

Stó:lō Collective – 21 Communities

April 3, 2025 | 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Shxwhá:y Village Cultural Centre
Meeting Notes

Present:

Aitchelitz - Athelets	Councillor Leona Sam
Cheam	EA, Nicholas Point – Chair
Chawathil	Audrey George Councillor Rhoda Peters (Zoom)
Chehalis - Sts'ailes	Councillor Kelsey Charlie
Scowlitz - Sq'ewlets	Chief Joseph Chapman
Seabird Island	Councillor Rod Peters
Shxw'ōwhámél	Si:yam Lenora Fraser Lands Manager Angie Dick CAO Cassandra Manley (Zoom)
Shxwha:y Village	Chief Robert Gladstone
Skawahlook - Sq'ewá:lxw	Councillor Jenn Carmen (Zoom) Managing Director Sharron Young Office Manager Michael Suedfeld
Skowkale - Sq'ewqéyl	Chief Darcy Paul
Skwah - Sqwá	Chief Johnathon Prest Councillor Ron Williams (Zoom)
Tzeachten - Ch'iyáqtel	Councillor Hayden Guilderson (Zoom)
Yakweakwioose - Yeqwyeqwí:ws	Councillor Nikki LaRock Administrator Tyriesha LaRock

Guests

Project Coordinator	Val Sam
Executive Assistant	Kelly Willmets
Administrative Support	Abby Duncan

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

1.0 Agenda accepted as presented. Meeting hosted by Shxwhá:y Village

2.0 Introduction

3.0 February 13, 2025 meeting notes accepted as presented

Meeting summary for Stó:lō Collective Meeting (04/03/2025)

The meeting was chaired by Nicholas Point, with representatives from various nations discussing the adoption of meeting notes, decision-making mechanisms, and scheduling the next meeting. The attendees also reviewed the transfer of properties from the Province to Stó:lō Nation, discussed the management of archaeological sites, and explored potential uses for the St. Mary's residential school site. The group also discussed decision-making processes, quorum requirements, and the importance of cultural sensitivity and healing during the demolition process.

Next steps

- All communities to appoint a council member and an administrative person as main points of contact for the Stó:lō Collective administrative staff.
- Val to reach out to each nation to discuss their preferred decision-making option for the Stó:lō Collective
- Abby to resend the email regarding the St. Mary's demolition BCR to all communities.
- Val to follow up with communities on obtaining the St. Mary's demolition BCRs.
- All communities to submit their decision on the quorum number for the Stó:lō Collective by the next meeting.
- Shxw'ōwhámél to host the next meeting on May 1st at 10 AM.
- Kelly and Abby to share Val's contact information with all communities.
- All attendees to sign the sign-in sheet before leaving.

Summary

Meeting at Shxwhá:y Village Cultural Center

The meeting was to be chaired by Chief Darwin, who was unable to attend and was replaced by Nicholas Point. The attendees included representatives from various nations. The meeting focused on reviewing previous meeting notes, discussing a decision-making mechanism, and scheduling the next meeting. The attendees also shared their introductions and expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to meet and collaborate. The meeting was held at the Cultural Center at Shxwhá:y Village, and the attendees were provided with coffee and refreshments followed by lunch.

Project Coordinator Leads St. Mary's Building Discussion

In the meeting, Val Sam led the discussion on the agenda adoption and the history of the St. Mary's Building situation. The team reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting and adopted the agenda. They also discussed the need for a decision-making mechanism and the appointment of Council members and administrative persons from the 21 communities. The team also reviewed a PowerPoint presentation about the properties and discussed the jointly held reserves. The conversation ended with the adoption of the minutes and the agenda.

Stó:lō Nation Property Transfers Discussed

Project Coordinator discussed the transfer of properties from the Province to Stó:lō Nation, including Coqualeetza, Pekw'xe:yles, and Xá:ytem. Coqualeetza was recently transferred and is now a reserve, a process that took 20 years. Pekw'xe:yles was also added to the reserve, and a celebration was held. Xá:ytem is a heritage site held in common as fee simple through the Stó:lō Heritage Trust Society. Project Coordinator also mentioned the potential for meetings and tours at the heritage site.

