



**LAXGALTS'AP  
MAY 9 - 13  
2022**

# Nisga'a Nation

## SPECIAL ASSEMBLY SUMMARY REPORT

KEY ISSUES, RESPONSES & ACTION ITEMS  
FROM THE ASSEMBLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS



**Nisga'a Lisims Government**

**Sayt-K'ilim-Çoot**  
one heart, one path, one nation

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# Introduction



Special Assemblies of the Nisga'a Nation are provided for by the Nisga'a Constitution.

In May 2022, the Nisga'a Nation gathered for a Special Assembly in Lax̱galts'ap for several days to discuss central issues facing the Nation.

In respect of that Assembly, this report summarizes and identifies:

- + the key issues that were articulated by Nisga'a citizens;
- + the responses by NLG in relation to the issues identified; and
- + the particular actions items that were, from the record of proceedings, items which respondents indicated that Nisga'a citizens could expect to see some form of follow up.

Where possible, the report has attempted to incorporate the language of the speaker, (i.e., to use their words and expressions). Minor edits have been made for clarity, and some duplicated questions and responses omitted. Where there may appear to be ungrammatical expressions, this is often due to notes which attempt to capture the actual speaking style of the speaker or which occasionally capture comments in point form.

It is hoped that this report will provide:

- + a review of some of the key issues that arose from the conference to ensure that
- + the comments of Nisga'a citizens are afforded an opportunity to be heard;
- + information in response to these questions and comments; and
- + identify any action items to ensure that follow-up can be tracked.

Questions inconsistent with the rules of the Special Assembly are omitted. In some instances, following the Special Assembly, additional information has been included to provide further details in response.



## With Thanks

The biennial Special Assembly of the Nisga'a Nation was scheduled by the Nisga'a Lisims Government (NLG) Executive to take place from May 9 - 13 2022 in the Nisga'a Village of Laxgalts'ap, the first major gathering of the Nisga'a Nation since the onset of the Global COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020.

This report will summarize and pay tribute to the many individuals who worked collaboratively to make the Assembly a success.

### **HOST COMMUNITY**

First and foremost, NLG wishes to express heartfelt gratitude to the host community of Laxgalts'ap for their tireless efforts in being our gracious hosts. Their work included providing:

- + food – morning and afternoon snacks, lunches and two evening dinners on Monday and Tuesday respectively;
- + rental of facilities – Laxgalts'ap Community Centre;
- + parking – First Aid attendants;
- + evening cultural entertainment activities.

### **NLG STAFF**

Many thanks to NLG Senior Management and all departmental staff who contributed to the success of the Assembly. Namely, the core group of staff that assisted with Friday and Sunday set-up, the staff that began their days extra early to open registration at 7:30 AM each day.

### **WEBCAST & PHOTOGRAPHY**

Thanks to our Communications Officer – Videographer, Paul Mercer and IT Team for making the Zoom webinar possible.

## Question & Answer Session

# Executive Panel / Governance & Fiscal Relations

### Reference Documents

President's report (2022 Special Assembly Report pages 14 & 15)

Executive chairperson's report (2022 Special Assembly Report page 16)

Secretary-treasurer's report (2022 Special Assembly Report pages 17-21)

Chairperson, council of elders' report (2022 Special Assembly Report pages 22-23)

**Q&A SUMMARY /** In this session, a number of citizens raised questions regarding the treaty gift including eligibility and access. Citizens also expressed comments and concerns covering a range of issues that included petitions, the Commercial Fisher's Fund, updating outdated legislation and road maintenance. In addition, participants spoke of the need to address housing & homelessness, how to ensure the Nisga'a Nation benefits from LNG, language preservation, health and citizenship.



**SUBJECT /** Treaty Gift, Housing, Special Investigation, Petitions, Language, LNG

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**Comments**

- + Treaty Gift: concern of auditing committee for 18 and under.
- + Housing: in Urban locals, don't build in cities, no Nisga'a Housing. What do we need to correct that?
- + Nisga'a Legislation: a lot of legislation out dates.
- + No report from the last Executive. A lot of questions came out of the last executive.
- + Special investigation: when?
- + Petitions: what's happening with them?
- + Taxes: permissive exemption bylaw. Right now it's done through NLG and should now be moved to the Village Governments.
- + Nisga'a language: come up with plan for the Nisga'a Language to move forward.
- + LNG: everything Nisga'a, and we must control and benefit from this project.

