



Office of Chief and Council Government of Siksika Nation

Siksika Nation Chief and Council Update: August 2021

Chief and Council participates in the Strathmore Stampede Parade 2021

(August 2, 2021 – Siksika Nation) Siksika Nation Chief and Council participated in the Strathmore Stampede 2021 parade this past weekend in Strathmore, Alberta.

Councillors Reuben Breaker, Susan Solway and Samuel Crowfoot joined Siksika Nation members including Melodie Ayoungman, mother of the late Kristian Ayoungman who was tragically killed in 2019.

Chief and Council joined Ayoungman and the family who all wore the signature green jersey with the number 14 to honour the young man who was well known as a hockey player, a champion powwow dancer and a role model in the community.

The float included banners acknowledging the resilience of Siksika Nation with the hashtag #SiksikaStrong and the 'Every Child Matters' slogan, an affirmation of Siksika Nations commitment to raise awareness of the residential school experience and to ensure that every child matters in our work moving forward. Siksika Nation Chief and Council would like to thank all who came out to support Melodie Ayoungman and family.

Community update on the work taking place at the former Crowfoot School location

(August 3, 2021 – Siksika Nation) Clean up and renovations will begin this week at the former Chief Crowfoot School location that will include a thorough clean-up of the site, demolition of old buildings and the construction of a much-needed community centre. The work will begin August 3rd under the lead of Siksika Resource Developments Ltd and will include several phases. The first phase is primarily demolition work and will include asbestos clean-up areas, removal and organization of equipment from the school and hauling disposable and hazardous materials to appropriate land fill. It is expected to wrap up in early September.

This work will also serve to prepare the site for the upcoming Indian Residential School search for unmarked graves that will take place in Siksika in the coming months and will include several locations including this location. Siksika Nation Chief and Council and Siksika Health Services are working in collaboration with the University of Alberta to carry out the Ground Penetrating Radar work required to complete the search and are taking the necessary steps to ensure these sites are adequately prepared. Blackfoot Construction Contracting will work closely with Dr. Kisha Supernant, Director of the Institute of Prairie Technology with the University of Alberta in the clean-up efforts to ensure the area will not be compromised or negatively impact the Residential school work.



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On June 30 and July 1, 2021, Dr. Kisha Supernant, Dr. Ave Dersch, and William (Liam) Wadsworth, all from the Institute of Prairie and Indigenous Archaeology at the University of Alberta, were invited to come down to Siksika to assess areas around former residential schools and agency schools. The purpose of the visit was to get familiar with the different locations, to see what remote sensing methods (including GPR and drone-based sensors) would work, and to make recommendations to the Nation about how to approach searching these areas to locate unmarked graves. No remote sensing data was formally collected on this visit.

On July 28 and 29, 2021, Dr. Supernant returned to Siksika to discuss ways to move forward, as well as visited the area where some construction work will be happening at the old Crowfoot elementary school and to see how well the GPR might work in that area. Again, no formal remote sensing data was collected.

MEDIA RELEASE: Siksika Nation and Canada sign Memorandum of Understanding to help create a roadmap for renewing their relationship August 9, 2021 — Ottawa, ON — Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada – Siksika Nation

Working collaboratively to renew the Nation-to-Nation relationship based on the affirmation of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership is key to advancing reconciliation with First Nations in Canada.

The Government of Canada and Siksika Nation have achieved a key milestone on the path of reconciliation today by signing a Memorandum of Understanding that will help guide the parties as they move forward together as Treaty partners to renew their Nation-to-Nation relationship based on community priorities.

Under this co-developed Memorandum of Understanding, the parties will work together to explore new ways to advance Siksika Nation's vision of greater self-determination for the benefit of their community. The Memorandum of Understanding outlines the next steps in the process and topics for exploratory discussions between the parties.

The goal is to work together in a spirit of mutual respect and co-operation toward practical and forward-looking arrangements to strengthen the Treaty relationship, implement Siksika Nation's right to self-determination and advance Siksika's vision and priorities. The parties also commit to working together toward a new fiscal relationship to help promote the economic, cultural and social well-being of their children, families and communities.

Quotes

"We look forward to developing a new fiscal arrangement with Canada. One that will fulfill the true spirit and intent of the Treaty. One that will address many issues that have long been underfunded or overlooked. We will be working together, Nation-to-Nation, to develop



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mutually acceptable terms and take measures to obtain a formal negotiation mandate, which will build a foundation for success for Siksika Nation.”

Nioksskaistamik, Chief Ouray Crowfoot Siksika Nation

“Today is important for renewing our Treaty relationship with Siksika Nation. Sincere gratitude and congratulations to Chief Ouray Crowfoot and Council for your leadership and dedication. This Memorandum of Understanding sets the stage for discussions focused on advancing Siksika Nation’s right to self- determination, policing and community safety, language and cultural retention and education and training. We are proud to work in partnership to advance Siksika community priorities on their path to self-determination.”

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P. Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

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Chief and Council meet with Bishop William McGrattan

(August 11, 2021 – Siksika Nation) Siksika Nation Chief and Council invited Bishop William McGrattan and Delegation from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary to meet on August 9th, 2021 at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park to establish ways to rectify the relationship between Siksika Nation and the Catholic Church who have a long-standing history together that includes Indian Residential Schools (IRS) as well as a devoted following comprised of Siksika Nation members.

“We want to work together as a Nation and we want to start the healing process but at the same time if we are going to have a real move forward with the Catholic Church, you need to have that acknowledgement across the entire Catholic Church.” expressed Chief Ouray Crowfoot.

