

KEY POINTS/TOPICS – Saskatoon Engagement, February 15th, 2024

GBA+ REFERENCE POINTS

- Our big society is protecting our people, women and children, and the land. What we want to see, we are starting to see today.
- There is no reference on the elders engaging proposed elements on the First Nation.
- Roles of Elders.
- COVID-19 security guards. They provided safety to the Elders and stopped drug dealers from entering the reserve.
- Elder engagement needed in proposed elements.
- Recognize the Roles of Elders.
- Tribunal levels are a good point to look at, everyone has elders that have knowledge and keepers. That is the best way for the government to speak to a community, is to sit down in a respectful manner with the elders.
- Include elements of harmony of the elders, when considering what kind of a policing model to use.
- Followers are talking about right and left wing. The elders didn't want to be a part of those wings.

EDUCATION, YOUTH, AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- Funding needed for Education and Capacity Building.
- Resources should go to the FN, rather than province, for capacity building.
- Education and Training for the youth to increase capacity building.
- Mentor Youth. Mentorship program is the missing piece.
- Legislation needs to recognize capacity building and recognition of law in provincial and federal courts.
- We need to be guiding our children properly; this whole system has not been helping our youth. They are not being heard and are being told what to do.

ELDERS

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INDIGENOUS POLICING, LAWS, TREATIES, AND THE LAND

- Recognize and implement culturally appropriate First Nations policing.
- Traditional laws - Incorporate traditional knowledge in policing communities.
- Law schools teach about policing in general. We can't separate the land and the people. Our systems existed before the RCMP.
- Recognizing indigenous law in the supreme courts; have Indigenous lawyers.
- Land Laws - We deal in extraction activities.
- Current laws are based on punishment, that is not our way.
- Incorporation of indigenous law (law-making authority over indigenous people)
- We made treaties with the plants and the animals; we have responsibilities and obligations because of that. We are obligated to our inherent treaties.
- Can't be a pan Canadian approach, must be an indigenous point of view.
- Our understanding of policing from an Indigenous worldview is a lot different than the colonial view.

LANGUAGE AND RE-BRANDING

- Mediation, not liking the term.
- Cultural Compliancy is too colonial and isn't in our language.
- Self-determination. Preamble language is reminiscent of minority language.
- We have to be careful with this language, it should be by our language and our law.
- Canada keeps coming up with new laws, which diminish our own free speech.
- ADR process to include First Nation languages and cultural processes.
- Create our own language, not even call it policing, define it in our own language.

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- Design the implementation based on our own indigenous language.
- The word “implementation” has no teeth on reserve. Common law has no teeth.
- The Elders literacy in English is low but their fluency in Cree is high.
- Example: Cree Court. There is a Cree judge, a Cree prosecutor, and a defence lawyer. The language is incorporated, and the customs of the region are taken into account.
- Ex. We don't call them security. We call them community patrols.
- Say Warriors, instead of police officers, no one wants to be called a cop, you know?
- There is stigma and trauma around these terms, ex. Social worker
- Our linguistic groups need to come out and help others to find ways to name these things in a good way. Because our language is powerful. It will have more meaning.
- Cree don't have the Cree word for reconciliation.

HISTORY

- Important to know the history of:
 - The Police Act 1990 and how it is designed for municipal police services, FSIN Peacekeepers Act and funding.
 - Reserve permits, how First Nation people were not allowed to vote until 1952, and the recent 29 recommendations from the recent James Smith Cree Nation inquest.
 - Government legislation and policy took over the First Nation people by enacting Indian Act causing: Enfranchisement, Prohibition of ceremonies, inability to hire a lawyer, Pass and permit system, Indian agents and farm instructors, Residential schools, Provinces and NRTA, Justice systems etc.
 - Policing, warrior societies, and processes that worked in the past.
 - What the crown has done to indigenous people is genocide.
 - SPCA 1865 – Animals have more rights than indigenous rights. More rights than women and other cultures.
 - Reconciliation, No one apologized for taking advantage of our lands.
- The schooling for the police force needs to include more Indigenous history, from the Indigenous perspective. To understand colonial violence, and why our communities are struggling. A week of cultural training is not enough.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION – FIRST NATION WAY

- Elders/Mediators can settle disputes.
- Start with a thanks ceremony, a pipe ceremony, so that it starts in a good way.
- Each individual party has to be there in order to result in it.
- Should take place on First Nations land.
- Have decision making leadership from the government at the table, with the Chief and Council.
- Includes first nation languages and cultural processes, and an incorporation of indigenous law (law-making authority over indigenous people)
- The spiritual advisors need to be at the table during dispute resolutions.

ISSUES WITH RCMP SERVICES

- The RCMP response time is too long, or not responding at all.
- Feel as though we are not a priority.
- It is difficult to work with them. The police turn on victim-blaming.
- RCMP are short staffed, underfunded, ill trained and ill equipped.
- “I work with gangs, and they call the RCMP the biggest gang in Canada.”
- Negative attitudes in police enforcement is a big issue in policing.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- The ownership is on the officer and community to build a connection.
- Law enforcement sees the maddest, baddest, saddest parts of the First Nations community and that results in a negative perception.
- Moving forward, we need more of the force to be dedicated to the First Nation, rather than be relocated after two years. Having those individuals in First Nations for a long period of time will build relationships.

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- Ex. of when RCMP got to know the community, there was a funeral, and the RCMP knew the individual and carried the casket in uniform.
- There's a lot of good city police officers. Again, there's also a lot of good indigenous people out there. You know, we have to be really careful that we just don't label everybody as being bad.
- I know that the RCMP are trying very hard to improve relationships between First Nations and the RCMP, and by and large I think they're doing a good job with that, and they're changing. As we go forward and start managing our own justice systems and our own police services, we will maintain that relationship with the RCMP and continue to work with municipal services like the Regina City Police in our case, and the Prince Albert City Police.