



Co-Chairs Roger Dufault(left) and Mayor Kim Baigrie(right)



Press Release

Township's Willingness Ad Hoc Committee Enters Final Review and Reporting Stage

Ignace ON May 3, 2024 – Over the past few weeks, the Township of Ignace's Willingness Ad Hoc Committee (WAHC) has been busy training experienced and new members as well as establishing their Chair and Co-Chair and recording secretaries for the important work ahead. Mayor Kim Baigrie and Mr. Roger Dufault will act as the committee's co-chairs during these proceedings. Meetings have taken place in order to begin preparing the parameters of the committee's work, establishing logistical procedures, and setting schedules for the anticipated reviews, deliberations, and dialogue around both the tabulations of votes and summaries of local engagement/conversations with respect to the Township's willingness to continue to actively stay engaged in the potential siting of a deep geological repository by the NWMO.

This includes the implementation of a methodology and matrix to help guide the committee in receiving and reviewing the study/report that is forthcoming from With Chela Inc., the municipal consultants and specialists that have managed the community's engagement and participation in registering votes in order that their voice could be heard. Two renowned peer review specialists will also be available to help guide and answer questions for the committee on procedural issues and potentially assist the committee with their final recommendations to Council.

"We are entering an extremely important stage of the willingness process over the course of the next two months in Ignace, and that is the understanding and analysis of the study results that With Chela Inc. will present to the volunteer committee. To ensure the utmost integrity, accountability and transparency of this process, all Township staff, Council members and I will all be removed from the process before the delivery of that report to this committee by Chela expected at the end of May or early June", stated Mayor Kim Baigrie. "I want to take this opportunity to thank the nine individuals from this community that stepped up as volunteers to conduct and present this extremely important work to Council expected to be delivered in late June or early July 2024".

The official process to gather input from the residents of Ignace ended at midnight on April 30, 2024, after four full days of registration and voting that took place by both electronic and paper ballot in the community. With Chela Inc. and her team have been working diligently over the past ten months to endeavor the engagement of every resident in the community of Ignace to ensure that their voices are heard on this extremely important topic.

Now that the process of engagement is completed, With Chela Inc. will begin the confidential process of tabulating results, analyzing data from local engagement and discussions, and preparing a summary and final report that will be presented to Ignace's Willingness Ad Hoc Committee, expected later this month or early next. At that time, only the nine volunteer community members on the committee will have access to, be able to review, analyze and deliberate on the final report before it is presented to Council in mid-June of this year for consideration and endorsement. No member of Council or township staff will see the final results until they are presented at that time. Council has previously stated that it will adhere to the recommendations and willingness of the community to either continue as a potential host or not, based on the committee's recommendations. The process being undertaken by the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee will continue in the most confidential manner and all data will be protected at all times, until the final report is publicly released once it is presented to Open Council.

"As the Co-Chair and one of the nine volunteer committee members, I want to thank both the experienced members that have been involved in this process for over a decade, as well as those new members who have taken it upon themselves to get involved in a real and tangible way to help advance local democracy on such an important project that could change the entire face and trajectory of this community," stated Mr. Roger Dufault. "We are not taking this task lightly and we want to ensure that once we have the final report from With Chela Inc. that we are in a position to understand, ask questions, deliberate, and deliver a final report to Council that truly represents the voice of whether we are, or are not, in favour of moving forward with this willingness journey for Ignace."

The Willingness Ad Hoc Committee will now be meeting regularly over the next two months in the Township of Ignace. There will be a confidentiality ban on all information related to the willingness process in Ignace until it is publicly released to Council in late June or early July 2024.

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