



## *Tkemlúps te Secwépemc*

### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

April 3, 2020

To: TteS Membership

#### **Recent actions taken by Chief and Council: Current Actions, Temporary Layoffs, and Postponement of TteS's By-Election**

##### **Current Actions:**

On behalf of Chief and Council, leadership has had to make some difficult decisions due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Please be assured that in all decision making, the best interests of our membership, our staff and our community's future, is paramount in our minds.

As the pandemic began to emerge in Canada, and the implications of it became clearer, Chief and Council eliminated all travel for staff and leadership. Although travel was eliminated as of March 17, your Chief and Council continued to attend normally scheduled meetings, via conference call.

There have been many meetings to plan and prepare the TteS organization and community on how to best respond to the Covid-19 virus while adhering to all of our health and safety standards recommended by Dr. Bonnie Henry.

Many discussions are taking place with the following entities too address all of our health and safety needs and assess how to best address our immediate response: Secwepemc Health Caucus, Interior Health Authority, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and other levels of local, provincial and federal governments.

We will continue to work with our Secwepemc and First Nation Government entities: SNTC, UBCIC, FNLC and FNTC to negotiate an economic benefit package to deal with the pandemic and downturn in our economy.

We have had to initiate our Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and we will continue to lobby for more funding and supports for our community during this difficult time.





Leadership will continue to address their regular workload, such as, budgets, policy development, and addressing membership concerns. We know this time has been challenging for you. We too, as your leaders, also feel the pressures, the challenges and the stress you are all feeling. That is the cost we accept as your leaders.

### **Temporary Layoffs:**

As the pandemic progressed, and our concern for the health and safety of staff, members and community members escalated. On March 17, we instructed all employees, except for Finance, to work from home to try to uphold social distancing and limit the staff from exposure to Covid-19. The Administrative Offices are closed to all walk-in visitors.

With much discussion and heavy hearts, we decided as of March 31, to temporarily layoff some staff and contracts that were expiring on March 31, were not renewed at this time.

This was not a decision that was taken lightly. We are following the recommendations of Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, ensuring that we all take the precautionary measures of social distancing, isolating yourselves at home, and working from home where possible. TteS as employers, are responsible for the health and safety of our workforce and therefore we need to limit the amount of interaction of staff.

TteS, as an organization, is committed to “flattening the curve” and trying to reduce our membership’s exposure to the virus. We must also take a hard look at our own sources of revenue to save and address the needs of our community.

We know our economy is hurting as well. TteS relies on taxation to operate and that businesses on reserve may be impacted by the pandemic. We will need to work with our stakeholders to get through this as this will have huge impact on us as a whole. We are obligated to be financially responsible and to ensure that our community and our future is fiscally sound, and that we have many members that need leadership to ensure the overall health and safety.

TteS essential services staff, all managers, the COA, and COO will continue to work ensuring services will be available to our membership. We are committed to providing our membership information updates about Covid-19 and ongoing financial supports that membership can access during this difficult time.





It is our sincere hope that our entire team of staff, will be back together soon and that we will have all survived this pandemic with good health. We want to continue meeting and exceeding the growth and sustainability of our needs and well-being.

### **TteS Byelection**

Chief and Council would also like to address the concerns that we are hearing about the Ttes By-election.

TteS is governed by the Custom Election Regulations which outlines the process and timeframes when a Councillor resigns their position. Upon receipt of Councillor Colleen Mosterd McLean's resignation, Chief and Council reviewed the TteS Election Regulations and staff developed a plan to implement the by-election.

In light of Covid-19 and the associated health and safety risks to our staff, our people, we approved at a duly convened Extra-Ordinary Council meeting April 3, 2020 that the by-election has been postponed indefinitely due to safety concerns of gathering and importance of social distancing. We will re-engage the election process once it is safe to do so.

Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller on March 27, 2020 recommends that First Nations suspend all elections during the pandemic due to health and safety concerns.

Costs associated with a by-election are a necessary part of good governance and follow our current Custom Election Regulations.

Decisions around the by-election must be made following our Custom Election Code and always with the safety of our membership in the forefront of our mind.

This pandemic is unprecedented. Our community can support one another and uphold each other, during these challenging times. We call on our family, friends and neighbours together to show the strength and resiliency of who we are together as Secwépemc.

As your elected Kukpi7, I have the utmost faith that current council will fulfill the required duties until the by-election can safely occur. I believe full heartedly that there will be continuity with existing portfolios as identified. Our goal will be to focus on the health and safety of our membership and our staff. We will be continuing to make decisions to help our members through this pandemic and back to a place where there is hope of a safer and healthier tomorrow.





Please stay safe, wash your hands and uphold the social distancing measures that are needed to stop the spread of this potentially devastating virus.

If anyone has any questions, please feel free to reach out to Chief and Council for answers.

All my relations,  
**Tkemlúps te Secwépemc**

Kukpi7 Rosanne Casimir (Chief)  
On behalf of Council