**Response**

President:

- + Housing: work is ongoing in each of the communities in our Homelands, while we provide the support to Urban locals, ie Letter of Intent. We have to find a way to assist in supporting locals in this area.
- + Special Investigation: cannot speak to the investigation that was brought on by administration as it is still in progress.

Executive Chairperson:

- + Petitions: the Executive established a Rules Committee and have yet to meet in June. One of the items is to address special investigations.

Secretary Treasurer:

- + Treaty gift to those citizens for 17 & under and the Permissive Exemption, this will be brought to the Finance Committee for recommendation.
- + LNG: everything Nisga'a – will work very hard with the team and address this.

Chairperson, CoE:

- + Former Chairperson provided a strategic plan, and we received \$6mm to begin this process.
- + We need to establish a Language authority, and how far the Ayuukhl Nisga'a directorate is with this, and that the grant was \$1mm for 6 years and yet to receive an update.

**SUBJECT /** Retirees, Residential school survivors, Health

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**Comments**

- + Retirees: what do people do after they retire?
- + Residential School survivors: how will the Executive exercise the law with Nisga'a law to protect the members?
- + They refuse to answer questions.
- + Nisga'a health is really weak, don't know how to deal with this. Would like to see something developed through funding and policy through Nisga'a Nation.

**Response**

- + Chairperson, CoE and the AGM of NVH will have information.
- + We have to look at what good to bring us so we can deal with it.
- + Agree with you and we can sit and discuss this more fully.
- + Thank you for reminding us for us to start working on being healthy, spiritually and mentally.

**SUBJECT /** NPLV, Pipeline, *Elections Act*, Language & Culture

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**Comments**

- + Petition: NPLV and Commercial fund, nothing brought up.
- + That NPLV lost a lot of money, Nisga'a owned.
- + Pipeline: open Houses. Job issue was pushed at this meeting.
- + Found out this pipeline is going to be laid at bottom of the ocean to Nasoga Gulf. We were not informed of this at the open houses. Need to be transparent.
- + *Elections Act*: why are elected members holding other positions within NLG?
- + Language and Culture: nothing mentioned about K'aats.

**Response**

Secretary-Treasurer:

- + Commercial Fishers Fund: until we look at more opportunities for that we are going to put that into an Investment Fund so it will grow.
- + We are taking percentages of those funds to alleviate our commercial fishers ie., maintenance on boats.
- + \$13,000,400: it is growing but also used to assist the commercial fishers.
- + NPLV: \$5.6mm debt that had to pay, will be paid down this fiscal year. Final payment will be made this year.
- + Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for all financials of the Nisga'a Nation, which includes negotiation for all financials through the IBAs.
- + We are reviewing all IBAs currently, and once review is complete a full report will be provided.
- + Able to balance the work, and there are issues I cannot do and are passed on.
- + Secretary-Treasurer does not hold 2 positions.

Council of Elders:

- + Acknowledge the most senior simgigat to stand.
- + All these members are the people to address the question on K'aats. These Chiefs and Matriarchs to address through their Wilps.

**SUBJECT /** LNG, Treaty Gift

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**Comments**

- + LNG: in favour, that is our future, that is job creation.
- + The people have a say. give us updates.
- + Treaty Gift: we only got part of it, what happened to that \$2500 we should have received long ago?
- + That money to be paid out as soon as possible.

**Response**

- + Treaty Gift: that \$5000 was a proposal that came from Nisga'a Village of Aiyansh. When WSN made decision and finance committee made recommendation, it was \$2500, Finance Committee works on other priorities for the Nation ie, housing, economic development. Discussions are ongoing
- + Approximately \$20mm has been dispursed to Nisga'a citizens. We have to be smart in making decisions on this fund, ie, housing.
- + Will have face to face meeting with you on other issues.

**SUBJECT / 2018 Special Assembly, Treaty Gift, Citizenship**

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**Comments**

- + Looking forward to 2018 special assembly responses
- + Treaty Gift: resolution of Dec 4th adoption. Am I correct that it states if they aren't registered by the effective date of Dec 1, 2021 that they are not eligible? If true, are we not following the Nisga'a Constitution?
- + Children turning 18 in July / August: process?

**Response**

Secretary-Treasurer:

- + Treaty Gift: decision made by Finance Committee, recommended to executive and passed by WSN.
- + As we move forward, we are identifying a lot of things we need to work on in regards to other Nisga'a citizens that have come forward.
- + We live with that decision but doesn't stop us from moving forward.
- + For now the Dec 1, 2021 decision is the one we are going by.

