

FIRST NATIONS TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

NOVEMBER 1, 2006



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BACKGROUND

The First Nations Technology Council (Council) was established in 2002 by the First Nations Summit Chiefs in Assembly through First Nations Summit Resolution #0602.12, with a mandate to develop a First Nations Technology Plan. Resources were secured during the summer of 2003 for the Council to begin work. In the past two years, the First Nations Summit has expanded the role of the Council through a series of three additional resolutions.

In support of our mission statement, "*Supporting the full integration of technologies to improve the quality of life for all First Nations in B.C.*," the Council mission includes five principal objectives:

- Advocating for First Nations communities on telecommunications and technology issues.
- Establishing sustainable ICT partnerships for First Nations communities.
- Advising the First Nations Summit on technical matters.
- Building the First Nations Technology Plan.
- Managing First Nations Technology Council communications.

MANDATE

The First Nations Technology Council mandate has been established through a series of resolutions approved by the First Nations Summit Chiefs in Assembly. These include:

- First Nations Summit Resolution #0602.12, dated June 14, 2002, which states in part:
"The First Nations Technology Council's mandate is to develop a First Nations Technology Plan for First Nations in British Columbia which will address technology issues, including:
 - 1) high speed Internet connection;
 - 2) technology skills development;
 - 3) development of technical support."
- First Nations Summit Resolution #0604.26, dated June 11, 2004, which states in part:
"The First Nations Summit Chiefs in Assembly hereby expand the mandate of the First Nations Technology Council to include promoting the use of technology as a tool to support the revitalization of culture and language in all First Nation communities in British Columbia."
- First Nations Summit Resolution #0604.27, dated June 11, 2004, which states in part:
"There is a need for First Nation communities to have high speed broadband access to the Internet that includes connecting all administrative offices, schools, health centres, water treatment plants and other community-owned facilities, as well as residences.
This connectivity should be considered as important as other basic infrastructure such as an electrical distribution system, water distribution system or community road."
- First Nations Summit Resolution #1104.12, dated November 25, 2004, which states in part:
"The mandate of the First Nations Technology Council is to develop a Technology Plan for First Nations of British Columbia. In order to develop a Technology Plan that is achievable, secures the support of both levels of government and the private sector, and can be used as a model for other communities in the province, the Council proposes to lead a proof of concept project to be known as the FIT (Fully



Integrated Technologies) Community project in a community cluster of at least 4 and not more than 8 communities located in the same geographic region. The First Nations Technology Council would work closely with, and take the lead from, the FIT Community Project Team made up of representatives from the communities included in the Cluster.”

- First Nations Summit Resolution #0906.03, dated September 29, 2006, which supports the First Nations Technology Council playing a coordination role by working with First Nations to build and distribute data/information management systems modules to complement work already done by communities and/or organizations

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council is to ensure that all British Columbia First Nations have high speed, affordable Internet, a technical environment on par with government, and the skills required for using any and all applications as tools to build strong healthy communities. These applications include but are not limited to preservation of language and culture, tele-health, distance education, economic development and more transparent governance. The Council's vision is that every First Nations community be a 'FIT (Fully Integrated Technologies) Community and this vision, includes ensuring that an integrated information management strategy and relevant application(s) are available to all communities and organizations.

The Council will work with other First Nations organizations, all levels of government, and the private sector to coordinate technology-based initiatives for the benefit of communities. The Council will work to build business relationships with socially-responsible companies and will work with government and industry on data-gathering and development of applications that will be useful to First Nations communities as well as to government.

COUNCIL GUIDELINES

Role

The role of the Council is:

- To provide guidance and direction to the First Nations Summit and Leadership Council on technology issues;
- To act as champions for the adoption of technology in all regions of the province;
- To engage other First Nations organizations, government, and industry representatives on issues regarding technology and its application;
- To work towards coordination of government programs and initiatives in the area of technology and application delivery;
- To promote ethical business practices in the area of technology;
- To keep abreast of broad issues around technology, and technology's importance in building strong, healthy communities;
- To promote awareness of the importance of information and to work with communities to help them better manage their information;
- To assist in the preparation of presentation materials, talking-point documents, and background information on First Nations technology-related matters for the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the BC Region of the Assembly of First Nations;
- To provide advice and guidance on the goals of the First Nations Technology Council, the Technology Coordinator's Workplan, and other Council business.



Structure

The Council is chaired by a member who has been endorsed by Summit Resolution and is comprised of members representing geographic regions of the province and members representing First Nations organizations and government agencies serving BC First Nations. Members are selected based on their ability to contribute to fulfilling the mandates of the Council, and their availability to attend Council meetings on a regular basis. Upon invitation, the Council is open to non-members.

Decision Making

Endorsement of the Technology Coordinator's Workplan will provide guidance for on-going work. Issues not covered by the Workplan will be decided upon by the Council members.

