (Inuvik) asks what is being done to help the people living at Eight Mile, most of whom are women, and have no sewage or water service or assistance getting wood.

Fred Carmichael says such issues are normally addressed at the community level, although the GTC will lobby for assistance where it can.

Robert Bourque asks when the new web site went up.

Fred Carmichael replies it has been up since June.

2) *Vice-President*

Mary Ann Ross thanks the people for their confidence in her, and outlines her portfolios for the next four years. These include: Education and Training; GSCI; Enrolment Board; GHAP; Gwich'in Children's Trust; Self-government negotiating activities; Lands, Resources and Implementation. About a year ago she took the new position of Employment Liaison Officer, and at the start of 2003 became Executive Assistant.

She has worked closely with Fred, Tom Williams and others, dealing with Beneficiary concerns regarding health care, housing, palliative care and many other issues. She was involved in a number of initiatives such as the web site, and language and crafts classes at the Inuvik office. She knows how important it is that Beneficiaries know what the GTC is up to, and now advertises GTC events on Inuvik TV, in addition to faxing updates to the DGOs each month. She has attended Inuvik Band meetings, and hopes to do the same in the other communities.

Elizabeth Hansen says that when people move from other communities to Inuvik, they find rents high and often end up moving in with relatives. Meeting the housing needs of these new arrivals is a burden on the Inuvik Band office, and she wonders if Mary Ann can work with the other communities, where they come from. In addition, she thinks Mary Ann's list of portfolios sounds burdensome, and wonders if she plans to delegate some responsibilities.

Mary Ann Ross replies that she will work with all the communities on housing issues. One of the problems is the six-month qualifying period for housing once you move into a community. Private housing is even more difficult. She is aware of the burdens on the Inuvik Band, and, while not wishing to intrude on its jurisdiction, she will work with it. It is important to ensure that the GNWT lives up to its responsibilities in housing, as in so many other areas where it does less than it should. Her portfolios are heavy, but she will work closely with Fred and Tom.

3) *Bylaw Revisions*

Grace Blake notes that Jack Williams of FieldLaw will be here throughout the Assembly. Today, he is accompanied by his colleagues Bob Teskey and Brian Grindey.

Bob Teskey, Managing Partner of FieldLaw, introduces himself and explains FieldLaw's operations. It is a full-service firm, with approximately ninety lawyers. It has offices in Edmonton and Calgary, and Jack Williams is the resident partner in Yellowknife. The firm appreciates the GTC's decision to use its services, which his presence today indicates. He regrets that previous commitments make it impossible for him to stay longer. Lawyers in the Calgary office have provided assistance on pipeline and oil and gas issues, and the firm's lawyers have worked hard, at their own expense, to get "up to speed" on the matters of concern to the GTC. One of its first tasks was the Bylaw revisions. Brian Grindey, of the Edmonton office, performed these revisions, and will give the Assembly an overview.

Brian Grindey reminds the Assembly of the decision by last year's Assembly to "clean up" the Bylaws to ensure internal consistency. We have brought a number of changes here to enhance the clarity and consistency of the Bylaws, provide correct cross-referencing, and fix errors in grammar and spelling. We recommend that the Assembly approve these, after which they will go to Industry Canada for registration. You will then have a "clean" set of Bylaws.

As part of the Bylaw review, FieldLaw also identified a number of broader issues. These will require discussion and consultation before you take any decisions. We wish to focus on seven in particular:

- 1) Voting Age: lowering the age below 18 would increase interest among youth, but might create some problems;
- 2) Whether it would be appropriate to institute a referendum Bylaw, allowing referenda on issues of ongoing importance;
- 3) Compensation for Board members: with Board members also sitting on the Executive, there is the potential appearance of a conflict of interest in the setting of compensation; the creation of an independent compensation committee is one option to consider;

- 4) Conflict of Interest more generally; the question arises of whether it is desirable to add detailed conflict of interest provisions to Bylaw 1, the main Bylaw;
- 5) Special and Ordinary Resolutions: ordinary Resolutions require a vote of 50% plus one to pass, while special ones require a 2/3 vote; there has been some discussion of changing this to 75%, which would be harder to achieve but once achieved would ensure more unity behind relevant decisions; there is also the possibility of requiring a minimal level of support from each community;
- 6) Observers: Bylaw 1 sets no limit on the number of observers, something the organization may wish to change;
- 7) The possibility of a Youth Director: last year's Assembly passed a Resolution to explore this possibility; while this innovation might spark greater interest among young people, there are questions to address such as whether the position would rotate among communities or be filled from one of them; there are also logistical concerns regarding attendance at Board meetings during the school year, and problems arising from the legal inability of a minor to enter contracts.

Finally, there is the broader question of representation of Beneficiaries from outside the GSA and how this would be implemented. He gathers there is a memorandum on these issues in the Assembly binders, along with restated Bylaws 1, 3 and 4.

The Assembly recesses for lunch at 12:00 p.m., and reconvenes at 1:00 p.m. with Barry Greenland in the chair.

Jack Williams reminds the group that Brian Grindey performed most of the revisions, with assistance from himself and a committee that included Tom Williams, Greg Cayen and Robert Charlie. He reiterates that the changes to Bylaws 1, 3 and 4 were of a technical or administrative nature. The Bylaws have existed since the Claim was signed, and need revision from time to time.

He proposes to deal with the substantive issues raised in the memorandum separately.

Robert Charlie doubts that Delegates have had sufficient time to review these modified Bylaws. People need time to go through them if they are to ask questions.

Elizabeth Hansen says there are problems with the elections Bylaw. It makes no mention of mailouts, although two were needed this time. Since the CRO and DRO were not in place early enough, the election had to be postponed. There was insufficient turnaround time on mailouts given the limits of the postal service.

Jack Williams replies that this anomaly arose because there were no applications for the CRO position after it was first advertised. Ensuring adequate turnaround time for mailout ballots was important, and he advised the Executive to cover itself by changing the election date. Changing the date necessitated the first mailout. This is unusual but the Bylaw gives the Executive discretion to change procedures in order to make the overall process work.

There is a version setting out all the changes on a line-by-line basis, the “blacklined” version. This is a lengthy document, and therefore was not included in the Assembly packages, but he can have copies prepared if it would help people understand what has been modified. If people have not had time to go through the Bylaw revisions, they may wish to postpone recommending the changes until they come to the Resolutions Committee as a group. He would be happy to lead off any discussion. As for the changes Brian Grindey mentioned earlier, it is not possible to make a decision at this Assembly. They would all require major revisions. What you can do is strike a committee, with instructions to go through them and report back to the Board, which in turn would bring recommendations to the next Assembly. Agreement.

Barry Greenland suggests Delegates go through the revisions and discuss them in caucus prior to further discussion when we reach the Resolutions. Elizabeth Hansen was not here earlier, and her report may reflect upon changes we could make to the elections Bylaw. Perhaps she can present her report now.

Elizabeth Hansen says she has not brought along a written report, and will have to make an oral one. During the election she and DRO Deanna Larocque only had the Bylaws to go by, and developed a working document to go with it along the way. They developed recommendations, on the need for a good working document, which will go to the Board. Recommendations include training sessions prior to the appointment of the CRO next time, in order to go through the elections manual and working document and putting resource people in place in each community. The main part of her report would be delivery of the certificate of election declaring Fred Carmichael and Mary Ann Ross duly elected for a four-year period. She also requests a Resolution directing destruction of the ballots as per the relevant section of the election manual.

James Firth says he has several questions about the election results. The figures for Inuvik’s advance poll were given, but not those for the advance polls in the other communities. In addition, the certificate of results stated total turnout as 90%, when it was closer to 60%. He is seeking clarification, not questioning the result.

Elizabeth Hansen says the advance poll and mailout numbers were combined in the totals for the other communities. Total numbers for the advance polls were only about 65. She did tabulate the final results to ensure that the totals were correct.

James Firth says this does not really answer his question.

Barry Greenland says it is his understanding that the results must be presented to the Assembly in written form before they can be accepted. They must include the number of eligible voters, the numbers of mailout ballots sent out and received, the numbers for all the advance polls in each community and the total votes cast on election day. Can Elizabeth Hansen provide this information in writing?

Elizabeth Hansen replies that she was on the recent Snake River trip, and therefore did not have time to do a written report for the Assembly. She believes she provided all this information to Tom Williams. Perhaps he can obtain the necessary information from Inuvik.

Barry Greenland responds that once a written report has been received, the Assembly can proceed to Resolutions accepting the election results and directing destruction of the ballots.

Richard Wilson (Ft. McPherson) asks what the turnout was for the mailout ballots.

Elizabeth Hansen replies that about 666 ballots went out, and about 338 were completed and returned. One of the problems is that a number of people outside the GSA didn't really know the candidates, and were reluctant to vote under such circumstances. Given the costs of a mailout, and the fact that some people won't respond, she recommends contacting people beforehand to find out if they want mailout ballots.

Robert Bourque asks who made the recommendations for changing the election procedures.

Elizabeth Hansen replies that she and Deanna Larocque made them, having observed the process from the start and seen its flaws.

Robert Charlie asks how much the election cost.

Elizabeth Hansen says she knows \$50,000 was set aside to cover election expenses. She does not know what the cost will be, having not yet seen all of the invoices. Perhaps Greg Cayen and Tom Williams would know.

Barry Greenland says Tom Williams has just informed him that Greg Cayen will have these figures available tomorrow.

Elizabeth Hansen wishes to add that she and Deanna Larocque had no working document to help them when it came to election procedures and had to do everything on their own. She agrees that the figures should break down advance poll results. Once Tom Williams gets the information from Inuvik, the numbers in question should be available.

James Firth observes that the experience of this election suggests we may need to have a polling booth in some of the communities outside the GSA. In addition, the advance poll may require a full-scale polling station in each community too.

James Andre says that perhaps those outside the GSA should not have a vote. It seems to him that the people who live in the GSA communities are the only ones who're really affected.

Barry Greenland points out that all enrolled Beneficiaries are entitled to vote under the Claim, wherever they live.

Robert Charlie recalls that when the GTC advertised for people to sit on the elections committee, there was no response. In future, perhaps each community can designate someone, so that there would be at least one person in each community to whom people could turn with their questions. He thanks Elizabeth Hansen for a job well done under trying circumstances.

J. GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL UPDATES

1) Self-government Negotiations Office

Chief Negotiator Bob Simpson informs the group that the self-government business plan has been distributed, and he proposes to walk through it in conjunction with Gwich'in Negotiator Lawrence Norbert. The recently concluded Agreement in Principle (AIP) represents a milestone in the negotiations process, with a final agreement three or four years away. He and Lawrence propose to discuss three major areas: the Self-government Office and its activities; the AIP itself; our proposals for future consultation and a revised negotiations mandate.

The Self-government Office was created by the GTC and the IRC to negotiate self-government jointly. Each year we enter into financial arrangements and MOU for the process, reporting regularly to a Management Committee on which Fred Carmichael sits, along with Nellie Cournoyea of the IRC. He and Lawrence work closely together, and the Office has recently hired an Executive Director, now that it has become a legal entity, with a higher degree of accountability. The Office also makes use of legal counsel, and employs an Implementation Coordinator, Program Development Coordinators, and Fieldworkers in each community. Throughout negotiation of the AIP, our approach has been to get the basic structures of self-government into the agreement, and then to focus on securing the necessary finances in subsequent negotiations.

We devote a fair chunk of our resources to community-level operations, largely through stakeholder agreements transferring responsibilities to communities and taking on their workers. Our operations are based on an annual business plan and a workplan for the year's negotiations. We revise the workplan as we go. Each year we sit down with the Federal and Territorial Governments to negotiate the workplan for the following year. We will then deal with key areas: a fiscal financing agreement, a five-year block funding arrangement for transferring program funding; resource revenue sharing and own-source revenues; the question of constitutional protection of self-government, which will require a decision by the political leadership; lawmaking authority over Gwich'in rights in the Claim. We attempt to keep the emphasis on community consultation, and are working to improve communications. We propose to undertake detailed surveys to feed into our new mandate. We also focus on capacity-building and training. In constitution-building, we also try to keep things at the community level, with discussion and exploration of various models by which communities can decide what administrative models fit their needs, and what powers they wish to take over. We will develop a comprehensive training and capacity-building plan to take to the communities.

The Office has also received direction to enter other areas, such as the operations of the Inter-Governmental Forum, where it works with seven of the eight other Aboriginal groups in the NWT through the Aboriginal Summit, on issues related to devolution and resource revenue sharing. Transferred resource revenues would be new revenues for the North, and could help finance self-government. We also participate in the Beaufort-Delta Political Accord to maintain productive working relations with the Federal and Territorial Governments, and ensure that we do not suffer disadvantage by virtue of being in a modest region. The GTC and IRC retain some self-government funding to cover the expenses of the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit negotiators respectively. The Office spends about \$1.2 million internally, contributing much of the funding that is left to stakeholder agreements.

Lawrence Norbert summarizes the development of the AIP, beginning with the agreement between the GTC and IRC to negotiate self-government jointly in 1996, with a schedule and progress agreed to by all parties. In 2001 the negotiators initialed the AIP, thereby indicating that they had negotiated a draft framework as per the instructions of their political principals. At that point they handed the AIP over to the political leadership, culminating in the April 2003 signing.

The AIP sets out the lawmaking and administrative powers for the new levels of government. Of particular interest to us are culture and language; student support; post-secondary education; wills, trusteeship and guardianship. Outstanding subject matters are: housing; economic development; marriage; lawmaking over Gwich'in lands, rights and benefits. At the community consultations, people have indicated their concern that national programs such as pensions might be affected. National responsibilities of the Federal Government will remain unchanged. Nor, as some fear, will self-government detract from what is in the Claim. Indeed, it will build upon the powers in the Claim. The GCLCA deals with land and money, but does not confer governmental responsibilities. Self-government will give the institutions upon which people decide the status of a Gwich'in government. A Gwich'in government may be able to run programs such as non-insured health benefits under a final agreement through transfer to a Gwich'in or other level of government. Treaty rights will not be affected; the dissolution of Bands, a source of concern, refers only to the transfer of Band assets and responsibilities to the new Gwich'in government, as designed by Beneficiaries. The final agreement would supersede the Indian Act.

Future community consultations will be reflected in our implementation plans, once you decide what powers you wish to take over and at what pace. We propose to explain the coming and implications of self-government in material for the schools, inviting people to think about where they would like to be in five or ten years. We hope that by the Fall of 2004 we will be in a position to inform the political leadership that we have negotiated a draft final agreement as per their instructions. It would then be up to the leadership to review the Agreement and make its decision. With luck, we could have a signing by Winter 2005. There must be a ratification, but the exact process has yet to be worked out. Inevitably, there will be a transition period. Hamlets will make the transition to local public governments, the interim regional body will become a regional government, and Gwich'in structures will become a Gwich'in government, all at some point between Summer 2005 and Summer 2007. An optimistic assessment would put the effective date in Spring 2008. Precise dates will depend upon the pace of negotiations; some of the obstacles to progress are identified in the self-government report in the GTC Annual Report for this year.

Bob Simpson reminds the group that when the negotiating process for self-government began, he received broad negotiating instructions to determine what was possible. About a year into negotiations, he saw the need for specific instructions. Over the following eighteen months, he undertook to get a mandate, which was approved at the 1998 Assembly, and on the basis of which the AIP was negotiated. While he might proceed from here on the basis of that mandate and what is in the AIP, he is not comfortable doing so. The Chiefs had concerns at the time of the first scheduled AIP signing, and did not want Fred Carmichael to sign. Some of these concerns rested on misconceptions, and when they were raised they brought an element of uncertainty into the negotiations. Such uncertainty is not desirable in terms of successful negotiation. The Federal and Territorial Governments have all the power; all we have is the force of reason and argument to establish the inherent right of self-government. Where we lose the unity of leadership, and residents seem unsure of what they want, our negotiating position is undermined. There is a need to determine what Beneficiaries want. In a few more weeks he will give Fieldworkers a document to take into people's homes, presenting the requirements of self-government. In a subsequent set of visits, starting in December or January, the Fieldworkers will seek your input as the basis of a new mandate. Our findings will come before the next Assembly in a mandate document on specific instructions for negotiating a final agreement. The underlying question is whether people want self-government or not. If there is uncertainty, we should know now rather than "negotiate in bad faith to keep the process going."

The negotiators are here to negotiate an agreement on your behalf; if you don't want one, let us know. Otherwise the next two or three years of negotiating will be of limited use. You may wish to wait five or ten years until you feel comfortable before going ahead, and you do need to feel comfortable. We hope to put something in front of the Board by March, and either get approval to proceed to the next steps or wind up the entire process at the next Assembly.

Lawrence Norbert adds that as communities start planning, they should look at what is involved in making self-government work. There are important career planning questions that arise. From the point of view of the Self-government Office, self-government means you have guaranteed representation within governments at different levels and the ability to safeguard your inherent right. This provides more control over programs and services and, over the long run, the ability to make your own decisions about your own future within your own homeland. He thanks the GTC for making "the rise of self-government" the theme of this year's Annual Report.

Tom Wright asks why we might not want to seek constitutional protection for any self-government agreement.

Bob Simpson replies that the Claim is constitutionally protected, which has advantages in terms of operations under existing law. But self-government is a relatively new field, and it is unclear how it fits into the Canadian constitution. Other agreements and evolving case law will clarify this over time, so we might not want to pursue the option of constitutional protection right away.

Tom Wright asks how long it will be until the reality of self-government is here.

Bob Simpson replies that an optimistic estimate would have negotiations concluded within 2-3 years, with 2-3 years to make the transition. There will also be a ten-year implementation plan, to spread the assumption of powers over time in a manageable fashion.

Peter Ross adds that unless the required dollars come with the new responsibilities, communities could find themselves worse off under self-government. In addition, it would be necessary to push young people to get their education, or else we would end up just hiring Southerners to run things again. We need to make full preparations before any major changes.

Robert Charlie asks if the Self-government Office has met with the Town of Inuvik to address its concerns. He also wonders if the Office has made presentations in schools.

Bob Simpson says that the Town of Inuvik was opposed to self-government until we signed the AIP. He is unsure how reflective such opposition was of the Town Council as a whole. He and the negotiators for the other parties have indicated their willingness to discuss things with Inuvik. A recent letter from Inuvik's Mayor says guaranteed representation is no longer a problem for Council, but rep. by pop. on the regional government level is a major concern. We are prepared to discuss all such concerns. We do school presentations, and have also developed a curriculum for the schools on land claims and self-government, as well as an Indigenous studies program which serves as an access year at the university level. He agrees with Peter Ross that we need to start training early enough to ensure that people in the region are running the governments under the new dispensation.

Ann Firth Jones (Yellowknife) asks what consultation and communication has taken place with Beneficiaries outside the GSA.

Bob Simpson replies that while the primary consultations have been within the GSA, there must be consultations with Beneficiaries elsewhere since they will likely vote on the final agreement. We can mail material anywhere, and he has indicated that he's willing to make presentations in Yellowknife. He gathers that James Andre made one in Whitehorse.

Robert Charlie asks what feedback the Inuvialuit have recently given.

Bob Simpson says Inuvialuit support was strong up to the AIP stage, and has softened some in the last year given the delay over Chapter 27 concerns. The Inuvialuit did question the partnership since they were unsure what the concerns were and had doubts about the way they were handled. They have generally supported the mandate exercise, and want to know how strong Gwich'in interest is. This is one of the reasons he wants a clear mandate. He does not want to negotiate a final agreement, and only then hear that people are unsure. He does not want to be put in the same position as he was a year ago; "I can't negotiate in the dark."

Tom Wright notes that it's unclear what self-government is. If you ask two people, you get two different answers.

Elizabeth Hansen would like to see the leaders do a 'phone-in show on self-government. She thinks people should "give self-government a try before saying no to it."

Maureen Clark suggests doubts about self-government are really doubts about our own abilities. She also wants to see the GSCI brought into self-government, with matters of culture and protection of the land addressed.

Bob Simpson replies that the AIP has provisions on language and culture, including a stipulation that all governments make "best efforts" to include Gwich'in culture and language in program delivery. We also have lawmaking authority over language and culture. He thinks of self-government in terms of regaining control that was taken from you.