President Clayton:

- + Special Assembly 2018: information on that special assembly will be distributed
- + Citizenship: the Executive will be considering a standing committee for citizenship which will guide administration.

**SUBJECT / Special Assembly Reports, Legislation, Voting Boundaries, NCFS**

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**Comments**

- + We haven't had this assembly for 4 years, why aren't the 4 year reporting included?
- + Nisga'a Legislation: good news that they could be updated. Would like to get our status back, but don't know if legislation has that power.
- + Boundaries: why can't citizens on the island vote? Would like to see that changed.
- + NCFS: when a Nisga'a child and family is in crisis, we need to be there as a Nation, it doesn't matter where we live.

**Response**

President Clayton:

- + The reports are up to date in spite of the global pandemic. We had to find a way to make a report to the citizens by Zoom.

**SUBJECT / Homelessness, QoL**

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**Comments**

- + Homelessness: there are so many citizens that are homeless in urban sectors and on Nisga'a Lands.
- + We need to ensure the Quality of Life of our citizens are being met.
- + We see low income apartments being built in urban sectors. We are the only nation that doesn't have those apartments.

**Response**

President Clayton:

- + Homelessness is a priority with NLG. We have many citizens in urban settings that are homeless.
- + We are working with Ts'amiks, and went on a field trip. It's incredible what they are doing.
- + City of Terrace: meeting of minds and how to address this issue. First Nations Alliance is also addressing this matter in Terrace.

Secretary-Treasurer:

- + Homelessness: Department of Capital, Housing & Facilities Operations was able to acquire funding for homelessness, \$2mm to begin to address that issue. We will need to sit down to address how to utilize those funds.
- + Nothing stopping Urban locals from reaching out to other resources, NLG will be supporting those initiatives.
- + Looking forward to plans taking place this year

**SUBJECT / Road Maintenance, Public Meeting Participation**

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**Comments**

- + What are we going to do about our roads?
- + How do we get control in maintaining our own roads? Since it has changed hands, It's gone from bad to worse. See broken down machines throughout winter.
- + Nisga'a Nation: how many of you attended the public meeting when they come to the door? If you do not attend you get 2nd hand information. That is one of the keys to our success is getting the proper information.
- + It's a major thing knocking at our door, thank you for sharing that information which is our pipeline.

**Response**

President Clayton:

- + Roads: state of the Nisga'a highway 113, Nisga'a government heard the concerns of the communities.
- + The government is working to get a meeting with the Minister of Transportation, and the priority will be Highway 113. Once we receive that information it will go out to the communities.
- + Encourage the 4 Village Governments to look at and discuss considering the creation of a construction company so we can take over our own highway.

Secretary-Treasurer:

- + Thank you for your comments for Nisga'a citizens to participate in meetings.
- + Further to Roads, we will need to have a plan in place before we meet with the Minister.

**SUBJECT /  
GOVERNANCE & FISCAL RELATIONS**

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Q: How are we managing for protection of old growth, considering the new provincial old growth deferral announcement? Province of BC is managing old growth with affected first nations through the deferral process. This should affect us in some way, as the province is protecting and pausing on harvest of all of growth until it is discussed with respect nations. This means we should be consulted by those who hold or issue timber licences, like the Tsimshian who hold Tree Farm Licence #1, as well as BC Timber Sales. Those who hold licences must consult on old growth deferrals to ensure consultation has been done. Do we know, or have we mapped out old growth based on the BC guidelines for old growth? This needs to be done.

Follow up of old growth deferral question: Did we say yes or no to the deferral? Yes means pause so we can review. No means, we trust you (licensee) to make the best decision on our behalf and to continue harvesting as usual.

Q: Good morning from Gitlaxt'aamiks. My question is regarding the single parent for council of elders, how will the single parents be chosen, when will this take place?

A: *Hi, great question. Unfortunately the Council of Elders are not on Zoom right now so they're unable to see your question. We encourage you to follow up with the Ayuukhl Nisga'a Department of NLG. They're in a better position to assist you with finding an answer.*

Q: I'd love to ask what is in place to ensure that the younger people are getting support they require to further their education in Nisga'a language and culture so they can one day teach our children. I myself have had many barriers prevent me to further my education, immediate one being funding (policy if you do not succeed you lose your funding). I've been paying my own tuition myself for 3 years and it's been tough.

Q: It is a very important issue (urban-based housing). Considering history, and the longstanding policies of creating off-reserve/urbanite first nation population, our nations need to reevaluate the needs that come with this growing off-reserve peoples. Some of these moves were not sought but still a growing reality. Some have urban housing programs (helping off-reserve first nation purchase homes falling within a certain income bracket, or rentals) – is this possible for the urban Nisga'a nations?

