



CHIEFS COUNCIL

RESOLUTION #36 -12/05/2023

SUPPORT FOR 2-YEAR PILOT PROJECT ON A NEW ANIMAL SERVICES COMMUNITY-OF-PRACTICE AND TO RECLAIM THE CULTURAL PRACTICE OF DOG SLEDDING IN THE MATAWA FIRST NATIONS

WHEREAS unlike municipalities across Canada, Matawa First Nations do not have animal services in our communities nor are we within the immediate vicinity of a veterinary hospital (with the closest one being 251 kms by road and the furthest one being 540 kms by air); and

WHEREAS the lack of animal services has resulted in poor animal health and dog overpopulation which negatively impacts the community through instances of dog bites, pack aggression, dog mauling deaths, and potential for zoonotic disease transmission; and

WHEREAS similar to the shift in our Indigenous languages due to residential schools and colonization, the cultural practice of dog sledding has all but disappeared in the Matawa First Nations which is contributing to poor mental health outcomes and in other areas of the country like in Inukjuak, Quebec, the government of Canada has supported sled dog revitalization which partially meets the *2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action* (18 and 22: recognizing the value of land-based healing practices and using them where requested); and

WHEREAS to address these animal issues affecting Matawa First Nations' public health, safety and mental health outcomes, Matawa First Nation Management (MFNM) has developed a 2-year remote/road-access First Nation pilot project proposal to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) in the amount of \$2,031,465 which establishes a comprehensive and innovative approach not yet made available in the Matawa First Nations or through any other Tribal Council in Canada; so

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs support MFNM's application to ISC for an Indigenous Animal Services 2-Year Pilot Project entitled '*Creating an Animal Services Community-of-Practice & Bringing Back Dog and Human Cultural Traditions in the Matawa First Nations*' inclusive of much needed spay/neuter clinics to act as a model for other First Nations in the country and call for it to be fully funded as a priority.

MOVED BY: Chief Judy Desmoulin, Long Lake #58 First Nation

SECONDED BY: Chief Sol Atlookan, Eabametoong First Nation

Abstentions: 0

Carried: Yes

Dated in Thunder Bay, Ontario, the 12th day of May, 2023.

