



## **SNGREC Political Update Oct 6, 2023**

### **SNGREC Nomination day**

On Saturday, September 23, at Community Hall, Six Nations of the Grand River held its nominations for the upcoming elections.

Earning nominations for Chief were Coun. Sherry-Lyn Hill, and former Chief Steve Williams.

There are 14 people running for 12 councillor positions. They are Cynthia Jamieson, Steve Williams, Hazel Johnson, Audrey Powless-Bomberry, Alaina Marie VanEvery, Melba Thomas, Amos George Key, Kerry Bomberry, Helen Miller, Greg Frazer, Carole Lesley Greene, Jennifer Lynn Murdock, Dean Earl Clark Hill, and Dayle Bomberry.

Because Williams was nominated for both Chief and councillor, he has 10 business days until Oct. 6) to declare which position he will run for.

The 59<sup>th</sup> SNGR election is on November 4 at Community Hall, with advanced polls on October 21 and 28. There will also be an online option.

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### **Voices Heard at Ottawa Rally**

Community members, as well as part of Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Council (SNGREC) had their voices heard in Ottawa, on September 20.

The contingent went by bus, thanks to the Chiefs of Ontario, in support opposing Bill-C53.

“This was a well-attended event,” Coun. Nathan Wright said. “Our voices were heard beyond where the rally was. We were able to meet with parliamentarians and talk to them about why we were there.”

Coun. Wright said that the Bill-C53 rally was not the only really going on that day. Despite that, their voices were heard.

“I really appreciated everyone who showed up,” Coun. Wright said.

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### **Walk the Tract Friendship Walk a Success**

The Walk the Tract Friendship Walk, that took place last weekend was a resounding success.

During the two stops a day over Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the event had numerous participants from our community, as well as many people from the neighbouring 38 municipalities that are connected to the Haldimand Tract.

Friday the event was in Fergus and St. Jacobs. Saturday was Waterloo and Brantford. And on Sunday the finale was in Cayuga and Port Maitland.

It was also well attended by political and educational dignitaries.

“It was so well attended,” Coun. Michelle Bomberry said. “This was a great example of being able to educate people.”

Coun. Greg Frazer agreed.

“There is a lot of ignorance about what the Tract is, and how the land goes and what it means to us,” Coun. Frazer. “This was a great opportunity to meet with leaders from other municipalities. There were some great conversations that took place.”

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### **SNGR introduces Nathan Wright as new Interim CEO**

Six Nations of the Grand River (SNGR) announces the appointment of Nathan Wright as its new Acting Chief Executive Officer (I/CEO).

After careful consideration, Wright was chosen for his proven leadership skills and dedication to the community. Wright was serving as a councillor and resigned from his post on Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Council earlier this week.

Not only has Wright’s leadership skills shone during his tenure as a councillor, but as Chief Operating Officer of the Chiefs of Ontario, and Executive Director with the National Indigenous Fire Safety Council.

“I am tremendously excited about this new role and serving the community in this capacity,” Wright said. “I’m looking forward to working with the executive team and staff to continue building a bright future for our community.”

Wright takes over the role from Darrin Jamieson, who is taking a one-year leave of absence which began on September 1, 2023. Jamieson’s decision was difficult to make, but it was one he made for the betterment of his health and wellness.



For the last three years in this position, Jamieson was instrumental in navigating SNGR staff and the community down a challenging path through the COVID-19 pandemic, while providing services, and developing long-term plans to serve the growing needs of the community. Wright plans to continue that, with a number of immediate tasks on his plate.

“We are happy to have Nathan step in and accept this position,” Chief Mark B. Hill said. “Nathan has shown great vision, leadership and communication qualities that will help him in this role. I would also like to wish Darrin all the best health and happiness in the world. Darrin is such a major piece of our successes at SNGR. He is a big part of our community. We can’t wait for his return. But first and foremost, we are happy that he is thinking about his own health and wellness.”

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### **Health Legislation Feedback**

Six Nations of the Grand River (SNGR) has concerns about the proposed Indigenous Health transformation policy and legislation drafting process.

SNGR has been following this process since it was announced in 2020, and we are troubled by the lack of nation-to-nation consultation and explicit accommodation for our sovereignty and inherent rights.

“The legislative proposal is set to be handed over to the Department of Justice for drafting without any input from the SNGR, Canada's largest First Nation, which is alarming to us,” Chief Mark B. Hill said. “As such, we are calling for a comprehensive array of opt out and optional exclusion clauses to be included in this legislation that would allow any First Nation that so wishes, including SNGR, to take control of the delivery of health and wellness services within our own community without any prejudice to Canada’s existing fiduciary obligations.”

SNGR believes the proposal will have three major implications for its community, as highlighted in the reports produced by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) through engagement and co-analysis.