Q: Will lots be increased in size in the villages? Will the "Indian reserve" village sizes finally be expanded as the houses are too close together, it's so unhealthy. There's no privacy and not enough lot space to have a smoke-house and boat equipment and a small play area for children, and no space for a garage and a storage unit. There's no gardening space. When will Nisga'a Fish & Wildlife get a replaced building? That old building they have to use was just a temporary one for the old Nisga'a Tribal Council, that building has been condemned twice now as it's very unsafe and unhealthy.

*A: Thank you for your questions. 1. Lot sizes are determined by laws that are created by each respective Nisga'a Village under the Zoning By Law and guided by the Official Community Plans. As part of the Housing & Infrastructure Action Plan, we hope to carry out a review of both of these under the Asset Management: Tier 1 Project. This project is early in the stages, but I would anticipate that the Village Government would complete a community consultation component to the project. I would raise your concerns here as the VG seeks input for amending these important governing documents. 2. The Nisga'a Fish & Wildlife building is currently being reviewed by the Directorate's Facility Operations team to address the concerns raised and are looking at the replacement option as part of this work. Under the Nisga'a Nation: Housing & Infrastructure: Action Plan, this building is listed under Year 1.*

Q: When the housing units begin will they be all the same design? Indian Affairs did that with our housing. All DIA housing units were so small, like disgustingly small yet our family were large and many in our unit. Those DIA units were all just bare bones units and cheap plywood and no plumbing unless someone could guess how to put it together. Will this "new" housing budget for the Nisga'a Nation of over \$44 million, ensure the "housing" will be adequate and built properly and have enough space for families? If this money from Federal Government is a grant to First Nations, why do we have to pay rent costs on the housing, and some houses are called "social" housing which charges rent also. The little units for apartments are so cramped and flimsy and no privacy with no sound barriers between the cramped up units.

## Question & Answer Session

# Lands & Resources / Fisheries & Wildlife / Litigation Update

**Q&A SUMMARY /** In this session, the issue of dispute resolution with Nisga'a treaty partners was raised by a number of citizens. Additional concerns covered the purchase of Nasoga Gulf, food sovereignty, the effect of the opioid crisis, illegal fish sales and the use of Hlgu Isgwit Hot Springs. Citizens also spoke of their concerns regarding Spring salmon returns, the moose harvest, wolf population, logging on Nisga'a territory and park management.



**SUBJECT /** Dispute Resolution

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**Comments**

- + \$2 million dollars failure to abide by dispute resolution. Province covers cost of legal fees; so our neighbours know we are doing our due diligence.

**Response**

- + Request has been noted.

**SUBJECT /** Dispute Resolution

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**Comments**

- + Taken aback that we are still in dispute resolution with our partners. When the Treaty was given royal ascent the 1913 petition boundaries were included in that and that encompasses the land that we're speaking about. That document is protected under the constitution. There was another litigation by our neighbours, they did not speak specifically how other claims against the Treaty were to be dealt with. The rights of citizens are in Chapter 10, dispute resolution is Chapter. 19. We should sue our treaty partners for the cost of moving LNG Gulf to Wil Milit. I would like more information on the Gitanyow case.

**Response**

Jim Aldridge:

- + Neighbours can't use the duty to consult, we relied on that in the Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla case. They didn't want a duty to consult. Generally, asserted rights will not defeat treaty rights. Yes, we absolutely rely on 1913 Petition boundaries.

President Clayton:

- + Nisga'a Government is, and has been very concerned about the asserted rights that our Treaty partners continue to recognize with our neighbours. Last July voted unanimously to take our Treaty partners to court. If we are not happy with the decision, that Resolution will be triggered.

**SUBJECT /** Nasoga Gulf

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**Comments**

- + Purchase of Nasoga Gulf: 220 square kilometers of land has shrunk to 22,000 ha. Our land is important to our people.

**Response**

Mansell Griffin:

- + It's 22,000 ha which is equivalent to 220 square kilometers.

**SUBJECT /** Food Sovereignty, Opioid Crisis

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**Comments**

- + Works in downtown eastside in Vancouver, getting notoriety by cooking my own share of t'ibin. Governments funders, media are all over this. It's indigenous food sovereignty. How can you support Nisga'a food sovereignty for our people who don't live on Nisga'a lands?
- + Our people are dying disproportionately faster than the mainstream people due to the opioid crisis.

