

Tuesday October 2, 2024

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION

heiltsuk tribal
council



HTC Annual General Meeting (s)

The 2024 Heiltsuk Nation Annual General Meetings were held:

- Bella Bella on Monday, September 23, 2024
- and in Vancouver on Saturday, September 29th, 2024

We appreciate and acknowledge the good attendance at both meetings. We thank all our members for coming out to ask your questions and participate in the meetings on the work and initiatives we carry out on behalf of our people.

Usual Business:

Like every year, HTC along with Joint Leadership holds our AGMS for the purposes of:

- Receiving and considering the financial statements of the Nation and the Auditors report;
- Reporting on HTC and Joint Leadership activities on behalf of the Heiltsuk; and
- Receiving feedback and input from Heiltsuk members.
- At both AGMs paper copies of the following reports were distributed to all AGM attendees:
- Heiltsuk Indian Band Audited Consolidated Financial Statements March 31, 2024
- Heiltsuk Indian Band Compiled Programs and Schedules March 31, 2024
- Heiltsuk Tribal Council AGM Report, March 31, 2023 – March 31, 2024
- Open House Materials from both: Haicistut and Heiltsuk Constitution



Members may request paper copies of all the reports through the HTC office. To request a copy of the reports, please contact Executive Assistant: htc.ea@heiltsuk.ca

Additional Business:

HTC shared this statement at our urban meeting on Saturday, September 29th, 2024. We remain committed to meaningful information sharing with our members, we see this as happening in a timely and ongoing manner:

Heiltsuk Tribal Council (HTC) is aware of ongoing member concerns about Heiltsuk Nation's governance and administration and, specifically, concerns and allegations set out in a document that was presented last year at the 2023 Urban AGM and is now re-circulating in our communities. We are deeply saddened by the re-opening of these wounds just as we are entering community engagement on our Hałtzaqv Constitution. This should be a time of building, not of tearing down.

We fully support and respect the right of our members to voice their concerns and offer constructive criticism of our government. This is a fundamental part of accountability and good governance. But it must be done in a respectful and informed manner, with a focus on supporting our community, not dividing it. We are deeply troubled by the continued spread of harmful allegations, misinformation and disinformation within our community. This is more than simply raising questions – it creates confusion, mistrust and division, undermining our collective efforts to follow our ǵvıłás.



As Heiltsuk people we all have a duty to uphold our ḡvīlās, to seek truth, act with integrity and ensure our actions are in the best interest of all Hałtzaqv people. This includes the responsibility to inform ourselves and verify information before sharing it or making accusations.

The so-called “Action Plan” document contains numerous serious allegations against HTC Councillors and employees and calls for a forensic audit and complete overhaul of Heiltsuk Nation’s governance and administration. When these concerns were first raised by Mr. Allan Mason at the 2022 Urban AGM, we took them seriously, and we reported back to the membership at the 2023 AGM and Urban AGM about what we did in response:

- From summer 2022 to spring 2023, we conducted an extensive internal review of all the issues raised by Mr. Mason, including whether there was any reason to justify a forensic audit;
- We comprehensively reviewed documents, information, records and reports relevant to the concerns raised, and obtained advice and recommendations from professional legal and financial advisors with relevant expertise;
- The evidence conclusively showed there was no truth to the allegations and our legal and financial professionals advised there was no justifiable basis for a forensic audit.
- We exhaustively reported on the results of our review at the 2023 Urban AGM.
- We further reported on the outcomes from the 2023 Urban AGM to membership through mailouts, hand delivery and social media and made sure membership knew how to access all the information, records and reports from our review.



Enormous effort and cost was expended to meaningfully and completely address these matters. Mr. Allan Mason himself recognized this at the 2023 Urban AGM, when he thanked leadership for our comprehensive and transparent response and agreed a forensic audit was not needed. He recognized and apologized for the harm caused by these unsubstantiated allegations and called on membership to work together for the betterment of our people. Anyone who wants to review the video from the 2023 AGM, and all related documents, presentations, records and reports, may contact htc.ea@heiltsuk.ca.

We will continue to make information available in keeping with our responsibility as leadership to ensure transparency and accountability.

The costs of the misinformation and false allegations have been far greater than mere time and money; they go to the core of who we are as Heiltsuk people. Families and friends have been torn apart, hearts and reputations have been harmed and trust has been broken. All this has been a distraction from the crucial work before us of strengthening our self-governance. This is not the right way for us as a people to deal with our concerns. It goes against *ǵvǵlǵs*. It goes against *Haǵtzaqv*.

The questions have been asked and answered. It is time to put these matters to rest. We invite all Heiltsuk membership to honor the meaning of Heiltsuk and to uphold our *ǵvǵlǵs*, working together for the betterment of our people.



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We ask everyone to participate in our collective governance in a healthy and constructive way, following ǵvǵlǵs and using the tools and processes we have worked together to create. Come to community engagement sessions, talk to our Hereditary and elected leaders, ask questions, listen, learn and have your say. We are here to support you and work alongside you.

Closing:

Joint Leadership will be de-briefing and seek ways to improve. We take learnings from all the questions, concerns and comments from our members. And they help form our future community engagement sessions and preparations for presentations for community reporting. Giaxsica.

Heiltsuk Tribal Council

The financial statements and auditor's reports have been published in accordance with the First Nations Financial Transparency Act on the Indigenous Services Canada website:

[//fnp-ppn.aadncaandc.gc.ca/FNP/Main/Search/FNMain.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=538&lang=eng](http://fnp-ppn.aadncaandc.gc.ca/FNP/Main/Search/FNMain.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=538&lang=eng)

