



## **Governance Roles Policy**

### **I. Definitions:**

“Communications” means consultation.

“Debendaagziwaad” refers to the people of the Nipissing First Nation. Those people who are recognized as “those who belong” to the Nipissing First Nation.

“Chief” and “Council” refers to the duly elected representatives of debendaazgiwaad.

“Chief Executive Officer” refers to the most senior manager of administration.

“Director of Administration” refers to the manager appointed to manage the day to day administrative functions of Nipissing First Nation.

### **II. Nipissing First Nation Governance Roles**

#### **1. ROLES OF CHIEF AND COUNCIL**

As a duly elected body of Nipissing Nation, the Council is comprised as one Chief, a Deputy-Chief and a fixed number of Councillors who have overall legal jurisdiction to enact laws of governance. As representatives, Council is mandated to make fair and effective decisions on behalf of debendaagziwaad and ensure the effective delivery of programs and services by establishing an appropriate public administrative capacity.

Under this general description, Council is responsible for the:

- Development of a strategic operational plan to guide its administrative capacity by setting long range goals and objectives (3-5 years).
- Development of an annual strategic plan by program and service.
- Production of annual and periodic reports against the strategic plan.
- Establishment and setting of goals and objectives through the NFN Strategic Plan.
- Appointment of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and clearly articulating single point delegated authority to the CEO.

- Performance evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer.
- Enactment of laws and policies to guide the First Nation public service.
- Enactment of policies designed to ensure transparency through consultation and accountability to its electorate.”
- Maintenance of trust responsibilities such as treaty rights, Crown fiduciary obligations.
- Ensuring leadership selection rules are followed and maintained as per the Custom Election Code.

Although Council has overall responsibility for the delivery of programs and services to membership, it is good governance practice to delineate clear operational divisions between the political and administrative capacities of the organization. It is therefore crucially important that the political body adheres to the principle of delegation and that the Nipissing First Nation administrative body assumes its delegated responsibilities and duties.

## **2. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL:**

When Council members are contacted by the membership with a concern, the following process will be taken:

1. The Councillor will contact the Director of Administration to advise of the concern and the request will be handled by the Director of Administration in consultation with the department.
2. The Director of Administration will keep the Councillor apprised of the status of the concern and provide follow-up to bring closure to the matter.
3. In cases where the Council wishes to meet with a department, contact will be made with the Director of Administration who will inform the department and/or assist in coordinating.

## **3. CLARIFYING THE VARIOUS ROLES**

This document describes various governance roles for the purpose of defining relationships between the elected Council and the Administration of Nipissing First Nation.

The following attempts to isolate the various roles and responsibilities of the:

- i. Full-time Chief.

- ii. The Council or Councillor.
- iii. The Chief Executive Officer (senior manager)
- iv. The Director of Administration

*These lists do not presume to be absolute and complete.*

The Chief is the leader of the First Nation, and as such, is the person most responsible for overall governing of the First Nation. In that capacity is also responsible in conjunction with Council for the efficient and accountable operation and management of the First Nation Administration.

“Full-time” Chief may be defined as “a participatory role in the administrative capacity of the First Nation” without violating the principle of delegation. This position demands a cooperation and effective liaison with the Chief Executive Officer in order to meet the ongoing service demands and expectations of the electorate.

#### **4. PRIMARY ROLES OF THE CHIEF**

##### **Political Roles of the Chief**

- Responsible for internal and external communications.
- Ensuring political visibility at community events.
- Visible support for various community groups.
- Being accessible and facilitating support for debendaagziwaad.
- Primary resource seeker for program growth and prosperity.
- Ensuring policy lines of authority are respected.
- Ensuring timely, consistency and fairness in decision making.
- Ensuring appropriate organizational structures are established that foster community involvement and efficient decision making
- Carrying out the role of the “chair” for regular and special meetings of the Council.
- Providing leadership in strategic planning and resource allocations.
- Organizing the selection and appointment of the Chief Executive Officer in the event of a vacancy.
- Ensuring appropriate local legislation is enacted by Council for good government.
- Ensuring the protection of Natin and individual treaty rights.
- Ensuring the political capacity of the First Nation maintains focus not infringed on or violated by any means without referendum of debendaagziwaad on the strategic direction (plan) set by Council in its planning function.
- Participates as the Nation representative to Political Territorial Organizations (PTO's) and other applications and consulting with Council on resolutions and votes.
- Exercises the authority to delegate to other members of Council.

