



Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg

P.O. Box 717 Mobert, Ontario P0M 2J0

Phone : (807) 822-2134
Toll Free: 1-888-797-1123
Fax: (807) 822-2850

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL RE COVID-19 MATTERS & NEW MEASURES

Ahnni to all of our members, both those living in and outside of Mobert.

As we pass the second week of our full community lock-down, we want to first thank all of you who have continued to cooperate with the measures that the Council has put in place to protect our citizens.

We know that the lock-down in particular has caused frustration and complications to our lives. Our routines have been interrupted, we might be separated from family, friends and other loved ones, and there is uncertainty on when this will all end.

Please know that our Council implemented the various measures now in place only to protect our citizens, and in particular the most vulnerable of citizens, including our Elders, those who are ill and young children.

The decision to go on full lock-down was not an easy one, and the only reason we decided to do this was to keep the COVID-19 virus out of our community.

We are grateful to the Creator that to date, our community has been spared from this illness. Around the world, **more than 1.3 million have contracted the COVID-19 virus, and almost 74,000 have died.**

Members of our staff team have family members (outside of Ontario) that have either contracted the virus, and sadly passed away. This is a circumstance that we have been working very hard to avoid within the boundaries of our small community.

And other First Nations and surrounding communities are following our lead. We got ahead of this thing quickly and it appears to be working. We are also grateful to the many people who are in Mobert and working very hard to take care of the needs of the community. Those that are providing security, those that are distributing food and those that are checking in on our families to make sure they are ok and not forgotten. They are amazing and we, as a community, owe them our gratitude.

We acknowledge that not everything has gone perfectly. This is the first time that all of us are dealing with a pandemic, and in particular, a lock-down, so we are learning and making adjustments as we go forward.

In the last week or so, there has been confusion on who is allowed to return to Mobert during the lockdown. Originally, we wanted to keep the door open to residents of Mobert who were away when the lock-down was put in place, perhaps for work or school. Unfortunately, it seems that some have taken advantage of or not respected our rules and have brought people in our by-laws do not allow to be here, including people that don't normally live in Mobert. This not only breaks our laws, but also risks the health and lives of all of our residents. No single person has the right to put the health of others at risk. And in an effort to consider peoples unique situations, it seems that we may have contributed to this confusion.

Therefore, today the Council met and decided to implement some new tougher and clearer rules to address this confusion. We also have to deal with the people who are in Mobert who are not allowed to be here under our laws. To address this, we passed the following motion:

Moved that:

1. Effective immediately, there shall be no further persons allowed to enter the Pic Mobert reserve that are not already located on the reserve, regardless of their current place of residence.
2. All persons who are not authorized to be on the Pic Mobert Reserve under the By-Law to Provide for the Health of Residents on the Pic Mobert Reserve and to Prevent the Spreading of Contagious and Infectious Disease be deemed as trespassers, and the police notified to remove them immediately.
3. That the following persons be deemed as trespassers under Point #2 above:
 - a. Shanna Simpson
 - b. Jessie McLaughlin
4. That this list of persons noted in 3 may be amended at any time by a simple motion of the Band Council as the situation warrants.
5. That the subject By-Law be amended to reflect these decisions.
6. That a record of these decisions be posted publicly and made available to the appropriate authorities.

Moved by: Jessica McWatch

Seconded by: Louis Kwissiwa

Carried

We do regret the need to identify specific persons but we felt that there was no choice. These persons, and possibly others, were not authorized to be here and in the spirit of safety and fairness to others, they will be required to leave until this lock-down is lifted. The Council will not step back from our duty to protect our citizens.

We are not sure how long this is going to last. It seems that there are some signs of hope around the world that lock-downs and social distancing are working, but it could be weeks or longer before life can go back to normal.

This will pass and our lives will carry on.

In the meantime, we hope that you will continue to support our efforts and work with us, not against us, in protecting our community from this terrible and deadly virus.

Miigwetch

Gimaa Kwe and Council