



July 2, 2024

Regional Chief Abram Benedict
Chiefs of Ontario
468 Queen St. E, Suite 400
Toronto, ON M5A 1T7

Re: AFN Executive Committee Portfolios

Dear Regional Chief Benedict:

Thank you for accepting the responsibility of overseeing the Safe Drinking Water portfolio and the Lands, Territories and Resources portfolio, which includes Additions to Reserve and Specific Claims.

Also encompassed in your portfolios is the Chiefs' Committee on Lands Territories and Resources. At times, with respect to the Lands portfolio, collaboration with your colleagues on the Executive Committee will be necessary, including Regional Chief Adamek in her duties as portfolio holder for Modern Treaties and Self-Government Agreements, and Regional Chief Teegee, as portfolio holder for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In accepting this mandate, you are entrusted with the responsibility to act in accordance with the principles and objectives of the AFN, advocating for the rights and interests of all First Nations. Your commitment to promoting unity, fostering collaboration, and ensuring the principles and ideals of the AFN Charter are maintained is of the utmost importance. In accordance with the AFN Charter, Article 18(9),

“The National Chief shall assign portfolios in a collaborative process with the Executive Committee and/or re-assign portfolio topics to Regional Chiefs serving on the Executive Committee to lead specific topics of work as required. Upon assignment, the Regional Chief shall report quarterly to the Executive Committee and the First Nations-in-Assembly as well as to their own Regions. If the Regional Chief fails to report quarterly, the National Chief may consider re-assigning the portfolio.

- a) The portfolio holder shall be responsible for leading the work of the portfolio as directed by resolutions from the First Nations-in-Assembly;
- b) The portfolio holder shall chair all Chiefs' Committee meetings that are associated with their portfolio and oversee the work of the Chiefs' Committee to ensure that all procedures and processes are being followed and maintained under the Terms of Reference, By-Laws and the AFN Charter."

Additionally, for your portfolio area, I ask that you to take on the following activities, supported by the AFN Secretariat:

- **Advocacy:** Actively engage with federal, provincial, and territorial governments to advocate for policies and initiatives that align with the interests and needs of the First Nations. Represent the concerns and aspirations of First Nations in various forums.
- **Unity and Collaboration:** Foster unity among First Nations and promote collaboration on matters of common interest. Work closely with other Regional Chiefs to strengthen the collective voice of the AFN.
- **Engagement:** Regularly engage with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, women, youth, veterans, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples through our Advisory Councils and other forums to understand their perspectives, needs, and concerns. Bring forward these insights to inform decision-making.
- **Capacity Building:** Work towards the empowerment and capacity building of First Nations. Collaborate with relevant partners to secure resources and support programs that enhance First Nations' well-being.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Maintain a high standard of accountability and transparency in your actions and decisions. Keep the Executive Committee informed about relevant developments, challenges, and opportunities.

As the lead portfolio holder, you will be supported by the AFN Secretariat and your work will be guided by resolutions approved by First Nations-in-Assembly that provide you with your mandate. Resolutions relevant to your portfolios include but are not limited to:

Safe Drinking Water

- 23/2022 – *Re-Commitment to Co-Development of Replacement Legislation for Safe Drinking Water for First Nations*

Lands, Territories & Resources

- 37/2023 – *Returning First Nations Lands through Additions to Reserve Reform*
- 39/2023 – *Repeal or Amend Legislation that Breaches First Nations Inherent and Treaty Rights to Natural Resources*
- 09/2020 – *Jointly Develop a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*

Financial support for travel will be supported by the AFN Secretariat, where funding is available and in accordance with AFN Finance policies.

I again thank you for accepting your role as the Portfolio holder for these areas and look forward to working with you to advance the work of the Assembly of First Nations.

Megwetch,



Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak
National Chief