- To facilitate the performance review of the Chief Executive Officer and Strategic Advisory annually.
- To assign committee portfolios.

### **Administrative Roles of the Chief**

- Works with the Director of Administration to prepare an agenda for the Council meetings.
- Acts as the official spokesperson or representative for the First Nation.
- Serves as the ex-officio member of all standing and special committees or other boards mandated by Council.
- During emergencies, makes executive decisions.
- Arranges special meetings if and when necessary to accommodate administrative requirements.
- Supports the Chief Executive Officer in the effective delivery of programs and services to debendaagziwaad by re-enforcing delegated authorities to perform that duty.
- Acts as a liaison between the Council(lors) and the Chief Executive Officer in addressing operational matters.
- Participates on the 2013 Boundary Claim Trust and Land Claim Settlement Trust Boards.
- Participates on the Finance & Audit Committee.
- Participates on the Executive Council.

### **5. PRIMAY ROLES OF THE DEPUTY-CHIEF**

The functional role of the Deputy-Chief is to be a Councillor and to provide support and assistance to the Chief in the event that the Chief is unable to delegate roles. In longer term absences (ie: in times of illness) roles will be delegated by a Resolution of Council.

Mandated to sit on the 2013 Boundary Claim Trust Board and Land Claim Settlement Trust Board..

- Participates on the Finance & Audit Committee.
- Participates on the Executive Council.

### **6. PRIMARY ROLES OF COUNCILLORS**

The Council is the political capacity for the First Nation and is the body held accountable for effective and good governance practices.

As the elected representatives of the electorate, Councillors main function is to guide and direct the affairs of the First Nation by presenting ideas or solutions for debate and eventually voting according to his/her best judgment for or against a legal motion.

- Attend all scheduled Council meetings.
- Chair committee meetings as assigned (portfolio assignments).
- Report the committee's progress to Council as required.
- Present concerns of the debendaagziwaad by providing adequate information in advance of the meeting.
- Formulate and debate motions.
- Debate issues pros and cons to ensure all facts are considered fairly for the Nation as a whole.
- Vote with the best interest of the Nation in mind, the Council member supports the decision of the Council as a whole. debendaagziwaad in mind.
- Participate as a member of Council in the formation of local legislation.
- Ensure the aboriginal treaty rights of debendaagziwaad are not infringed upon or violated by any means without referendum of debendaagziwaad.
- As a member of Council, in consultation with the Chief may be required to provide Traditional Territory Acknowledgements, Openings or provide interviews on behalf of the Nation.
- Ensure the political capacity of the First Nation maintains focus on the political strategic direction (plan) set by Council in its planning function.
- Approve the annual strategic plan and budget.
- Ensure open internal communications with its electorate is maintained.
- Represent Chief and Council at all external meetings, conferences as mandated by Council. This would include involvement with non-First Nation entities.

## **SUPPORTING THE ADMINISTRATION CAPACITY**

As elected representatives of the electorate, the Councillors also have responsibilities towards the efficient operation and management of its administrative capacity in the following manner:

- Participating in the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer.
- By delegating total management and administrative authority to the Chief Executive Officer.
- By ensuring the approval of operational policies to guide the performance of administrative duties of the First Nation public service.
- By participating actively in the formation of agendas by bringing written submissions to be included for regular meetings.
- Diligently reading materials prepared for meetings and discussions prior to the meeting.
- Ensuring both internal and external communications flow through the Chief or Deputy-Chief.
- Reading all reports prepared by administration.
- Council may also establish other boards and/or commission with full delegation to operate as separate entities with partial or full authorities to manage mandated programs.

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- Ensuring strategic and annual business plans are complete as possible and approving them for implementation.
- Participates on the Executive Council on a rotating basis.

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