Bertha Francis (Ft. McPherson) suggests self-government is a way of doing things for yourself rather than being pushed around by others.

Harry Carmichael (Inuvik) adds that even where we would rely on others to do things in the early stages of self-government, we could insist that Gwich'in Beneficiaries be trained to take over from them.

Johnny Charlie (Ft. McPherson) points out that many of the jobs now in government are union jobs with high wages. We would need the resources to pay people before taking these over.

Bob Simpson reiterates that at the start of the process, the negotiators made a strategic decision to focus on programs and structures up to the AIP stage and then on getting the money required. We are having some success getting the GNWT to change its views regarding the revenues they provide. It's tough to determine what existing resources are there, and he is reluctant to make any promises. We'll probably get what's there now. We do know there's waste in government, and efficiencies that we can create. In addition, we're trying to get resource royalties to help fund self-government. Without new money, we probably won't be able to get a self-government agreement in the North.

Gabe Andre (Tsiigehtchic) suggests all the communities should be of one mind when it comes to self-government.

Robert Bourque says that insofar as the GTC runs programs and communities operate businesses, we already practice a degree of self-government. Under formal self-government, we would assume a greater measure of control.

Sigmore Furlong (Aklavik) suggests self-government is a way of showing what the Gwich'in are capable of doing.

Lawrence Norbert notes that one example of what self-government means came up this morning during the discussion of Bylaw revisions. As a land claim entity, we still need Federal approval of our Bylaws through registration with Industry Canada. Under self-government we would not seek Ottawa's approval of the laws by which we govern ourselves.

2) *GTC Operations*

Tom Williams informs the Assembly that his report, which will cover the main aspects of GTC operations over the past year, has also been circulated in hard copy.

He notes that improving communications has been a priority, with the newsletter coming out on a quarterly basis, the development of the new, more user-friendly web site, and the "open door policy" at the GTC's main office. We also propose stepped-up community visits, and monthly program updates.

After relying upon the same legal counsel since the inception of the Claim, we concluded a fresh approach would be welcome, and issued an RFP in August 2002. We went with three firms for three different specialties: FieldLaw for GTC operations and governance; Davis and Company for real estate; McCuaig Desrochers for corporate and commercial law. Together, these firms have some 300 lawyers whose expertise we can tap.

A lot of the GTC's energy went into negotiating an access and benefits agreement with Imperial Oil for a small Winter geotechnical program in the GSA. The idea of negotiating a benefits agreement was new. We had only negotiated one earlier agreement, with Devlan, when we were new to the game and a lot was left out. We concluded the Imperial agreement with an in-house team, drawing on assistance from FieldLaw. We met our goals, including \$20,000 in donations for education and training, and \$10,000 in community donations, from which all the communities have benefited. The agreement expires in March 2004, but will serve as a template for future agreements, in which we will again stick to our objectives of maximizing job and business opportunities for Beneficiaries while protecting the land.

There were concerns about the degree of community involvement, and in future negotiations the Chiefs will participate in the negotiating team.

Another priority this year was development of a Strategic Plan. We have established a working group and plan on community consultations to gather input. We will discuss the plan in more detail later in the Assembly.

The ongoing review of GTC programs provides opportunities for improving programs that have been in existence for a number of years without reassessment. This past year we conducted a comprehensive review of the GHAP. The program uses GNWT funds as well as GTC money, and we had a mandate to conduct a review as a condition of that funding arrangement. We hired a consultant, Brian Penney, to conduct a review to determine who was benefiting from the program. The review produced recommendations to make it easier for full-time trappers to obtain equipment and to reduce misuse of funds. The report was tabled at the recent regional RRCs meeting, at which we also committed to a further round of consultations. Following further community visits this Spring, we made further changes. The last allocation took place under the new rules, and the Fall allocation is coming up. We need to hear from you how the program is working under the new arrangements, and what you would like to see altered. We will conduct a program evaluation through a questionnaire to ensure that the program is efficiently run, and benefits harvesters. Gabe Andre mentioned that he was ineligible when he returned to harvesting after two years' absence. That's the kind of problem we wish to address, so that funding is available to all who want to harvest.

On the human resources (HR) front, we were able to fund the Employment Liaison Officer position for a second year, thanks to funding from the GNWT. Funding for the position is currently on a year-to-year footing, but we hope to be in a position to secure multi-year funding later on. We also developed an HR database, which includes more than 500 Beneficiaries. Evaluating our work force is a big part of our HR plan, and we encourage all Beneficiaries to complete the form for the database. While many people were reluctant to provide the personal information the form asks for, that information is useful to us when we negotiate with government and industry. We also finished an HR manual and employee handbook. If we wish to be treated as a government, we must be ready to operate like one, and these documents set out the policies allowing us to do so. In addition, we support staff development among our present employees, and hired four Beneficiaries under the summer student program. Summer student training helps us develop a pool of Beneficiaries trained in a number of areas that will prove important under self-government and with increased economic development. As Fred noted earlier, the majority of positions within the organization are filled by Beneficiaries.

One of the major efforts this year was the development of a Gwich'in business policy. The Board approved the policy, seeing it as an important document that would be useful in negotiating access and benefits agreements as well as in implementing our MOU with the GNWT. Yet when we visited the communities this Spring we found concerns about the way the policy worked, with some problems attributed to the A and B lists and people concerned about the opportunities open to small business. We need to go back and revisit the policy through another review with extensive community input. We are creating a position of Manager, Gwich'in Business Development, and will soon advertise the post. This will be an important job; small business is the backbone of the regional economy, and helping small business will be a big part of the job.

For the next year, our priorities will be: completion of the strategic plan; a fresh evaluation of GHAP; negotiation of a comprehensive access and benefits agreement for a pipeline, with community involvement; revisiting the business policy; further program reviews; ongoing efforts to improve communications. The last two years we have had to spend a lot of time on "cleanup" in both finance and administration. Now that we have a secure financial and administrative foundation in place, we can move on to new initiatives. We will become more involved in the self-government process and work on options for a Gwich'in government and constitution while continuing to provide Beneficiaries with efficient, well-run governance.

Grace Blake seeks direction from the group as to whether it should continue the proceedings or adjourn until tomorrow morning.

Following agreement to adjourn, Bertha Francis leads the Assembly in a closing prayer. The group adjourns at 6:10 p.m., to resume at 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, August 12

Barry Greenland calls the Assembly to order at 9:20 a.m. Tom Wright leads the group in an opening prayer.

Barry Greenland recalls that yesterday's proceedings ended with Tom Williams's presentation on GTC operations. He is now available to answer questions.

Robert Charlie says there were community concerns regarding the MOU with the GNWT. This is an election year; will the next government honour the agreement? Moreover, a 50-50% split can be seen as a step backwards from the 60-40% split we used to have. There are also concerns about the process; how does a small business negotiate a contract?

Tom Williams replies that the GNWT commitment will continue under a new government. The MOU has a three-year term with options for renewal afterwards. Any business wishing to negotiate a contract must deal directly with the GNWT department in question. The GTC has asked for notification of all contracts up for negotiation, so it can keep tabs on the process. All the communities have entered into negotiations on some contracts. As for the one-time 60-40% split, there was never such an arrangement in writing. The GNWT members who will be here may have more to say. He sees the MOU as a step in the right direction.

Robert Charlie asks if the new position of Manager, Gwich'in Business Development, is currently occupied. What are the terms of reference?

Tom Williams responds that upon signing of the MOU, RWED provided funding for the position in order to monitor the MOU's implementation, keep the business list up-to-date, and perform other tasks to facilitate the MOU's operation. We are finalizing the job description and will put the position out to competition. The job will also include pointing small business in the right direction for financing and other aid. The funding for the job is year-to-year, so it will likely remain a term position until long-term funding is in place.

Elizabeth Hansen asks if funds from access and benefits agreements will be used to address the negative social impacts of development.

Tom Williams confirms this will be the case. The pipeline will be along-term project, and we will ensure socioeconomic implications are addressed. We also have a commitment from industry and government to develop a plan to address socioeconomic impacts throughout the NWT.

Elizabeth Hansen asks if this will include training people to operate social programs.

Tom Williams says he believes so. He understands that when Ethel Blondin-Andrew is here she will discuss some of the Aboriginal-specific training programs, which presumably include training of this kind.

Robert Bourque says he gathers the GTC was involved in negotiating construction of the new Aurora College facility in Inuvik, but gave it up. Now Dowland is in charge and the Gwich'in are not benefiting.

Tom Williams explains that this was a GDC undertaking, and he is not involved in GDC operations. He gathers that the GDC was initially in a joint venture with the IDC and put together a joint proposal. When Ketzka, our construction partnership, folded, we were left without a construction arm and Dowland took over the negotiations.

Fred Carmichael confirms this. He notes that the GTC's involvement in the process was never substantial. The negotiations were not complete when Ketzka pulled out. Without Ketzka, we had no technical people to negotiate with the Department of Public Works. We had to turn the negotiations over to the IDC, who used their own construction arm, Dowland. He understands that Tom Connors instructed Dowland to deal with Chii Construction in Inuvik. He does not know if Chii got work as a result. Perhaps Ernest Firth, the GDC's Chairman, can add information when he is here.

Bridget Larocque says that last year Todd Burlingame addressed the Assembly on behalf of the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board. The MVEIRB is a public board, but was established under the Claim. She sees no pressure from the GTC to ensure Beneficiaries are employed by these public boards, and she is the only Beneficiary working at the MVEIRB. Will the GTC pressure the Boards to implement hiring preferences for Beneficiaries not for affirmative action reasons, but in view of the stated purpose of the Boards and the sources of their funding?

Tom Williams says it is the case that public boards were created under the Claim, and that Federal funding flows to them through the GTC. But our formal influence over public boards is limited. The GTC can make representations regarding provision of training and employment opportunities. An Assembly motion directing us to do so would strengthen our hand.

Archie Norbert (Tsiigehtchic) says he has concerns about the working conditions of some environmental monitors. He gathers that we have people around Swan Lake living in pup tents.

Tom Williams replies that the GTC has put out an RFP for monitor training, to ensure that monitors are certified and we can inform industry of the fact. Responsibility for the monitoring program is largely devolved to the RRCs, as the communities requested. The GTC's role is limited to ensuring training and certification, but we may be able to follow up with industry regarding living accommodations.

Elizabeth Hansen asks if the GTC is giving the RRCs more money to run the monitoring program.

Deb Bisson (Director, Lands, Resources and Implementation) says the GTC can write a clause in the authorizations specifying what industry must pay monitors, and that monitors must have the same working conditions as others at a given site.

Harry Carmichael says he believes the people at Swan Lake are working on a Ducks Unlimited project, not working with industry.

Peter Ross says he would like to see community involvement in negotiating any pipeline deal.

Tom Williams reiterates that the Chiefs will be included in the negotiating team.

Maureen Clark says the protection of the land is too important to be left to the leadership alone in pipeline negotiations. We want people to build any pipeline on solid ground, and not just choose the shortest, cheapest route.

Ian McLeod says the Chiefs don't represent non-Status Beneficiaries, who also deserve a say.

Tom Williams notes that the pipeline is still at the discussion stage. There will be extensive consultation, and if people don't want a pipeline, one will not be built. Access authorizations go to the RRCs in each community, so if you object to proposed routing, you can stop it. In addition to the Chiefs, the negotiating team will include GTC reps., who will look at the interests of all Beneficiaries. Everyone will have to be comfortable before we recommend to the Board that Fred sign a deal.

3) *Education & Training*

Education and Training Manager Barb Crawford explains that her department has two “pots” of money. The Education and Training Trust Fund was created under the Claim, and provides the money for the scholarship and bursary programs. This year some 85 students will benefit, receiving on average \$200 a month. Bursaries are awarded on the basis of academic standing, course load, and need. Scholarships are available to students with an overall average of 80%. We are considering changing this, since we generally track the requirements of Student Finance and the Inuvialuit, both of whom have lowered the cutoff to 75%.

The other pot is the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) program. Funded by HRDC, this program supports human resource development initiatives undertaken by the 79 holders of AHRDA agreement holders across Canada. This is the last year of our current 5-year agreement, and it will be renewed next year. AHRDA covers a Labor Market program split into two parts (Part 1: wage subsidies; self-employment; skill development; job creation partnerships; Part 2: employment assistance services; labor market partnerships). We funded employment officers in Aklavik and Ft. McPherson under this program, as well as partnerships preparing people for various job activity. One example this year was heavy equipment operator training. AHRDA also supports our youth program, which focuses on Summer student employment, programs for people with disabilities, and child care. This year we hope to get a daycare up and running in Tsiigehtchic, and are now renovating the Band House in Ft. McPherson to provide services for children aged 3-5. We did a lot with wage subsidies, since this is the final year of the current agreement, and created positions in almost every community.

Robert Bourque asks for further information on the program for the disabled.

Barb Crawford says this is not a large fund, but money is available for anyone with a disability who wants to train for employment. This year we worked with Ft. McPherson Tent and Canvas to hire one young man. She is happy to visit the communities and see if there are other candidates for such training.

Robert Bourque asks if there is an age limit, and if training for employment in construction would be eligible.

Barb Crawford says there is no age limit, and she would consider a proposal in construction.

Elizabeth Hansen notes that nurses have to pay their own way to write their final exams in Edmonton. Are they eligible for aid?

Barb Crawford replies that she is aware of at least one person who was reimbursed.

Ann Firth Jones asks if there is funding available for the tutoring of small children, other than those with special needs, and if it is available to Beneficiaries outside the GSA.

Barb Crawford says two special needs slots were funded this year because the need was most pressing in that field. Under AHRDA, Education and Training funds only people in the GSA, but there are other AHRDA holders, all of whom serve First Nations, Metis and Inuit within their respective areas.

Lillian Wright (Inuvik) asks if the traditional artisan program will continue.

Barb Crawford replies that after some discussion, we, the Inuvialuit and Aurora College decided to redo the program so that it better reflects Delta traditions, and not to run it this year. It was originally imported from Portage College. A revised version is a possibility for next year.

4) *Enrolment Board*

Enrolment Board Chair Barb Crawford invites Robert Alexie, Sr., a Board member from Ft. McPherson, to join her at the table. She recalls that the Enrolment Board has gone through ups and downs since its creation in 1992. Since it was relocated to Inuvik, Cheryl Wright, the Coordinator, has worked hard to update the database and track people down. With elections and a payout this year, she and Robert have noticed, enrolment is “further down the line.” Indian Status lapses after a certain number of generations. In the case of the Gwich’in Claim, all those who can establish their Gwich’in ancestry satisfactorily are enrolled. Now, people who have never lived in the GSA, have no intention of coming here, and don’t know anyone here, are eligible to vote, get student aid and enjoy other benefits of the Claim. She is not saying these people are any less entitled to the Claim’s benefits, but the issue is now becoming a concern.

Robert Alexie, Sr., adds that applications now come in from all over Canada and from the U.S. The “oldtimers” don’t know anything about the ancestors of some of the people who apply.

Barb Crawford says things have reached the point where Cheryl has to pursue documentation to follow the blood lines. It is often hard to track these in the case of adoptions. There were 100 applications to deal with at the last Board meeting, and the process is getting time-consuming. The Board needs further direction. Do we need a policy change? Should we seek a legal opinion? Perhaps the Board and Coordinator should visit the communities to get local input.

Joe Tetlich suggests the issue is too sensitive to discuss around this table. Perhaps a Special Assembly with fewer people would be more appropriate.

Tom Wright says there must be some cutoff point. When he was involved with the Board, any hard cases would be taken to people like Sarah Simon, who had long memories and could answer almost any question. Every community would have people who could remember things, supplementing the relevant documentation.

Maureen Clark says it might be wise to include the GSCI in any community visits. A genealogical study of Tsiigehtchic is in progress.

Chief Charles Furlong (Aklavik) recalls that during the Claim negotiations we were presented with various options for defining who a Gwich’in is. There are instances, such as the Alaskan and James Bay agreements, where eligibility is defined quantitatively with a certain cutoff, and family trees and degrees of intermarriage come into the picture. We didn’t think this would work in the Gwich’in case, since Metis children and their descendants would be disadvantaged. Based on that, we concluded that as long as you can trace your ancestry to Gwich’in forebears on or before 1921, given the Treaty issue, you’re eligible. The problem will only grow. We need to look at complementing our current policies on what it means to be a Beneficiary. He doubts the Federal Government would agree to a redefinition of the term “Beneficiary” without reopening the Claim. Perhaps we could start by giving the Board the resources to make use of the information already there, and to do the required research into family trees. The most important resource will be the Elders in each community. We should direct the Board to promote the development of a research plan to address the question.

Robert Alexie, Sr., says that as Elders die, the problem will worsen. It is already serious in cases where all the names are unfamiliar.

Elizabeth Hansen suggests if the Board is expected to do such work, it must get more money. It would also help if people developed their own family trees. Because this is such a sensitive area, the genealogy book of a few years ago stopped in 1921, stating that you were responsible for letting your own children know where you’re from after that date.

Barb Crawford notes the Enrolment Board is reprinting the book, and having copies sent out into the communities.

5) *Lands, Resources and Implementation*

Deb Bisson introduces herself and explains the amalgamation of lands, resources and implementation into a single division. The implementation department is mandated by the Claim to deal with its management and implementation. Lands and resources personnel worked together, since all lands issues affected resources, and vice versa. And all are implementation issues. The program managers will report on their own recent activities, beginning with Lands Manager Joe Benoit, after which she will discuss implementation issues at more length.

Joe Benoit explains the requirement in the GCLCA of Gwich'in management and control of lands in the GSA, and proceeds to explain the workings of the access application process. Fees must be paid prior to access unless an agreement is already in place. Approved land use activities for 2003 included 27 new research authorizations, 2 quarry authorizations, 2 residential authorizations and 2 commercial lease authorizations. He hopes to begin the training of monitors soon, to meet the NWT monitoring standards. Monitors will be contracted at the community level, at remuneration beginning at \$400 a day. There is a consensus that the hourly rate should be higher than last year. Special rates will apply in the cases of Traditional Knowledge (TK) and other specialists.

Land management and control rules are being rewritten to cover the Yukon, with approval to come through the GTC Board. We propose to increase the fees, rates and penalties, perhaps to match those charged by the Inuvialuit. He plans a river tour to correctly locate as many camps and cabins on Gwich'in land as possible and identify any environmental issues. Some time back we sent maps to the communities for correction, and only one was returned. These maps were prepared prior to the development of GPS, and many cabins are wrongly positioned. New structures on Gwich'in lands are generally not approved unless a lease is in place or the local RRC agrees. Where a camp or cabin is not in use, it would be nice to make it usable and establish ownership. If there is no ownership, perhaps the nearest RRC can take it on. Some camp sites are in need of cleanup, and he will report on these to the owners and the RRCs. He is also working with the Nihitat Gwich'in Council on a land use permitting workshop; he hopes to go to the communities afterwards to explain the procedures. Pit management plans for the Willow Creek Quarry, Frog Creek Quarry and Midway Lake have been received. In the last year we reviewed pit and quarry authorizations to ensure that all included plans. Pit management plans are also a requirement for new authorizations.

Resource Manager Norman Snowshoe introduces himself and summarizes the range of issues in which he is active, from the NWT and Wildlife Acts and Species at Risk Legislation to the Dempster Regulations. Development in the Peel River Watershed area is an ongoing concern, and he is involved in efforts to establish a Peel River Land Use Plan. No planning activities are under way at present, and we have only managed to create a body to develop a Plan, the Peel River Watershed Commission. Work on overlap agreements has been slow, with progress in dealings with Mayo, but only unsuccessful attempts to set up a meeting with the Vuntut Gwich'in of Old Crow. James Firth has been very helpful on overlap issues. One of the recurring challenges in his work is the presence of so many organizations trying to do similar work. If the RRCs and the other organizations are to work together more efficiently, the political will must be there. He hopes to help clarify who is responsible for what, and ensure that relevant GNWT information reaches the right organizations and individuals, which does not always happen now. He notes that at these Assemblies, time is often short. One possible solution would be to run them more like board meetings, with very specific agenda items addressed by staff.

