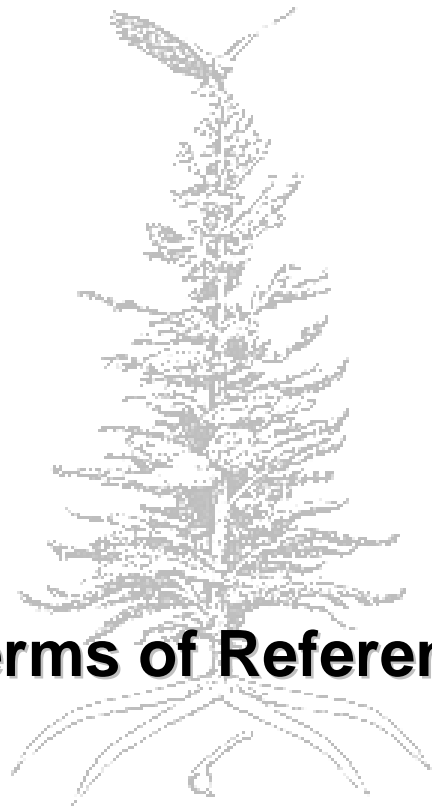




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# IROQUOIS CAUCUS

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## Terms of Reference

2014

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

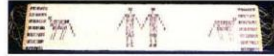
Vision Statement .....	2
Mission Statement .....	2
Iroquois Caucus Declaration of Principles .....	3
Statement of Solidarity December 5, 2005 .....	4
Declaration of Unity on AFN Renewal Commission Marcy 28, 2006 .....	5
Statement on Quebecois Nationhood .....	6
1. Roles & Responsibilities .....	7
2. Members.....	7
3. Issue Management Process .....	8
4. Term .....	8
5. Resources (Human and Financial) .....	8
6. Meetings .....	9
7. Quorum.....	9
8. Iroquois Caucus Coordinator .....	9
9. Consensus.....	10
10. Amendments .....	10
General Meeting Guidelines .....	11
Issue Identification Process .....	12
Briefing Note Format .....	13
Meeting Preparation Timeline .....	14
Meeting Process.....	15
Issue recording Sheet.....	16
APPENDIX A: Iroquois Caucus Coordinator Job Description .....	17

## VISION STATEMENT

*With the foundation of our Rotinonhsón:ni culture, we work together strengthening our nations through the protection, exercise and maintenance of our rights and jurisdiction.*

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of the Iroquois Caucus is to present a unified voice on common issues to protect and enhance the rights, language, culture, lands, environment and resources for the benefit of our people.*



# IROQUOIS CAUCUS

## Níionkwaianerenseró:ten

*Ne Rotinonhses'ró:non:*

*Tsi nahe sekatheke ne: onkwehonwe sihathi iatakwenio tsi nehatinakere.*

*Tsotkon ratesere ne: rotenionerensera iahtthene thatehonwathinikonhare.*

*Hegada:gye: ne: negye ewade:s ne:gyehsq: gaihodaahgos eha:de:s gono:weh sheh ni:yoht gay ensra odeggado had iyanehsroni ne:hni seniga:ye ewadehsdahno.*

*Ne: gono:he nadegao:drí:nyo eyoihwane:daht sheh nigaya:nehstrode: ne: gahswehda dehkni deyoha:de ne: egayada:gye ganigohi:yoniyot nadeganahdri:nyoh ne: ohnihwahdahgoh ne: sge:no onohidonyo gado:ge dwana:gre dedwadadrihwanahkwa:k ne:hni dejaohgo dedwadadoh ganigoha:so.*

*Sgaihwaht ewa:do edwadi:hogwaht hai:gwa: dewenya:do:k ne: hodinoso:ni hodiwenohso o niyogwai:o de hai:gwa dwadado:ni:yo*

*Tyukwanikuhliyo skanikulata a:etwatste khale a:etwalihwakwenyeste khale a:etwste nen tsi nahte tyolihowan/\ k /\h nu:nikahyatu oskanhe khale tekakhasi.*

## Declaration of Principles

*The Iroquois people:*

*Consistently and historically declared exclusive jurisdiction over all matters in their territories.*

*Continue to exercise the right and responsibility to govern their affairs without interference.*

*Continue to exercise these responsibilities using their own form of political, legislative and administrative processes.*

*In their relationships adhere to the principles of the two row wampum which include harmonious relations based on peaceful co-existence, mutual respect and sharing.*

