



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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MCK say Niawenhkó:wa to Task Force for a job well done

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 22, Ohiarí:ha/June 2021) As of today, the community is no longer under a State of Emergency and has now entered the Recovery Phase of the pandemic. As well, the Mandate of the Kahnawà:ke COVID-19 Task Force has ended. The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke would like to take this opportunity to offer its thanks and appreciation for a job well done.

During the time of the Task Force's operation, Kahnawà:ke suffered no COVID-related fatalities and only two hospitalizations – neither which resulted in stays in the intensive care unit. Actions were taken swiftly and effectively, always with the health and safety of our most vulnerable population in mind. Untold hours of work and dedication went into ensuring the information provided to the community was accurate and up-to-date, and that the actions taken were effective and sensible.

"It is very difficult to express just how difficult their job was," said Ratsénhaienhs Clinton Phillips, who sat as an alternate as the MCK representative on the Task Force and witnessed much of their work first-hand. "The community was incredible, respecting the directives and working together for the collective benefit. In order to gain that trust it was necessary to gather a Task Force team that comprised of the major sectors of the community: the Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre (KMHC), Kahnawake Mohawk Peacekeepers, Fire Brigade, Shakotiiia'takéhnhas Community Service, Education Center, the Longhouses, and the MCK. And the Task Force was able to inform the community in a timely and on-going basis, at times seven-days-a-week."

While the pandemic is by no means over, Kahnawà:ke has been spared the worst of it, despite the situation around our community and throughout Quebec.

"Without a doubt, the actions taken on our behalf by the Task Force saved lives," added Ratsénhaienhs Phillips. "It was often very challenging, as some directives required difficult decisions that weren't always popular. But, in the end, our community came through with flying colors – and that's what matters most."

"While the Task Force was a team, we would be remiss if we didn't single out Lloyd Phillips for his consistent leadership as the Task Force chairperson," Ratsénhaienhs Phillips concluded. "He'll still have a major role during the Recovery Phase as Commissioner of Public Safety, so that's great for continuity. We'd also like to acknowledge KMHC Executive Director Lisa Westaway for her efforts. Her work not only as the health liaison but as a leader and one of the main spokespersons for the Task Force was exemplary."

"On behalf of the MCK and the entire community, we offer our gratitude. Niawenhkó:wa."