Environmental Coordinator Johnny Edwards explains his responsibilities in the conduct of species samples, studies and other projects pertaining to contaminant levels in the GSA. He is involved in the Cumulative Impacts Monitoring Program and Audit (CIMP), an initiative of INAC's regional office which is required by the GCLCA and the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. In addition, he works on Cumulative Effects Assessment and Management (CEAM), a broader initiative rooted in past assessments indicating a need for comprehensive information on, and better management of, cumulative effects.

Assessment and management of the impact of Northern contaminants is the responsibility of the Northern Contaminants Program. Given limits on the current funding of the Program, his title was changed and responsibilities redefined. He is responsible for relations with the DGOs and RRCs in regard to environmental issues. One of his current priorities is updating the Land Registry. Once the registry is brought up-to-date in a more user-friendly Microsoft Access format, the GTC will find it easier to trace the obligations associated with authorizations and benefit agreements.

Deb Bisson outlines her background and training in environmental management, and informs the Assembly that when she joined the GTC in December it was on the understanding that she would mentor a Beneficiary to take over. Two candidates turned the opportunity down, so if anyone is interested, she would be glad to make contact. When she joined the organization, a widespread concern was that communications between the GTC and the communities were not what they should be. Accordingly, she focused on this area in her early months, during which the learning curve was steep. Last month she issued a comprehensive report, which went to all DGOs and RRCs. A second report came out just a few days ago. This is in tabular format, setting out the status of each initiative and the next steps we will take. If you wish more detailed information, feel free to contact us. Copies of her Implementation Update are in the Assembly binder.

Over the last year we were active in obtaining three amendments to the GCLCA. Two are financial, dealing with the distribution and investment of settlement money: a change in wording to allow more than one payout; and an amendment allowing investments in pooled funds. The third was a “rolling surrender” clause, harmonizing with other land claims in regard to harvesting rights. The changes are minor ones.

The major project this year was the renegotiation of the Implementation Plan, completed in December. We have obtained an increase in GTC funding from \$153,716 to \$485,762 and in RRC funding from \$176,817 to \$264,000. We also updated the action items in the Plan.

We were left with outstanding issues where the Implementation Committee has recommended arbitration: GTC core funding; the Economic Measures chapter; unilateral referral to arbitration; YDAP; devolution in the Yukon; the Wildlife Studies Fund. On two issues, unilateral referral to arbitration and the Wildlife Studies Fund, we’ve indicated our readiness to arbitrate. On the four others, we propose to see what happens through less adversarial channels before resorting to arbitration. We do not plan to seek arbitration on Yukon issues yet, although these have historically been difficult. Fred Carmichael and Tom Williams are working with the new Yukon Government, which seems interested in working with the GTC on these issues in a more cooperative manner than some of its predecessors. They are also working through the Council of Yukon First Nations on some of the same issues. The question is whether these faster, cheaper and less adversarial options will produce a satisfactory outcome, thereby obviating the need for arbitration. Our main concern is that we have been excluded from participation in decisionmaking in regards to a Peel River Watershed Land Use Plan. The Yukon Territorial Government forwarded a legal opinion to us claiming that there is no legal obligation to grant us participation, an opinion she considers erroneous as both law and policy. We have a breathing space of approximately two years before the relevant Act is finalized. The definition of “First Nation” in the Yukon Umbrella Act excluded us from exercising any right of representation in the Yukon. There is now a possibility of participation through membership in the Council of Yukon First Nations, depending upon whether it is politically feasible for the Council to allow this. As for devolution, it is her reading of the devolution legislation that the Federal Government has not devolved to the YTG its obligations to the GTC, a view we impress upon Ottawa at every opportunity.

Noel Andre recounts his difficulty in obtaining compensation from Devlan for the destruction of a trapline.

Fred Carmichael says he is aware of such incidents, and is under the impression compensation will be settled among the RRCs, the trappers and the company.

Deb Bisson adds that a clause in each authorization specifies that the authorization holder must provide compensation for damage to traplines. We can enforce this obligation.

Robert Bourque says there are cabins on the East Branch. The RRCs have no power to stop this; what enforcement capabilities does the GTC have?

Joe Benoit says he gathers the RRCs have approved occupation. Community approval occurred in most cases. If the community decides there is no right to build, actions can range from seeking a lease agreement to removal. So far, we have no clear case of trespass. Where there is one, we will act. The only case where there is uncertainty is a cabin in Gull Channel. We have drafted a Trespass Act to forward to the Legislature.

Robert Bourque says he believes there are cases of trespass, and invites Joe Benoit to Inuvik's next RRC meeting to discuss the matter in detail.

Wilbert Firth (Ft. McPherson) asks what is happening in the signage file and around Deep Water Lake. He observes that one problem with the Caribou lake cleanup was that sewage was dumped on the ground rather than trucked out. Removal should be a requirement in the authorization. He also wonders if there have been baseline studies in the Peel and around Tsiigehtchic, where there should be monitoring for heavy metals and organochlorines. Without baseline data, claims of subsequent damage cannot be substantiated.

Joe Benoit replies that work has been done on the signage file, and we're identifying funding. The Deep Water Lake project is near completion, and we have legal counsel working on the lease agreement. According to INAC, it was acceptable for operators to dump sewage at the Caribou Lake site as long as it was distributed and covered over. He agrees on the importance of baseline studies, and this is the second year we've done them.

Deb Bisson says the signage file was resurrected about a month ago, and the new people in her department had to spend time seeing what had been done before and what signs were needed. In compliance with our business policy, we'd have to take bids to make and install the signs.

Tom Williams adds RWED is willing to commit some funds under Implementation. Once that is secured, we'll go ahead with the project.

James Firth says that Inuvik has done some work on this file. Can we invoice the GTC for what we have spent? We have also secured funding for a workshop on permitting issues with the RRCs and others, as well as circulating papers on a proposed pipeline strategy. We have raised concerns about damage to traplines. We need to put a value on our land and control who goes on it. In addition, we need an enforcement capability. The only mechanism for enforcement is a Petty Trespass Act, and we should raise this with our MLAs.

Tom Williams says the GTC will look at this invoice. He believes we paid part of the last such invoice, but in future we will need prior authorization before the work proceeds.

Elizabeth Firth (Ft. McPherson) observes that when the cabins are mapped, people may be out at some of them. She asks that people be given advance notice, and would like the lands personnel to come with a guide.

Joe Benoit says he will provide notification, either in the community or to individual Beneficiaries. He will see if guides are available.

Chief Abe Wilson (Ft. McPherson) asks for an explanation of how arbitration works, as well as estimate of its costs. He also wonders if monitor training includes sampling. He adds that there are about 20 abandoned oil rig sites in the Yukon, all of them beside creeks. Instead of talking about Yukon issues, we should act. Some of us are talking about a motion directing visits to these Yukon sites.

Deb Bisson explains that arbitration is written into the GCLCA as a means of resolving disputes in specified cases or regarding interpretation of a clause. A panel with nominees from each party would listen to the arguments and make a determination. Costs vary, but this option is cheaper than a lawsuit. You would prepare a legal opinion beforehand, and might wish to call witnesses. The expenses of the witnesses and the lawyers' time and travel would be among the costs. The process moves forward a step at a time. Obtaining a legal opinion is the first step. Once you retain a lawyer you can set a cap on what he spends preparing the opinion.

Joe Benoit says sampling is identified as part of monitoring duties, but the GNWT is the only party that currently provides the training. The Peel is unique in some ways, so Peel monitors would need specialized training. There is a difference between a monitor and a technician; so far, monitors don't sample, they just observe and report to us.

Charlie Snowshoe (Ft. McPherson) recounts his observation of the damage done by coal methane gas in mining at sites in the United States. Similar technology is being used to extract oil from the oil sands in Alberta, causing falling water levels. The Alberta Government will give the companies permission to use whatever techniques they wish to extract the oil, without regard for the communities and people who will be affected. He congratulates Elaine Alexie for her work on these and related environmental issues.

Elaine Alexie (Ft. McPherson) observes that she was recently involved as coordinator of the Elders' gathering on the Snake River, arranged to promote awareness of the dangers of development to the Peel River Watershed. The event aroused considerable media interest, and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) played the lead role in organizing it. She and a number of other youth at the gathering drafted a statement expressing their concern over this issue. She would like to see young people participate in policymaking since it affects their future. In addition, she would like to see more cooperation between the GTC and CPAWS.

Fred Carmichael thanks Elaine Alexie for her interest and encourages her to stay involved and persevere even when others disagree with her. He notes that these environmental problems do not develop quickly, and they will not be solved quickly. Years ago, when the Berger inquiry led to a moratorium on pipeline activity he, as a young man in business, objected. In retrospect, he thinks Berger was right. The GTC's leaders are concerned about development in the Peel River Watershed, and are working hard to develop a Peel River Watershed Plan with the YTG. The GTC has never refused to work with CPAWS or any other organization sharing our concerns. It is, of course, our firm policy to take advice from other organizations and work with them, but not to take direction from them. We must have the final say on what happens on our own land.

- 6) *Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board*
No presentation.

K. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 2002- 2003 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Grace Blake informs the Assembly that the CFO's report begins on p. 55 of the GTC Annual Report, followed by the financial statements for the year. She invites CFO Greg Cayen and John Stelter of KPMG to the table.

Greg Cayen reminds the Assembly that he went to all four communities last week to meet with the Delegates and go through the financial statements in detail. He proposes to deal only with the high-lights today.

His report on p. 55 explains the GTC's dual mandate: to manage long-term investments on behalf of Beneficiaries through the Land Claim Settlement Fund; and to deliver programs and services through its operations. Tom Williams is in charge on the operational side, ensuring that programs are run effectively and efficiently.

He proposes to talk primarily about the GTC's investments. The graph on p. 55 shows the composition of the Settlement Fund as of March 31, 2003: \$11 million (10% of assets) in the GDC; future settlement proceeds of \$28 million (24%); and \$77 million (66%) in the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation. With total investments of \$116 million, we will be close to our objective of \$130 million in 2007 if we adhere to our current program and follow Bylaw 3.

You will hear later from our investment managers about the performance of our investments and their expected future performance. Last year was a difficult year for the markets, with GSC investments earning an annual rate of return of -12.4%. Since 1996, when we outsourced GSC investment management, the cumulative return has been about 5.7% a year. Market conditions have improved in recent months, with a return up to 6.7% by the end of June and almost 7% by the end of July. This indicates that while the past year was poor, there is no reason for panic, and normal conditions are reasserting themselves. The diversification of our holdings through use of two fund managers has provided some comfort. There are concerns regarding the GDC, which we will address separately later in the agenda. We hope to find ways to strengthen the GDC. We ran an operating surplus of \$105,000 for the year. In past years the operations account ran a large deficit, and we now appear to have stabilized things. As you see from the figures on p. 59 of the Annual Report, total consolidated Beneficiaries' equity is approximately \$121 million, or \$45,000 per capita, up from \$69,000 million and \$29,000 per capita in 1992. We are some 80% of the way to our target for 2007, at which point the capital transfers end and we will have to depend upon our own resources.

Our strategic development and outlook are summarized on p. 59. We plan to continue reviewing our asset mix and look at the future of the GDC, perhaps considering the transfer of some GDC assets to the Settlement Fund. This will depend in part on advice from KPMG about the tax implications of doing so. We will also discuss a dividend policy, something we must have in place by 2007, and an implementation funding plan for the years after 2007. In sum, you are in a strong financial position.

Robert Bourque says we always hear there are between \$6 and \$7 million dollars unaccounted for. Has there ever been any money missing since the Claim was implemented?

Greg Cayen responds that to his knowledge there has never been any money that was not accounted for.

Robert Bourque says the question is raised every year, and he thanks Greg Cayen for putting it to rest.

Charles Furlong says that as member of the Finance Committee he can say the organization has come a long way in the past two-and-a-half years, with a lot of work done to reduce expenses, find all the weaknesses and make things manageable. This year's operating surplus is an indication that the organization is in fact manageable.

Be it Resolved That

the Gwich'in Tribal Council financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2003 be accepted as presented.

Moved by: Charles Furlong (Aklavik)

Seconded by: Tom Wright (Inuvik)

Grace Blake wonders if the motion should be made by someone not on the Finance Committee.

Charles Furlong explains that he is both a voting Delegate at the Assembly and a GTC Board appointment to the Finance Committee. Normally a representative of the appropriate committee seeks Assembly approval of actions or documents.

Passed. (Resolution #05/2003)

Greg Cayen introduces John Stelter of KPMG.

John Stelter thanks the group for the opportunity to address it once again as well as for the GTC's continued confidence in KPMG. He directs the attention of those present to the Auditors' Report to the Beneficiaries on p.63 of the GTC Annual Report. This year, as in previous ones, KPMG prepared audited financial statements for the GTC and issued separate audit opinions on the GTC and all its subsidiaries and associated organizations, including the GDC and its subsidiaries, the GSC, TI'oondih Healing Society, the Enrolment Board, GSCI, Self-government Office, and the Harvesters' Trust. The consolidated report combines all these into one report. He is pleased to note that KPMG was able to issue unqualified audit opinions in every case. As the GTC's auditor, he is satisfied that these financial statements are about the best he has seen, and are a credit to all those involved.

Greg Cayen notes that John Stelter has been advising the GTC since 1992, and in recognition of his service makes a presentation to him.

L. GWICH'IN SETTLEMENT CORPORATION

1) Towers Perrin

Greg Cayen reiterates that there is about \$80 million in the GSC, with the goal of \$130 million by 2007. The more money we can put in the GSC, the more will be available for various purposes later on. There are now only four more capital transfer payments. He would like Peter Hallett of Towers Perrin, whose full presentation also appears at tab 8 of the Assembly binder, to report to the Assembly.

Peter Hallett introduces himself and explains Towers Perrin's role as the GTC's investment adviser. The figures you have are reflective of the fund as of March 31. The last two years have not been good economically, and therefore the investment environment for the fund has been unfavourable. Still, the GSC investments have fared better than many other funds. Between the end of March and the end of July, the fund did grow by \$5 million. These ups and downs are part and parcel of the risks of being in the markets, but in the long term this is the best approach to grow your assets. Towers Perrin's role as investment adviser is providing advice on fund management, the respective allocations to equities, bonds and cash, and management of ongoing cash flow into the fund.

The position of the fund today is similar to what it was at the end of March, with the addition of the latest \$7 million capital transfer payment, now invested in cash. We are moving into a more normal investment environment, with growth of some 7% over the past three months. This is a strong rebound, with better economic conditions firming up and the geopolitical situation stabilizing. By the end of June we were pretty well on target in terms of the return on investment (ROI), although you hope to do even better.

We have reached a critical point in the fund's evolution as the end of the capital transfers approaches. Your fund managers must manage their respective portfolios in accordance with the investment policy, which is approved by the GSC Board. This Fall we will conduct a formal review of that policy in order to discuss the appropriate allocation of the fund to international equities. One of the recent amendments to the Claim allows you to invest in major economies outside North America. Allocation to the markets in those countries will be reviewed by the Finance Committee, while we keep the total allocated to stocks stable. This further diversifies your portfolio and balances risks. It will likely be the last significant change to the portfolio prior to 2007. Of course, we engage in ongoing review of what the fund managers do, as well as some modeling to determine what sort of spending can be done on a sustainable basis for the fund. You will have to decide if you wish to grow the fund further, maintain it as is, or even shrink it. We recommend at least maintaining it so as to improve your long-term ability to pay for things.

2) *TAL Institutional Management*

Greg Cayen thanks Peter Hallett, and welcomes Deborah Lewis, Senior Vice-President of TAL Institutional Management. Her report is at tab 10 of the Assembly binder.

Deborah Lewis introduces herself and explains TAL's operations as the investment management arm of CIBC. The value of the portfolio TAL manages for the GTC is shown at p. 3 of her report. As of March 31, 2003 this was \$59,557,296. By the end of June it had increased to \$63,944,572, indicating a dramatic improvement in market conditions. This has become still more pronounced as of the end of July, at which point the portfolio reached \$64.54 million. She reiterates the tradeoff between risk and reward and the need to look at the long-term return, not only annual performance.

TAL's performance benchmarks for the four-year period 1999-2003 appear on p.4 of her report, with the performance of the Gwich'in portfolio measured against them on pages 7-8. The portfolio has exceeded the benchmarks for a four-year period and since its inception. TAL positioned the portfolio to benefit from an economic rebound that we anticipated but the Iraq war and Enron scandals impacted financial markets in the past year. As a result, the rebound did not materialize as expected, and your portfolio underperformed the benchmark in the year up to March 31. If you look at the figures up to June 30, on p. 8, you can see we are now outperforming the benchmarks.

TAL's strategy to benefit from the recovery now under way is set out on pages 10-12. In Canadian equities, we propose an overweighting in financials, materials, and consumer discretionary, since we see resurgent consumer spending and stepped-up business spending reflected in the materials sector. We follow similar logic in the case of U.S. equities, with overweighting in health care given high drug demand. In addition, we will overweight Provincial and corporate over Government of Canada bonds. We favor stocks over Canadian bonds and overweight equities, expecting the central banks to inject money in order to fuel spending, with an uneven recovery led by North America.

Greg Cayen reminds the Assembly that TAL has given the GTC a 7% cumulative return in some difficult times, and is well-positioned for future growth. He hopes the Assembly has the required comfort level. He now invites Kerry Harty of RBC-Dominion Securities to the table.

3) *RBC Dominion Securities*

Kerry Harty thanks the group for the opportunity to manage a portion of the GSC's investment portfolio. He notes his full report appears at tab 9 of the Assembly binder. RBC's assessment of the investment landscape is in its fundamentals similar to that of TAL. The last few years have been exceptionally difficult, especially for stocks. RBC's mandate is to invest its portion of your portfolio in Canadian equities. We do differ from TAL in our view that interest rates are likely to level off or indeed rise. The strong dollar is hampering Canadian exports, and we expect continued earnings growth, with the corner apparently having been turned on the equity market. It is good to have fund managers with different perspectives, who will use varied strategies to balance risks. For both RBC-Dominion Securities and its clients, the last four years have been difficult ones. He congratulates the group on sticking to its investment policy. The chart of portfolio values in his report shows the \$7,044,328 the GTC handed over to RBC earlier in the year is now up to \$7,382,717 in value. The firms in which we have invested your money include: Bank of Nova Scotia; BCE; Cameco; Canadian National Railways; Finning International; Petro-Canada; Telus; Toromont Industries, and Transcanada Corp. These are strong companies, many of them household names. If they do well, you will do well.

Greg Cayen thanks Kerry Harty and invites Ernie Carmichael and Barb Deslauriers of CIBC to come to the table.

4) *Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce*

Ernie Carmichael introduces himself and explains his role at the CIBC regional office in Yellowknife. Barb Deslauriers manages the Inuvik branch. He has been the GTC's account manager for ten years, is proud of CIBC's relationship with the GTC and promises the bank will continue to work hard to serve Beneficiaries. Some years ago the CIBC brought in TAL to help the GTC manage the GSC portfolio. The business you have with TAL allows CIBC to offer a number of benefits to the GTC as an organization as well as to individual Beneficiaries.

Barb Deslauriers has been manager at the Inuvik branch for just over a year now, and has found the experience rewarding.

Grace Blake asks the group if it has questions for any of the presenters who addressed GSC matters.

Bridget Larocque says that NorthWesTel has a monopoly here. She wonders why we would invest in its potential long-term rivals such as BCE and Telus. She also wonders if all these companies are environment-friendly and good corporate citizens.

Kerry Harty replies that RBC-Dominion Securities invests in publicly traded companies; NorthWesTel is not publicly traded, while BCE and Telus are. He recalls that in Alberta, when AGT had a monopoly in telephone service, it was hard to get a 'phone because the communities were often small and uneconomical. As they grew, it became more economical to serve them and the Alberta government pulled out, leaving a competitive market in which a number of companies competed for the business. Economic growth has not yet reached that stage in the North, which is why NorthWesTel is the kind of company it is. That could change with further growth.