*Agree to promote and protect the Iroquois languages, culture and autonomy.*

*Respect and recognize the unique responsibilities, authority and jurisdiction inherent within their respective communities.*

*Undertake to ensure that the foregoing principles include in any and all future negotiations and agreements pertaining to intergovernmental relations.*

*Agree to adhere, promote and apply the principles contained herein, jointly and separately.*

**THEFORE, THE MEMBERS OF THE IROQUOIS CAUCUS HEREBY AFFIRM THEIR SUPPORT FOR THIS DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES**


  
Kahnawà:ke

  
Kanéhsatá:ke

  
Akwesásne

  
Tyendingaga

  
Six Nations of the Grand River

  
Oneida of the Thames

Wahta

## **IROQUOIS STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY**

### **Amongst and Between the Elected Councils of Kahnawà:ke, Kanehsatá:ke, Akwesáhsne Tyendinaga, Wahta, Six Nations of the Grand River and Oneida of the Thames**

To the Chiefs of the Assembly

Many hundreds of years ago, a Peacemaker came amongst our people and demonstrated that a single arrow could be easily broken, but that five arrows bound together could not. This promoted the unification of five individual Nations into the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois Confederacy, which still exists today. We are seeking to restore this principle of Unity.

Kahnawà:ke, Kanehsatá:ke, Akwesáhsne, Tyendinaga, Wahta, Six Nations of the Grand River and Oneida of the Thames are communities of the Iroquois Confederacy. Although we are separated by distance, we recognize that we are one People who share a common Identity, common responsibilities and our own system of Law and government.

In our long history as the original people of this land, it is only in the very short time since the arrival of the Europeans, that our Nations have been disrupted, our relationships severed, and our families torn apart by a system designed and imposed for that very purpose.

But even within this system, we find that many of the issues affecting our people require us to look to our original rights, our own system of Law and, the historical relationships and agreements our people entered into as Nations.

As individual communities, we have had our issues and views represented through other processes. This has not worked for us.

Instead, we have come together in a forum known as the "Iroquois Caucus" where we can discuss our shared issues and concerns, come to be of one mind and speak with one voice. The purpose of this forum is to develop consensus-based positions, formulate nation-based strategies and seek solutions beneficial to our people.

As Iroquois, we will now, and in the future, represent ourselves at all regional, national and International levels and speak on our own behalf as one People.

We recommend to our Sisters and Brothers across Turtle Island to also begin this process of internal rebuilding and to renew the historical relationships between our Nations, for the purpose of adding more arrows to the bundle.

Niá:wen

**Given at AFN December 6, 2005**



**DECLARATION**  
**from the Members of the Iroquoian Caucus**  
**To the Special General Assembly of the**  
**Assembly of First Nations**  
**March 28, 2006**

We the members of the Iroquoian Caucus make this declaration this 28<sup>th</sup> day of March with respect to the Report and Recommendations of the AFN Renewal Commission.

It is with respect for all those Nations present at this Special General Assembly and;

With recognition and honour for those who have worked to bring this report forward;

We make this declaration by building on a previous Statement of Solidarity amongst and between the Elected Councils of Kahnawà:ke, Kanehsatá:ke, Akwesáhsne, Tyendinaga, Wahta, Six Nations of the Grand River and Oneida Nation of the Thames Council made in December of 2005. Although we are separated by distance, we recognize that we are one People who share a common identify, common responsibilities and our own system of Governance:

Iroquoian people have always had a strong voice and we will continue to work under the principle of Unity to bring our Nations together;

We are engaged in a process of strengthening our own governing structures and relationships amongst ourselves;

We are travelling on a road of learning and adherence to our own principles and laws and;

We are not prepared to establish a new relationship with an organization whose function is unknown and may not adhere to our Nation's principles and laws;

We could support a renewed relationship with an organization that can advocate for and provide the kind of support we need to strengthen our own governing structures. However, it is our Nation who must define this relationship;

We are encouraged by other Nations, who like us, are engaged in similar activities that will lead to stronger Nations.

We acknowledge your efforts and the work of the Commission, but at this time we must continue on our own path.

We will continue to speak and represent ourselves and therefore cannot support any change or process that may effectively diminish our voice.

**STATEMENT**  
**from the Iroquois Caucus regarding the**  
**Recognition of Quebec Nationhood.**

**Given at the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly**  
**December 5, 2006**  
**Westin Hotel**  
**Ottawa**

The members of the Iroquois Caucus acknowledge the current political statements by Canada to recognize the Quebecois as a nation within Canada.