Coqualeetza and Xá:ytem Properties Overview

The group discusses two properties: Coqualeetza and Xá:ytem (Hatzic Rock). Coqualeetza is described as a beautiful, centrally located property in Chilliwack with multiple buildings serving various purposes for the Stó:lō Service Agency. Xá:ytem is an archaeological site with significant historical importance, featuring pit houses and an interpretive center. The group notes that the Addition to Reserve process for these lands has been completed. They also discuss the current management of Xá:ytem, including its use for school district tours and events, with SSA Administrative support from SSA soon to be the main contact for bookings. Ron raises a question about liability insurance for student visits, which is confirmed to be in place.

Heritage Park Land Status Discussion

Members raised questions about the status of Heritage Park, the changeover of lands to fee simple land held by Leq'a:mel, Matsqui & Sumas. Questions arose on the consultation with other nations. Members also inquired about the history of Heritage Park and the surrounding properties. The group discussed the transfer of land from federal to provincial lands and the involvement of other nations in the process. They also discussed the need for a joint management agreement and a decision-making model for Xá:ytem and Coqualeetza. The group agreed on the importance of notifying local municipalities about the change in status of lands.

Hybrid Meeting Format and Decision Mechanism

The Project Coordinator proposed a hybrid meeting format to maintain momentum and suggested rotating locations with the necessary technology. The Project Coordinator expressed support for a unified Stó:lō leadership and emphasized the importance of clear territorial boundaries. The Project Coordinator also highlighted the need to ensure that the current initiative is not being discussed at other tables to maintain focus and momentum. The discussion then shifted to the decision-making mechanism, with a

focus on the number of nations required to make decisions on the properties. The current options include 50% plus one (11 nations), 75% (15 nations), or all 21 nations.

Future of Properties and Cultural Preservation

The team discussed the future of their properties, considering both economic opportunities and cultural preservation. They agreed on the importance of building consensus and finding common ground for their goals. The idea of creating a decision-making mechanism, possibly in the form of a terms of reference, was proposed. The team also discussed the potential for a cultural healing and wellness center, with a focus on holistic healing methods and community unity. The idea of utilizing the lands for a common healing place and gathering space for all people was also brought up.

St. Mary's Residential School Site Future

The discussion focuses on the future of St. Mary's residential school site and potential uses for the land. A residential school survivor expresses interest in the plans for demolishing the buildings, which are set to begin no earlier than 2027 due to current tenant agreements. The group discusses the importance of documenting the site before demolition and conducting spiritual work. They also explore ideas for future use of the land, including building an arbor for gatherings and powwows, creating pit houses for cultural and tourism purposes, and potentially establishing a wellness facility to address addiction issues in the community. The conversation emphasizes the need for cultural sensitivity and healing during the demolition process.

Healing Through Residential School Demolition

Ron expressed his support for Nikki's statement about the importance of following the dreams and ideas of their elders. He also shared his personal experience of his father's emotional response to a video of a friend from their residential school days, which opened up a long-closed door of healing. Ron emphasized the need to break the cycles of addiction and the ripple effects of residential schools on families. He suggested the need for a celebration upon the demolition of the St. Mary's facility, which he believes will start the healing process. Leadership echoed Ron's sentiments, emphasizing the importance of leadership coming from one's soul and the need to balance remembering the past with building a better future.

Quorum Requirements and Future Projects

The group discusses decision-making processes and quorum requirements for their meetings and future land development projects. They agree to have Val reach out to each nation to discuss their preferred decision-making options and to collect Band Council Resolutions (BCRs) regarding the St. Mary's property demolition. The group also decides to have each nation appoint representatives for the committee, including a council member and an administrative person. They set the next meeting for May 1st at Shxw'ōwhámél maintaining a monthly schedule and agree to continue working on action items in the interim.

Meeting concluded.