



Kahnawà:ke Ratitsénhaiens

Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

P.O. Box 720 Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory JOL 1B0

Phone: (450) 632-7500 Fax: (450) 638-5958

Web Site: www.Kahnawake.com E-mail: communications@mck.ca

Enhsakotò:kénhte Nitiotié:ren Tsi Ietsenhaiéntákhwa

Tsi Nahóten Karihwanákere No'nenk News Release

MCK Budget 2012-2013 released

For immediate release

(Kahnawà:ke – 28, Enniskó:wa/March 2012) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) has finalized the 2012-2013 budget for the upcoming fiscal year (April-March), which totals \$44,303,747. In order to 'zero balance' the budget and avoid a projected operating deficit of approximately \$3 million, budget decreases in many areas were necessary. In other words, MCK Operations was required to lower their funding requirements by \$3 million. Each and every MCK Unit or function was asked to work with less dollars without impacting current services.

"The projected operating deficit was a staggering \$3 million at the start of the budgeting process and an unprecedented collaborative effort was made to zero balance once again," said Director of Finance Erica Delisle. "The fact that this was done without layoffs or reduction of services is astounding as this was accomplished despite no new operating revenues coming in. We were very fortunate this year but there is no way to sustain the level of services Kahnawà:ke has become accustomed to for much longer without new revenue sources or severely depleting reserves."

Two of the most significant changes from last year's budget are in the area of the Social Assistance Program and the Kahnawake Gaming Commission. A dramatic increase of social assistance recipients, speculated to be due largely to the decline in local job availabilities, is costing close to \$5.3 million dollars annually, which represents an increase of \$634,724 from last year. Conversely, the Kahnawake Gaming Commission has experienced a severe decline in Licensees in the past year, resulting in decreased fees of more than half a million dollars at \$580,000. These two items represent a \$1.2 million impact on the core operating budget.

As part of the annual Core Budget for operations, the MCK is pleased that it was still able to meet the needs of some vital community organizations - namely the Kahnawake Youth Center (\$150,000), the Cultural Center (\$354,000), Skawenni:io Tsi Iewennahnotahkwa Library (\$10,000), and the Kahnawake Fire Brigade, (\$300,000). Only two secondary requests were approved; \$300,000 for the Kahnawake Education Center to cover yet another shortfall (taken from Operational Reserves), and \$18,774 for the Kahnawake Fire Brigade for training and equipment (taken from the Emergency Measures Reserve).

The MCK is now entering the second year of a five-year agreement with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, who once again sent a letter of commendation recognizing the MCK's strong management of its financial resources. Unfortunately, while funds for the primary budget have been confirmed, the 'annual adjustment factor' still was not as of the time of this press release. The annual adjustment factor is added each year to offset inflation costs on utilities such as fuel and electricity. Word on confirmation is not expected until after Canada presents the Federal Budget, which at this point is still unknown.

"I applaud the entire organization, all the Directors, Managers, Senior Management Team and our Finance Department for bringing a zero balanced budget to Chief and Council," said Grand Chief Michael Ahrírhon Delisle Jr. "Under these circumstances, given the uncertainty of the Federal budget, and the pledge to continue to provide the level of services that our community demands, I commend the collaborative effort that was required to achieve this extremely difficult task. This work has become increasingly difficult in our current financial situation."

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For information about this release, please contact:
Gene Diabo, MCK Communications Officer - Operations
450 632 7500 ext. 2254, gene.diabo@mck.ca

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