We hereby declare, however, this recognition will have no bearing or effect on our people, their rights or territories, now or in the future.

As original Nations of this land we have always maintained that we are Nations within the meaning of International Law and have never given up this status.

We will take all necessary measures to protect the interests of our people, our communities, our Territories, our Nations and the Confederacy.

We call upon our Brothers and Sisters of Turtle Island to renew ancient alliances in an effort to provide mutual assistance and support in protecting our common interests in our homelands

## **1. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The Iroquois Caucus:

- a) will be responsible for promoting, advocating, and applying the principles contained in its Declaration of Principles;
- b) will be responsible for the development of a unified voice and advocating positions, with respect to issues it accepts on behalf of its members;
- c) may accept by motion any issue put forth by its members and agree on a mandate, scope and work plan for any issue accepted by the Iroquois Caucus;
- d) may assign any delegate(s) to represent the Caucus, on any issue for which the Caucus has established a position;
- e) will meet at least six (6) times per year;
- f) will hold special meetings as necessary to deal with issues or to meet with government officials;
- g) will be accountable to its member communities;
- h) may assign individuals to assist in addressing specific issues that are accepted by the Caucus;
- i) will oversee the activities and responsibilities of the Iroquois Caucus Coordinator and individuals assigned to assist in addressing issues; and,
- j) may appoint or replace the Iroquois Caucus Coordinator when necessary.

## **2. Members**

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- a) The Iroquois Caucus will be comprised of elected representatives of the Iroquois Caucus member communities.
- b) Councils or Communities are responsible to identify delegates to the Iroquois Caucus.
- c) Each community Council will identify the delegate responsible for signing Iroquois Caucus resolutions on their behalf.
- d) Each community Council will identify a contact person for their community that will serve as the primary contact for the Iroquois Caucus Coordinator.
- e) Chiefs and technicians assigned to represent their Council are responsible for ensuring that issues are dealt with and responded to in a timely manner.



### **3. Issues Management Process**

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- a) Issues will be presented to the Iroquois Caucus for discussion and acceptance as set out in the Issues Identification Process (page 12).
- b) Once an issue is accepted, the Caucus will determine the mandate and scope, set time frames, and identify a Chief/Councilor and individual(s) to address the issue; the Iroquois Caucus Coordinator will complete the Issue Recording Sheet.
- c) The individual(s) assigned will ensure that an initial work plan is completed that will address the mandate and scope and time frame allotted and will circulate the draft to the Caucus.
- d) Meetings will be held primarily via conference call and may be held in person if required. The Iroquois Caucus Coordinator will assist in scheduling and coordination of meetings, as well as be the designated recorder.
- e) The participants will identify, determine and complete action items or recommendations which will be included in meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will be distributed to the participants following each meeting. Meeting minutes will be made available to the Caucus, when providing a progress report.
- f) A written progress report, for tracking purposes, will be provided at each Iroquois Caucus meeting until the work plan is completed.
- g) The individual(s) working on an issue do not have the authority to make decisions or commitments on behalf of the Iroquois Caucus.

### **4. Term**

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- a) The term of the Iroquois Caucus is determined by the need to address all prioritized issues that affect its mission, or is dissolved by mutual consent of its members.

### **5. Resources (Human and Financial)**

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- a) Members of the Caucus and individuals assigned to issues will be resourced from their respective communities or Councils.
- b) Alternative sources of revenue will be considered where appropriate and as needed.
- c) The host community for Iroquois Caucus meetings will provide administrative support throughout the meeting to assist with printing materials, photocopying, faxing and/or note taking (if necessary), and any other tasks required to host a successful meeting.

- d) At the end of the fiscal year, the Iroquois Caucus Coordinator will submit an annual report that outlines all the political work completed by the Iroquois Caucus, and including a financial report outlining financial expenses for the year. Further, the Iroquois Caucus will make the annual report available to community members.

## **6. MEETINGS**

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- a) All meetings should use a traditional opening and closing.
- b) All meetings are open to community members unless decided otherwise by the Iroquois Caucus. Attendance by the media and/or special interest groups will be subject to the approval of the Iroquois Caucus.
- c) A Chief or Councillor from the host community will serve as Chairperson for the duration of the Iroquois Caucus meeting.
- d) The Iroquois Caucus Coordinator will be the primary note taker for all Iroquois Caucus meetings.
- e) The meeting agenda and package material will be provided to each member community two weeks prior to the meeting date.

