

Community Report

December 3, 2019

Sucker Creek First Nation

About the Recipient Appointed Advisory (RAA)

I obtained my Certified General Accountant (CGA) designation in 2010, in addition to my Bachelor of Business Administration and Criminal Justice Degrees from the University of Winnipeg where I graduated in 2005. In 2016 I was the recipient of the "Afro Canadian Heroes Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award". I started my accounting career in 2006 working as a Junior Accountant in Winnipeg with a small Public Practice CGA firm with a predominately not for profit client base. In 2008 I moved to Edmonton Alberta and began working at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) as an Income Tax and GST Auditor. Work experience with the CRA provided hands on experience with the Canadian Taxation system; an invaluable skill which has been extremely beneficial. After 5 years learning and working with the CRA I decided to leave in pursuit of other opportunities. Leaving the CRA I took a position with KPMG LLP as an Indirect Tax Specialist providing tax advisory services to clients of the firm which included Universities across Canada and health Care facilities throughout Alberta. Subsequently I went and worked for the Alberta Provincial Government as an auditor with the First Nation Development Fund

In 2014 Meagan Schroder my business partner and former colleague at CRA (both from 2008 to 2013) took the necessary steps to open our own public practice "Roth Schroder Professional Corporation". At the time both Meagan and I were working as Corporate Financial Controllers in the Oil and Gas and Construction industries respectively. About Meagan Schroder CPA, CGA. Meagan is a member of Bigstone Cree Nation and grew up in the Slave Lake, Wabasca area. Meagan left home to attend NAIT where she earned her Accounting Diploma in 2006 and Business Administration in 2008, In 2010 she earned her Certified General Accountant (CGA) designation. In 2017 Meagan won the Spirit of NAIT Award. Meagan leads the operations of the firm, she maintains the day to day, manages the staff and future expansion. She thrives working with our Corporate and personal Tax clients and manages the monthly bookkeeping clients as well and works with our CRA advisory Clients.

Facebook Post

I do not have access to the Facebook page. However, it has been brought to my attention that former employees of the Nations administrative office are posting misleading information online. When employees commence employment with the Nation office, they sign a code of confidentiality which is effective during their terms of employment and remains in effect after. The purpose of that document is to ensure former employees who may be upset about their termination do not present information to the community that is misleading. It's important to address some of the misleading comments online, given the current employees are bound by confidentiality and many of the comments are becoming upsetting as they undermine the hard work the staff at the office do everyday.

1. To date only one Director has been terminated from SCFN. We have had directors move on to pursue another opportunity and we have had directors who left for personal reasons.
2. Non-senior staff terminations have been due to department restructuring or for just cause.
3. SCFN is not in third party.
4. SCFN was provided a grant by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to cover the RAA contract, no additional funds from any department are required to supplement the RAA contract. The terminology in the funding agreement ties the funding to the RAA contract and therefore cannot be used for any other purpose.
5. When a SCFN former employee breaches confidentiality, under section 2.8 of the Operations, Policies and Procedures Manual it effects their future employment eligibility with the Nation.
6. No new policies have been created at SCFN, the policies in place are just being enforced.

Duties of the RAA

Taking on the role of RAA I agreed to administer certain key functions which ISC deems necessary to transition the Nation out of RAA status. Since taking on the RAA responsibilities no new policies have been put in place. The existing policies however have been enforced. In order to successfully see SCFN out of RAA status I must uphold these policies and follow them. I expected the staff to follow them and therefore as their direct report, I too myself must follow them, not following these policies would inevitably lead the Nation into third party and that is not the goal. I understand enforcing the policies is a change to the community at large, however if I wasn't following them then I would not be doing the job. When I took on the role, I was aware enforcing policies would unfortunately eventually cause disturbance in the community, but staying this course is key to my departure.

With respects to the current RAA status, SCFN is moving forward on the path to no longer being under an RAA. The key element to be successful is demonstrating and adherence to the Policies and Procedures.

The RAA agreement as written has me onsite one day per week for cheque signing and the week of Band Intake and Council. Currently I am onsite Tuesday and Wednesday each week and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during the Band Intake/Council week. When I am not onsite, I still work for SCFN to approve expenditures, reviewing reports, supporting administrative staff. A lot of work is done from my office in Edmonton. I also attend meetings with Chief and Council in Edmonton and arrange meetings to move Council initiatives forward.

Below I have listed the takeaway items from the RAA contract, I will have the contract posted on the SCFN website, a copy of the contract was handed out at the Community Meeting when I started. There is also a draft of the SCFN strategic Plan on the Website. Going forward we will make sure to post more updates, so the community is informed on what is being done at the administrative office.

GOVERNANCE:

- Assist C&C to draft BCR to ensure funds are spent for intended purposes
- MAP: Global Performance, Capacity Development, Deficit Reduction, MAP Update, Legal Matters
- C&C Training Plan
- Develop management, administrative and decision-making systems of all of the Council's operations that will help address or remedy the cause of intervention.

FINANCE:

- Implement and monitor Financial Management Policy
- Ensure obligations in Financial Management Agreement are met
- Approve all purchases & disbursements
- Financial statements, Budget and information on financial commitments
- Oversee the daily financial operations and control of the funded programs; operations & services to the community.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

- Policies & Regulations
- Day to day supervisory and staffing decisions, staffing levels, changes to salary
- Review qualifications, job descriptions & performance, retain qualified staff

STAFF TRAINING:

- Financial, operational, program management and adherence to policy.

Human Resources

We are actively working to fill the vacant roles. We have faced many challenges. The current hiring process is as such under Section 2.4 Recruitment and Selection of the Operations, Policies and Procedure Manual. When it pertains to hiring a Director (Senior Management) all Chief and Council are involved.

Selection

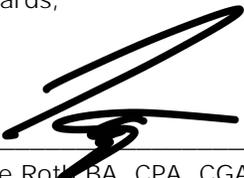
1. Senior Management shall be hired by a committee comprised of members of the Chief and Council. Outside resources shall be used in this selection process as deemed necessary by the Chief and Council. The decision as to the successful candidate will be made by the full Chief and Council.

2. The Nation Manager and a Chief and Council representative (e.g. Portfolio Holder) shall be involved in selecting all supervisory positions.
3. The Nation Manager and the applicable supervisor shall be involved in selecting full-time and part-time staff.
4. The applicable Supervisor, in consultation with the Nation Manager, shall select part-time, wage, relief and seasonal staff.
5. All selection decisions shall be made solely based on the candidate's ability to carry out the responsibilities of the position and the candidate's potential development.

Moving Forward

1. SCFN was approved for an additional 5 years of Block Funding by successfully completing the GA Part C. The GA Part C is the General Assessment to determine the Nations risk level.
2. The administrative office has moved to a new operating system called Xyntax, the transition will take a little time and we expected to have face challenges as you do with any new system transition, but here are some of the benefits:
 - a. Submit electronic request for home repairs
 - b. Members will be able to access the community profiles
 - c. All administrative staff will be working in the same system
 - d. Cross departmental information sharing
 - e. Streamlined operations
 - f. Electronic approvalsNot all features will be turned on instantly but as the office get more comfortable new features will be released.
3. Online Policies and Procedures Portal, the policies are all being moved to an online portal. The community will have access to the portal to review polices and procedures.
4. Working on Accreditation for the SCFN Daycare
5. Project Opal in currently being signed off on which will bring additional revenues to the Nation
6. Working on funding to construct a Multiplex for SCFN.

Regards,



Tope Rotimi BA, CPA, CGA.