



Ch'iyáqtel Member Meeting
February 4, 2026
Community Hall

Present: Councillor Hayden Guilderson (Chair)
Chief Derek Epp (via videoconference) (Item 2)
Councillor Jennifer Janik
Councillor Anthony Malloway
Councillor Loren Muth (via videoconference) (Item 4)

Youth Council Jasmine Roberts

Guests: Dennis Marsden, Chief Executive Officer (CEO),
Shxw Kwimel Cha (Item 2)

Members Present (via videoconference):

Carli Brkich
Lahayla Charlie-Campbell
Tyler Epp
Aidan Fisher
Trina Hunt
Jessica Janik
Elly Janik
Ashley Kinkead
David Kirk
Corina Malloway
John Malloway
Justin Malloway
Nancy Malloway
Fred Noddin
Sheila Robinson
Melody Shewchuk
Denise Unger
Dion Weisbrod
Amelia Roberts
Colleen Deck
Jewel Weston
Lily Roberts
Mike Bonner
Sandra Bonner-Pederson

Members Present In-Person:

Debbie Malloway
Jason Roberts
Jasmine Roberts
Kyle Hall
Danielle Malloway
Sheree Epp
Troy Guilderson
Adam Kramshoj
John Kramshoj
Dan Bonner
Brandy Weisbrod

Minutes: Christel Guenette, Raincoast Ventures, Ltd.

CALL TO ORDER:

Councillor Hayden Guilderson called the Ch'iyáqtel Member meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER

Councillor Jennifer Janik provided an opening prayer.

1. WELCOME

Chair Hayden Guilderson noted that agendas were available in hard copy and displayed onscreen.

In response to a question regarding meeting minutes, Chair Hayden Guilderson informed that a representative from Raincoast Ventures Ltd. was in attendance to take the minutes. There were no minutes from the September 2025 gathering, as that meeting was an open house rather than a formal Membership meeting. Minutes from the prior Membership meeting exist and will be shared with Members.

MOTION 2026.02.04.01

It was moved by Tyler Epp and seconded by Troy Guilderson that the Ch'iyáqtel Membership Meeting accept the draft Ch'iyáqtel Membership Meeting Agenda dated February 4, 2026, as presented.

Motion passed.

Chair Hayden Guilderson noted that Chief Derek Epp and Councillor Loren Muth were absent. Council is focusing on shared accountability through a rotating Chair model for Council and Membership meetings to support governance training and leadership development. Chief Derek Epp was in Vancouver presenting to the federal Senate Standing Committee on First Nations Tax Commission legislative amendments, and Councillor Loren Muth was in the Yukon supporting the Tahltan, Kaska, and Taku River Nations on a transformative health declaration.

Chair Hayden Guilderson welcomed Councillors Anthony Malloway and Jennifer Janik.

2. INTRODUCTION OF SHXW KWIMEL CHA CEO – DENNIS MARSDEN

Dennis Marsden, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Shxw Kwimel Cha, introduced themselves and shared their diverse background in finance, banking, construction finance, policy development, advocacy, and Chamber leadership. The role of the CEO initially involved stabilizing and reviewing operations, followed by repositioning the organization for long-term success and growth.

Dennis Marsden provided a presentation on Shxw Kwimel Cha, noting the following:

- Governance and structure:
 - o Corporate bylaws and articles have been updated, and a formal, independent Board of Directors has been appointed
 - o The Board includes three Members, with one ex officio Council representative, and maintains a clear separation between governance and day-to-day operations
- Current assets and revenue streams:
 - o Existing assets include energy projects, land development initiatives, Vedder Crossing Plaza, and an upcoming land acquisition in partnership with other Nations
 - o These initiatives are beginning to generate revenue, with further growth anticipated
- Revenue Verticals:
 - o Land development: Focus on reserve land expansion, property management, and supporting Certificate of Possession (CP) holders in development and partnership opportunities
 - o Joint ventures and revenue sharing: Actively pursuing respectful partnerships with private sector and government projects, including revenue-sharing agreements and employment opportunities
 - o Healthcare: Advancing First Nations-owned health services, beginning with a mental health services acquisition that will provide immediate Member benefits and Nation service delivery