There are clients with specific investing guidelines, such as no investments in alcohol or tobacco products. We can follow such guidelines, but the client must establish them. If you want to develop guidelines, you should raise them with the Finance Committee. We do not, for example, invest in companies that use child labor. Our philosophy is reflected in your portfolio, but if you choose to specify additional guidelines, we can incorporate them.

Deborah Lewis adds that most of the companies in which TAL invests are socially responsible, although there is controversy surrounding the practices of some of the mining companies. Ethical investing is becoming more of an issue in the marketplace. When an issue arises in regard to a specific company, TAL meets with its management. For example, Talisman was avoided by some investors and investment managers given its controversial activities in Nigeria.

Wilbert Firth asks if any changes to the overall asset mix are under consideration.

Peter Hallett says Towers Perrin will look at this as part of the Fall review. We are looking mainly at international investments while retaining the present formula of 60% stocks, 40% bonds.

Wilbert Firth says that in the past it has helped to have investments in companies with problematic activities. When we invested in BP, we were able to attend the shareholders' meeting and make representations on what we wanted changed.

Robert Charlie says that each year we ask CIBC about bank services in the GSA, which remain poor despite the fact that we have \$63 million invested with you.

Ernie Carmichael replies that while CIBC is in business to make a profit, we do offer benefits in return for the business we get. The more business you can bring us, the more we can do by way of concessionary offers. We'd be happy to look at anything reasonable, but the cost of doing business in the area is high. That is why other financial institutions have left.

Robert Charlie wonders how many people take advantage of the package currently on offer.

Ernie Carmichael says CIBC tries to let Beneficiaries know what is available in terms of loans. It's not always easy to identify Beneficiaries. We've tried to put the message out through the Band offices and hope Beneficiaries are aware of the package. If you identify yourself as a Beneficiary when you come in, it's available. This does happen at the Yellowknife branch.

Barb Deslauriers adds that she sees it happen in the Inuvik branch too.

Grace Blake asks what the package includes.

Ernie Carmichael says the main features are reduced mortgage and consumer loan rates, a bonus for investment in GICs, and a reduced Aerogold membership fee. There are also benefits for new clients. He believes all the Bands have copies of the package. You can also see Barb at the Inuvik branch.

Elizabeth Hansen says the Assembly raised customer service concerns last year. What has changed?

Barb Deslauriers replies two new banking machines have been brought in. We have also had a full complement of staff for the last nine months, reducing problems. The 'phone-in system remains a problem, and we are seeing what we can do.

Robert Bourque asks if there will be banking service in the smaller communities.

Ernie Carmichael replies that CIBC has looked at this in the past, and is prepared to do so again. Our business depends mainly on loans, mortgages and investment. Installing a branch just to cash cheques has a very low return, especially in communities where the numbers are small. The economic case has to be made.

Robert Bourque asks if banking machines are an option.

Ernie Carmichael replies that five years ago CIBC explored a request for banking machines. But this is not cheap either; the machines must be serviced; 'phone lines must be maintained; and service must be dependable. There are also security concerns. In one case the option of putting a machine in the band office arose, but the band would not accept the required security restrictions. We've experienced challenges keeping the machines in Inuvik running.

5) *First Nations Bank*

Greg Cayen welcomes Keith Martel, Chairman of the Board of the First Nations Bank, and Yovhan Burega, formerly Senior Vice-President of the TD Bank. They made a presentation to the GTC Board some months back and wish to outline for the Assembly the First Nations Bank's potential as an alternative source of banking services.

Keith Martel thanks the Assembly for its invitation and outlines the history and operations of the First Nations Bank. It was created by and for Aboriginal people, and is the only chartered bank in Canada with exclusive Aboriginal common share ownership. 90% of its business is with Aboriginal organizations, communities and individuals.

The Bank has its origins in the Aboriginal Capital Corporation in Saskatchewan and was chartered under the bank Act in 1996, operations commencing in late 1997. It formed an alliance with the TD Bank in order to access the large financial services only available through a large bank. A First Nations Bank bankcard will get you service at any TB branch or ATM.

Yovhan Burega adds that despite this arrangement, the First Nations Bank is not controlled by TD. TD injected capital and purchased preferred shares, but First Nations owns all the common shares and we have an agreement with TD to ensure First Nations majority share ownership. Four of our nine Board members are Aboriginals as are about 75% of our employees. The norm for a new bank is to break even in five years; we were generating a profit in three, without charging usurious rates. Where we came in we also brought competition, bringing rates down generally.

Keith Martel says the Bank has four branches: Saskatoon; Walpole Island First Nation; Chisasibi Cree Nation; Winnipeg. We also have community banking centres in smaller centres.

Yovhan Burega adds that the Bank provides services in communities with 500 or 750 people. Banking services can probably be offered on a profitable basis to communities as small as 250. We are interested in establishing a branch in Inuvik under a three-part strategy.

We want to give you the opportunity to invest in the Bank; we also need to ensure that the required volume of business would be there for the project to be workable and for you to make a good return on your investment. We would establish a branch in Inuvik to make this bear fruit. Banking services in the smaller communities would probably be through agency relationships with other businesses in each community. Most of our current branches and the ones we are actively considering are in remote, mainly Northern, communities. This investment would bring you genuine influence over financial services, as both customers and owners, and the opportunity to form ties with other Aboriginal investors, as well as to leverage relationships with government and industry to obtain further benefits.

Keith Martel adds that the Aboriginal staff we hire provide the best services for their own communities. We've proposed entering into an MOU setting out what we need before we commit to building a branch. We will be reasonable, and would like the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit to work together; both would bring strengths to any partnership.

Elizabeth Hansen asks how the process of exploring this opportunity would proceed from here.

Keith Martel replies that the Bank has given the GTC Board the information it has, and would like to explore with it the size of investment that would be required and the volume of business that could be secured.

M. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

Greg Cayen informs the group that John Stelter has audited GTC statements for a number of years, and he recommends reappointment.

Be it Resolved That

the firm KPMG be appointed the Gwich'in Tribal Council's auditor for the year ending March 31, 2004.

Moved by: Robert Bourque (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Melba Mitchell (Inuvik)

Carried. (Resolution #06/2003)

N. PORCUPINE CARIBOU MANAGEMENT BOARD

PCMB Chairman Joe Tetlichy introduces himself and explains the workings of the PCMB, which was established under the Porcupine Caribou Agreement among the communities connected with the Porcupine Caribou. The organization's primary mandate is to attend to the habitat and the continuance of the herd. The herd's numbers have been in decline for the past five years.

This Spring we tried to do a census of the caribou right after calving season. Alaska Fish and Game normally do a count in the first week of July, provided that the caribou congregate in one location. This year the herd left earlier than usual, making it impossible to do a July count. This was a concern since we receive many warnings from the communities that the numbers are falling. Three years ago there were 129,000 caribou, and last Spring we estimated there were 123,000.

The Dempster Highway Regulations remain a source of contention. In a process initiated in 1995, we have tried to reach an agreed stand among the user communities, using both traditional knowledge and modern science to combat unhealthy hunting practices on the highway. In June we gathered all parties together at a summit to reach consensus, but each group seemed to have its own agenda. The groups decided to seek further input from their respective communities. The PCMB needs the cooperation of the user communities in harvest mapping; one obstacle is that since the herd is an international one, the cooperation of the Alaskan communities is necessary. Given their distrust, this has not been easy to obtain.

The Porcupine Caribou Agreement was signed in 1987, and since then the signatory First Nations have signed their respective land claims. We wish to bring them back to the table in order to amend the Agreement. So far, all the groups have been agreeable to doing so. The most recent group to sign on was the Council of Yukon First Nations.

One administrative concern was that our Secretary-Treasurer was based in Northern B.C. We now have one who is in Whitehorse. Some Board members thought we spent too much time lobbying for the protection of ANWR rather than managing the herd. The Board recommended we get out of the lobbying business and the Vuntut Gwich'in of Old Crow have taken that responsibility over. This Fall we will meet in Ft. McPherson around harvest time.

Robert Bourque asks when the herd will be open to commercial harvesting.

Joe Tetlichy replies the Agreement prohibits commercial harvesting of the Porcupine Caribou. If you want to change that, convey the suggestion through your Board rep.

Robert Bourque asks why it is, then, that big game hunters are making money from the herd.

Joe Tetlichy answers that when the Agreement was settled in 1987, there were a number of concessionary hunters in the Yukon. It is unclear if the animals are from the Porcupine herd or other herds. The Hart River herd, which is open to commercial hunting, migrates into the Dempster area. We have our technical people looking into the matter.

Elizabeth Hansen asks if contaminants in lichens are a major factor in the declining numbers of the herd. Given the falling numbers, she thinks commercial hunting should be ruled out.

Joe Tetlichy replies sampling of caribou for contaminants has found very little there.

Abe Wilson asks when the meeting in Ft. McPherson will take place.

Joe Tetlich says it will be in the third week of October.

Abe Wilson assumes the hunting regulations will be on the table, “starting from square one.”

Joe Tetlich replies the regulations were passed by the Yukon Legislature, and have stayed the same for three years, but are now under review. Since the June summit reached no agreement on changes, the regulations are still in effect as they stand.

James Andre wonders if the actions of predators along with cows not reaching the calving grounds are factors in the falling numbers.

Joe Tetlich says two years ago migration was slow, with calves being dropped around the Porcupine River. This was unusual, but when Alaska Fish and Game did a count they found a healthy population. 85% of the females had young ones.

James Andre says that Ft. McPherson, as the largest user community, wonders why the Dempster Regulations are so named when a community not on the Dempster seems to have so much power.

Joe Tetlich replies that all affected communities have input into the PCMB. No one community is in charge, and the PCMB’s members collectively have the final say.

Ian McLeod says some time back the PCMB had funding available from the Gordon Foundation for outdoor camps and activities. Is it still available?

Joe Tetlich explains that the funding from the Gordon Foundation was originally for lobbying, and when the PCMB got out of that business, it made the money available to First Nations for outdoor activities on a proposal basis. This required amending the agreement with the Foundation, and will not happen again.

Johnny Charlie says he sees wildlife monitors in the Yukon. When will we have one in place on the NWT side?

Joe Tetlich says the position Johnny Charlie describes is funded by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Board. The PCMB doesn’t supply any of the money. The Vuntut Gwich’in pay for their own worker up there.

Robert Charlie says the GRRB worked with RWED to hire someone to man a check station on the highway.

Fred Carmichael adds that if Johnny Charlie wants a full-time monitor, he might want to go to the GNWT. If he wants the GTC to fund the position, he will have to make a formal request, which will receive all appropriate consideration.

O. GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY

1) *The Hon. Roger Allen; The Hon. Jim Antoine; The Hon. Joe Handley; The Hon. Vince Steen*

Grace Blake invites the Hon. Roger Allen, the Hon. Joe Handley, the Hon. Jim Antoine, and the Hon. Vince Steen to the table. She also notes the presence here of David Krutko, MLA, Mackenzie-Delta.

The Hon. Roger Allen thanks the group for its invitation, saying “it is always good to come home.” He outlines his own Cabinet responsibilities and those of his colleagues, and invites the Hon. Jim Antoine to give an overview of the GNWT’s current activities and future plans.

The Hon. Jim Antoine says that for him, after eight years in the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio, the signing of the AIP on self-government was a major step forward and a long time coming, bringing us measurably closer to a Final Agreement. We now have a two-year business plan to fund the self-government process.

Since the late 1960s, when the Federal Government ran virtually everything up here, many responsibilities have been devolved to the GNWT. The last remaining major area of Federal Control is land and resources. For a number of years, the GNWT has taken the position that it needs control of the resources that are “naturally ours.” We are trying to gain greater control, in part through the Inter-Governmental Forum, and working with the Aboriginal Summit. Development must benefit Northerners, and this will have to be established in the next few years. There are difficult issues to address and Ottawa will not give us everything we want, but we will press hard for more of a say and more money.

With the ten years of the first Gwich’in Implementation agreement expiring last December, all parties have now agreed to recommend an increased funding plan with increased powers. The recently concluded Gwich’in Land Use Plan will be a useful tool for setting ground rules governing development. The GNWT supports the Plan and will employ tools like the Protected Areas Strategy to make it work.

The recent MOU with the GNWT breaks new ground. This is the first year of implementation, and we are learning how to make the agreement work. The current government is drawing to a close, with the election on November 24, but he is optimistic the next government will continue supporting successful initiatives in self-government, economic development and other areas.

The Hon. Joe Handley notes his principal responsibilities are Finance and Transport. His principal challenge is keeping GNWT finances in shape, which includes attracting revenues into the GNWT account. We have record rates of development now, and they will only increase. We have resources here that the rest of the world wants, and are determined to secure resource revenue sharing so that people here benefit as much as possible. The last thing we want is a lot of money being made here and going out.

We are in the last year of the current financing formula, a formula developed under very different circumstances. We are focused on the negotiation of a new arrangement that provides maximum benefit to residents of the NWT. With development gathering momentum, our physical infrastructure becomes even more important. We need to spend effectively in this area, and he is working with the Federal Finance Minister, John Manley, Industry Minister Allan Rock, and Ethel Blondin-Andrew to attract infrastructure dollars. He is committed to spending at least \$4 million a year to upgrade the Dempster to withstand the pressures of development. We are funding the Deh Cho bridge, should be looking at the Peel River bridge, and may want to look at a Mackenzie River bridge too.

The Hon. Vince Steen says he believes the activities of his departments are visible in most communities. MACA and the DPW are working on the Safe Water Initiative in the communities; we intend to finish the water treatment plant in Tsiigehtchic this Spring, and are making improvements to Ft. McPherson’s water system. Other major projects include the new Aurora College facility in Inuvik, and the Aklavik curling rink.

He is pleased that the communities are taking advantage of the Community Initiatives Program, including \$200,000 for the Aklavik curling rink, \$50,000 for the Aklavik ball diamond, and \$50,000 for the new youth centre in Ft. McPherson. He hopes to continue the current level of funding, and encourages communities to continue going down this road.

James Andre says that program devolution often means programs come down to the community level but without enough funding. One example is the income support program in Ft. McPherson. The community could not afford the required audit without taking it from its own funding.

Jim Antoine replies that income support now falls under the ECE portfolio. As a government, we have tried to devolve programs to the communities where people wanted them, along with the decisionmaking. When the decisions were taken in Yellowknife, people complained. That was the rationale for devolution. Income support may have been a poor example, but we are trying to learn as we go along.

James Andre says he would also like an update on GNWT action relating to the Federal firearms legislation. The Fall hunting season is coming soon, and people will be hunting and transporting their guns. Many Elders have not registered their guns, and Aboriginals have treaty rights to hunt and trap.

Roger Allen replies that the RCMP has agreed not to prosecute those who use firearms for hunting. We have raised our concerns with the Federal Government, working closely with the Saskatchewan Government. We await the verdicts in some of the relevant court cases.

Jim Antoine adds that the legislation is a “poor fit” with the North. The legislation does not directly address the question of treaty rights. We are waiting to see what happens with the Nunavut challenge, which is based on Aboriginal rights. Bill Erasmus is working on the issue, and we will see if the legislation trumps our treaty rights.

James Andre says rising power bills are a concern; he gathers there will soon be a 45% increase in the rates.

Joe Handley replies there will be an increase, but not one of 45%. The Public Utilities Board, not the GNWT, will set the new rates. In the long run, the only way to address rising energy costs is by relying on a power source like hydro, where we control the costs ourselves. We now have two hydro pilot projects under way. Tapping “under the river” hydro power from the Peel is at the discussion stage. If there is enough interest, we will pursue it.

Elizabeth Hansen says the construction of teacher housing units should be a priority, but is not GNWT policy. We need educated people to take advantage of the opportunities economic development brings, but we need teachers to provide that education.

Roger Allen replies that over the last three years he has been involved in reforming the NWT’s housing strategy so as to better address community needs. We have dramatically increased the loan guarantee level. The key issue in developing affordable housing is making income support more adaptable.

Florence Vaneltsi (Inuvik) says she does not understand the Housing Corporation’s responsibilities.

Roger Allen explains the plan is to move from social housing to broader housing programs, and a general expansion of the housing market. We are promoting rental housing and housing for professionals. Given the decline in social housing dollars, we need to work NGOs to deal with the issue.

Florence Vaneltsi says there are more than twenty families in Inuvik that have been evicted. She knows one person who found it took Housing six months to get the papers together for her to get a unit. She was charged economic rent for those six months. Can this be forgiven?

Roger Allen explains that policy is set at the Ministerial level. Individual cases are dealt with at the local housing organization. Eviction is normally done under the Landlord and Tenant Act, and there is a framework in place by which we must abide. Once matters reach the court system, there is little we can do.

Lawrence Norbert suggests a publication or a video to commemorate the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the Dempster Highway would be a worthwhile initiative.

Joe Handley replies he would be willing to discuss any proposal in his capacity as Minister of Transport or refer it to RWED.

Ian McLeod notes RWED has programs that help people get out on the land to trap, but the money made is deducted from income support.

Gabe Andre adds that this holds true for pensions as well.

Jim Antoine says this is one of the big problems in the income support program. The effect of various “claw-back” provisions on part-time income is something we all contend with. He will relay the concern to Minister Ootes.

Gabe Andre says he has also been invoiced for badly needed home repairs.

Roger Allen responds that there are a number of housing programs for seniors. The problem is that in many cases individuals are not aware of programs for which they are eligible. All programs are application-based. We now have fuel support for seniors under income support, and a generous subsidy program that includes the construction of small houses for those moving back on the land.

Peter Ross asks if pipeline development might entail a new ferry system. The current ferry motors are World War two vintage, and both expensive and difficult to service. He adds that ferry staff are concerned that their hours are being cut back to avoid overtime.

Joe Handley replies that if a pipeline goes through we will need better ferry service. He would like to build the Deh Cho bridge over the next few years, and shift the ferry there, which is newer, to this location. Transport concluded that with the traffic loads at the beginning and end of the day it made sense to remove a half-hour at each end to save overtime costs. Traffic is the key factor.

James Firth says we need to get a petty trespass act through the legislature in order to control access to Gwich'in lands. This issue has been around for some time.

Roger Allen replies that, as Minister of Justice, he is aware of the problem. He is working to find a mechanism that is applicable to specific groups, and will be happy to explore various options.

Nap Norbert (Tsiigehtchic) asks what funding is available for construction of the Tsiigehtchic outdoor skating rink.

Vince Steen says there will be \$50,000 for the project through the Community Initiatives Program. It is the community's responsibility to take the program from there. The GNWT will supply the funds and expertise; construction is up to the community. If \$50,000 proves insufficient, you have the option of applying for additional funds. He does not know why the rink was removed from MACA's capital plan in the first place, but it has been restored.

Peter Ross says the funding is actually \$45,000. The community may tap other funding sources.

Grace Blake leads the group in a moment of silence for the two Ft. McPherson residents who recently died.

Fred Carmichael extends his condolences to the Ross and Bonnetplume families. He reminds the group that in February we signed an MOU on GNWT contracting within the GSA, negotiated by Charlie Furlong for the GTC and Bob McLeod for the GNWT. This sets a target of 50% of the work available. The MOU was a landmark. He knows there has been talk of a 60-40 split, but no such arrangement was ever set down on paper. He believes this was an off-the-cuff promise by a Minister, which never went to Cabinet for its approval.

Jim Antoine introduces RWED Deputy Minister Bob McLeod, who will provide an update on the MOU between the GTC and the GNWT. Tom Williams is circulating copies of a status report on MOU implementation to date.

Bob McLeod reiterates that the MOU covers a five-year period, and sets a target of 50% of contracts, by value, to go to Gwich'in business. The GNWT will provide the GTC with a list of upcoming contracts, and will receive in return a list of Gwich'in businesses. You tell us what contracts are of interest and we will notify the appropriate government departments. If you look at the status report, you will see that of \$12.07 million in contracts, \$4.2 million ultimately went to Gwich'in. Seven contracts were negotiated, seven were sole-sourced, and seventeen were won in open competition, indicating that the competitive market and level playing field do work. Fourteen contracts are currently under consideration, so we are on schedule and close to meeting the overall target. The MOU deals with two very different kinds of communities. There are the Gwich'in communities where the 50% target applies; in fact, 54% went to Gwich'in. There are also the "overlap communities" of Inuvik and Aklavik, which contain substantial numbers of both Gwich'in and Inuvialuit. There we seek guidelines based on population, and 35% of contracts, by value, have gone to Gwich'in. We have received a second edition of the Gwich'in business list, and are now planning for the second year under the MOU.

