



ATIKAMEKSHENG
ANISHNAWBEK
SPECIAL EDITION

ELECTIONS
2020

OUR ELECTION OUR WAY

THE IN PERSON VOTE WILL BE HELD
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE ON
SATURDAY JUNE 27TH 2020.





Historic Vote Underway FOR GIMAA AND COUNCIL

Voting in the 2020 Atikameksheng Anishnawbek election is now underway.

This historic vote is being conducted like never before, under the First Nation’s new custom election code and via online electronic voting. This new law, Gimaakeng Naaknigewin, governs the process and conduct of the Gimaa (Chief) and Council election. The code was ratified in January 2020.

“We are so pleased to see our election moving ahead in our way. It is a significant step towards self-determination when we can select our community leadership using our own processes under our own jurisdiction,” said Gimaa Valerie Richer.

In order to raise awareness of the election and get out the vote, the community is working to inform their citizens through online communications, including a new election website: <https://atikamekshenganishnawbek.ca/elections/> and using its social media channels on Facebook and Twitter.

The theme of the online campaign is “Our Election. Our Way.” – a means of raising awareness of this historic election – the first under the new custom election code.



THIS IS OUR MOMENT BY GIMAA VALERIE RICHER

I was speaking to Chief Pamajewon not too long ago who remembered the day they kicked the Indian Agent out of their band meeting. I was fascinated by this recounting of history in his community and I saw the look of pride he had when sharing this truly historic event with me. I thought this was a bold and powerful move to assert their Nation’s sovereignty and was fascinated to hear this from someone who was there.



I was thinking back to this story because I feel like this is our moment. This is our moment that we kicked the Indian Act out of our band elections and this makes me proud. We have been talking about doing this for years.

This is truly a historic event for us and I encourage you to remember this moment and make sure our young ones remember this too. Perhaps on election day, we should take pictures of all our little ones, with the slogan “Atikameksheng doesn’t need the Indian Act” or something to that effect.

We don’t celebrate our successes enough and I think it is time we start. I want to congratulate all of you, and all of us for making this happen. I am so proud of you Atikameksheng and I am so proud to say that I was the last Indian Act Chief in Atikameksheng!

I am looking forward to the next four years under our own Gimakeeng Naaknigewin and I can’t wait to see what step we take next!

Read Gimaa’s full article at <https://atikamekshenganishnawbek.ca/election-updates/>



CONTEST!

WHAT DOES THIS ELECTION MEAN TO YOU?

We want to hear from you! Why is this election important? Let us know through social media by using the hashtag #OurElectionOurWay or by emailing communications@wfn.com. All submissions will be eligible for a draw, five \$20 Tim Horton's Gift Cards are available!



Why is this election important to you?

#OurElectionOurWay

Answer by using the hashtag on Facebook or Twitter or send your response to communications@wfn.com for your chance to win 1 of 5 \$20 Tim's Gift Cards.

All submissions will be entered into a draw. Winners will be randomly selected on June 23

Act. Interact. Vote

OUR ELECTION, OUR WAY

A Call to Action for all Atikameksheng Anishnawbek:

Act! – Visit the Elections page to learn more about the 2020 Election and the election code. Sign up to the Members Portal.

Interact! – Like us on Facebook and Twitter. Share information, opinions and stories. Use hashtag #OurElectionOurWay.

Vote! – Most importantly, exercise your right and get out and vote. You can cast your online electronic vote right now. You can also send in your mail-in ballot or vote at the polling station on June 27, 2020. Conventional voting instructions can be found on the website.





CUSTOM ELECTION A TANGIBLE STEP TOWARDS SELF-GOVERNMENT

A dose of reality: The history of Band Council governance is ripe with oppression, colonialism and trauma for all First Nations across Canada. Since the introduction of the Indian Act in 1876, the goal of the Band governance provisions of the Indian Act was to stamp out traditional systems of governance in favour of governance done in their way!

But beginning with the opposition and rejection of the 1969 White Paper, to the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, First Nations have begun to re-assert our right to self-determination. This was a victory carried out by our leaders like Gary Potts back in the Constitutional talks and became recognized and affirmed in s. 35 of the Constitution Act.

It was this fierce advocacy from First Nations during these times that drew attention to the emerging concept of self-government. Self-government may be a relatively new term but it's certainly not a new concept. Anishnawbek have governed ourselves since time immemorial long before the establishment of the Indian Act.

In 1988, the Indian Act enabled provisions for First Nations to create their own Band Custom Election codes. Since then, approximately half of all First Nations in Canada have taken up the task of creating, ratifying and implementing their own election codes. So Atikameksheng is not alone. This has been done (and done successfully) in



many other communities across Canada

Is it perfect? No. Band governance, as a whole, continues to be imposed on our people under the Indian Act. The Band custom election process still requires us to meet certain standards imposed by colonial oppressors. Much of this is not according to our true customs like the Clan System.

