CARCROSS/TAGISH FIRST NATION

C/TFN's Clan-Based Government System

Leadership Selection

In the mid-1990's the CTFN Citizenship decided that Khà Shâde Héni (Chief) and Council should be selected by Clans, as opposed to elections for these positions (as per the Indian Act rules around selecting leadership). The Chief and Council of the day stepped down and allowed the Clans to step in to choose their leaders. This process would have each Clan selecting an Executive Council Representative, and then those representatives would select the Khà Shâde Héni from this group.

Today, in 2013, we still work within a Clan-based Government System, with a few exceptions. For example, in response to community concerns, in May 2012, a Khà Shâde Héni was elected by all CTFN Citizens. Consequently, changes were done to the C/TFN Constitution to allow this election to happen.

Is it a Traditional Clan-based System?

The short answer is no. There are Clan rules that the C/TFN Citizenship have chosen not to practice for many years (such as traditional marriages based on family/Clan lines). Also, the election of a leader is not consistent with the Clan-based System. Looking back, it could also be observed that there wasn't a traditional way of working with modern responsibilities such as allotting resources through Temporary Financial Assistance, Post Secondary Education, training programs, housing allocations, etc.

As much as the goal is to incorporate and work within the traditional protocol, there have been aspects of a true Clan-based System that have been adapted for meeting the needs of today, our Citizenship, and in meeting the requirements of our Self Government and Final

Agreements.

Clans

To start to understand a Clan-based System, and how it works in a C/TFN context, it would be important to understand the Clans. There are six Clans in the C/TFN, two are Wolf moiety and four are Crow moiety. The Clans are: Daklaweidi (Wolf); Deisheetaan (Crow); Gaanaxtedi (Crow); Ishkahittaan (Crow); Kookhittaan (Crow); and Yan Yedi (Wolf). For more information and the Clan stories, please see the C/TFN website (www.ctfn.ca/origin-clans).

Clan-based Committees

Every four years, the Clans appoint Clan Representatives to sit on General Council (3 reps), Executive Council (1 rep), as well as the C/TFN Clan-based Committees (Land Management Board, Family Council, Education Advisory Committee, Elders Council*, Citizenship Committee*, Youth Council and Justice Council).

These representatives are tasked by their Clan with the responsibility for bringing new ideas/issues to the Clan to bring forward a Clan position to their respective council/committee meetings. They are also responsible for reporting back to their Clan meetings about the Committee's business. For example, if a policy concerning one of these areas (housing, education, etc) is being written or revised, each Clan representative is asked to bring it back to their Clan for approval, revisions, discussion, etc.

If there are not enough interested Clan members to represent the Clan on these different committees, any Citizen may be chosen by the Clan to represent them on that committee, with one exception - Associate Members are not allowed to represent a Clan on the four main branches of government (Elder`s Council, General Council, Executive Council or Justice Council).

Associate Members are defined in the Constitution as ``a person who is entitled to be enrolled pursuant to the C/TFN Citizenship Code, or who is associated with the C/TFN in any other way, but who is not of C/TFN ancestry...”

Children of the Community

Children of the Community were added to the C/TFN Constitution in 2004, by approval of the General Council. Children of the Community are "Citizens who are not members of one of the Clans" and they "may attend and participate in a meeting of any Clan". It is generally expected, out of respect, that these Citizens ask permission of the Clan leader to attend their Clan meeting.

General Council

General Council consists of 3 representatives from each Clan for a total of 18 members. General Council is responsible for setting the Government Priorities, they approve changes to the C/TFN Constitution C/TFN Legislation or Acts, Government Departmental Budgets, and the Audited Financial Statements. The Economic Development Corporation (Carcross/Tagish Management Corporation) as well as the two C/TFN Trusts report directly to General Council.

General Council Meetings

Executive Council is responsible for calling meetings of the General Council by way of resolution, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. It is highly recommended that all Clans meet prior to the General Council meetings to discuss Clan member concerns, suggestions and recommendations that they wish to have brought forth for consideration by their General Council representatives.

C/TFN Government Departments support this as much as possible by ensuring that General Council meeting materials are mailed out to each General and Executive Council member at least 30 days in advance of the meeting, having community meetings around items of general interest (such as the Lands Act) and making these materials available to all Citizens at the front desk or via email.

Executive Council

Executive Council consists of one representative from each Clan, as well as two Elders chosen by the Elder`s Council (one Wolf and one Crow). Executive Council is responsible for: Calling meetings of General Council; ensuring progress on government priorities (as

approved by General Council); enhancing, maintaining and revitalizing the Clan System; requesting, approving and implementing changes to government policy and process; hiring and overseeing the Management Board (Department Directors); delegating any of its authorities to any other branch of the C/TFN Government.

Executive Council Meetings

Executive Council meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Unless there is an in-Camera session called (for confidential issues), or it is a retreat, these meetings are open to all C/TFN Citizens. To get an item on the agenda, please fill out an Executive Council Agenda Processing Form, which is made available on our website or by contacting the Governance Office. The Executive Council strive to conduct their meetings on a consensus basis, where this is not possible, at least 75% of the representatives need to be in agreement for a decision or resolution to be passed.

Justice Council

The Justice Council is made up of six Clan representatives, who do not represent C/TFN on any other board, committee or council (to ensure that they remain a neutral body). C/TFN is currently in talks with Teslin Tlingit Council in exploring their Administration of Justice Agreement (AJA). As this process continues, the Justice Council has been put on hold until there is a clear idea of what is needed on the ground and how the AJA operates within this context.

Elder's Council

Two representatives are chosen by the Elder`s Council to represent and provide guidance from the Elders Council to the Executive Council. One Wolf Elder and one Crow Elder sit in an advisory role for each of the Executive Council meetings. For them to bring forward advice from the Elder`s Council, they are expected to report on Executive Council meetings and discussions to the Elder`s Council. As such, they are also tasked with reporting discussions and concerns of the Elders Council to the Executive Council.

How Departments work with the Clan-based Committees

Each department works closely with a Clan-based Committee. These Committees include the Family Council (who works with the Health and Wellness Department); the Land Management Board (who works closely with Heritage, Lands and Natural Resources Department), the Education Advisory Committee (who works with the Capacity Development Department), and the Housing Team (who works closely with the Finance and Infrastructure Department). Governance is responsible for coordinating meetings of the General Council, Executive Council, Elders Council, Citizenship Committee, Youth Council and Justice Council. These committees make changes to the different policies of each department (in partnership with Management Board and Executive Council), and make decisions on items such as housing allocations, education funding, land use applications, etc. The Clan-Based Government System depends on these committees to ensure that Clan concerns, issues, comments are brought forward to the government for discussion/inclusion in the relevant decisions and/or policies.

How do we ensure a strong Clan-based Government System?

When Clan meetings do not happen, or when they are not well-attended, input on various policies and decisions is limited to those directly involved. It is important to ensure that a wide range of views are heard and included in government decisions. A few recommendations for Clans to consider:

1. **Hold regular clan meetings (teleconference numbers are available for wider participation).**
2. **Have each of your Clan-based Committee Representatives Report to the Clan regularly.**
3. **Hold a Clan meeting prior to a General Council to ensure everyone's views are included.**
4. **When policies or direction need to be changed, Clans should discuss these changes (staff members may be asked to attend for explanation, or further discussion).**
5. **Governance Office staff are able to assist with preparations – agenda, posters,**

meeting space.

6. Come up with a minimum set of requirements for Clan Representatives – health, education, ability to report back to Clans, etc.