Elizabeth Hansen notes that the Bonnetplume and Ross families have suffered deaths, and she thinks that out of respect the Assembly should continue tomorrow rather than continuing into the evening. Moreover, she thinks people here are thinking of the departed and their families; they are not interested in continuing these discussions right now.

Barry Greenland notes that people now have the status report on the MOU in front of them, and can read it at their leisure, raising any concerns later.

Hazel Nerysoo says she wishes Health Minister Miltenberger had been here. She would like to see some of the energy we put into economic development and a possible pipeline go into issues like palliative care and child apprehension. Some families have little by way of support services, and they are the ones who have the greatest difficulty when a family member becomes ill or dies. Where these are government responsibilities, we should "make noise" and press government to meet its obligations.

Charlie Snowshoe suggests postponing the scheduled celebration of the signing of the Land Use Plan, given the recent deaths of two Beneficiaries. We can reschedule it later, perhaps near Christmas.

Bertha Francis leads the group in a closing prayer, after which the Assembly adjourns until 9 a.m. Wednesday.

Wednesday, August 13

Barry Greenland calls the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He informs those present that Jack Williams will attend a meeting at the Band Office, at 7:30 tonight, to go over the Bylaw revisions and answer any questions. Those who still have concerns are advised to attend.

Lillian Wright leads the group in an opening prayer.

2) *The Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew*

The Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew thanks the Assembly for its invitation. She has traveled a great deal since the 2000 election, and tries to visit as many community events as she can. Given the unusual extent of the riding, this is difficult, and when she is absent it should not be construed as indicating any lack of interest.

Yesterday morning she was in Calgary, meeting with Conoco-Phillips and other companies interested in a pipeline. On her flight, she talked with David Peterson, the Federal negotiator on devolution. The issue of “net fiscal benefit” from devolution is a big one, and she encourages people to speak up to ensure they get adequate revenues. Later, she was present at part of yesterday’s Assembly discussions, and took in the reminders that while economic development is vital, human needs must not be neglected. She will forward a package on Federal palliative care programs to Hazel Nerysoo. Senator Sharon Carstairs is very knowledgeable about palliative care, and is happy to respond to inquiries.

She reminds the Assembly that she has Ministerial responsibilities under Health Canada and HRDC. HRDC’s five-year AHRDA program is now under review, and Aboriginal groups have worked hard to include friendship centres through service contracts. She knows that on the Health side, there are concerns about non-insured benefits. The consent form is another problem, and she is trying to come up with a solution that is acceptable to First Nations.

As far as training goes, she expects a great deal to happen in the near future. The Federal Government has established the Resource Development Training Program, and will have some announcements to make soon. Education and training must be a priority now even for development six or nine years down the road. The submission of the Preliminary Information Package for a proposed pipeline will initiate the regulatory process under the National Energy Board Act and other legislation. When a project description is put forward, you don’t get a simple yes or no. There will be a great deal of work, involving a number of regulatory bodies, in preparation for an eventual application.

Whenever political leaders meet with the oil companies, they tell us how cumbersome the process is; that no other country has the constitutionalized land claims process that Canada has. She notes the progress in self-government, including the AIP signing. During the ten years she’s been in Cabinet, a lot has been accomplished, but there’s a lot more to do. On September 25 the Prime Minister is coming North for the signing of the Dogrib claim, along with Ministers Nault, Stewart and herself.

The NWT now has the highest overall rates of employment, GDP growth and GDP per capita. Yet 60% of the money from diamond mining goes South. The Territory is still too thinly populated, with too few trained people. She recalls that in the past development brought a great deal of money and energy with it, but when the boom ended everything was dead. She cautions against a repetition of that sequence, and notes that Canada now has the leadership required to ensure it doesn’t happen again.

Peter Ross says Tsiigehtchic has had palliative care problems similar to those Ft. McPherson has experienced, and would also like to receive information on Federal programs.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew says she will forward the same package. She reiterates that Sharon Carstairs would be happy to talk with people from the community or meet with a group in Ottawa.

Elizabeth Hansen says there will be a need for programs for families when the next boom hits, to address social impacts like alcohol and drugs. We need more social workers and training opportunities for those who would like to do social work.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew replies that when she talks about social and human development, this is a big part of what she means. The Federal Government has a tremendous range of programs including prenatal nutrition and child care programs. The National Inuit and First Nations Child Care Agreements accomplished a lot, without Provincial consent, because Treaty groups can enter into agreements directly with the Federal Government. Under this umbrella we have managed to promote a number of programs, such as Aboriginal Head Start, and other programs for children up to age six. The obstacles come when you try to deliver programs for school-age children, where the Provinces jealously guard their authority in education and social development, and insist that Ottawa keep out. A lot can be done through impact and benefits agreements. At first a lot of the diamond companies refused to negotiate these, but now are doing so. When the companies said they wouldn't negotiate with Aboriginal groups, Robert Nault refused to sign their licenses until they did. There was tension, but in the end deals were done. There is also language funding under Heritage Canada, which has a \$250 million program. A lot of the other programs relating to residential schools involve compensation for people who were abused, but don't do anything for those who lost their language and culture.

Elizabeth Hansen notes people are still sent South for drug treatment. Treatment is more effective closer to home and on the land. She finds it sad that a facility like TI'oondih stands empty because the dollars are not accessible for treatment programs here.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew recalls that when the new marijuana legislation was brought forward, many M.P.s said it would not work without a reinforcement of drug treatment programs. She was one of them. She is convinced TI'oondih is a good idea, having seen families who have a chance of surviving as a result. She doesn't think you can "fix" one person in a family. She supports "whole family" facilities, especially when they are on the land. Programs are less successful when facilities won't take children, and the patients want to take their children with them. The Federal Government needs to hear from people what they think works and what they think doesn't. She recalls the young people from Davis Inlet who were taken out to Edmonton for treatment and returned home to find their parents still drinking and no facilities for follow-up.

Tom Wright wonders why the Federal Government does not do more to develop the infrastructure.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew points out that many programs allocate funding on a per capita basis. Yet Industry Minister Allan Rock now has some needs-based programs, which may help. Premier Kakfwi, the NWT Chamber of Commerce, and other business groups have lobbied for greater infrastructure spending. Minister Rock considers the "corridors for development" proposal one of the best he has ever seen. The Federal Government has sought help from industry in extending the Mackenzie Highway. Some companies say they are not in the business of infrastructure, others say they will think about it, and still others, generally those with the smallest chances of being major players, are willing to make commitments. Of course, not all groups agree on the desirability of this project; the Sahtu are happy with a Winter road.

Robert Bourque says he has concerns about Inuvialuit land acquisitions near the airport in Inuvik.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew says she is not aware of the details surrounding this matter, but would be happy to forward any inquiries to Minister Nault.

Fred Carmichael explains that in exchange, which the GNWT required for airports on Inuvialuit land in Paulatuk, Holman, and Sachs Harbour, the Inuvialuit were given a choice of Crown lands and chose some around the Inuvik airport. The GTC contacted the Ministry of Transport asking if other land could be exchanged instead. We had hoped to meet with Transport officials at our last Board meeting, but it could not be arranged. They will attend our next meeting, and if we cannot get a satisfactory solution we will move on to other actions, including contacting Ethel.

Larry Firth recalls that on April 16th, Ethel and Minister Nault met with the Gwich'in Chiefs. Abe Wilson spoke of Ft. McPherson's need for a new youth centre and Minister Nault suggested we forward a proposal. We put a proposal together, got a Housing Corp. commitment to design a building, and received some MACA funding as well. Can you reiterate that the proposal is going through the system?

Ethel Blondin-Andrew says she will commit herself to Minister Nault's undertaking. She was under the impression what he said was that he'd look at materials costs. She recalls Peter Ross asked about another project at the same meeting, to which he was also amenable. She will contact her colleague's office and see where things stand.

Peter Ross says the money he sought was for the outdoor skating rink. He has received assurances of funding from Bob Overvold of INAC, who was here earlier, and assumes Ft. McPherson will get similar assurances.

Larry Firth says that despite the high employment rate, 60% of the workforce in the diamond mines is from the South. Another mine is likely to come on stream at the same time as the pipeline, and the percentage will be about 90% in that case.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew replies that this is why education and training are so important, and why she backs programs like the Aboriginal Employment Skills Program (ASEP) and AHRDA agreements with different Aboriginal groups. Many Aboriginals are competing for work as unskilled labour, which accounts for only a small portion of the jobs development brings. Appropriate training will help people to pursue the skilled jobs, which are more plentiful and better-paying.

Bertha Francis wonders if it is possible to have more training done locally. It is hard for young people to leave their homes for training, and they often get lonely and turn to alcohol.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew says that when she spoke yesterday in Calgary with Rob Hunt, Chairman of the NWT Training Group, he was interested in doing training "on the ground" where possible. Industry understands it is not practical to send everyone down South for training.

Sigmore Furlong wonders if Ethel Blondin-Andrew's department provides funding for youth sports program and equipment. Many young people would derive pleasure and self-esteem from participation in sports, but their parents can't afford the equipment.

Gabe Andrew suggests that when development is being planned traditional knowledge should be taken into account, with ample use made of Elders.

Johnny Kay asks Ethel Blondin-Andrew what she thinks of the proposed First Nations Governance Act.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew explains that she has no responsibility for the FNGA. The legislation is prepared but has not yet gone through the House. When Robert Nault is in the NWT later this month she will ask him about his intentions. She knows there is opposition to the legislation, and Robert Nault is aware of the challenges. As a member of the Cabinet she is not entitled to a "personal opinion" on government measures.

It would be up to Robert Nault to answer any questions, and she cannot speak to another Minister's legislation. Almost every group with which she meets raises the FNGA. The legislation will have less impact here, given the land claims and the coming of self-government, but people take an approach based on principle.

Bridget Larocque asks if Ethel Blondin-Andrew will vote against the wishes of the people here on legislation. People are still confused about the firearms legislation. It is important that our representatives respect our rights both by Treaty and under the Claim.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew replies that if there is a vote on the FNGA, then she will vote on it. She would not decline to vote because she does not believe in hiding. As a Cabinet member, she does not have the privileges of a backbench member. She is bound by both Cabinet solidarity and Cabinet confidentiality. There are compensating gains in access to other Ministers. She can "fight a closer battle in Cabinet" but there is a price to pay. If there is a vote she will have to consider it carefully since it could be a career-altering vote for her. If she voted against the FNGA she would no longer be a Minister.

As for the firearms legislation, she listened to the discussion yesterday. She has brought information for subsistence hunters, and is making plans to bring the official in charge of gun control up here to meet the GTC. Responsibility for the legislation rests with the Solicitor General, who is her seatmate. She talks to him often, and many of the seventeen amendments to the legislation, which have changed it considerably, have reflected in part her involvement. More than 90% of firearms owners have complied, and 80% of licensed owners have received registration certificates. People are complying not because they love the measure but because it is the law and they are law-abiding citizens. She will not encourage people to defy it. She understands the difficulties, as a subsistence hunter herself.

As for Gabe Andre's observations about the importance of traditional knowledge, she agrees. There are various programs to use Elders and their knowledge. One of the most promising is used by Colt in the Mackenzie Valley, where Elders view a video of a route where activity is planned and identify historic or other sites deserving special protection.

She used to be able to spend money on sporting equipment, and indeed managed to retrofit the NWT ski team. The Treasury Board raised concerns and this funding is no longer available. Her department does have agreements with the Minister of Sports, who works with SportsNorth and other organizations. A great deal of money is raised for sporting activities through sponsorships, which requires efforts by the wider community but is not impossible.

Mary Ann Ross thanks Ethel Blondin-Andrew and makes a presentation to her on behalf of the GTC and the Tsiighehtchic Charter Community.

3) *Noeline Villebrun*

Barry Greenland informs the group that the funeral for Sarah Bonnetplume will be held tomorrow in Ft. McPherson at 5:00 p.m. He is pleased to welcome the National Chief of the Dene Nation, Noeline Villebrun.

Noeline Villebrun thanks the community for its hospitality and the Assembly for its invitation. She is pleased to see the way the Gwich'in have both the Elders and the youth sitting around the table with everyone else.

Since her election on July 4, she has been busy, including attendance at the Assembly of First Nations national meeting, at which Phil Fontaine was elected as National Chief. Many people at that meeting expressed their concerns about the health consent form and the firearms legislation. We will address both of these issues at a Special Assembly in November.

The Dene Nation is also taking steps to enhance the parental role in the education system, including curriculum development. A community's language and culture should pervade its schools, and culture-based schools need people from the community as teachers.

The Gwich'in MOU is significant, and different regions will look to it as an example. We have similar concerns in all regions, many of them relating to social services and health. But to be heard we must be unified, and support one another's initiatives. Last week she and Dene Nation staff took part in a three-day workshop at Ft. Rae to look at the organization's Assembly mandate. The issues raised included an alternative dispute resolution committee to help the regions deal with their differences. We are now forming a committee which will include members from every region, and hope to submit a report on it to the upcoming Dene Nation Special Assembly. Another issue of concern is the use of the Child Welfare Act and the ways children are apprehended. We hope that formation of community committees can help families address this problem. The organization looked at four different options for filling the AFN Vice-Chief position, decided to have the Executive make the appointment, and will report on this to the upcoming Assembly as well. The Assembly will coincide with the Denedeh Development Corporation's AGM, which will help offset costs. Health Canada is willing to help fund some of our health initiatives, and she will soon meet directly with the Deputy Minister of Health to discuss funding issues and mechanisms for transferring funds directly from Health Canada to the Dene Nation and other organizations.

One of the messages she hears at every meeting is the importance of unity. Elders, youth and others all have roles to play. If we can stick together, we can act as a unified nation once again.

Barry Greenland thanks Noeline Villebrun for being here all week.

Noeline Villebrun makes presentations on behalf of the Dene Nation to the host Chief, Peter Ross, and Fred Carmichael.

James Cardinal (Tsiigehtchic) says that in his community fifteen people registered for the Firearms Certificate Acquisition course. He couldn't find one person to put on the course, and had to refund all the money. The registration part of the process is easy enough; it's the acquisition part that's very difficult; you spend hours on the 'phone waiting to talk with someone. Each community should have someone able to train others.

Noeline Villebrun replies that as Dene Chief she has inherited the AFN Vice-Chief position. She has copies of the AFN firearms briefing with her, and understands how important the issue is. The AFN should lobby the Canadian Firearms Centre, and continue to hold meetings on implementation of the policy and interpretation of the regulations. First Nations people want safety, but also want an approach that respects their Aboriginal and Treaty rights to hunt. Her husband took a course, but had to wait six months because there was nobody available to give it.

Mary Ann Ross makes a presentation to Noeline Villebrun and thanks her for her attendance at the Assembly.

4) *First Air*

Barry Greenland welcomes Julia Mott of First Air to the Assembly.

Julia Mott introduces herself and thanks Tsiigehtchic for its hospitality. She reminds the group that the GTC has a contract with First Air and is concluding a new one. While airlines globally are reducing service, First Air is not doing so. It has increased flights into Inuvik and will not charge for meals, while standards of service will remain high. As a pipeline moves closer, service may even go up. The airline provides a variety of scheduled and charter services, with cargo service and charter flights worldwide. It has been in operation since 1946, and has more than 1,000 employees, of whom 450 live in the North.

First Air is the second largest private employer in the North, and serves 28 Northern destinations with more than 250 flights a week. Each year it flies 270,000 passengers and more than 22 million kilos of cargo. First Air services three territories and four Provinces. It is the third largest airline in Canada, servicing 77% of the North, and in both 2001 and 2002 was honoured by CIBC as one of Canada's best managed companies.

Recently, First Air has been upgrading its fleet of aircraft, acquiring the ATLR 42, and reconfiguring it to carry cargo, a \$26 million investment. Unusually for an airline, it has no debts and owns everything it operates, save its Super Hercules aircraft. It would purchase these too if the current owner were willing to sell.

We spend more than \$40 million within the Northern economy, with more than \$14 million in locally procured goods and services. First Air also provides more than \$3 million in cash and in-kind donations to Northern communities each year.

We offer a wide range of fares, augmented by our deal with the GTC and individual Beneficiaries. This includes 75% off compassionate travel, and an additional 10% discount for Elders and youth. We also have regular seat sales, youth standby fares, meeting and conference rates, tourism and group rates, and Aeroplan miles on all flights. Your negotiators have indicated that compassionate fare is important to you, as are reduced cargo fares to send traditional foods to students down South, or for them to send their books when they are coming home in the Summer. We subscribe to the Aeroplan program, but do not operate it, so we don't govern the way it works, and we know that seat allocation has been an issue. Our Community Development Program allows residents to apply for assistance for community initiatives in: wellness; youth development; cultural and community events; literacy and education; economic development; sporting events. We can't support every event but do what we can. We are also dispensing a number of tickets to the GTC for it to allocate as it chooses. Our arrangement with the Gwich'in has been in place since January 2002, and Gwich'in can also access the Dene Nation Contract. Our Community Development Program has recently assisted the Midway Lake Festival, the Great Northern Arts Festival, and Moose Kerr School's "stay in school" program. We also contributed \$45,000 to Inuvik's family centre.

Mary Ann Ross thanks Julia Mott for coming, and makes a presentation to her on behalf of the GTC. Barry Greenland adds that Julia has also provided a gift certificate for a trip for two to Yellowknife. We will do a draw for this prize, and all Beneficiaries and Delegates may enter.

P. GWICH'IN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Ernest Firth, Chairman of the GDC, offers condolences to the families who have recently lost loved ones. He notes that among the changes to the GDC's corporate structure is the appointment of a Vice-Chair, Mavis Clark, who is here with him today. Greg Cayen, who discussed the GTC's financial position yesterday, will now explain where the GDC stands, in his capacity as its CFO.

Greg Cayen reminds the group that the complete GDC report for the year is on pages 48-50 of the GTC Annual Report. He also went through these figures in detail during his pre-Assembly community visits. For the year, the GDC had an operating income of \$106,000. This was the second year it had an operating income, and that for 2001 was between \$35 and \$40,000. Ongoing issues include Klondike River Lodge, where we had a further writedown of approximately \$200,000. Yet this is not an operating loss or a reflection upon the Corporation's performance. The GDC's various investments are doing well. Our new trucking partnership, Mackenzie Valley Construction, generated a substantial profit in its first six months of operations. Gwich'in Properties Ltd., our real estate arm, has \$15 million in assets and is a large and successful firm. It used to incur significant losses, but is now doing well, with net income for 2002 of \$70,000 before income taxes. Camp MGK, in which the GDC has a 25% share, is doing well, with total earnings of more than \$200,000. Larga Ltd., in which we have a 37.5% share, consistently generates about \$200,000 a year. We purchased our stake for \$266,000, and it is now valued at about \$725,000. Our other holdings, GEOS, Trans North Arctic Helicopters, and Aadrii, generate a small profit each year.

The GDC has come a long way over the last two-and-a-half years, in large part by undertaking these acquisitions, which will pay cash dividends. In the near future, the next 2-3 years, the money will stay in these companies as we continue to build them up. At the moment, we have no additional funds to invest. This does not preclude government funding for investments. Right now, we do not have cash revenues sufficient to cover our overhead, and are working hard to contain and reduce costs. He recommends taking the time to plan for the future, and think about our investments and different sources of capital. Total GDC revenues for the last year were just over \$12 million, an increase of 244% from 2000. Assets are up to \$23 million, from \$5 million in 2000. These changes are among the reasons people are now talking about the GDC. Everyone, including the GDC, expected an immediate boom in oil and gas activity; it has not yet materialized.

