



Wet'suwet'en First Nation elects new Chief and Council

(Wet'suwet'en First Nation Territory - Burns Lake, BC) - On May 30, 2019, the Wet'suwet'en First Nation concluded its election for one Chief and two Councillor's, for a three year term from May 31, 2019 to May 31, 2022.

The successful candidates are Maureen Luggi, Chief and elected Councillors Heather Nooski and Karen Ogen-Toews. Luggi defeated incumbent Vivian Tom.

The total amount of the eligible voters is 183. The results of the vote for Chief and Councillor positions are:

Chief Candidate	Votes	Councillor Candidate	Votes
Luggi, Maureen	55	Nooski, Heather	49
Tom, Erwin	21	Ogen-Toews, Karen	48
Tom, Vivian	21	Sampson, Sterling	42
Turner, Sharon	10	Turner, Rochelle	19
		Turner, Viola	40
Total Votes for Chief	107	Total Votes for Councillor	107
Spoiled/Rejected Ballots	0	Spoiled/Rejected Ballots	1

Newly elected Chief Maureen Luggi stated “The mandate for our newly elected Council is to pursue long-term government to government negotiations based on governance and reconciliation and to engage the community in discussions on re-entering back into the British Columbia Treaty Process.” Luggi is the former Chief of Wet'suwet'en First Nation from 1987 - 2007.

“There is a stronger need to focus on economic reconciliation for the First Nation, to eliminate poverty, improve housing conditions, improve drinking water conditions and the overall health and wellness of the community will be a priority.” stated Councillor Karen Ogen-Toews. Ogen-Toews is the former Chief of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation from 2010-2016.

Councillor Heather Nooski stated “I am honoured to work with my community and I am here to offer fair representation, honest communication and accountability in my role as Councillor. Nooski added that her intentions are to support local and regional efforts to strengthen and diversify the economy. This elected position is the first for Nooski.

The conduct of the election was managed by Lawrence Lewis, Electoral Officer, OneFeather, Victoria, BC.

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For more information, contact:
Maureen Luggi, Chief
Mobile 250-640-7711
Email: wfnchief@lakescom.net

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Biographical Information

Maureen Luggi

Maureen is of Gitksan, Wet'suwet'en & Stellat'en ancestry and was born and raised in Burns Lake, British Columbia. She is a member of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and was the elected Chief of her community from 1987 - 2007.

She is currently completing a Public Relations Certificate Program at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, BC. She has a Certificate in Administration of Aboriginal Governments from the University of Victoria and is certified in Conflict Resolution and First Nations Negotiations Skills by the Justice Institute of BC. She is an accredited First Nations Electoral Officer and is certified in Expanded Emotional Intelligence and the Art & Science of Coaching with Erickson International and is a Neuro-Linguistic Programming Practitioner and Master Practitioner.

Maureen operates her own business which provides management, executive coordination, leadership, facilitation, proposal writing and electoral services. She has more than 30 years' experience working with Indigenous & non-Indigenous communities, companies and non-profit organizations and has served as an Indigenous representative and Executive member on the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council Society, Carrier Sekani Family Services Society, Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment & Training Association, Burns Lake Native Development Corporation, Burns Lake Native Logging, Babine Forest Products and Decker Lake Forest Products.

She is skilled in project management and event planning, having established & implemented an Indigenous Housing First homelessness project on behalf of the Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment & Training Association and established the very successful Lheidli T'enneh Pavilion at the 2015 Canada Winter Games in Prince George.

Maureen served as General Manager of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and has a strong background in budget development & financial management, report writing, program implementation, community consultation, engagement & collaboration, and governance policy development and implementation. She has extensive experience chairing meetings of all sizes, committees, working groups and guiding teams. She also worked as a Treaty Negotiator with her First Nation and as Communications Coordinator with the Lheidli T'enneh Treaty Office.

She demonstrates exceptional oral & written communication skills and is effective in working with various groups of people including elders, youth and families.

She maintains a keen interest in communications, media, politics, piano, crochet and reading. Maureen has 3 children and 4 grandchildren

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Biographical Information

Karen Ogen-Toews

Karen Ogen-Toews is of Gitksan, Stelat'en and Wet'suwet'en ancestry. She is currently the CEO of the First Nations LNG Alliance Society, a society of First Nations in support of responsible LNG development in British Columbia, with a priority on the environment, and on Indigenous consultation and engagement.

Karen is the former elected Chief of Wet'suwet'en First Nation from 2010-2016. She graduated with a Bachelors of Social Work in 1999 and a Master's degree in Social Work, at the University of Northern British Columbia in 2007. She has a certificate in Indigenous Governance at the University of Victoria.