The following priorities identified in the meeting included the demolition of the old rectory and convent in Siksika, the maintenance of Holy Trinity Church, historical records and research as



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well as supporting the healing and memorialization of Residential school survivors from Siksika. The meeting also addressed the upcoming IRS search for unmarked graves that will take place in Siksika and will include several locations including the site of St. Joseph Residential School Grounds.

Leadership also indicated that they do not condone the actions of those who attempted to set fire to two churches in Siksika this past June and highlighted the need for an improved relationship between the Nation and the Church as there are a number of Nation members who are devout members of various denominations including the Catholic and Anglican faith-based religions.

Bishop William McGrattan conveyed his gratitude for the invite and looks forward to working with Siksika on a new path moving forward, "I come with great hope. I believe that we need to begin locally and we need to start in small ways and this is the first reception and willingness of a First Nation in our Dioceses to meet and I think that is both courageous and I also see this as an opportunity to re-build trust and that takes a long time so these are small ways I hope during this meeting that we can begin to establish this path moving forward, to rectify, but more to improve the future, especially for young peoples and families and that is something that we should share together, not only as a church but as a country."

The meeting also included Siksika Nation Councillors; Kendall Panther Bone, Tracy McHugh, Jenny Goodin, Wade Healy and Ike Solway and a delegation from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary that included Fr. Wilbert Chin Jon – Vicar General, Fr. Kevin Tumback – Vicar General, Alejandro Henao, Carol Hollywood, Fr. Long Vu – Pastor, Deacon Roger Nelson, Maurice Running Rabbit – Parish Council and support staff. The meeting wrapped up with a tour of the site of St. Joseph Residential School Grounds and the Cemeteries at the St. Mary's Church Parish Hall in Siksika.

COMMUNITY RELEASE: Siksika Nation & Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada come to tentative agreement regarding 1910 Wrongful Surrender claim

(August 13, 2021 – Siksika Nation) Siksika Nation and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada negotiators have come to a tentative agreement today regarding a negotiated settlement to resolve the 1910 Wrongful Surrender claim. This is a historic moment and represents more than sixty years of efforts by Siksika Nation to seek redress from the Crown.

The next stage of the process is to finalize the technical details of the negotiated settlement and prepare the terms of the arrangement for release to the Siksika Nation community. The terms of the negotiated settlement remain confidential. At the appropriate time, the terms of the settlement will be presented for community engagement and ratification by the Siksika Nation members.



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This builds on the Memorandum of Understanding signed last week to explore new ways to advance Siksika Nation's vision for greater self-determination for the benefit of their community and promote the economic, cultural and social well-being of their children, families and communities.

Quote:

Chief Ouray Crowfoot,

"Siksika Nation has been involved with this claim for over sixty years. There have been many Chiefs & Councils who have made great strides with Canada on this case. Our Council team has worked tirelessly with Canada to secure the best benefit for Siksika Nation. We feel the settlement agreement will provide benefits for Siksika Nation members immediately and for generations to come. We acknowledge those who made sacrifices before us and we called on those ancestors for strength and guidance every time we met with Canada regarding this important work."

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P. Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

"We recognize the perseverance and dedication of the Siksika Nation and the hard work of negotiators for both parties, in coming to an understanding today to resolve the 1910 surrender claim. While there is still more work ahead to finalize the agreement and provide the opportunity for community members to have the final say on the agreement, this is an important step forward. We look forward to our ongoing work with Siksika Nation towards meaningful reconciliation."

Siksika Nation celebrates Langdon Days 2021

(August 21, 2021 – Siksika Nation) Siksika Nation Chief and Council were invited to participate in the Langdon Days parade on August 21st, 2021 as Parade Marshals. Chief Ouray Crowfoot and Councillors Kent Ayoungman and Susan Solway represented Siksika Nation alongside youth ambassador Miss Teen Siksika Annie McMaster for the annual event that takes place in the neighbouring community of Siksika.

"We were invited to lead the Langdon Days parade as the parade marshals, and to provide a blessing this afternoon. The community association recognizes that this is Blackfoot territory and wanted to be respectful. Breaking barriers and building relations are key to the anti-racism message; to be visible in the local communities by proudly expressing who we are starts the conversation away from assumptions and preconceived ideas. We'll be meeting with the Rockyview council in a week or two to build on work relations." Councillor Susan Solway.



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Chief and Council meet with potential builders for upcoming projects in Siksika

(August 26, 2021 - Siksika Nation) Siksika Nation Chief and Council has met with builders and engineers over the summer months for upcoming projects in Siksika including the development of the Siksika Residential School Memorial Park & Centre and a new Public Safety Building which will serve the communities on the east side of Siksika.

As part of a multi-phase project that began with an extensive clean-up of the old Crowfoot school and the St. Josephs' Residential School site, leaders prepare for the next phase which also includes preparing the site for the ground penetrating radar work that will take place in Siksika in the coming months.

So far, leaders have met with a number of different companies including Eagle Builders in Blackfalds, Talbera International Technologies Ltd. and Sprung Structures based out of Lethbridge. They also toured a few of the buildings constructed by these companies on the Blood Tribe, including the White Calf building, a multipurpose building and a ceremonial building to get an idea of what these companies have to offer.

Siksika Nation Chief and Council have aligned their priorities to improve infrastructure and community wellness initiatives and remain steadfast to supporting Nation members by meeting the growing demand and accessibility for programs and services in Siksika.

“We are working to align our goals set out in the strategic plan that include rebuilding Siksika with high standards of safety and wellness and are making every effort to vet the appropriate engineers and builders to help Siksika carry out these goals.” Explained Councillor Tracy McHugh who is working closely with a committee to make sure these projects are being carried out to completion.

The committee also includes council members; Kendall Panther Bone, Rueben Breaker, Jenny Goodin, and Ike Solway as well as technicians from the administration and related bodies.