Ernest Firth thanks Greg Cayen for his remarks and reiterates that the GDC has made a great deal of progress. It is now in a different corporate world. We have managed to cut operating costs. Overhead is now tight and we are reducing spending on Board meetings, travel, indeed everything but the core operating costs of doing our business.

Last October the GDC Board developed a strategic plan for the next five years, until the capital transfer payments end in 2007. Implementation of the plan depends in part upon our following the Gwich'in Business Policy, which is still being fine-tuned. We will follow the Policy once the Assembly endorses it. The GDC is looking at becoming more of an investment, as opposed to an operating, company. We have taken over real estate assets including the RWED, Mack and Semmler buildings, and are now a major corporate shareholder in Inuvik. We also have sizable holdings in Yellowknife and, through Larga, in Edmonton. Our plan is to continue making investments that will, over the long term, provide the required ROI under our investment guidelines. The financial data show how successful we have been over the last two years. Our "bottom line" is profit. When our investments pay off, we will pay dividends to the shareholder, the GTC, which can then do with the money what it wishes. We have already made many large investments, and have nothing left to invest. We present you with this picture of our operations so that you can make an informed decision. With no money coming in and no tools with which to work, our CEO, Tom Connors, resigned. We should acknowledge his work for the GDC, which largely made it what it is today. There is talk of doing a review of the GDC, to determine where we should go; he would emphasize that we can't work without the needed tools. We propose to continue operating on the present basis until the GTC or the Assembly reaches a decision.

Robert Bourque says the GDC's profit strikes him as very modest given its total revenues. In addition, he sees "the idea of profit overriding jobs for our people." The Gwich'in Business Policy is not working for us. He sees the schedule with the "A" and "B" lists. First come the GDC companies, followed by community corporations, joint ventures, and only then our own people. This is supposed to be a working document, and he would like to see it reviewed. The GDC would like more money, but the only place we can find that money would be from the Settlement Fund. That money is for future generations and he doesn't want to touch it. The GDC does need a review, including community feedback. In the last few years we've talked about separating business and politics. The GDC should be owned by the people, not the GTC. Perhaps we should split up the GDC among the community corporations, perhaps we shouldn't, but it does need a review.

Ernest Firth replies that the Gwich'in Business Policy was developed through Neht'uh Development Group. When approved, it will come to the GDC. He has not, as GDC Chairman, received anything yet, so we have nothing to follow. The GDC was not involved in developing the Policy; give us an approved Business Policy, and we'll follow it.

Robert Bourque says he gathers that the Policy in draft form was a working document, and is the one followed today.

Fred Carmichael explains that the GTC put out a contract for development of the Business Policy, with community consultation. Nehtr'uh's bid was successful, and \$47,000 was spent on the work. Nehtr'uh came back with the draft policy and informed the GTC it represented what people wanted. The GTC Board accepted it. When GTC staff went into the communities, they found there was dissatisfaction with the Policy, and people claimed there had not been proper consultation. Now we will withdraw the Policy and develop a fresh document. To ensure it is "done right" it will be done in-house, with sufficient community input.

Robert Bourque thanks Fred Carmichael for his reassurances.

Charles Furlong says it is important to reach a consensus on how to do business in the GSA and put our differences aside. We have no room for "opposition parties" in our nation. Business will be "the song of the day", and the Gwich'in do not take advantage of the coming opportunities we will be held responsible by future generations for missing them. It's important to have faith in the regional structures we've created. He has looked at the GDC structure, and it has potential. We've given the GDC a mandate and it has developed a strategic plan as well as making sound investments. To remain successful, it requires the flexibility to choose further profitable investments. The GDC is not perfect, but it used to be in far worse condition. He would remind people of the Inuvialuit example. They supported their Development Corporation, with good results. After the recent progress the GDC has made, we must ensure it does not "fall back."

Maureen Clark says she finds it hard to decide to give the GDC more money when we've just "cut the apron strings." She might take a different position after the review is completed. She is not opposed to the GDC's ventures, she is just being cautious, and it is "good to have one cautious person in the group."

Ernest Firth wishes to emphasize that he is not asking this Assembly to take money from any particular fund.

Greg Cayen adds that the GDC Board and management worked hard this year and the last to clean things up. It will remain busy managing its current assets, but won't, as things stand, be making further investments. He would not ask for additional capital if he were not 100% certain it would be used properly. We can now foresee an explosion of business opportunities. The GDC built up an overhead structure to prepare for an oil and gas boom, as well as cleaning up the mess we inherited a few years ago. Money from our subsidiaries goes to cover the overhead. It will be a few years before we get the consistent management fees that will cover expenses. After that point, we will be able to pay the GTC dividends. The intention is not to get the GTC to cover our overhead. We do not have, here and now, a comprehensive plan to present. When we do, we will present it, with community consultations. The point is to ensure that we do not miss opportunities we would later regret not taking advantage of.

Ruth Wright (Inuvik) says she assumes the people hired to run the GDC are "business smart." We should let them do the job. She does not think we should give jobs to Beneficiaries just because they are Beneficiaries, regardless of how well they will work. If we don't make good investments now, we may end up with less to pass on to the next generation.

Larry Firth says the main points made by Ernest and Greg seem to be that a review is needed, and that the GDC needs the appropriate tools to do its job. Both can be addressed in a motion.

James Cardinal says he understands that last year some GDC Board members had business interests of their own. He would rather that any Board members not be involved in joint ventures. In particular, he has concerns about the highway work around Ft. McPherson.

Ernest Firth replies that Wolf Creek Services, a joint venture owned in part by a former GDC Director, underbid the GDC. He knows there is unhappiness about it.

Charlie Snowshoe asks how this happened.

Ernest Firth suggests that David Krutko might be able to reply on behalf of the GNWT.

David Krutko replies that the ten-year highway contract expired, and we now have the MOU in place. The MOU supersedes previous arrangements. Mackenzie Valley Construction successfully bid on the contract for maintenance between Inuvik and the Mackenzie. Another portion was publicly tendered and won by Wolf Creek Services in partnership with Porcupine Construction, a Yukon company. Since the work was publicly tendered, we had no say.

Robert Charlie observes that soon after the Claim was signed, we came up with an investment Bylaw that specified protection of the principal. In 1994 there was talk about protecting the capital even if the ROI was not great. At least, we'd be confident the money was there. He wonders about the costs of the GDC's investments, including the loans to purchase buildings in Inuvik.

Greg Cayen responds that he considers Bylaw 3 "sacred" and acts on it every day. The GDC has a good portfolio of investments. There are loans, which we can go through when we get into GDC finances in more detail in the community visits for the review. Camp MGK is a five-year loan, the others are long-term. But they will produce a handsome return and, as we pay them off, we will have equity to invest in other ventures.

Melba Mitchell says she thinks it would be helpful if people knew beforehand when the GDC was looking at a joint venture, rather than learning after the fact.

Ernest Firth says he will try to consult when it is feasible.

Fred Carmichael says the discussion of this topic has been healthy. A few years back, we opted for the separation of business from politics. The criticism the GTC still gets for what the GDC does suggests that people are not really ready for that separation. Nobody calls him to complain about the performance of TAL and RBC-Dominion Securities, even though their recent performance has not been as good as that of the GDC. We should apply the same standard consistently. The question before us is whether we really want a DevCorp. If we do, then we should leave it alone. He wants to hear again if people want the separation of business and politics. If you say you do, that would be a clear direction that the GDC should be left alone to do its work. Two-and-a-half years ago, the GDC was absolutely broke, and it is now a strong business of which people can be proud. We had discussions with Tom Connors about putting more capital into the GDC, and our Board was committed to that. We told him we would see if the Assembly was willing to put that money in. If the answer is "no", we accept the will of the people but it will be a disappointment. We will not build that better future for our people if we sit on our money and hold ourselves back. There is \$80 million in the Settlement Fund, which creates no training and no jobs here. At least the GDC creates some job and training opportunities.

Q. MACKENZIE VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW BOARD

Bridget Larocque says she is here with Karen MacArthur, the MVEIRB's Technical Knowledge (TK) Coordinator, who will explain the purpose of her recent community visits, and Charlie Snowshoe, a Board member.

Karen MacArthur says her role is to ensure that TK is brought into the process whenever the MVEIRB conducts environmental assessments. She travels with Board members to communities, explaining the Board's activities and listening to their concerns and questions. Last year we had a TK workshop in Yellowknife to get community-level input on incorporating TK. We anticipated sixty participants and had eighty-seven. From the results of that workshop, we are developing new TK guidelines, which should be available for your comments by the end of September. Copies will be forwarded to all First Nations groups in the region.

This Spring we held a translators' workshop, in which Bertha Francis and Mary Teya took part. This helped translators learn how to deal with our terminology, and this Fall we expect to have another workshop, focusing on oil and gas.

Bridget Larocque explains the MVEIRB's mandate to represent the interests of all Mackenzie Valley residents in conducting environmental assessments of proposals for development. The Gwich'in, Sahtu, and Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Boards, or government departments that issue permits may issue a project referral for our assessment. We can also conduct assessments on our own initiative. We seek the views of Bands, communities, and the general public before submitting recommendations to INAC. The Board either recommends conditions for approval or moves the proposed development to a higher level of assessment, a review panel, which must hold public hearings.

Charlie Snowshoe says that he has been busy since last Summer on assessments of a number of projects, and it has been quite a learning experience. It used to be the case that business came in and did what it wanted; now there are regulatory structures in place. The process takes time. The assessment of the Snap Lake diamond mine took more than two years. We have a group along the Mackenzie discussing environmental assessment of a potential pipeline.

Robert Charlie asks if the MVEIRB has a TK policy which it follows. He knows the GSCI has a draft policy, which has yet to be adopted.

Karen MacArthur replies that the MVEIRB has guidelines under development, which she hopes will also help government and industry as they try to incorporate TK into their activities. The MVEIRB takes the view that TK is equivalent to western scientific knowledge at any level. We want to help industry regarding the correct protocols for dealing with TK in communities.

R. GWICH'IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Mary Ann Ross informs the Assembly that she has the GSCI as one of her portfolios and sits on its Board *ex officio*. The managers for her portfolios will report to her, and she to the Board. She will also report to each year's Assembly about her portfolios. The GSCI Executive Director, Leslie McCartney, is taking her annual holiday now. The GTC Board will ask her to make a presentation at its next meeting. The GSCI has completed a five-year strategic plan, which will also be presented to the Board. The GSCI's report on its activities over the year appears on pages 29-33 of the GTC Annual report.

Ruth Wright reiterates that the language is important, and we should be doing all we can to preserve it. Language is a big part of a culture. In Inuvik we started language classes with a volunteer teacher. Some people wanted us to ask for money to do this, but the Elders are dying off while we just talk about how important language and culture are.

S. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Barry Greenland suggests that since the Assembly is behind schedule and many concerns have already been expressed, there be a single presentation from each community. People have already had many opportunities to speak to various issues. He calls upon the Chief from each community to report.

1) Gwich'in Councils

Charles Furlong says Aklavik has many of the same concerns as the other communities, many of them relating to "putting bread and butter on the table." When he became Chief, it was necessary to rebuild the organization in Aklavik, do a lot of internal training and restore pride in the community. The first year or two were very challenging, and focused on eliminating deficits and paying down debt. The community has come a long way, with all of its organizations now running surpluses.

Aklavik also has a Development Corporation, which concentrates on real estate. We recently entered a partnership with the Housing Corp. to renovate a duplex, leasing it back to the Housing Corp., paying off the loan for the project in two years. After that, “it will be straight profit.” We have also taken over the buildings in the community previously owned by Gwich’in Properties, and that too should be paid off in two years.

Our business arm, Daazraii Investments, recently acquired government grants providing 75% of the funding required to purchase a 51% share in North Wright Air, which is doing well. Our present development plan is largely complete, and we recently finished an economic strategy that will go out to the community for its input. This includes an addition to the existing Band Office, to include the Post Office, Power Corp. and NorthWesTel payment agencies. We are also in discussions with RBC about a banking machine, and propose a combined gas station and general store outside. If all goes well, construction will start soon after Christmas.

Aklavik also hosted the Dene Nation Assembly, and organized the first-ever meetings of all the GSA Chiefs and Councils, held in Inuvik. Current initiatives include seeking community-level input on development of a new social programming facility. He will seek suggestions from all communities. The Band currently runs the Brighter Futures and Healthy Babies programs, and was able to hire an Elders’ coordinator this year. It will continue to address social needs as available funding permits.

Abe Wilson reports that in Ft. McPherson the Tetlit Gwich’in Council worked hard to deal with all the issues of concern to its membership. During the last couple of years, Council has looked closely at the possible consequences of development, especially a pipeline, and has focused on social programming as a result. In the coming months we hope to sign a deal with the Department of Justice for programming at TI’oondih Healing Camp. We have also secured two-year funding from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation for programming at TI’oondih, and expect to have the first program under way in September. Child apprehension is a growing concern, and we have formed a committee to deal with it, the first community in the NWT to do so.

A new youth centre remains one of our top priorities. After developing a proposal, we made progress in getting funding from the Hamlet Council and from MACA under the Community Initiatives Program, and hope to get INAC assistance. Several weeks ago our Community Assembly discussed a number of overlap issues, and passed a motion to send a delegation to the Vuntut Gwich’in Assembly in Old Crow to develop a working relationship. Many people from Ft. McPherson travel to Old Crow, and we thought it important to build a cabin along the route between the two communities. The Vuntut Gwich’in have long taken the position that the site in question was their territory, but have now approved a cabin. Jim Antoine has approved funds for construction.

Ft. McPherson’s business arm, the Rat River Development Corporation, followed the example of the GTC and GDC in separating business from politics. The RRDC has its own Board, although we have had several resignations due to perceived conflicts of interest and are trying to fill the vacancies. Cleaning things up to determine the RRDC’s financial situation took time and effort, but we also acquired rental properties in the community from Gwich’in Properties, as well as the Band Office building. In addition, Rat River entered a promising joint venture with Golder Associates in the environmental field. This is the last year in the present Chief and Council’s mandate.

Johnny Charlie adds that the Vuntut Gwich’in did put a condition on the planned cabin that there be no trapping on the site; we may have to revisit this at a later date.

Peter Ross tells the group that the Gwichya Gwich’in Council created a new position of Executive Assistant, to manage the increasing workload that comes with more development activity. Indian and Inuit Services conditionally approved \$20,000 for the position, but our effort to secure additional funds from Aboriginal Affairs was not successful. The housing shortage remains a serious problem. We managed two more units this Summer, and hope to build more.

The recent Devlan program in the area gave us opportunities to enter a number of joint ventures, including: Storm Communications (communication services); Great Slave Helicopters (air support services), and PTI Catering (catering services). Tsiigehtchic also participated in a joint venture with Golder Associates, to do environmental consulting on the Devlan program, and there are prospects for collaboration in the training of environmental monitors.

The community was unhappy that its outdoor rink was pulled from MACA's capital plan, but Vince Steen has now committed \$50,000 to the project. Bob Overvold of INAC had indicated \$90,000 in Federal funding is available. A community meeting explored options for investing Tsiigehtchic's share of the Sahtu settlement. Options include: creation of a revolving fund to support small business; investment in construction in Yellowknife; heavy equipment purchases for work in the region, and investment in the Golder joint venture. We purchase several bonds in 1990-1991, with a 13% ROI. One matured last year, and another, the last, matures in 2006. He will advise the next leadership to reinvest. Ongoing problems for the Council include the lack of adequate funding. Dan Andre represents Tsiigehtchic on the committee established to look at relationships among the GTC, DGOs and RRCs within the framework of the GTC's strategic plan. As development, including a possible pipeline, goes ahead, environmental concerns must be addressed. It is also important that there be adequate community involvement in negotiating future impact and benefits agreements. This will be his last Annual General Assembly as Chief (although he still has Tsiigehtchic's community Assembly coming up), and he wishes to thank all on the GTC Board for their support and friendship. He hopes to see younger people in positions of leadership, but working closely with the Elders and former Chiefs. As the last community Assembly directed, an action plan for Tsiigehtchic is in the works, and he would like to thank Alestine Andre, Douglas Kendo and Elizabeth Westwell for their help. We also have a proposal seeking \$100,000 to implement the ideas in the plan. He wishes to close by congratulating Fred Carmichael, and his own daughter Mary Ann Ross upon their recent electoral victories.

James Firth reiterates his congratulations to Fred Carmichael and Mary Ann Ross. Despite disagreements within the GTC, the democratic process works and we must work together. Over the past year the Inuvik Native Band and Nihtat Gwich'in Council have focused much of their attention on defining their own roles in the coming age of self-government. We had a number of workshops in the community and reviewed our Bylaws, elections process and approach to working with business people. We have a paper out on the last topic, and hope we and the GTC leadership find points of agreement. Another project we're considering is a Gwich'in business association, and we have a draft paper we would be happy to share with the other communities. In addition, we've supported a project in which Charlie Furlong has been active for the past three months, an NWT Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce. Perhaps we can discuss this at the next regional leadership meeting, in September.

At these gatherings, we rightly emphasize the need to train and hire our own people, but sometimes you need to "step back a bit" and bring in someone else, especially since the required training may not be there in the smaller communities. Inuvik hired an independent financial expert to look at our operations. She made a number of recommendations in the interest of improved efficiency, and we are "back where we should be." Band Manager Dolly Carmichael is now a Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager, a qualification close to that of Paul Teoh.

Over the last year there has been a lot of debate about a pipeline, some of it because he and Fred Carmichael have been active in two different groups. He hopes people understand that the two are not competing. Both have the same objective in mind, that of getting the best deal possible for the good of the Gwich'in people.

Last Christmas we took some of our Sahtu Settlement money and distributed it to Inuvik Beneficiaries, looking at it as a chance to put something back into the community. We also emphasize promotion of our culture, including through the Rachel Reindeer Camp, funded with some of our Brighter Futures money. If you look at our report in the GTC Annual Report, on p. 42 you'll see a picture of John Jerome and Alice Francis in front of the new home we helped build for them; "that's what it's all about."

With the Dogrib Assembly coming up next week, he hopes we send some representation to provide encouragement and support.

2) *Renewable Resource Councils*

Grace Blake suggests that any RRC concerns that have not been raised in earlier discussion be put forward in the form of Resolutions. Agreement.

3) *Yellowknife/Whitehorse Delegations*

Margaret Begg from Yellowknife introduces herself, Ann Firth Jones and Esther Dobbs. She informs the group that Beneficiaries outside the GSA have expressed their desire for recognition, and last year's Assembly passed a motion that was broadly supportive. We are now working on a petition, and have a society registered under the NWT Societies Act. This year, we have non-voting reps. at the Assembly again, and still no office in Yellowknife. All we want is recognition as Beneficiaries who can contribute to the promotion of Gwich'in values and culture.

Ann Firth Jones asks the Assembly to "acknowledge the message we bring from your relatives." The Beneficiaries outside the GSA have much to offer. There are more than 350 around Great Slave Lake. On a big issue 350 votes can exert considerable influence for a course of action. In addition, we can help bring money into the organization, since much of the GTC's funding is on a *per capita* basis. We already provide Beneficiaries who work in a number of government departments and other organizations. They provide a pool of potential Gwich'in leaders and representatives and can help meet the growing need of Gwich'in business for qualified people. Leaving out the young Beneficiaries who are outside the GSA can only make them angry and bitter. Instead, if we work together we can support them as they pursue their educations and encourage them to preserve their language and culture and be proud of who they are. An office in Yellowknife would help meet our needs. We can now access your web site and database; "that's a start." The GTC's decision will be a turning point for the Gwich'in people; "we must be an equal part, not a weak link in the chain."

Esther Dobbs informs the Assembly that she is here on behalf of the Yukon Gwich'in. She works at Yukon College as a cultural development facilitator and sits on the Council of Yukon First Nations. There are approximately 75 Gwich'in in her area, and she and her colleagues are active teaching the Gwich'in language and providing traditional foods to Beneficiaries traveling through the Yukon, as well as to students. They do what they can to promote Gwich'in values and would like stronger ties with the GTC. They would also like to see some changes to the Christmas hamper program. In the last few years, there have been instances of slight, elderly women receiving turkeys too large for them to use, as well as diabetic Beneficiaries receiving candy and other foods of little value to them. She wonders if cheques could be considered as an alternative for these Beneficiaries.