- Agritech: Exploring agritech, greenhouse expansion, and local food production opportunities
- Member-owned businesses: Identifying and promoting Member businesses, supporting entrepreneurs, tradespeople, artists, and youth through visibility, training, and business support
- 50-Acre Land Development:
 - Early-stage planning is underway, with full Membership engagement planned throughout the process
 - Infrastructure capacity, road access, and servicing requirements are being assessed in collaboration with the City of Chilliwack
 - All decisions will be made by Chief and Council, informed by technical advice and Member input.

Dennis Marsden noted that all initiatives will align with community values while delivering long-term economic and social benefits. The CEO was available to meet with Members in the office every Tuesday to Thursday, and remotely on Monday and Friday.

During discussion, comments were offered regarding:

- Importance of being mindful when considering future land purchase or business opportunities, particularly where other Nations have acquired land outside their traditional territories, and the need to remain aware of Additions to Reserve implications
 - Council confirmed that there are currently no land purchases outside Ch'íyáqtel's traditional territory
- Request to share the presentation slides
- Note that the work aligns with priorities identified through previous community engagement and the Community Comprehensive Plan
- Importance of transparency and communication with membership regarding economic development initiatives, including partnerships, acquisitions, and major projects
- Clarification that the CEO role is a separate position and that collaboration with related entities will occur as opportunities arise
- Confirmation that Membership engagement and two-way communication will remain central as initiatives progress, including future updates once confidentiality requirements allow.

Chief Derek Epp provided an overview of the recent casino acquisition, noting that it was a time-sensitive opportunity that arose when the Apollo Group, a publicly traded company, began divesting casino assets. Due to the nature of the transaction and strict non-disclosure agreements required of all seven Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribal Chiefs, there were significant limitations on what information could be shared publicly or internally through the process.

While broader engagement would have been preferred, the limited window to act required leadership at the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribal level to decide whether to proceed. All seven Nations ultimately agreed to pursue the acquisition, which was assessed as a strong investment with the potential to generate own-source revenue and long-term economic benefits for the Nations.

Improving communication and engagement is important moving forward. There are ongoing efforts to strengthen relationships between the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribal Council and individual Nations, including regular participation at community open houses, opportunities for Tribal leadership and staff to attend Membership meetings, and consideration of hosting a recurring "Tribes Day" to share information about Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribal initiatives and activities more broadly.

During discussion, comments were offered regarding:

- Confirmation that all seven Nations agreed to proceed with the casino acquisition and are currently working through the regulatory approval process, with most Nations also securing financing
- Concerns about the lack of membership engagement in the process, particularly given the potentially sensitive nature of a casino acquisition

- Recognition that confidentiality and non-disclosure requirements limited the ability to consult Membership
 - o There are differing views on whether such transactions should proceed without broader engagement
- Acknowledgement of the challenges leadership faced in balancing time-sensitive opportunities with transparency and community involvement
 - o How can similar processes be improved in the future?

3. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Chair Hayden Guilderson provided an update on the strategic plan, noting that Council, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and the management team participated in a week-long strategic planning session in November 2025. Fuselight was engaged to develop a graphic recording of the plan to improve clarity and communication.

The graphic recording was presented to staff in January 2026 and received positive feedback, with staff identifying strongly with its themes. The strategic plan reflects the Council’s continued shift to a governance-focused role, with administration leading operations. The central focus of the strategic plan is “Leading for Today, Tomorrow, and Future Generations,” with housing and community transformation identified as key priorities.

