



Wasoqopa'q First Nation

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October 30th, 2024

Dear Members,

We are writing to advise that Wasoqopa'q First Nation ("WFN") has recently obtained a judgement in the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia relating to a housing matter in one of our communities.

In particular, a member of WFN has been residing on properties located on the Yarmouth Reserve without authorization since 2022. The WFN Housing By-law sets out the requirements to be a lawful resident in our communities.

The properties in issue are the last remaining lots on the Yarmouth Reserve that are suitable for development for Band housing. Housing in our communities is in short supply - something which we have been working to address. The process for housing allocation under the Housing By-law is based on the factors set out in By-law and must be done in an orderly way. In this case, WFN obtained funding to place homes on these properties. These homes would provide housing to families on the Housing List.

However, since 2022, WFN issued a Notice to Vacate to the member, and repeatedly requested that the member remove their structures from the properties, so that they may be developed for housing. At all times, the member refused.

In the absence of voluntary compliance, with many on the Housing List awaiting housing, and funding under the Rapid Housing Initiative to develop the properties, WFN Chief and Council had no choice except to take the issue to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court. On October 28, 2024, the Court issued an order (the "Court Order") declaring that the member is trespassing on the properties, and requiring that they vacate within thirty days.

The Court Order upholds the authority of Chief and Council to govern and uphold our laws in our communities while also recognizing our Housing By-law as valid law. Further, the Court made clear that WFN made concerted efforts to address the member's housing issues outside of Court. It is important to emphasize that the Court made no findings or comments against WFN.

We continue to seek voluntary compliance with the Notice to Vacate and Court Order. Chief and Council are hopeful that the individual involved will comply with the Court Order so that no further steps need to be taken to bring this matter to a peaceful conclusion.

Chief and Council will continue to administer Band housing in accordance with our Housing By-law, and seek to develop lands suitable for housing, for the benefit of the First Nation as a whole.

Chief Deborah Robinson

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