## **7. QUORUM**

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- a) Every effort possible should be made by the member communities to attend the Iroquois Caucus meeting.
- b) Four (4) of the seven (7) member communities will constitute a meeting.
- c) Communities not represented at the Iroquois Caucus when decisions are rendered will be given the opportunity to provide their input prior to the meeting in writing to the Iroquois Caucus Coordinator.

## **8. Iroquois Caucus Coordinator**

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- a) Shall perform the duties and responsibilities outlined in the Iroquois Caucus Coordinator job description which is attached as Appendix 'A'.
- b) The Iroquois Caucus Coordinator will act as the official Recorder of all Iroquois Caucus meetings, and will:

- i. ensure that the minutes are accurately recorded to reflect what was being discussed, decisions made or direction given;
- ii. provide draft minutes to all member Nations;
- iii. revise draft minutes, after receiving input (corrections);
- iv. ensure the final draft minutes are distributed at least two (2) weeks prior to the next meeting at which time the minutes will be finalized; and,
- v. maintain a file containing all information provided for each issue.

## **9. Consensus**

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- a) All decisions of the Iroquois Caucus are rendered by consensus where possible.

## **10. Amendments**

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- a) Any changes to the Iroquois Caucus Terms of Reference shall be made by consensus of the Iroquois Caucus and will take effect on the date of the resolution or such date as specified in the resolution.

# GENERAL MEETING GUIDELINES

## Respect

---

Always be respectful to all participants and hosts. It cost time and resources for people to attend and their time is valuable.

## Cell Phones

---

Exit the meeting to take a call. Have cell phones on low or vibrate only.

## Commitment

---

All communities have made a commitment to this process. In most cases long distance travel is involved. Please be on time, and stay for the entire meeting.

## Participation

---

Participate in the discussion on all agenda items. Your input is valuable and may be helpful to other participants or their community.

## Focus

---

Focus on the issue, not the person.

## Stick To The Issue

---

Make all statements and comments relevant to the issue. Straying off topic wastes time and energy.

## Only One (1) Speaker At A Time

---

Focus on what point the speaker is trying to make. Try to understand the speakers' perspective.

## Be Brief

---

Long-windedness causes boredom. Be as brief as possible and get to the point.

## Speak In Low Tones

---

If a side discussion is necessary, speak in low tones so as not to disrupt the general discussion, interrupt the speaker or other peoples ability to hear the speaker.

## Build Consensus

---

Work toward a solution or a position that everyone can either agree with or support. Address peoples concerns.

# ISSUE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

## **Stage 1: Introduction/Information**

The issue should be presented with enough relevant information and background to provide an adequate understanding. The community or person bringing the issue should provide briefing notes containing background information, an analysis or assessment, options and recommendations. At this stage participants can ask for clarifications, more information or questions in general, in order to better understand the issue.

## **Stage 2: Deliberation/Deferral**

In this stage, the Caucus discusses the issue, real and potential impacts, consider recommendations, remedies or solutions/positions or desired outcome. If more information or other resources are required, the issue can be deferred.

## **Stage 3: Decision/Delegation**

In this stage, the Caucus decides on a course of action, a desired outcome or a common position after having deliberated or debated the issue thoroughly. If necessary, the responsibility for action (or tasks) related to the issue is delegated to individual(s) along with a timeline for reporting and/or updating the Caucus.

At this point, a brief overview is provided based on the Issue tracking sheet, then the issue is closed and the Caucus moves on to the next agenda item.

# BRIEFING NOTE

**ISSUE (TOPIC):** Briefly describe the issue the Caucus needs to address

**KEY MESSAGE:**

- What are the main points for bringing the issue to the Iroquois Caucus' attention?
- How did the issue arise?
- Why is it of concern to the Iroquois Caucus?

**ASSESSMENT**

Provide a brief background on the issue, analysis done either personal or community, and options to consider including pros and cons to be considered and potential impacts. More detailed background, analysis or documentation can be provided in the meeting packages.

**POSITIONS**

Does the Caucus already have a position put forward publicly or in correspondence?  
Are there positions developed that the Caucus should be aware of?  
What is the recommended position?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Provide recommendations for the Caucus to consider.