She is a current member of the Board for the Yinka Dene Economic Development Limited Partnership, which is the economic arm of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation. Karen is a former member of the Premier's First Nation's Advisory Committee which is now the Indigenous Advisory Committee; the Workforce Development Advisory Committee for the trades and training for the LNG.

Karen has travelled on various trade missions to speak about the Indigenous partnerships in the Liquefied Natural Gas industry in Beijing, China in October 2015 with the former Premier Christy Clark; June 2017 with Minister Jim Carr, Natural Resource Canada; and March 2019 with the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, China; Rotorua, New Zealand and Tokyo, Japan at the Gastech conference.

Karen is married to Brent Toews and has two adult children Jesse and Nicole.

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Biographical Information

Heather Nooski

Heather Nooski is of Gitxsan, Stelat'en, Nadleh Whut'en and Wet'suwet'en ancestry.

She has 3 years experience as a Community Health Promoter with Maskwacis Health Services in Maskwacis, Alberta. Heather is a front-line worker in Health and has received her certificate in Community Health Promotions from the University of Alberta extended facility. Her training background includes Culinary Arts, Level 1; HIV/Aids & Hepatitis C; Occupational First Aid and Suicide Prevention. She is a former Education Assistant at Ermineskin Junior High School, Maskwacis, Alberta and Substitute Teachers Aide at Ermineskin Kindergarten Community School, Maskwacis, Alberta

She volunteered as a Board Member with the 2019 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships and the Aboriginal Sport Circle to promote hockey for Indigenous Youth Athletes. Heather was also a Female Youth Representative, on the Canadian Association of Advancement for Women in Sport & Physical Activity in Ottawa, Ontario and her main purpose was to encourage Indigenous women and girls in sports. Her other volunteer work includes being the Female Youth Representative for the Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Association in Vancouver, BC, of which she received board training and her purpose was to encourage more Youth in Sports. Heather also volunteered under a Youth Development Program with Carrier Sekani Family Services in Prince George, BC to work with Youth and participated in a Train the Trainers program with Jane Middleton-Moz.

Heather is passionate about Indigenous leadership and opportunities to work with Elders, Youth and Indigenous communities, particularly in promoting Health, Wellness & Sports. She easily develops rapport with people and communicates well publicly, on behalf of her current employer at Maskwacis Health Services.

She is an avid player in slo-pitch since the age of 7 years old and a mother to one son, who she joyfully raises as a single parent. She encourages her son Beckett in organized sports that include hockey, baseball and soccer.

Wet'suwet'en First Nation

Fact Sheet

Community Description

The Wet'suwet'en First Nation has 257 members and is located 17 km west of Burns Lake, BC, in the central interior of British Columbia. It is formerly known as Broman Lake Indian Band. The main community is Palling Indian Reserve #1 and the community has 10 registered reserves allocated as its land base.

Language

The language spoken is Wet'suwet'en, which is the Nedut'en/Witsuwiten dialect of the Athabaskan Dene Language Group.

Tribal Affiliation

The Wet'suwet'en First Nation is affiliated with the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, Prince George, BC and is a member of the Burns Lake Native Development Corporation, Burns Lake, BC.

Summary of Economic Development Initiatives, Community Businesses and Joint Ventures

The Wet'suwet'en First Nation wholly-owns the Yinka Dene Economic Development Limited Partnership and it operates as its economic arm.

Agreements signed by Wet'suwet'en First Nation

Wet'suwet'en Economic and Community Development Agreement (2014)

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/ecda_huckleberry_wetsuweten.pdf

Forestry Agreements

Wet'suwet'en FN Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreement (2017)

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/wetsuweten_fcrsa_executed_nov_9_2017.pdf

Wet'suwet'en FN Interim Agreement and Forest & Range Opportunities (2006)

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/forestry-agreements/wetsuweten_fro_may06.pdf

Wet'suwet'en FN Political Accord concerning Lands & Resources (2003)

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/forestry-agreements/political_accord_wetsuweten_may03.pdf

Wet'suwet'en First Nation Interim Measures Agreement (2003)

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/forestry-agreements/wetsuweten_im_aug03.pdf

LNG Agreements

Wet'suwet'en FN Natural Gas Pipeline Benefits Agreement (2014)

Coastal Gas Link Pipeline Project

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/wetsuweten_first_nation_pba_cgl_signed_bcr_-_jan_2015.pdf

**Wet'suwet'en First Nation's Limited Partnership (FNLP) Pacific Trails Pipeline (PTP)
Economic Participation Agreement (2008)**

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/wetsuweten_first_nation.pdf