

## **Community Notice**

### **Results of the Community Input on our Nation's Leadership Structure**

We write to advise you of the results of input we received from the community with respect to our Nation's leadership structure.

#### **1. Events Leading up to the Leadership Structure Review**

In the 1970s our Nation returned to its traditional hereditary system of governance. Since then our Nation has been led by a council comprised of a hereditary chief (formerly Chief William Glendale, now his eldest son, William Gordon Glendale) and two elected councillors (Anne Glendale and Michael Jacobson Weston). Councillor Michael Jacobson was elected in September 2013 by a community vote held in Campbell River.

As the eldest son of former Chief William Glendale, Chief Gordon Glendale assumed the position of Chief after his father passed away on April 17, 2016. At that time, the community was informed of the Chief's passing and in 2013, as per our custom in the big house Gordon Glendale was stood up and recognized by everyone present as the next Hereditary Chief.

At a Community Update Meeting on September 24, 2016 some members raised for discussion a new model of governance that would involve a Hereditary Chief supported by a Family Heads leadership council. Under this governance structure every family would have a voice in how the Nation was governed. Some members expressed a preference for an election for all Council positions.

Based on the discussions and interest at the September 2016 Community Update Meeting, a meeting of the Hereditary Family Leaders was held in Alert Bay on November 17, 2016 to discuss the question of leadership that had been raised by some members of the Nation. Direction was given by the Hereditary Family Leaders to hold a membership meeting as soon as possible to ask the membership what they want for leadership.

#### **2. The Leadership Structure Review Process**

Shortly after the Hereditary Family Leaders meeting in November 2016, a Community Meeting Notice was circulated to members and posted on the Da'naxda'xw Facebook page to inform members that a meeting would be held on January 21, 2017 to gather input on whether or not our Nation should change our leadership structure, and specifically whether or not we should hold elections.

On December 21, 2016, our current leadership was served with an Application by two of our members who challenged the authority of the current leadership to govern our Nation, and sought an order that an election be held for Chief and Council.

It was determined to be in the interests of the members to continue with a member driven process to determine whether or not to change our leadership structure, and continued with the process. Therefore, a further notice of the already scheduled meeting was circulated in January 2017, and a detail agenda was provided shortly before the meeting.

The meeting was held in Campbell River on January 21, 2017, and facilitated by a third party neutral facilitator, Richard Dawson from Namgis First Nation.

The meeting was attended by 54 members. Members were asked to express their leadership structure preference including a) Hereditary Chief and two elected Councillors; b) Hereditary Chief supported by Family Leadership Council; c) Elected Chief and Councillors. Members were also given an option of having the Nation engage in a longer process to discuss the different options. Members were provided with a ballot to record their preference.

The majority of members at the meeting expressed a preference for option b), however given some of the members expressed an interest in more time to consider the issue - the time for providing input was extended to February 27, 2017. Many members expressed concern about having the Court and lawyers determining our leadership structure and were of the view any such decision should be made by the members.

### **3. Input from the Community on the Leadership Structure**

We received 82 completed ballots. Our community has 151 eligible voters. Therefore, over 50% of our members voted. Of the 82 ballots received:

- 0 voted to keep the current structure, Hereditary Chief and two elected Councillors
- 64 voted for the Hereditary Chief supported by Family Leadership Council
- 14 voted for Elected Chief and Council
- 3 ballots were submitted without indicating a preference

[note that adds up to 81 – so one vote is not accounted for. Also – please confirm you kept copies of all the ballots – you will need to show the election was not rigged – and an independent person collected / oversaw the count... can you tell me more about how that worked. We did receive one form in the mail post marked February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 this form was conveyed to Trish and Gordon over the phone by Molly Dawson and was counted the form is being sent to Richard Dawson]

### **4. Next Steps**

The outcome of this process is that the majority of our voting members would like to see a change in our governance structure to a Hereditary Chief supported by a Family Leadership Council.

As a result, we are asking that all the Family Heads contact either Trish Nolie (trish.n@danaxdaxw.com) or Molly Dawson ([molly@danaxdaxw.com](mailto:molly@danaxdaxw.com)) or the office 250-974-2703 to schedule a meeting to discuss how we will engage the community in deciding how to implement this new leadership structure.

We anticipate that shortly after this initial meeting, a community meeting will be held to invite input from the community on how to transition into this new structure and to develop a code for governance.