

Indigenous Advisory Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the IAC is to:

- a) To provide advice and recommendations to the Municipality of North Grenville on Indigenous aspirations, issues, and concerns.
- b) To support the Municipality in its efforts to honour and celebrate Indigenous peoples.
- c) To provide advice and recommendations on how to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two Spirited People.
- d) To promote and support reconciliation between Indigenous peoples, the Municipality, and the citizens of North Grenville.
- e) To promote reconciliation between municipal citizens and Indigenous peoples.

The Committee shall have regard to the shared priorities of the Community Strategic Plan, Committee Handbook, and Procedural By-Law.

Membership

The goal will be to have a Circle that is comprised of a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of nine (9) volunteer members. A staff person(s) from Corporate Services may also attend meetings as a liaison(s) to the Municipality. The majority of members shall be Indigenous.

In considering the appointment of members to the Committee, the Circle shall consider the following:

- a) The members of the IAC shall be Indigenous, ensuring that the perspectives and concerns of the Indigenous community are represented in the Circle's discussions and recommendations.
- b) The Circle shall consider the expertise and experience of potential members in relation to the mandate of the IAC. This may include experience in Indigenous governance, community development, or other relevant fields.

The Circle shall review applicants and make a recommendation to Council.

The Circle may by consensus remove any member of the Circle who is unable to fulfil their obligations.

Commitment

The Municipality has committed to receiving advice and recommendations from the IAC with respect and agrees to declare its allyship with Indigenous peoples. This relationship will be founded on an understanding of the sovereignty of the original Algonquin peoples and their legal interests in their lands as well as the other original peoples of Turtle Island that make this area home.

Facilitation of Meetings and Initiatives

The Circle members at each meeting will agree as to who will facilitate the discussion. At the end of each meeting the volunteer members will select a naamaadgei (helper) for the next month, inclusive of facilitating the next meeting. This person will be the point of contact for the next month.

The naamaadge will present the Committee's reports and recommendations to Council, as required with staff support.

Advisory Experts and Observers

The Circle may invite additional knowledge keepers and observers to attend a regular meeting(s) to support the work of the Circle.

Meetings

The Circle shall meet at least quarterly – either in person or via an accessible virtual platform. Additional meetings shall be held if necessary. Agenda packages will be sent out the week prior to the meetings and published on the Municipality's website. Draft minutes will be distributed by email to each Circle member by the Corporate Services department within one (1) week following the meeting.

Quorum

Quorum of the Committee shall be a majority of the appointed members.

Votes by the Committee will be held at regular or special meetings. Decision making of the group shall be by majority vote.

Decision Making

Decision making of the Circle will be by consensus in keeping with the seven grandfather teachings".

Department Jurisdiction

Corporate Services - The Director is responsible to ensure that all associated legislative responsibilities to the Circle are fulfilled.

Staff Contact

Director of Corporate Services

Administrative Support

The Clerk delegates authority to the Director of Corporate Services to provide minute taking. Agenda preparation and distribution will be done by the Director of Corporate Services in conjunction with the naamaadge and Clerk's division. The Clerk's division will post the agenda on the municipal website and via the meeting calendar invitation.

Budget

The Circle will prepare an annual work plan including budget requests ahead of the budget cycle. The Director of Corporate Services shall bring forward budget requests of the Circle as part of the Municipal budget process.

i The Ojibway word for “helper” is Naamaadge. Naamaadgekwe is used to describe female helpers. Naamaadgenini is used to describe male helpers. Naamaadge is used to describe members from the two-spirit community who do not want to be identified as female or male. All persons should be asked how they would like to be identified. The pronunciations are as follows:

Naamaadge = Nah-mahd-geh
Naamaadgekwe = Nah-mahd-geh-kwe
Naamaadgenini = Nah-mahd-geh-nee-neh

Source: Loretta King McDonald, Odawa, member of the Eagle Clan, Elder and Ojibway language teacher from the Wikwemikong Unceded Territory on Manitoulin Island.

ii The following Seven Grandfather Teachings will be used as a reference and may be altered by the Circle members as necessary. The Seven Grandfather Teachings are a set of Anishinaabe guiding principles passed down from generation to generation to guide the Anishinaabe in living a good life in peace and without conflict.

Guiding Principles

Many Indigenous organizations and communities have adopted the Seven Grandfather Teachings as a moral stepping stone and cultural foundation. Communities have adapted the teachings to suit their community values. Despite where the teachings originated, they share the same concepts of abiding by moral respect for all living things. The Seven Grandfather Teachings are among the most widely shared Anishinaabe principles because they are relatable and encompass the kind of morals that humanity can aspire to live by. They offer ways to enrich one’s life while existing in peace and harmony with all of creation.

The Story

The Creator gave spirits known as the Seven Grandfathers the responsibility to watch over the Anishinaabe people. The Grandfathers sent a Messenger down to earth to find someone to communicate Anishinaabe values. After searching in all directions, the Messenger found a baby. The Seven Grandfathers instructed the Messenger to take the baby around the Earth for seven years to learn the Anishinaabe way of life. After their return, the Grandfathers gave the baby, now a young boy, seven teachings to share with the Anishinaabe people; love, respect, bravery, truth, honesty, humility, and wisdom. Below lists each teaching in Anishinaabemowin and the linguistic breakdown of each word.

1. Debwewin = Truth

To speak only to the extent, we have lived or experienced. Commonly referred to as Truth.

- Deb = to a certain extent
- We = sound through speech
- Win = a way it is done

Truth is represented by the turtle as the turtle was here during the creation of Earth and carries the teachings of life on his back.

2. Dabasendiziwin = Humility

To think lower of oneself in relation to all that sustains us. Commonly referred to as Humility.

- Dabas = low or lower
- End = pertaining to thought
- Izi = state or condition
- Win = a way it is done

Humility is represented by the wolf. The wolf lives for his pack and the ultimate shame is to be an outcast

3. Manaaji’idiwin = Respect

To go easy on one another and all of Creation. Commonly referred to as Respect.

- Manaaji = to go easy on someone
- Idi = in a reciprocal way
- Win = a way it is done

Respect is represented by the buffalo. The buffalo gives every part of his being to sustain the human way of living. The buffalo respects the balance and needs of others.

4. Zaagi'idiwin - Love

Unconditional love between one another including all of Creation, humans and non-humans. Commonly referred to as Love.

- Zaag = to emerge, come out or flow out
- Idi = in a reciprocal way
- Win = a way it is done

The eagle represents love because he has the strength to carry all of the teachings.

5. Gwayakwaadiziwin - Honesty

To live correctly and with virtue. Commonly referred to as Honesty.

- Gwayak = correctly, straightly, and rightly
- Aadizi = he/she lives
- Win = a way it is done

Honesty is represented by either the raven. They both understand who they are and how to walk in their life.

6. Zoongide'ewin = Bravery or Courage

To live with a solid, strong heart. Commonly referred to as Bravery or Courage.

- Zoongi = solid, strong
- De'e = a form of heart
- Win = a way it is done Bravery is represented by the bear.

The mother bear has the courage and strength to face her fears and challenges while protecting her young. To face life with courage is bravery.

7. Nibwaakaawin = Wisdom

To live with vision. Commonly referred to as Wisdom.

- Ni = the soul within
- Waa = pertaining to sight
- Kaa = an abundance
- Win = a way it is done

The beaver represents wisdom because he uses his natural gift by altering the environment for his family's survival.