

Director of Administration, Beth Ponka
Board of Directors Report
May 5, 2018

Financial

- we received our legal disbursements funding for this year and LAO has advised that more funds will be available for supplementary funding, if needed
- we received funding for two summer students – one through Canada Summer Jobs and one through Shooniyaa (Treaty 3) to keep Cheyanne on.
- I have been gathering quotes and information for potential renovations in our Thunder Bay and Marathon offices
- we have been putting together a proposed budget for the FEG funding
- all mandatory remittances for staff wages have been made
- recent changes to the *Employment Standards Act/Fair Workplaces Act* have caused us to revisit the issue of the bookkeeper as an independent contractor. We are reviewing the requirements.

Administration

- NRTP – MOA with Unions – memo attached for additional information
- this week our network drive began to show in the red zone for storage space. We are following up with IT
- we have been discussing file storage management to try to reduce the amount of paper that we have on hand. The CIMS program provides space on the LAO network for storing documents.
- there are updates and changes to CIMS coming very shortly. The first stage of changes are effective around the end of may and are supposed to improve speed. The second change includes updates and improvements for functionality and are expected in September.
- LAO is being audited by the Auditor General. Their staff visited our office earlier this week to get information about our services and relationship with LAO as a funder.
- I drafted a letter for the Chair of the Northern Executive Directors regarding our concerns about the distribution of the FEG funding. The northern region has received a total of \$855,000 of \$17.3 million, or about 4.9%. The formula used by LAO to distribute the funds fails to recognize the challenges in the North. The formula relies on Statistics Canada and tax-filer information, which tends to dramatically understate the numbers of Indigenous people and fails to acknowledge the depth of poverty in most First Nation communities.

Personnel

- we have been hosting a placement student from the Aboriginal Community Advocacy Program at Con College, Jessica Barry. I plan to offer her the summer student position and hope she can join us for the summer.
- Cheyanne is starting full-time next week, for the summer
- Victoria Methot completed her IPC placement with us in April
- Kim Facca is back at work
- Tracey Lasook is having hip surgery next week and will be off for 6 to 8 weeks
- Barb Kulifaj will be in next week to cover while the support staff are away at their annual training session in Toronto.
- Brittany Bouchard, our summer student for the last two summers, was accepted to the the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law. What an accomplishment!
- the annual evaluations for all staff are complete

Training

- the caseworkers and I attended the Northern Regional Training session in Sault Ste. Marie.
- the NRT support staff training session will be May 9 – 11 in Toronto.
- we had an internal training session, staff meeting, and wellness session for all staff (including branch office staff) this week
- all Thunder Bay staff participated in a session on Naloxone and our office now has Naloxone kits.

Board

- Louis attended the NRTP Steering Committee meeting on April 23 and stayed an extra day in SSM to participate in the Indigenous teaching session and the Native Issues Study Group. Louis has undertaken to give a traditional name to the NISG
- there are ongoing Board webinars. The next one is on Self-Evaluation, which our Board is scheduled to do in July. It's good timing and everyone is encouraged to participate and let us know if there are any issues/barriers to your participation
- Louis attended the Rural Roots Poverty Summit in Bracebridge last week. I'll let him give an update on that.

Community Development/Outreach

- we have recently joined discussions on an inter-clinic project for a Gladue pilot project. We are hoping to pool money to facilitate the hiring of a Gladue worker/writer to complete reports for Indigenous people applying for ODSP. The project will be based at a clinic in the southwest. We are hoping that perhaps there could be someone locally on retainer in the future.
- Melanie and Caycie did a session on Canada Child Tax Benefits at a session organized by the NOW Women's Centre
- the ID Action Group is meeting regularly to identify and address systemic issues in obtaining ID.
- some of our staff met with Bill Mauro to discuss the *Roadmap for Change* report and the need to implement the recommendations of the working groups, particularly raising social assistance rates and continuing to make improvements to the regulations.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Ponka