Fred Carmichael thanks the group for their presentations. He thinks they make a strong case; "just because some of my family live in Edmonton doesn't mean they're not part of the family. You're still part of the Gwich'in family." When the GTC receives their petition, he will see that it is acted upon at the Board level. He raised the question of representation of Beneficiaries outside the GSA at one Board meeting, and did not get a very enthusiastic response. He will ensure that things reach the stage of a recorded vote, and do what he can to help. As for hampers, he recalls there was something of a panic two years back, as the GTC struggled to get the hampers to Beneficiaries outside the GSA. He was amazed at what people did to get the hampers delivered.

Charles Furlong recalls that when this issue arose last year the GTC looked for ways to be accommodating. Creating some presence in Yellowknife was an option but the lack of sufficient funding is always an issue. He has personally done some research into the possibility of creating a Sub-Band under the Indian Act, although INAC does not encourage the creation of these entities. There is still funding out there for Metis people, although the Metis Nation no longer exists as a body. He has drafted a constitution for an entity called the North West Metis Council. If you change the wording from "North West" to "Yellowknife" you can access \$13,000.

He adds that provisions in the Claim name the four Gwich'in communities in existence. Providing voting Delegate status for Beneficiaries could be tricky, since the Federal and Territorial Governments could see this as creating another community, which would require negotiations with them. We should seek a legal opinion before proceeding down this road. As for representation at various organizational levels, we can look into the options once the Board has made a decision. An office in Yellowknife could be part of the solution, if we can find the funding. Another option might be for each Beneficiary outside the GSA to be affiliated with one of the GSA communities. When Assembly Delegates were chosen, each community could then select one or two of you as Delegates. The Claim does specify that if your numbers reached 1,000, we would have to do something. Such numbers, however, would also allow you to "swing" elections. He will speak with his own Council to see what can be done. These are just a few options to think about.

Fred Carmichael says he would like to hear from the other Chiefs.

Abe Wilson observes that since the Claim specifies all Beneficiaries have the same rights, the Beneficiaries from outside the GSA would seem to have a strong case. He thinks their participation is a good thing.

Peter Ross says he too thinks they have an equal right to sit at the table. But the questions arises of what to do if the Beneficiaries in Alberta were then to demand voting Delegate status and additional formal recognition. Once we start down this road, where is the stopping point?

James Firth replies that in Inuvik, "I don't think we have any problem in opening the doors." There might be concerns regarding participation in dividends and harvesting aid. When people raise such concerns we have to take them seriously. He too is supportive but thinks the case for a legal assessment is strong.

Grace Blake reminds the group that Jack and Tom Williams will go through the Bylaw revisions at a meeting in the Band Office a 7:00 p.m. She urges the Elders and youth to designate a spokesmen to make presentations on their behalf tomorrow morning.

After a closing prayer led by Tom Wright, the Assembly adjourns at 5:00 p.m., to resume at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 14.

Barry Greenland calls the Assembly to order at 9:00 a.m. Florence Vaneltsi leads the group in an opening prayer.

T. PRESENTATIONS FROM ELDERS AND YOUTH

Sigmore Furlong and Archie Norbert introduce themselves as the designated spokesmen for, respectively, youth and Elders.

Sigmore Furlong says Gwich'in youth want greater funding for education, as well as greater general support from the GTC, DGOs and other organizations. They would also like youth representation at all meetings. There should be more programs to discourage youth from turning to drugs and alcohol, and to engage in activities like sports. Youth also benefit from opportunities to travel. The youth of Ft. McPherson, in particular, want a new youth centre. It would be nice to see the Gwich'in flag hanging from the front of all Gwich'in businesses, so that people would know what businesses are owned by Beneficiaries. Youth, Elders and other Beneficiaries should work together since the people can achieve more working together. We should all cherish the Elders.

Archie Norbert says there is consensus among Elders as to their major concerns. Elders should not be required to make monthly visits to the housing offices in their communities. Housing staff should visit them to provide the needed assistance. Some Elders complain that medications must be ordered from the Inuvik pharmacy. There should be weekly home visits by nurses in each community instead. Students should learn about self-government and the Claim in schools, and we should support home visits by the Fieldworkers. Too often we see our own people getting trained but not finding any work or getting housing, whereas government employees come into the area and quickly get housing and other benefits. Our own people working for our own organizations should get no less. Elders often face punitive "claw-back" provisions in their pensions and other benefits when they make money from part-time work or honoraria for attending meetings. We should look at gift certificates as an alternative. At the last Dene Nation Elders' Conference, a local Gwich'in Elder, John Norbert, was elected President of the Dene Nation Elders' Committee. He would like to say a few words.

John Norbert says that he is the "Chief Elder" for now and welcomes the ideas of Elders from the GSA.

U. OTHER BUSINESS

Fred Carmichael informs the group that Elaine Alexie asked him yesterday if she might make a brief presentation on oil and gas issues, and he has agreed.

Elaine Alexie tells the Assembly that she will do a brief PowerPoint presentation, drawing upon work she did on natural gas extraction over the year and information supplied by friends of hers who are studying chemical engineering at Stanford University. She adds that this presentation is by way of information, not an effort to change minds.

Most natural gas extraction in the NWT will be to meet U.S. consumption. Natural gas is the second largest energy source in the U.S. and the third largest globally. It is the least carbon-intensive and cleanest burning of the fossil fuels. Transportation is primarily via pipelines, although smaller amounts are transported in supertankers. The greatest increases in demand over the next few years are expected in electric power generation.

The processing sequence for natural gas has a number of steps: separation; storage; pipeline transportation to the distributor. All of these steps will take place in the NWT if a pipeline goes ahead, so the NWT will experience most of the related environmental impacts.

The seismic testing required to locate reserves damages habitats, and roads are carved out where they will facilitate extraction. The release of hydrogen sulfide has adverse health impacts, reaching communities as much as 300 km. downwind and causing a higher incidence of birth defects. The impact of methane gas from wells has consequences too; methane is natural gas in its purest form, and is a greenhouse gas twenty-six times as powerful as carbon dioxide. Toxic drilling mud wastes are reinjected into the ground, often affecting previously clean aquifers. Safety flaring at wells is another danger, and so are leaks into the atmosphere during transportation along the lengthy pipeline corridor, even if the pipeline will be underground. Methane leaks are hard to detect given the gas's invisibility and lack of odour. Seismic activity can cause ruptures. The iron ore used in underground pipelines corrodes and explodes when exposed to the air, while natural gas in turn erodes the pipes and makes ruptures more likely.

There are further impacts at the retail and end-use stages. These include emissions of carbon monoxide and dioxide as well as other hydrocarbons, causing climate change, carbon depletion, soil instability and even vascular plant growth, which prevents sunlight from reaching smaller plants.

She suggests the major industrialized economies are consuming more energy than can be sustained, accumulating "environmental debt" by borrowing from the future. They use more resources than the earth can produce, reducing biodiversity by 20% a year. there would be benefits from a pipeline in terms of employment. In addition, communities could be hooked up to the system and taken off the diesel generators. Natural gas is cleaner than oil and coal, but we should ask if it is worth it given the environmental damage over 20-30 years. There are alternatives to non-sustainable extraction in renewable energy sources like hydroelectric power, wind and solar energy.

Elizabeth Hansen thanks Elaine Alexie for her presentation, and says this information should be made available in the schools.

1) *Political Direction / Strategic Plan*

Barry Greenland invites Fred Carmichael to go through the strategic plan.

Fred Carmichael says that since we are running behind schedule, and there is a funeral in Ft. McPherson at 5:00 p.m., which many Delegates would like to attend, time is short. Tom Williams, who was involved in developing the plan, will go through the high-lights, focusing primarily on the goals that have been identified.

Tom Williams informs the group that since the previous Assembly, a committee consisting of himself, Robert Charlie, Deb Bisson, Mary Ann Ross, Bob Simpson, Lawrence Norbert and Greg Cayen has worked on this project. The Aboriginal Summit provided assistance, including sharing the cost of hiring a consultant, Martin Landry, who conducted much of the consultation with Beneficiaries inside and outside the GSA. Strategic planning is a long-term process, so the road map must be flexible and serve as a living document that adapts to changing circumstances. A draft document is being circulated now. It contains many of the comments and suggestions we received from Beneficiaries during the consultation process. The Strategic Planning Committee identified the key issues for which the organization needs to plan, and we recommend focusing on "priority goals" critical to its success. The document sets out the six goals we identified, along with strategies that serve as examples of how we might pursue them.

The priority goals are:

- 1) Increasing, and improving the quality of, support programs and services provided to Gwich'in organizations. Strategies could include: arranging additional technical support for community organizations in strategic, financial, human resource and economic development planning; designing, developing and investing in new governance and leadership programs targeted at community-based organizations.

- 2) Improving the GTC's governance, political and constitutional development. Strategies might include: organizing facilitated workshops to review and clarify the respective roles of the DGOs, RRCs, GDC and GSCI; consideration of alternative Board structures, such as portfolios for each Board member; developing new governance policies that consider the GTC elections process, the qualifications of Board members, and other governance policy needs.
- 3) Increasing the level of participation in negotiating socioeconomic benefit agreements. Strategies could include: engaging the oil and gas industry, the Federal and Territorial Governments in negotiations toward benefits agreements that include training, employment, economic benefits, well-being, cultural development and cash settlements.
- 4) Increasing involvement in the design and development of self-government initiatives. Strategies might include: identification of options regarding the future role, governance and administrative structure of a Gwich'in government, for presentation to Beneficiaries; clarification of the future role, governance and administrative structures of Gwich'in community governments; identifying options for the GTC's future role; participation in the design of the Beaufort Delta Regional Government model.
- 5) Increasing influence over the policies and programs of the Federal and Territorial Governments. Strategies could include: negotiations with the GNWT for recognition and inclusion of the GCLCA and self-government in the school curriculum; developing positions within the Aboriginal Summit for developing consolidated, multi-year block funding of GNWT programs for community governments; multi-year programs to support increased trades skills programs and other training related to major development activity; multi-year program support for capacity-building.
- 6) Increased and improved communication with Beneficiaries. Strategies might include: development of a comprehensive communications strategy raising the level and quality of communications, including plan language information on the GCLCA and self-government initiatives; progress on the GTC's strategic priorities; regularly scheduled publications and communications events.

The Strategic Planning Committee suggests a series of subsequent steps. The first is approval of these goals by the Assembly. We would then proceed to development of strategies relating to each goal, including allocation of responsibility, annual costs, sources of financing, targets and performance indicators, by himself and other GTC staff through September. In October, the Vice-President will lead the review and approval of proposed strategies, at the Board level. In October and November, the President, Vice-President and Board will present the strategies to Beneficiaries, the communities and Gwich'in organizations, with the goal of launching the plan in November. While the dates are flexible, we need something in place and will try to meet them. Once the plan is fully developed, the GTC will be accountable for its implementation. Our hope is that Beneficiaries will have the plan in front of them, much as they have the GCLCA in front of them for ready reference.

Elizabeth Hansen says she supports the assignment of portfolios to GTC Board members. She wonders if time will be devoted to orienting new Board members after they are elected.

Tom Williams replies that training of both old and new Board members will be part of the governance training. Assigning specific portfolios to Board members should increase their accountability.

James Andre says the people who negotiated the Claim did a good job. He doesn't see them involved now, and would like them to have input.

Fred Carmichael says that those who were involved in negotiating the Claim have input during the consultation process, as do all other Beneficiaries. The GTC certainly wants to draw upon their experience and knowledge.

Maureen Clark notes that much of the governance training for Council members is through MACA. She would like to see traditional governance training included too.

2) *Economic Direction*

Barry Greenland notes that Fred Carmichael, the presenter on this item, addressed it during previous discussion of the GDC and other matters. He does not propose to add anything now.

3) *Social Direction*

Barry Greenland informs the group that Charlie Furlong is the designated presenter on this item. Does he have anything to add to what he has said before?

Charles Furlong says he is near completion of an information package. He will solicit people from each community to sit on the Board of the proposed new social facility, and then go to the GTC Board, and finally the communities.

4) *Oil and Gas Activity*

Barry Greenland asks Robert Bourque, who proposed the inclusion of this item, if he would care to lead off the discussion.

Robert Bourque says his point is that the coming oil and gas development makes this “the biggest time of our lives...our last shot at the boodle.” He would like to have seen industry representatives here to provide information.

Barry Greenland notes that the industry does not have representatives at this Assembly.

Robert Bourque suggests a Special Assembly at which industry could make presentations, followed by discussion.

Fred Carmichael says oil and gas development is an important topic. The GTC sent the agenda for the Assembly out to the communities for their suggestions. In retrospect, we should have invited industry representatives.

He adds that he and his colleagues on the APG have acted on their mandate from the Ft. Liard meeting in 2000, to obtain the financing for an equity share in any pipeline. While that money is in place, we’re not committed to anything. All of the relevant information will be brought into the communities for discussion. At his age, he has nothing to gain as an individual from a pipeline. He just wants people to be in a position to make an informed decision. If he were intent on “pushing a pipeline”, he would not have made room for Elaine Alexie’s presentation, which he knew would reflect a perspective very different from his own. People should see both sides of the question. Over the next two years there will be extensive community consultation and environmental studies. The National Energy Board will not issue a permit if it is not satisfied with the results of the environmental assessments. People in the GSA will participate in a ratification process of some sort. Although, as he has said before, signing an access and benefits agreement is *de facto* ratification. We have a strong system in place to protect our lands.

James Firth adds that Inuvik has prepared its own pipeline strategy, and he would like to see the leadership directed to read it. We are willing to share it with the other communities, and think it important that we discuss the issues together. Our strategy proposes formation of a working group to follow up on some of the work Charlie Furlong did for the Dene Nation.

Charles Furlong says the Dene Nation Executive has two studies on the impacts of a pipeline, which high-light the importance of community-level consultation and the obligations of both government and industry. He believes industry representatives would be agreeable to holding informational workshops in the communities, but sees no need for a Special Assembly on oil and gas. “Time is not on our side”, and we should move quickly. The sooner we bring our concerns into industry’s planning, the better.

Larry Firth suggests the GTC seek funding from the GNWT and industry for community meetings.

Maureen Clark recalls past consultations often saw industry reps. come into the community and leave before people had a chance to digest all the information and ask their questions. She would like to see two-day meetings, so that people have time to ask questions and get answers.

5) *Bylaw Revision Process*

Barry Greenland reminds the group that Jack Williams met with Beneficiaries yesterday evening at the Band Office to go through the Bylaw revisions.

Tom Williams says that at this meeting participants were able to go through the “blacklined version”, setting out all the changes. There were a number of typos, inconsistencies and other superficial errors in the document we referred to Industry Canada last year. Cleaning them up was among the first tasks FieldLaw undertook for the GTC, working with himself, Greg Cayen and Robert Charlie.

Jack Williams reiterates that the changes to the Bylaws for which we seek approval here were superficial. The only significant change to Bylaw 1 dealt with the references to Assemblies of ten Delegates from each DGO. He has been informed that some have fewer than ten, so the wording will change to refer to no fewer than five.

He has drafted a Resolution directing that Bylaws 1, 3 and 4, with the appropriate revisions, be filed with Industry Canada. On Monday Brian Grindey went through the other issues we identified. Since these would change the substance of the Bylaws, and have not yet been discussed at the Board or community level, we recommend that a GTC committee, along with legal counsel, go into the communities, explain the rationale for each proposed change, and get feedback from Beneficiaries. This work will go ahead over the next year, to come to the next Assembly in the shape of a Board-sanctioned report on further Bylaw changes.

Robert Bourque asks if Jack Williams’s suggestion is that Delegates take the changes back into their communities for discussion.

Jack Williams reiterates that he recommends that the Bylaws, as cleaned up, be registered with Industry Canada. This would fulfill the desire of past Assemblies for a “clean” set of Bylaws. The eight issues outlined needing subsequent discussion would be taken into the communities. It would help if the GTC were to strike a committee, with input from the communities, which would gather input from Beneficiaries. The meetings could be held in the Winter, when roads allow easy access to the communities.

Elizabeth Hansen asks Jack Williams what time-frame he has in mind.

Jack Williams replies that once the Assembly gives its approval, registration of the Bylaws, as cleaned up, will take 2-3 weeks. The GTC would bring the results of the community consultations, with Board recommendations, to the next Assembly.

Hazel Nerysoo says one Bylaw change that has come up is the appointment of an independent Chair at Board meetings. As things stand, a Board member acts as Chair but thereby loses the ability to take part in the discussions. If the Bylaws were modified accordingly, each community could designate an independent Chair who would preside over Board meetings in that community.

Jack Williams replies that this would be a substantive change. It would require Assembly direction, and presumably discussion in the foregoing community consultations. It is not part of the cleanup process.

Grace Blake thanks Jack Williams for his assistance.

Mary Ann Ross makes presentations to the Delegates from outside the GSA and to Elaine Alexie, in appreciation of their participation.

James Firth and Peter Ross inform the Assembly that the Council of Gwich'in Chiefs is working on Treaty 11 issues as they relate to self-government. It has just hired an advisor and will forward information.

James Firth adds that the group made representations to the Minister of INAC to obtain replicas for each community of the Chief Julius medal, which in Ft. McPherson was traditionally passed from the outgoing Chief to his successor. We had someone in Inuvik design the medal, and wish now to present a replica to Fred and one to Mary Ann.

Fred Carmichael adds he is touched and glad to receive a "friendship medal", given the importance of unity among the Gwich'in. He will wear the medal with pride.

Mary Ann Ross says she too is happy and moved. She likes a suggestion made earlier by Barry Greenland that at the end of Assembly we all shake one another's hands. When we meet again next year, not everyone will be here. Delegations may be different, and "we may lose loved ones." She would also like a picture taken of each Delegation, perhaps for inclusion in the next Annual Report.

Maureen Clark makes presentations to Fred Carmichael and Mary Ann Ross on behalf of the host community as tokens of appreciation upon their election victories.

Fred Carmichael expresses his gratitude. Mary Ann Ross adds that she has six children, of whom four are daughters. What she does, she does for them. There are many women here whom she admires and regards as role models.

V. RESOLUTIONS

Grace Blake notes that the Resolutions Committee is now distributing copies of the draft Resolutions that have been submitted. Additional draft Resolutions will be presented soon.

Whereas

the membership acknowledge a responsibility to provide palliative care to members who need this service; and

Whereas

an appropriate standard of care is not currently provided by the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Authority; and

Whereas

the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation is authorized to disburse funds for supplementary program funding as defined in Chapter 11 of the GCLCA;

Be it Resolved That

- 1) Delegates to this AGM approve the transfer of \$100,000 from the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation to the GTC, to provide palliative care services to the membership in this fiscal year.

- 2) The GTC, in association with Gwich'in community organizations, develop a policy to govern disbursements from the Palliative Care Fund.
- 3) The GTC report to the next Annual General Assembly with respect to the delivery of these services.

Moved by: Maureen Clark (Tsiigehtchic)

Seconded by: Hazel Nerysoo (Ft. McPherson)

Tom Wright reminds the Assembly that Ethel Blondin-Andrew mentioned Federal programs. While he is sympathetic to the intent behind the motion, the GTC should learn if funding is available from other sources before committing any of its own money.

Peter Ross says he agrees. Perhaps the Resolution can be amended to specify a partnership with Health and Social Services.

Charles Furlong adds that there is the danger that if the GTC assumes “governmental responsibilities”, the Federal and Territorial Governments will use it as a pretext for reducing their own services. As we specified when negotiating the Claim, our goal is not to duplicate governmental services but to ensure governments meet their obligations.

Maureen Clark urges the Assembly to “show compassion”, noting the burdens on the families affected are heavy.

Barry Greenland recalls that when he sat on the GTC Board, he saw the requests that came in. We had lump sum payments of up to \$5,000 available, but one of the problems is that “terminal illness” is a phrase that covers a number of ailments. We need to look at the services currently available. He gathers the policy is under review.