Author  
Community  
Date



# MEETING PREPARATION TIMELINE

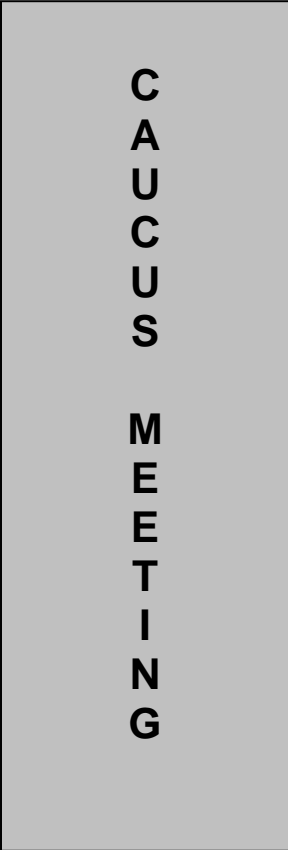
1                      5                      10                      15                      20                      25                      30

Reminder of meeting info, request for agenda items and related info

Draft agenda, confirmations and gather info  
Send out meeting location info, maps etc.

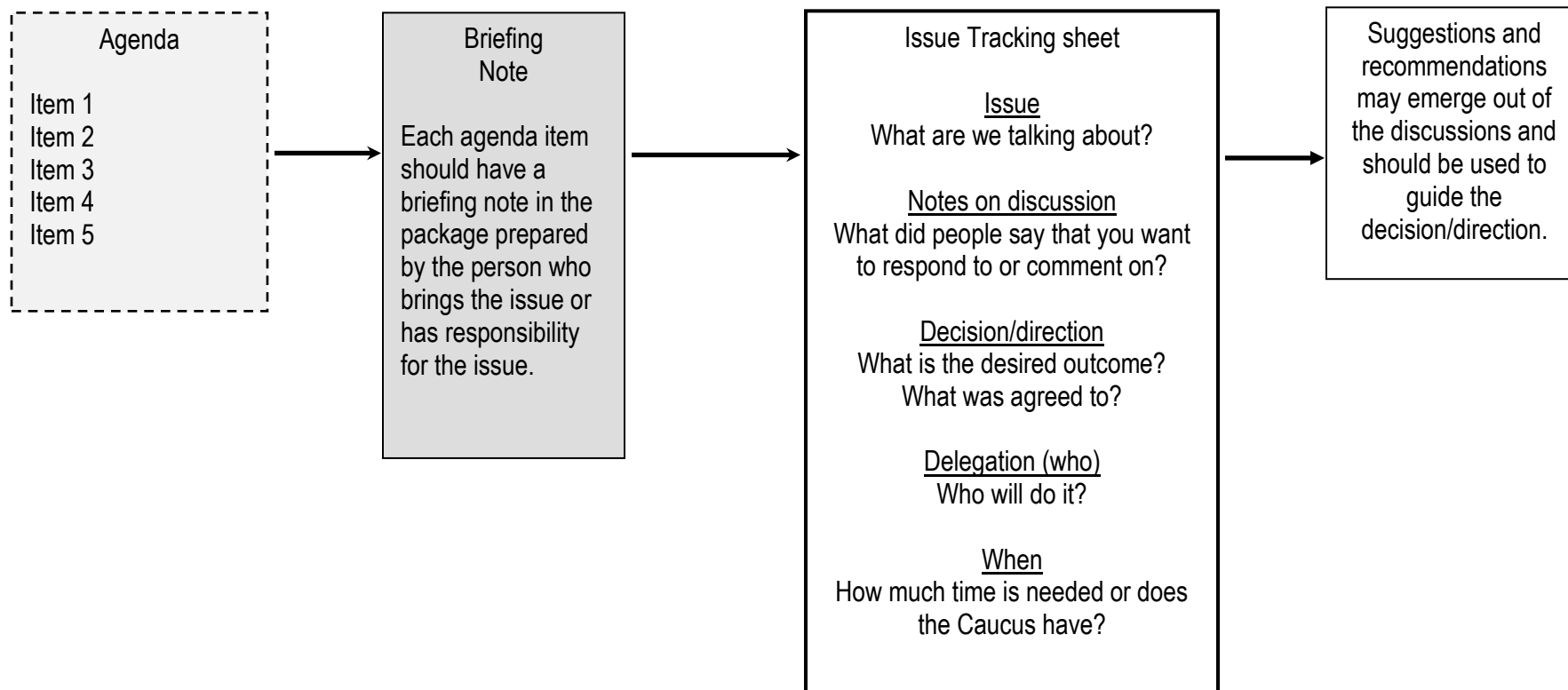
Finalize package contents.

Coordinator to prepare package and finalize agenda etc.



Coordinator will prepare Action Items summary and begin Record of Decisions.