Despite this, it is certainly a monumental and historic step forward to establish the Gimaakeng Naaknigewin, our own custom election code and the Atikameksheng G'Chi-Naaknigewin, our constitution and highest law of our people. These are tangible instruments of self-government.

Now that we have our own constitution and election code, we can choose to take further steps towards self-determination and our own forms of government. That's the choice we have as Atikameksheng citizens.

“We are Nations. We have always been Nations. As Nations, we have inherent rights we have never given up. We have the right to our own forms of government. We have the right to self-determination.”

Anishnawbek Nation Declaration (1980)



Election Safety

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19

UPDATES

The highest priority for Atikameksheng Anishnawbek is to ensure the health and safety of our citizens. This is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic when our collective and individual health has been challenged. With regards to the election and voting safety – please review the following public health measures and associated election advice.

Election Safety Tips:

- Consider voting from the safety and comfort of your own home by using online, electronic voting
- At the polling station on election day, there will be physical distancing measures in place. Please follow the instructions provided by election officials.
- Election officials will be disinfecting common surfaces and the voting area at the polling station on election day.
- Consider the health of others by wearing a mask if you need to visit the polling station on election day.



• **THE BIGGEST QUESTION, THAT WE DON'T NECESSARILY HAVE AN ANSWER FOR: WHY TAKE THE RISK?**



Q: "I HAVEN'T RECEIVED MY MAIL-IN BALLOT. IS THERE STILL TIME TO GET A VOTING PACKAGE?"

A: There is a chance that your mail-in ballot package may have been lost in the mail or we do not have your most current address in our database. There is still time to obtain a replacement, or receive a new mail-in ballot package. Contact the electoral officer as soon as possible by calling: Cell/Text: 705-849-8072 or email: Vaughn Johnston vaughn_johnston@hotmail.com or email Luanne Naponse lunaponse@yahoo.ca.



Do you have a question about the Election, the Election Code or how to vote?

Send your questions via Facebook, Twitter by tagging #OurElectionOurWay or email: communications@wfn.com.



CANDIDATES WHO IS RUNNING

UPDATES

CANDIDATES FOR GIMAA

HOMER, Monica

MILLER, Edward Steve

NOOTCHTAI, Craig

PETAHTEGOOSE, Chuck

CANDIDATES FOR COUNCILLOR

ABEL, Jason Paul

MACNEIL (NEBENIONQUIT), Lesley

MILLER, Laurretta (Laurie)

MILLER, Peter

NAPONSE (DODD), Lorraine

NAPONSE-CORBIERE, Pamela

NEBONAIONOQUET, Noella

NOOTCHTAI, Ashley

NOOTCHTAI, Loretta

NOOTCHTAI, Vance (Rock)

OZAWAGOSH, Candace

PAISHEGWON, Don

PETAHTEGOOSE, Art

PETAHTEGOOSE, Harvey

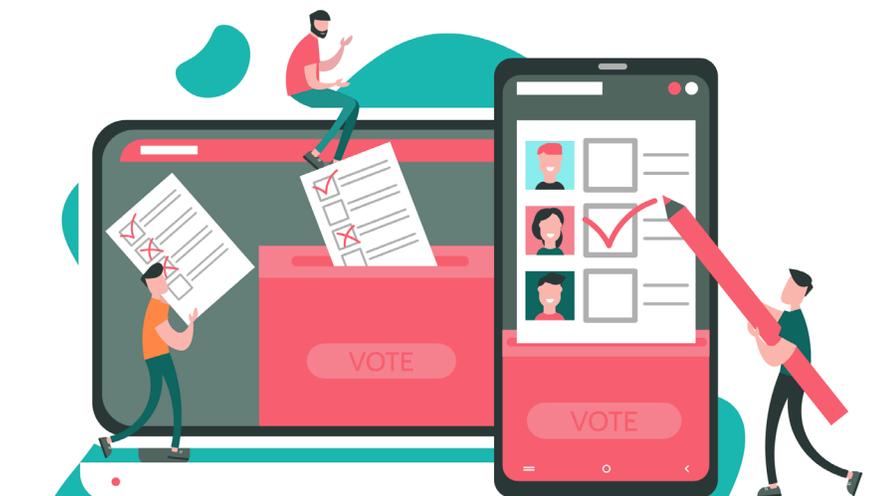
PETAHTEGOOSE, Jennifer

RICHER, Liz

WILLIS, Brian



Vote count will be live streamed on June 27th. Please register through the Members Portal on the Atikameksheng website.





ELECTIONS WEBSITE

CHECK IT OUT FOR TONS OF INFORMATION

UPDATES

Have you checked out the Elections section of our website?
How to Vote, Q&A's, Updates, Vote Now and more helpful resources!



<https://atikamekshenganishnawbek.ca/election/>

HOW TO VOTE

There are three ways to vote in the election:

1. Online (Electronic) Voting: Voting is open now on One Feather.
2. Mail-in Ballot: Your ballot package will be mailed out on May 28, 2020 or sooner.
3. At the polling station, the Atikameksheng Community Centre on election day, June 27, 2020.