Accountability

The Council is accountable to the First Nations communities, represented by Summit Chiefs in Assembly, to the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs and to the Chiefs of the BC Region of the Assembly of First Nations. The Council is financially responsible to the First Nations Summit.

Communication Principles

To achieve the goals of the Council, Council members agree to communicate in a transparent, timely manner and provide fact-based information to all provincial First Nations communities and to encourage them to bring forward to the Council issues of importance or concern regarding technology.

Reporting

The Council, with the support of the Technology Coordinator, will report to the First Nations Summit, and will make recommendations to the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the BC Region of the Assembly of First Nations.

Reports produced by the Council will be signed by the Council Chair on behalf of the Council.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Agenda

The Agenda and all other pertinent information should be circulated in advance of Council meetings.

Council Meetings Rules

- The Council will be comprised of community members and members of Aboriginal organizations who are committed to achieving the purposes of the Council, who are accountable to fellow Council members, and who embrace the leadership role and the need to be well-informed on matters before the Council to permit informed, fact-based decision-making.
- Council meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order as they might be adapted for committees, unless otherwise agreed by the Council.
- Meetings will be fair so that people who have a point to make will be given an opportunity.

- Meetings will be efficient so that time is spent on discussion relevant to the matter at hand.
- To ensure maximum decision-making efficiency and clarity of purpose, the Council may exercise discretion to request that fellow Council members who demonstrate an unwillingness to subscribe to the role or function of the Council cease participation as a member of the Council.

Discussion

Only members and guests recognized by the Council Chair may speak.

Working Groups

The Council Chair and the Technology Coordinator may structure Working Groups, if required, to advance the work of the Council. When such Working Groups are required, they will be coordinated by Portfolio Leaders, who will take direction from, and report to, the full Council.

Disagreements

The Chair of the Council meeting is responsible for maintaining order. When there is substantive disagreement between members of Council that cannot be resolved through discussion and consensus building, the Council Chair will determine the Council's position relative to the matter in disagreement.

COUNCIL MEMBER DUTIES, ROLES, and RESPONSIBILITIES

Council Chair

- Is a member of the Council and is a partner in achieving the goals and objectives of the Council;
- Assigns work to Council members, sets Council meeting agenda, runs Council meetings, and ensures distribution of Council meeting minutes - in association with the Technology Coordinator;
- Chairs meetings of the Council;
- Encourages the Council's role in planning;
- Appoints Working Groups, in consultation with other Council members and the Technology Coordinator;
- Monitors the FNTC budget, in association with the Technology Coordinator;
- Reports to the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the BC Region of the Assembly of First Nations on behalf of the Council regarding Council decisions and recommendations;

Performs other responsibilities as required to promote technology in First Nations communities.

Council Members

- Regularly attend Council meetings and important related meetings;
- Make a serious commitment to participate actively in Council work;
- Volunteer for and willingly accept assignments, and complete assignments fully and on time;
- Stay informed about Council matters, prepare themselves well for meetings, and review and comment on minutes and reports;



- Maintain collegial working relationships with fellow members of the Council;
- Contribute to consensus-building on matters before the Council;
- Are active participants in the Council's evaluation and planning efforts.

Term of Service

- The Term of Service for members of the Council is two years. This term can be renewed;
- Council members will begin their term at the annual FNTC Conference in February;
- Beginning February 2007, all members of the current Council will be confirmed, with half the members agreeing to serve a three year term to ensure continuity;
- Members must agree to serve on Working Groups if they are to be financially supported by the Council at meetings;
- The Council meeting at the annual Conference is open to anyone interested in contributing to FNTC business, whether or not they serve on a Council Working Group.

Technology Coordinator

- Is not a member of the Council;
- Liaises between the Council Chair and the Council;
- Facilitates Council Working Groups;
- Coordinates the Council communications and reporting;
- Manages Council administrative functions;
- Manages the Technology Coordinator's Workplan and the FNTC Budget.

Conflicts of Interest

Council members are active professionally and personally in service to First Nations communities and organizations. From time to time, Council members may take on other professional roles not directly tied to a community or to a First Nations organization. The Chair may ask these members to remain on the Council and to continue their contribution to Council business, subject to an agreement that they do not use their position on the Council to derive any business or personal benefit. These members must agree to not allow any conflict of interest resulting from their participation on Council to exist without notifying the Council Chair in writing.

A conflict of interest would be seen to be created when the Council member's business or personal interests, or those of a family member, business associate, or company in which the member holds a significant interest, compromise or have the appearance of compromising the Council member's unbiased opinion or impair the Council member's ability to participate in any piece of business before Council. Council members are required to disclose to Council any personal interest which he or she may have in any piece of business before Council and to refrain from participation in any decision on said piece of business.

Council members have professional qualifications and experience relevant to FNTC business. From time to time, the FNTC may have need of specific services that could be provided by Council members. If deemed by the Council to be a suitable person for the work required, a



member may be engaged and will be reimbursed as per a fair 'industry standard' per diem and legitimate travel based on First Nations Summit current rates.