Fred Carmichael says this is a difficult issue, and it is always hard to say “no” to people in need. But he was encouraged by what Ethel Blondin-Andrew said and shares Charlie Furlong’s wariness of duplicating government services. He will make a commitment to press governments on this issue, raising it with both Ottawa and Yellowknife.

Hazel Nerysoo reiterates that it has been five years since the issue was first raised, and we still have nothing in place. The burdens are heavy in the communities where there is no hospital. Perhaps the Resolution can be changed to eliminate the reference to disbursement from the GTC, and call on the GTC to work with others to develop the needed programs and policies. Maureen Clark agrees.

TABLED.

Whereas

Gwich'in youth are concerned for the well-being of sacred, ancestral Gwich'in lands within the Peel River Watershed and the preservation of the Gwich'in culture and traditional way of life; and

Whereas

Gwich'in youth assert the right to fully informed participation where matters of energy, the use of natural resources, and sustainability are discussed, negotiated and determined;

Be it Resolved That

the Gwich'in Tribal Council, local Gwich'in Councils and Renewable Resource Boards involve youth in discussions and decisionmaking regarding such issues; and support them in their conviction that the Peel River Watershed must be protected for future generations.

Moved by: Elizabeth Hansen (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Hazel Nerysoo (Ft. McPherson)

Carried. (Resolution #07/03)

Whereas

the Gwich'in Nation of northeast Alaska and northwest Canada have for centuries relied upon the Porcupine Caribou for subsistence and to meet their nutritional, cultural and spiritual needs, and continue to do so today; and

Whereas

the Gwich'in have the inherent right to continue their own way of life, a right recognized and affirmed by civilized nations, with Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and reading in part:

“...In no case may a people be deprived of their own means of subsistence”; and

Whereas

the health and productivity of the Porcupine Caribou are endangered by proposed oil and gas exploration and development in the herd's calving grounds in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge-Coastal Plain and its wintering grounds in the Peel River Watershed; and

Whereas

the Gwich'in Nation addressed this issue when gathered in Arctic Refuge in 1998; and

Whereas

the Gwich'in people of the communities of Arctic Village, Venetie, Ft. Yukon, Beaver, Chalkytsik, Birch Creek, Stevens Village, Circle and Eagle Village, Alaska; Old Crow, Ft. McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik and Inuvik in Canada have reached consensus in their traditional way and now speak as one on this issue;

Be it Resolved That

the Gwich'in Annual Assembly unanimously support the efforts of the Gwich'in Nation to secure permanent protection of the 1002 calving area in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and of the wintering and breeding grounds of the Porcupine Caribou; and

Be it Further Resolved That

it call upon the President and Congress of the United States to recognize the right of the Gwich'in to continue their own way of life by prohibiting development in the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou, and the Yukon Territorial Government to do so by prohibiting development in the wintering and breeding grounds within the Peel River Watershed.

Moved by: Johnny Kay (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Melba Mitchell (Inuvik)

Carried. (Resolution #08/03)

Whereas

the Gwich'in Tribal Council has invested a total of \$13.9 million from its Land Claim Settlement Fund in the Gwich'in Development Corporation; and

Whereas

the GDC has implemented its long-term growth strategy, and has no additional funds available to finance new investments; and

Whereas

the GDC's investment portfolio does not now generate sufficient cash to support its corporate overhead, and the GDC needs to reduce its expenses in order to avoid a deficit in this fiscal year; and

Whereas

the Gwich'in communities have frequently identified areas of conflict between GDC operations and community economic aspirations; and

Whereas

the GTC, as sole shareholder in the GDC, has a responsibility to ensure that its investment is secure, that funds are well-managed, and that the interests of the membership are protected;

Be it Resolved That

the GTC conduct a shareholder review of the GDC. The Terms of Reference of the review will include:

- a) Review of the mandate, operations and performance of the GDC;
- b) Consultation with the membership on the GDC's future and its role in regional economic development;
- c) Identification and recommendation of measures to preserve, protect and enhance the GTC's investment in the GDC;
- d) Preparation of a report for consideration by the GTC Board of Directors and the next Annual General Assembly clarifying the GDC's role, recommending the most efficient management structure, and, if necessary, identifying terms and conditions under which the GTC may invest additional funds in the GDC.

An independent consultant will be retained to work under the GTC's direct supervision in the conduct of the review.

Moved by: Larry Firth (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Robert Bourque (Inuvik)

Abe Wilson asks what will happen to the GDC while the review takes place. There is no CEO, apparently, even though the Board is still in place. He wonders who will take charge of day-to-day business.

Fred Carmichael says that for the moment Ernest Firth is there as Chairman of the Board. Fred himself made a commitment to Tom Connors to bring the GDC's need for capital to the Assembly. Tom gave a commitment in return that if we provided the needed money for further growth, he would withdraw his resignation. The only money the GDC has sought from us before now is the \$2 million from the Sahtu Settlement. The GDC's credibility has been restored, but this situation puts everyone in an awkward position.

Ernest Firth says that as things stand the GDC will continue as is but will not expand.

Larry Firth says this could be a short review. There is confusion over present arrangements. Local private businesses have become more vocal, and people want better communication. Everyone seems to want a review, and it shouldn't take long. Depending upon the kind of commitment we get from the Assembly, it may be a month or two. He is sponsoring the Resolution precisely because there is such broad support for a review.

Elizabeth Hansen suggests specifying a report at the next Assembly or at a Special Assembly.

Larry Firth says it is clear enough that the report will come to the Board first.

Charles Furlong warns against conducting a review that will be costly as well as time-consuming. A review will probably cost \$50,000, and it's unclear what it would accomplish. The GDC's various companies are now manageable. The problem is that the GDC's administrative side has cash flow problems because of the loans that were taken out to make investments and which now have to be paid back. A better way to go about this would be to have a joint meeting of the GTC and GDC Boards to go through the GDC workplan, and look at our options, perhaps redeploying investments such that profits from the subsidiaries go towards running the GDC efficiently. The GDC's Board has outlined where it stands. There's a communication problem, which makes it unlikely the Assembly will consider injecting the needed resources into the GDC.

Grace Blake asks Charles Furlong if he is proposing an Amendment.

Charles Furlong says he is not proposing one, he is suggesting a route different from that in the present Resolution.

Peter Ross observes the GDC is doing well, better than the GSC. The GSC's the one that lost \$6 million.

Robert Bourque says he supports the Resolution because of concerns over the lack of consultation and the GDC's failure to provide jobs.

Fred Carmichael says he finds it strange to be debating GDC business here, when a past Assembly directed the separation of business and politics. The Assembly has no business trying to make decisions for the GDC. The only question is whether the GTC will give the GDC what it needs to operate and grow. It borrows from the banks, paying 8% interest. It would pay less, and make more, if it borrowed from the GSC instead. We put \$7 million into RBC to invest, and don't know where it's invested, but are reluctant to invest in the GDC. The GDC employed 90 people last year, and 66 of them were Beneficiaries. He admires Chii Construction for the job it does, but would add that Mackenzie Valley Construction was directed to hire Beneficiaries, and does so where it can. But business is business. We can't afford to have trucks sitting empty and contracts fall behind schedule and not get renewed all because people feel free not to come to work for two or three days. Perhaps we should think about putting part of the next transfer payment into the only investment arm we have that does create jobs and training.

Ernest Firth says the only Resolution in front of us now is the one for a shareholder's review. If the Assembly votes for a review that will report back in a year then you might as well shut down the operation. The time for consultation will be over in a couple of years and we will find you've closed the door on yourselves because the GDC wasn't active. If there's going to be a motion to keep the GDC active by injecting capital, that should precede a motion dealing with the shareholder review. He agrees with Fred Carmichael and Charlie Furlong that the two Boards should meet. He can't think of a worse time to do a review than with the media watching. You are now in a good position to move forward in the business world; the GDC has a good reputation, and you have the political clout to open doors, as your concluding the MOU shows. If you put things on hold for a year to do a review, many opportunities will be missed as a result. Let the two Boards meet. They can report back to you if you want. But don't shut down the GDC, leaving your children to find out years from now that instead of taking advantage of the opportunities coming towards you, you paused to do a review.

Charles Furlong says he is not sure this Resolution would pass. He favours trying to find a measure upon which we can reach consensus. Perhaps we can agree that a joint Board meeting would be more effective. If we decide to inject capital into the GDC, we can use it as a lever to get government funds on a matching basis. It is important to back the GDC; its rivals are making their own preparations. If we do not back our own institutions, opportunity will pass us by. Will the mover and seconder consider the option of a joint Board meeting, and consideration of a capital injection, if the Assembly is willing?

James Firth says that as things stand now, he will not support putting any money into the GDC because the rules are not set. Charlie Furlong's ideas are good, but as Chief in Inuvik he has to see where our community and private businesses fit in, and whether we get a shot at negotiating contracts. If the GTC and GDC were to sit down and discuss things, with community input, then he might consider supporting putting money into the GDC. To move things along, he will support Charlie Furlong's alternative of a joint Board meeting. He reminds everyone that we have a collective Claim, and we should not compete with each other for the same work.

Larry Firth and Robert Bourque agree to table the motion, and redraft it, incorporating some of the suggestions made today.

TABLED.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #01/2003:

Be it Resolved That Grace Blake and Barry Greenland be appointed as Co-Chairs of the Gwich'in Tribal Council 20th Annual General Assembly.

Moved by: John Norbert (Tsiigehtchic)

Seconded by: Tom Wright (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #02/2003:

Be it Resolved That the agenda of the 20th Annual General Assembly be accepted as amended.

Moved by: Melba Mitchell (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Rose Clark (Tsiigehtchic)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #03/2003:

Be it Resolved That Jack Williams, Bridget Laroque and Richard Wilson be appointed to the Resolutions Committee for the 20th Annual General Assembly.

Moved by: Robert Bourque (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Johnny Kay (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #04/2003:

Be it Resolved That the Minutes of the 19th Annual General Assembly be approved as presented.

Moved by: Frank Firth (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Tom Wright (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #05/2003:

Be it Resolved That the Gwich'in Tribal Council financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2003 be accepted as presented.

Moved by: Charles Furlong (Aklavik)

Seconded by: Tom Wright (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #06/2003:

Be it Resolved That the firm KPMG be appointed as the Gwich'in Tribal Council auditors for the year ending March 31, 2004.

Moved by: Robert Bourque (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Melba Mitchell (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #07/2003:

Whereas Gwich'in youth are concerned for the well-being of sacred, ancestral Gwich'in lands within the Peel River Watershed and the preservation of the Gwich'in culture and traditional way of life; and

Whereas Gwich'in youth assert the right to fully informed participation where matters of energy, the use of natural resources, and sustainability are discussed, negotiated and determined;

Be it Resolved That the Gwich'in Tribal Council, local Gwich'in Councils and Renewable Resource Boards involve youth in discussions and decisionmaking regarding such issues; and support them in their conviction that the Peel River Watershed must be protected for future generations.

Moved by: Elizabeth Hansen (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Hazel Nerysoo (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #08/2003:

Whereas the Gwich'in Nation of northeast Alaska and northwest Canada have relied for centuries upon the Porcupine Caribou for subsistence and to meet their nutritional, cultural and spiritual needs, and continue to do so today; and

Whereas the Gwich'in have the inherent right to continue their own way of life, a right recognized and affirmed by civilized nations, with Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and reading in part:

“...In no case may a people be deprived of their own means of subsistence”; and

Whereas the health and productivity of the Porcupine Caribou are endangered by proposed oil and gas exploration and development in the herd's calving grounds in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge-Coastal Plain and its wintering grounds in the Peel River Watershed; and

Whereas the Gwich'in Nation addressed this issue when gathered in Arctic Refuge in 1998; and

Whereas the Gwich'in people of the communities of Arctic Village, Venetie, Ft. Yukon, Beaver, Chalkytsik, Birch Creek, Stevens Village, Circle and Eagle Village, Alaska; Old Crow, Ft. McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik and Inuvik in Canada have reached consensus in their traditional way and now speak as one on this issue;

Be it Resolved That the Gwich'in Annual Assembly unanimously support the efforts of the Gwich'in Nation to secure permanent protection of the 1002 calving area in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and of the wintering and breeding grounds of the Porcupine Caribou; and

Be it Further Resolved That it call upon the President and Congress of the United States to recognize the right of the Gwich'in to continue their own way of life by prohibiting development in the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou, and the Yukon Territorial Government to do so by prohibiting development in the wintering and breeding grounds within the Peel River Watershed.

Moved by: Johnny Kay (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Melba Mitchell (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #09/2003:

Whereas the Chief Returning Officer for the 2003 GTC elections has presented her report to the 20th Annual General Assembly for review and acceptance;

Be it Resolved That the Assembly accept the report of the Chief Returning Officer and direct her to destroy the ballots from the 2003 GTC elections.

Moved by: Abe Wilson (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Fanny Greenland (Aklavik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #10/2003:

Whereas the GCLCA states that Beneficiaries have exclusive harvesting rights on the Aklavik Lands; and
Whereas GCLCA provisions dealing with the transfer of ownership of the Aklavik Lands have not been implemented;

Be it Resolved That the GTC Executive direct the implementation of such land transfers so as to allow the Ehdiiat Gwich'in to exercise ownership of those lands.

Moved by: Ian McLeod (Aklavik)

Seconded by: Johnny Kay (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #11/2003:

Whereas the hunters and trappers of the Ehdiitat Gwich'in have had poor experiences with the waters while crossing the Aklavik Trail; and

Whereas there is a need for these hunters and trappers to safely harvest their traditional lands;

Be it Resolved That the GTC Executive take a lead role in assisting the Ehdiitat Gwich'in to obtain the installation of a safe bridge crossing on the Aklavik Trail.

Moved by: Ian McLeod (Aklavik)

Seconded by: Bernice Furlong (Aklavik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #12/2003:

Whereas the 18th Annual General Assembly granted approval for the GTC executive to act upon revisions to Bylaw #1; and

Whereas the 19th Annual General Assembly granted approval for the GTC Executive to address the broader issues of Bylaw revisions; and

Whereas the Executive has submitted a comprehensive review of all Bylaws, along with revised versions of Bylaws 1, 3 and 4;

Be it Resolved That the Assembly approve registration with Industry Canada of the revised Bylaws; and

Be it Further Resolved That the Assembly direct the GTC Executive to undertake consultations with Gwich'in organizations and communities regarding the additional changes to the Bylaws which it has proposed, and report back to the GTC Board and the next Assembly.

Moved by: Elizabeth Hansen (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Peter Ross (Tsiigehtchic)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #13/2003:

Whereas woodcutters in the GSA do not enjoy protection or benefits under the Workers' Compensation Board; and

Whereas it is desirable that Gwich'in harvesters be protected from and compensated for injuries sustained while cutting wood;

Be it Resolved That the GTC work to establish WCB coverage for Beneficiaries harvesting wood in the GSA.

Moved by: Ian McLeod (Aklavik)

Seconded by: Charles Furlong (Aklavik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #14/2003:

Whereas the Gwich'in Tribal Council has endorsed a strategic planning framework; and

Whereas the Strategic Planning Committee has completed a brief landscape review and developed a step-by-step process to achieve the following recommended goals:

- Higher quality programs and services to support Gwich'in organizations;
- Improved governance and political and constitutional development within the GTC;
- Increased levels of participation in the negotiation of socioeconomic benefits agreements;
- Greater involvement in the design and development of self-government initiatives;
- Increased influence over the policies and programs of the GNWT and the Government of Canada;
- Improved communications with Beneficiaries;

Be it Resolved That the GTC Executive be directed to implement appropriate strategies in pursuit of these goals, in conjunction with the Board of Directors, and with the participation of Gwich'in organizations, communities and individual Beneficiaries.

Moved by: Charles Furlong (Aklavik)

Seconded by: Frank Firth (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #15/2003:

Whereas the GTC's zero-tolerance policy towards the abuse of alcohol has worked well and earned the respect of others; and

Whereas there have been recent instances of Gwich'in representatives appearing at conferences and similar events while under the influence of alcohol;

Be it Resolved That the 20th Annual General Assembly reaffirms its support for the GTC zero-tolerance alcohol policy.

Moved by: Robert Charlie (Inuvik)

Seconded by: Tom Wright (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #16/2003:

Whereas the Gwich'in Tribal Council is mandated to select a Board member and an Alternate to the Porcupine Caribou Management Board and recommend their appointment to the Federal Government, and has not recommended such appointment for many years; and

Whereas current Board members may not have the time to visit the communities and provide regular updates on Board activities as the communities wish and as Board discussion of user community regulations makes desirable;

Be it Resolved That the GTC select a new Board member and Alternate to represent it on the PCMB, and recommend those names to the Federal Government for appointment.

Moved by: Hazel Nerysoo (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Neil Colin (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #17/2003:

Whereas past oil and gas activity has left abandoned oil and gas wells in areas of the Yukon where the Gwich'in own land and have recognized Aboriginal rights;

Be it Resolved That the GTC Executive take action to ensure that these abandoned sites be inspected for contaminants and to direct government and industry to undertake the required clean-up activities.

Moved by: Abe Wilson (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Johnny Kay (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #18/2003:

Whereas the Gwich'in Tribal Council Annual General Assembly is a vehicle for sharing information; and
Whereas there is still a general misunderstanding among Gwich'in Beneficiaries of the separation of business from politics;

Be it Resolved That the Gwich'in Development Corporation be asked to hold its annual shareholders' meeting in conjunction with the next Assembly, as part of the regular agenda.

Moved by: Peter Ross (Tsiigehtchic)

Seconded by: Hazel Nerysoo (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #19/2003:

Whereas the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board does not currently provide an appropriate standard of palliative care within the GSA;

Be it Resolved That the Gwich'in Tribal Council lobby the Federal and Territorial Governments to establish a palliative care program, with a minimum of \$100,000 in funding; that once such funding is secured the GTC develop programs and policies in the field of palliative care; and that the GTC report to the next Annual General Assembly upon the delivery of these services.

Moved by: Maureen Clark (Tsiigehtchic)

Seconded by: Hazel Nerysoo (Ft. McPherson)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #20/2003:

Whereas those Gwich'in Beneficiaries who live outside the Gwich'in Settlement Area wish to have a more active role;

Be it Resolved That the GTC Executive investigate the possibilities of opening an office in Yellowknife to service the particular needs of those Beneficiaries, and of creating a Designated Gwich'in Organization outside the GSA for their effective representation.

Moved by: Frank Firth (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Elizabeth Hansen (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #21/2003:

Whereas the Gwich'in Tribal Council has invested a total of \$13.9 million from its Land Claim Settlement Fund in the Gwich'in Development Corporation; and

Whereas the GDC has implemented its long-term growth strategy, and has no additional funds available to finance new investments; and

Whereas the GDC's investment portfolio does not now generate sufficient cash to support its corporate overhead, and the GDC needs to reduce its expenses in order to avoid a deficit in this fiscal year; and

Whereas the Gwich'in communities have frequently identified areas of conflict between GDC operations and community economic aspirations; and

Whereas the GTC, as sole shareholder in the GDC, has a responsibility to ensure that its investment is secure, that funds are well-managed, and that the interests of the membership are protected;

Be it Resolved That the GTC meet with the Board of the GDC to review the mandate, operations and performance of the GDC; and prepare a report for the GTC Board of Directors clarifying the GDC's role and with recommendations for the most efficient management structure and further capital requirements; and

Be it Further Resolved That the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation be authorized to lend the GDC up to \$5,000,000.00 at 6.67% interest.

Moved by: Larry Firth (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Robert Bourque (Inuvik)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #22/2003:

Be it Resolved That the 21st Annual General Assembly be held at Midway Lake directly after the Midway Lake Music Festival, weather permitting.

Be it Further Resolved That Fort McPherson will be the alternative location.

Moved by: Abe Wilson (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Maureen Clark (Tsiigehtchic)

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL 20TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Resolution #23/2003:

Be it Resolved That the 20th Annual General Assembly adjourn.

Moved by: Abe Wilson (Ft. McPherson)

Seconded by: Johnny Kay (Ft. McPherson)