The proposed legislation appears likely to change the current funding models and formulas for First Nations, without meaningful consent of our community.

“The broad and pan-Indigenous approach of this legislation is concerning to us,” Chief Hill said. “Historically, such approaches have not worked in favour of Six Nations of the Grand River. The overemphasis on a collective Indigenous identity, as opposed to recognizing the unique identities and needs of First Nations, raises concerns. We believe that this legislation may



impact the current dynamics between Six Nations of the Grand River, the Government of Canada, and the Government of Ontario.”

Changes to the way these governments inter-operate to deliver health and wellness services could be introduced suddenly without adequate time for First Nations to respond, which would have far-reaching consequences.

That is why optionality is a key principle that must be incorporated in whatever legislation is drafted over the coming months into spring of 2024.

First Nations must have the ability to enter into any new arrangement that is put together on their own terms, in their own time, and in accordance with their own particular needs.

“We require an explicit commitment to address the profound implications of this legislation on the Six Nations of the Grand River community,” Chief Hill said. “It is non-negotiable that our community's distinctive needs and rights be not only acknowledged but firmly enshrined in any legislation concerning Indigenous health.”

We insist on the incorporation of an exclusion clause within this legislation that unequivocally safeguards our sovereignty and inherent rights, and require a commitment to ongoing and substantive consultation with the Six Nations of the Grand River on all matters, without exception.

Finally, any benefits or improvements to health service delivery under this transformation process should be offered equally to all First Nations on an optional basis subject to their own needs and determination. Should Six Nations or any other First Nation opt out of any or all of the new system's parts or processes, there must be no jeopardizing of funding levels or any other benefit.

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### **Orange Shirt Day Event**

Friday was another great way for the community to come together in a different way during the SNGR Orange Shirt Day Event.

With Saturday being the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, SNGR and SNGREC staff handed out gift packages to those who came to the drive thru Family Night Game pack giveaway. The event was held at Oneida Business Park (50 Generations Dr.)

With an emphasis on spending time with your families, the contents of the gift bags included: Food/Snacks, Colouring Book, Custom Playing Cards, Card Game Guide Booklet, #EveryChildMatters Tote Bag, and a Sweetgrass Braid



“The event was a tremendous success,” Chief Mark B. Hill said. “It was nice to see many familiar faces. I really like the idea of card games and snacks as a way for families to spend time together on a day that is important for our community.”

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### **Chief Hill speaks about prosperity and green energy at Energy Storage Canada Conference**

On Tuesday, Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Chief Mark B. Hill was the keynote speaker at the Energy Storage Canada Conference in Toronto.

The speaking engagement allowed Chief Hill to show the rest of the country, and parts of the world, that Six Nations of the Grand River (SNGR) is at the forefront of green energy with the Oneida Energy Storage Project.

The Oneida Energy Project, which uses Tesla technology, is currently the largest battery storage project in the world.

“This means not only increased prosperity for our people, but a chance to demonstrate green energy leadership, as well as a forward path for First Nations economic opportunities,” Chief Hill said. “It means jobs, jobs, and jobs, as the project is not only partly owned by Six Nations as an equity partner, but will be built by Six Nations members, through our joint construction venture with Aecon, known as A6N, which has a 97% Indigenous work force.”

Chief Hill said that this project is not only groundbreaking and important for not only Six Nations but for many other First Nations.

“The Oneida Energy Storage Project is only the latest and most high-profile illustration of this new way forward,” Chief Hill said.

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### **Six Nations of the Grand River (SNGR) hires Dorothy Patterson as new CEPO**

The Six Nations of the Grand River (SNGR) is pleased to announce the hiring of Dorothy Patterson as the new Chief Electoral Polling Officer.

Patterson is the individual tasked with ensuring that the election process runs smoothly and that all eligible community members can cast their vote.

SNGR believes that this new hire will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position and will help to ensure that the election is fair and transparent. We look forward to working with Patterson as the new CEPO and wish them all the best in their new role.



“We are very happy to have Dorothy in this role,” SNGR Interim Chief Executive Officer Nathan Wright said. “This was a top priority as soon as I took this portfolio, and a position we needed to fill as soon as possible.”

Having a CEPO is crucial. Without a CEPO, there is a risk of the election results being called into question, which could ultimately undermine the integrity of the entire election. Therefore, it is essential to have someone in this position who is knowledgeable, experienced, and committed to upholding the principles of fairness and transparency.

The election for the 59<sup>th</sup> SNGR Elected Council, hosted by the CEPO based on the 2023 SNGR Election Code, is on November 4, with advanced polls available October 21 and 28, all at the Community Hall (1739 4<sup>th</sup> Line). If you have any questions related to the election, Dorothy Patterson is available at (519) 445-4204.