

Report

Date

May 4, 2022

File:

Subject

National Indigenous Peoples Day 2022

PURPOSE

To consider an offer of financial or other support to Cowichan Tribes for a National Indigenous Peoples Day event in 2022.

BACKGROUND

The First Nations Relations Committee (FNRC) identified at its June 14, 2021 meeting that it wished to consider a 2022 National Indigenous Peoples Day event in North Cowichan at a future meeting. June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day (NIPD), an event celebrated by many Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities across Canada. This is a federally recognized day to celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. It falls on the summer solstice, because for generations, many Indigenous peoples and communities have celebrated their culture and heritage on or near the longest day of the year.¹ Cowichan Tribes has historically hosted an NIPD event.

DISCUSSION

In recent weeks, staff began preparing the draft agenda for the first FNRC meeting of 2022. It quickly became apparent there was limited time for the Committee to meaningfully consider what it might like to do and to seek advice and formal approval from local First Nations on what a 2022 North Cowichan-hosted event might look like.

To expedite Council consideration of how it may wish to acknowledge this year's NIPD, staff worked with the FNRC Chair to prepare the attached draft letter to Cowichan Tribes on behalf of the FNRC Committee (Attachment 1). The letter offers up to \$5,000 to assist with any potential 2022 event costs, inquires as to whether there is any other way North Cowichan can contribute to any potential 2022 event, and expresses interest in exploring future opportunities to collaborate on or contribute to NIPD, and other similar events in the future.

This letter is specific to Cowichan Tribes so that they could be notified of our interest in supporting NIPD as soon as possible, while any 2022 event planning is underway. Staff will be following up with the Halalt, Lyackson, Penelakut and Stz'uminus First Nations to inquire as to whether they are holding 2022 events. Should other First Nations confirm that 2022 events are in progress, staff will work with the FNRC Committee Chair to draft additional letters of support with proportionate suggested support amounts for consideration at a future meeting of Council.

¹ *About National Indigenous Peoples Day* (2020, May 21) retrieved from
<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013718/1534874583157#sct2>

OPTIONS

1. **(Recommended Option)** THAT Council authorize the Chair of the First Nations Relations Committee to sign the letter attached to the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer's report dated May 4, 2022, and that it be sent to Cowichan Tribes offering up to \$5,000 in financial support towards any planned National Indigenous Peoples Day event in 2022.
2. THAT Council authorize the Chair of the First Nations Relations Committee to sign the letter attached to the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer's report dated May 4, 2022 from the Chair of the First Nations Relations Committee, and that it be sent to Cowichan Tribes, subject to the following changes: *(Council to identify amendments, including the amount of financial support)*

IMPLICATIONS

Relationship building is central to the journey toward reconciliation. Council's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan identifies "continu[ing] to develop strong relationships with Indigenous peoples" as a strategic priority action, and the FNRC Committee was struck in 2019 to support this objective. The Terms of Reference for the FNRC identify that its mandate includes "initiat[ing] and build[ing] programs and activities that foster, maintain and strengthen relationships with Local First Nations."

The proposed letter and offer to Cowichan Tribes and planned follow-up with other First Nations regarding NIPD 2022 presents an opportunity to build relationships with local First Nations and signal our sincere interest in collaborating and/or supporting other similar events in the future.

Council has allocated funds within the 2022 Financial Plan to support relationship building with Indigenous Peoples and to cover the cost of the recommended staff option.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council authorize the Chair of the First Nations Relations Committee to sign the letter attached to the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer's report dated May 4, 2022, and that it be sent to Cowichan Tribes offering up to \$5,000 in financial support towards any planned National Indigenous Peoples Day event in 2022.

Report prepared by:



Sarah Nixon
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Report reviewed by:

Ted Swabey

Ted Swabey
Chief Administrative Officer

Approved to be forwarded to Council:

Ted Swabey

Ted Swabey
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments: Draft Letter-FNRC Offer to Support Cowichan Tribes 2022 National Indigenous Peoples Day Event