



## CHIEFS COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION #12-03-10-2024

#### SUPPORT FOR A BUSINESS PLAN TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND THE MATAWA ANIMAL SERVICES PILOT-PROJECT

**WHEREAS** Matawa Chiefs Resolution #36-12/05/2023 passed on May 12, 2023 supported a Matawa First Nation Management (MFNM) application to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) for a 2-year pilot project on animal services; and

**WHEREAS** funded by ISC, this project began on February 5, 2024 with a reduced timeline of 14-months; and

**WHEREAS** with the funding capacity provided, and with the assistance of Animal Guardians within the nine (9) First Nations in Matawa, the pilot-project has been able to undertake (or plans to undertake prior to March 31, 2025) the following:

- February 5: advocate for the One Health Model – that animals, humans and the environment must work together for the health of all (in progress)
- February 5: Animal Population Surveys and Sustainability Plans (in progress)
- May 1 - 4: Webequie First Nation Animal Wellness Clinic
- May 22: Development of an Animal Guardian Resource Guide (in progress)
- May 23: Submission to Ontario's Proposed Bill 171, An Act to Enact the Veterinarian Professionals Act, 2024 and to Amend or Repeal Various Act (and further advocacy work with the CVO and Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Agribusiness and other industry advocates)
- June 3: Eabametoong First Nation Wellness Clinic and Listening Circle
- June 20 – 25: Ginoogaming and Long Lake #58 First Nation Animal Wellness Clinic (with PetSmart Charities Canada and Northern Reach)
- June 26: Aroland First Nation Animal Plans Listening Circle
- June 27: Constance Lake First Nation Listening Circle
- Aug 8 – 11: Constance Lake First Nation Wellness Clinic (with Ontario SPCA and Humane Society & PetSmart Charities Canada)
- October 16 – 20: Eabametoong First Nation Animal Wellness Clinic
- November – March: Potential Animal Wellness Clinic(s) in 1-3 remaining First Nations in Matawa not having held an Animal Wellness Clinic; and development of online resources and building industry relationships to support food, transportation, and animal transfers.

**WHEREAS** the Matawa Animal Services Pilot-Project creates a comprehensive and innovative approach that addresses the gap of care for animals, People, and the land of First Nations who were placed on





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Indian reserves not within the immediate proximity to veterinary services, animal supplies and resources; and

**WHEREAS** the *Ontario SPCA and Humane Society* have been operating for the past 150 years in the province not effectively servicing First Nations and ad-hoc/intermittent spay and neuter clinics and animal rescues in First Nations are not enough to control the animal population and that Indigenous Peoples need to be part of the solution needing the resources to drive the plans in a de-colonized approach; and

**WHEREAS** animal wellness services from other First Nations in northern Ontario and other provinces (who also experience poor animal health and dog overpopulation which leads to dog bites, pack aggression, dog mauling deaths, and increased potential for zoonotic disease transmission), have been requested of the Matawa Animal Services Pilot-Project on an ongoing basis but they have been advised that they are beyond the scope of the Pilot-Project; and

**WHEREAS** an opportunity is available based on the community-of-practice already established by MFNM to create a regional operating model for First Nations in northern Ontario who lack access to veterinary services, animal supplies and resources; so

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that, as part of the sustainability plan of the Matawa Animal Services Pilot-Project, the Matawa Chiefs Council direct MFNM to complete a broader 5-year business plan that continues and expands the project as a subsidiary non-profit organization similar to that of *Four Rivers Environmental Services Group* within Matawa who provide services to both First Nations in Matawa and beyond; and

**FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED** that this 5-year business plan, starting in fiscal year 2025-2026, will include: increasing partnerships, an operating model in locations to be determined, infrastructure plan, human resources and market strategies, cash flow projections, financing opportunities, and other required components including (but not limited to) the best practices, science and traditional ecological knowledge around animal services, management and care; and

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that regular updates be provided to the Matawa Chiefs Council as they become available.

**MOVED BY:** Chief Sheri Taylor, Ginoogaming First Nation

**SECONDED BY:** Chief Sonny Gagnon, Aroland First Nation





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**OPPOSED:** 0  
**ABSENTIONS:** 0  
**CARRIED:** 7

Dated, the third day of October 2024 in Thunder Bay, Ontario

Chiefs Present:

Chief Sheri Taylor, Ginoogaming First Nation  
Chief Bruce Achneepineskum, Matawa Falls First Nation  
Chief Rick Allen, Constance Lake First Nation  
Chief Cornelius Wabasse, Webequie First Nation  
Chief Solomon Atlookan, Eabametoong First Nation  
Ogamakan Micheal Sugarhead, Nibinamik First Nation  
Chief Sonny Gagnon, Aroland First Nation

