



BC TREATY COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TREATY COMMISSION PROPOSES PROBE OF VOTE

VANCOUVER – The Treaty Commission will probe the reasons for the rejection of the Lheidli T’enneh First Nation treaty if community members agree to participate in such a review.

Community members plan to meet April 29th in Prince George to consider their situation and determine their next steps. The Treaty Commission is proposing there be an independent assessment done of the community’s preparations for the vote.

Chief Commissioner Steven Point said, “We want to know if more time and information would have made a difference in the result or if content is the culprit, as some are suggesting.

“If there was misinformation or misunderstanding, the community may want another opportunity to come together to consider the content of their treaty. If there were doubts or fears, or questions that remain unanswered, then there may be an opportunity to address them.”

For example, the Treaty Commission wants to know why so many members didn’t vote and why there appears to have been confusion among some community members about the content of the treaty. The treaty vote came as the result of weekly community meetings involving family representatives over a period of several years.

“The Treaty Commission’s examination of the vote would be for the benefit the Lheidli T’enneh people, not to answer those who are saying the treaty process is in trouble.”

Point said the future of the treaty process is not resting on the shoulders of the Lheidli T’enneh, or Tsawwassen First Nation or the five Maa-nulth First Nations on Vancouver Island.

“Many other First Nations are impatient to move ahead with treaty negotiations,” he said. “The treaty process is bigger than any one First Nation. It took us a long time to get a seat at the table and this is still our best opportunity to resolve the issues that have pitted First Nations against the other governments.”

Point said a treaty is the best option if First Nations are to be self-governing and self-reliant and it’s just a matter of time before there are agreements.

“Now is not the time for the parties to lose courage, but to negotiate with more resolve and determination,” he said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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