# MEETING PROCESS



Once the Issue tracking sheet is filled, the issue is closed and the Caucus moves to the next agenda item. The process repeats until all items are covered or the meeting ends. If time runs out and the meeting cannot be extended, remaining agenda items can be carried forward to the next Caucus meeting.

This will require the Caucus to begin the meeting by prioritizing the agenda to deal with items in a timely manner.

# ISSUE RECORDING SHEET

Date:

Location:

Issue

Notes on discussion

Decision/direction

Delegation (who)

When

## **APPENDIX A: Iroquois Caucus Job Description**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Iroquois Caucus is a body composed of seven Iroquoian communities and governments in what is now Canada on Turtle Island, representing over 55,000 citizens. It includes Kahnawà:ke, Kahnésatá:ke, Akwesáhsne, Tyendinaga, Wahta, Six Nations of the Grand River and Oneida Nation of the Thames. The Caucus has come together to enable our governments to discuss our shared issues and concerns, come to be of one mind and speak with one voice. The purpose of this forum is to develop consensus-based positions, formulate nation-based strategies and seek solutions beneficial to our people. The Iroquois Caucus is not a formal organization, nor does it have a permanent physical office.

**TITLE:** Iroquois Caucus Coordinator

### **LOCATION:**

The Coordinator will be expected to work from their own home/office and communicate electronically with member communities/governments.

### **REPORTING RELATIONSHIP:**

The position reports to the Leadership of the Iroquois Caucus, both in written reports and when the Iroquois Caucus meets.

### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE POSITION:**

This is a part-time contract position serving the 7 Iroquois First Nations in Ontario and Quebec by providing policy, liaison, information sharing and coordination support to the Iroquois communities.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

#### **Meeting Coordination:**

This is a key function of the position is to coordinate the meetings of the Iroquois Caucus including:

1. Organize and execute the logistical requirements for successful Caucus meetings.
2. Ensure that all the required administrative tasks and logistics associated with the all Iroquois Caucus meetings (regular meetings and issues meetings with technicians) are carried out successfully including but not limited to:
  - a. preparing and finalizing agenda in consultation with Caucus members, at least 2 weeks prior to a meeting;
  - b. arranging for special guests connected to the draft agenda, where requested by Caucus members;
  - c. locating site of possible meetings and arranging meeting rooms;
  - d. booking a block of hotel rooms for participants to stay;

- e. arranging coffee, snacks for meeting breaks and lunch for participants each day;
  - f. researching and/or gathering information related to agenda items;
  - g. compiling meeting packages;
  - h. acting as chair, for all meetings;
  - i. providing meeting minutes and reports to Caucus members within 2 weeks following a meeting;
  - j. producing briefing notes on follow-up actions within 3 weeks following a meeting; and,
  - k. Liaise with Iroquois Caucus communities to acquire updates on decisions and follow-up actions.
3. Liaise with other First Nations Organizations.
  4. Maintain internal and external communications.
  5. Liaise with other Indigenous organizations as necessary or requested.
  6. Maintain Iroquois Caucus website.
  7. Draft position papers, press releases and other documents as required
  8. Contract 3<sup>rd</sup> party services as may be required
  9. Manage projects and contracts
  10. Undertake such other relevant duties as assigned by the Iroquois Caucus

#### **Financial Management and Budgeting:**

Position will be responsible for managing the budget of the Caucus and budgeting appropriate amounts to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the Caucus.

The position will also be expected to collect the membership contributions from each member community and send out reminders when they are in arrears.

This will also require preparation of quarterly financial reports and year end reports on the financial situation of the Caucus.

The position will arrange for signing authority with a member First Nation to manage a flow-through funding arrangement, including the weekly pay, to the Coordinator.

Coordinator will be responsible for signing contracts and paying debts incurred on behalf of the Iroquois Caucus e.g. hotels, suppliers, etc.

#### **Support and Advocacy:**

Coordinator serves each Iroquois Caucus Community by developing a general knowledge of each Community's overall history and background including strategic issues and concerns.

Support the Caucus by conducting research as required and including the preparation of letters, resolutions, briefings, strategy/position papers, planning frameworks, and support efforts as requested by Caucus collectively during their meetings.

To arrange and coordinate as required a political advocacy campaign with Parliamentarians including arranging meetings, preparing Briefing notes, arranging Meet-and-greet receptions and other related activities.

The Coordinator will submit an annual report that outlines all the political work completed by the Iroquois Caucus.

**Remuneration:**

The Coordinator will be expected to work 3 days per week for \$600 per week.