Councillor Jennifer Janik explained that the strategic planning graphic recordings reflect a shift from short-term thinking toward long-term community well-being. The role of economic development in reinvesting in community services and strengthening families is important. The mother figure in the graphic recording represents care, responsibility, and resilience, symbolizing Ch’iyáqtel’s role in supporting children, families, and future generations. The framework helps staff and Council better connect to the purpose of their work.

Chair Hayden Guilderson continued the update by outlining key governance priorities identified in the plan, including:

- Review of governance policies
- Consideration of expanding Council to seven members
- *Election Code* review
- Development of a new communications plan to strengthen coordination between Council, the CAO, management, and Shxw Kwimel Cha.

Chair Hayden Guilderson shared additional graphic recordings that reflected high-level strategy statements developed collaboratively with the management team, noting Council’s role to guide while relying on management as subject-matter experts for day-to-day operations. Membership remains at the centre of the strategic framework, with service to Membership as the core focus.

Chair Hayden Guilderson reviewed the 12-month Implementation Plan, noting plans for a community Forum in April 2026, with further engagement sessions planned twice annually.

Tyler Epp, Director of Community Services, informed Members of the opportunity to better utilize space and services by removing barriers to access. The Community Services Department is focused on understanding what Members actually want and need, rather than assuming priorities. Upcoming Community Forums were intended to create space for Members to provide direction, share needs, and help shape how programs and services are delivered, in coordination with other organizational initiatives. Clear communication is important so Members know whom to contact for specific services and issues. The goals of hosting community forums twice a year are to ensure Members lead the conversation, with Ch’iyáqtel responding and aligning its work with the direction provided by the community.

4. UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY LAND USE PLAN INITIATIVE UPDATE

Chair Hayden Guilderson provided an update on the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) Land Use Planning Initiative related to early visioning for the 50-acre lands. UFV geography students were engaged in developing high-level land-use concepts based on themes such as culture, housing, economic development, and food security.

One engagement session was held with approximately 25 Members, and Council and staff attended the students' final presentations in December 2025. While some concepts were narrow or not fully feasible on their own, the exercise generated creative ideas that may help support future Member discussions. The concepts are intended solely as visionary tools, not as finalized plans or decision-making documents. Once the final materials are received, they will be shared with the Membership for review, potentially at an upcoming Community Forum.

Councillor Loren Muth noted that the student concepts were limited by time and practicality, but they remain valuable for generating ideas. Once technical issues are resolved with receiving the materials, they will be printed and shared so Members can review them and provide input to support future engagement.

5. STATUS REGISTRATION UPDATE

Chair Hayden Guilderson provided an update on work related to status registration reform and the second-generation cut-off. Member input was gathered through meetings, outreach, social media, and informal discussions. This engagement resulted in several firsthand accounts highlighting lived experiences of registration inequities.

Funding was secured to support the development of a legal proposal, and work was completed in collaboration with legal counsel, including a review of *Indian Act* provisions and the identification of inconsistencies. The proposal, which was reviewed by Council, was submitted to Canada in early December 2025.

The proposal recommends moving toward a “one-parent rule” for status registration, aligning more closely with Ch'iyáqtel's *Membership Code*. It also explores the concept of individualized agreements between Canada and First Nations, recognizing that Nations are at different stages of capacity and service delivery and may wish to adopt approaches suited to their own circumstances.

Discussions have since taken place with federal representatives and other First Nations leaders, with interest expressed in the flexibility and potential impacts of the proposed approach. The work remains ongoing, with continued efforts planned to engage federal decision-makers.

During discussion, comments were offered regarding:

- Clarification on current Membership statistics, noting that of approximately 750 total Members, 612 are registered as status
- Data showing that 31% of registered status Members are classified as 6(2), meaning their descendants may be unable to pass on status under the current legislative framework
- Demographic trends indicating that 41% of the Membership is between the ages of six and 29, highlighting the potential for future population growth and the long-term impacts of status eligibility
- Concerns that, without reforms, the proportion of status Members may decline over time, even if overall Membership continues to grow
- Recognition that many funding programs remain tied to status numbers, creating potential financial impacts if status Membership decreases
- Goal of Ch'iyáqtel to reduce reliance on external funding.

