



Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation

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CONSTITUTION OF THE ANISHNAABEG OF KETTLE & STONY POINT FIRST NATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The constitution development process began in the year 2005. Throughout the development process, activities were coordinated by a Coordinator under the supervision and guidance of the First Nation Manager and Committee.

The Committee, which included First Nation Members, a Council member, the First Nation Manager and the Coordinator, undertook the task of drafting a Constitution which suited the needs of our community. This involved consulting with the First Nation Members and gathering their input through various means such as hosting community meetings, having Members complete questionnaires and establishing sub-committees comprised of Members representing the various segments of our community population (ie. seniors, youth, students).

Since 2005, the dynamics of the process have changed. We experienced changes in management, staff resources, committee and changes in leadership. What hasn't changed is the driving force of our leadership to push forward to complete the Constitution and present it to the First Nation Members for their acceptance and approval.

WHAT IS A CONSTITUTION?

A constitution is a fundamental set of guidelines that will define the nature, functions and limits of our leadership, and will help to establish and maintain our community in a way that will guide us and our future generations, as we go forward into the future.

It sets out the laws that will govern our First Nation, its land and its Members. It will also serve as a foundation upon which other guidelines and/or laws may be established, for the betterment and protection of our First Nation members, culture and community.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A CONSTITUTION?

A constitution will serve to act as a way of maintaining peace and order, equality, and to ensure the rights and representation of our Members. As a Member of Kettle and Stony Point, it will protect your rights and provide you with a secure atmosphere for you to live and work in.

It will also be beneficial for the development of our community, as we build and maintain our own local economy. It will give investors confidence in Kettle and Stony Point, knowing that their investments will be protected.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Presently, the only document that contains fundamental guidelines that affects everyday life for First Nation communities and members that don't have a constitution, is the Indian Act. The Indian Act was developed without the participation of the First Nations by another government and imposed on our communities in 1876. This is a product of the assimilation strategy of the federal government. To this day, they continue to impose laws and policies that have a direct impact on the livelihoods of First Nations peoples.

Our First Nation community is presently funded through this system that is intended to meet the needs of the people. With the ever increasing cost of living, this system falls short of meeting those needs.

If the First Nation Members were to accept and approve our own constitution, it would empower us to move forward and develop our community and our own local economy. It would not replace the fiduciary responsibility of the federal government, as that relationship will continue based on treaty agreements.

We argue and assert that, as an element of our inherent right of self-government, we have a right to have our own constitutions and that this right is part of a more fundamental right of self-government or self-determination.