6. FISH STREAM UPDATE

Chair Hayden Guilderson provided an update on the fish stream located at the base of Promontory Mountain, near Stoney Creek and Spath Landing developments. The Lands team continues to actively lead this work. While habitat restoration and fish protection remain key priorities, drainage and flood mitigation concerns have become more prominent, particularly following winter conditions and historic water flow issues in the area.

The Lands team has engaged with qualified professionals, including registered biologists and hydrologists, and continues to work in partnership with the Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance. Ongoing efforts include fish surveys during spawning seasons, water-quality monitoring, habitat improvement planning, and assessment of overall creek function to ensure it supports fish habitat and flood-mitigation objectives.

Councillor Anthony Mallowy shared an update on regional fishery discussions, noting that meetings have slowed during the winter months. The 2025 season saw improved fishing opportunities, including extended Sockeye access, though challenges with openings and coordination remained. There is a need for improved communication with Members, particularly around fishing rights, licensing information, and access to fisheries in the Chilliwack River system. Councillor Anthony Mallowy suggested creating a dedicated fisheries section on Ch'iyáqtel's website to share clear, timely information and support Members in exercising their fishing rights.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

a) Youth Council

Chair Hayden Guilderson introduced the newly appointed Youth Council and expressed appreciation for the interest shown by youth applicants. While three positions were initially posted, five qualified applicants were selected for their diverse backgrounds and strong community representation. The Youth Council consisted of Jasmine Roberts, Julissa Joe, Richard Malloway, Jamie Ritchie, and Red Moon Roberts. The Youth Council's first meeting will be scheduled shortly.

Jasmine Roberts introduced themselves and expressed willingness to support and connect with community members.

Chair Hayden Guilderson emphasized the importance of the Youth Council as part of leadership development and succession planning, highlighting the value of continued mentorship, participation in meetings and conferences, and growth opportunities. A future ceremony is being considered to formally recognize and honour the Youth Council members and their achievements.

b) Member Suggestion

A Member suggested inviting Steve Clegg, Lands Stewardship Manager, Skowkale, Aitchelitz, Yakweakwoose (S.A.Y.) Lands Office, to present at a future meeting on the habitat restoration work along Chilliwack River Road. The project shows a transformation from its early stages to its current state and could provide insight and inspiration for similar restoration work in Ch'iyáqtel.

c) Member Concerns

Members shared comments on transparency, long-term planning, and future impacts of Council decisions. Appreciation was expressed for the openness and professionalism of Chief and Council, while noting Members' concerns about limited engagement on time-sensitive economic opportunities, such as

the casino acquisition. It was acknowledged that fast-moving corporate decisions and confidentiality requirements can make engagement challenging, and that clearer communication around timing and constraints may help address concerns.

Questions and comments were raised regarding long-term projections for CP lands, including lease tracking, future redevelopment, and protections for cultural and spiritual sites as surrounding development increases. It is important to support CP holders not only today but also for generations to come, including maintaining lease records, planning for lease expiry, and helping future heirs understand and reclaim their lands when leases end.

Chair Hayden Guilderson clarified that support for CP holders focuses on helping Members navigate development responsibly, ensuring protections are in place, and giving the Nation a stronger seat at the table when development occurs. Improved tracking, early succession conversations, and long-term lease planning are important areas to continue strengthening.

Concerns were expressed regarding future Membership and status trends, funding implications, and the need for long-range projections to understand how demographic shifts may affect services and governance. Council reaffirmed its commitment to transparency, accountability to Membership, and continued dialogue on these issues. No question raised is inappropriate, and feedback is valuable for future planning.

8. NEXT MEETING

This item was not considered at the meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

2026.02.04.02

It was moved by Brandy Weisbrod and seconded by Troy Guilderson to adjourn the Membership meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Motion passed.