**SUBJECT /** Illegal Fish Sales, Hlgu Isgwit

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**Comments**

- + Gitanyow have been fishing at Meziadin Lake for the last six years. Saw a Facebook ad for a lady with two totes of fish. Why can't we put an injunction on these people and fine them every time they do something like this? Why can't our simgigat participate each time these are negotiated? How can you sit there and say they gave up their land?
- + Hlgu Isgwit: my late uncle John Gosnell saying that he gave up Hlgu Isgwit. It is a family owned place. Late uncle James and Joseph Gosnell. This was restitution to the House of Naaws. It's meant for healing not for what goes on there. It's time to speak on your ango'oskw. How did you obtain the land that belonged to the Chiefs of our Nation?

**Response**

Harry Nyce:

- + You are correct to ask. You can't point fingers into faces of those who are helping us to settle our lands. We have a Treaty in place, we are still working towards good for our people. To those who are doing the work, you are doing a great job. The work is ongoing, it may take a long time. We will continue saying what we have been saying. Si'aamhl wilin, I caution you to not point fingers.

Jim Aldridge:

- + I respectfully, assert that I did not have any say in the lands owned by Nisga'a Nation.
- + No legal claim to fish: if there are illegal sales of fish it should be reported to DFO.

**SUBJECT /** Spring Salmon, Moose Harvest, Wolf Population, Hlgu Isgwit

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**Comments**

- + Spring salmon: what are numbers this year?  
We were limited to 5 last year.
- + Moose: how many tags were filled last year?  
What percentage were filled? We have so many elders in need of this resource.
- + Wolf population control.
- + Hlgu Isgwit: when we go certain times of the day; then we start seeing extra-curricular activities taking place. It's a spiritual place.

**Response**

Harry Nyce:

- + Report in Special Assembly booklet reports on spring salmon returns which have declined. We have not seen a rapid decline, but we must conserve.
- + Moose harvest: we must remain vigilant with respect to moose harvest. We need to monitor populations. We have laws in place to protect this resource. We know as well that there is a law in place protecting wolves.

**SUBJECT /** Logging

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**Comments**

- + Concerned about logging. When the road was first built in 1956/57, every logging truck that we passed our Dad would get very angry. Our land is getting stripped, taking our money and our trees. How do they own aboriginal title on Nisga'a lands? Ts'imsan must be millionaires now. Why don't Nisga'a loggers log our land? Someone else is getting rich of our land. Our own people should be getting rich. Did we give our land away? We'll have no more trees left.
- + The committee is being restructured. What can FLNRO do to assist?

**Response**

Mansell Griffin:

- + Lax Kw'alaams owns TFL #1. Not on Nisga'a lands but on our territory. Nobody has established aboriginal rights within the Nass area other than ourselves. Coast Ts'imsan Resources owns TFL #1.

Terry Azak:

- + Encourage you all to speak Nisga'a, especially when dealing with the land and litigation. As children we were told that it carries more weight when you say it in Nisga'a. What are you going to do in regards to Meziadin? Send our youth up there, build a couple of smokehouses. Let's reclaim these places that our people used for fishing and gathering.

President Clayton:

- + Good point about the use of Nisga'a language. I have been silently working on my lost language. It's important for our citizens to understand that you can submit proposal to the government on how they can use the various pieces of land that are under dispute. In Dispute Resolution we have to show ownership over Nisga'a Lands.

**SUBJECT /** Park Management

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**Comments**

- + Works for BC Parks for 15 years as independent contractor. KATC took over that contract. I started my company in the middle of a recession. Been through 3 floods and fought through the pandemic. My contract ended in October 2021 and that bid was not posted. KATC did not follow through with that. That's difficult to deal with. Call from BOD in June 2021. I didn't want to do this but everyone needs to know what's going on. Bert Mercer, Mansell Griffin and Harry Nyce all sit on the Management Board for BC Parks. This is not arms-length. NLG should not compete with a local successful entrepreneur, ever.

**Response**

Mansell Griffin:

- + With respect to Park Management: it was managed in the same way pre-treaty. Treaty has a management board with reps from NLG and Provincial Government. Your Executive, by resolution appoints that Board and we are Mansell Griffin, Harry Nyce and Bert Mercer. By another motion they can appoint someone else. It was implied that I am on the Board for KATC. No staff or Lands Officers work for KATC.
- + This is a provincial park that is co-managed. Who they select is a provincial matter. There were no back-room deals, KATC applied and made a business case that was more successful. Normally the contract for the Park has 3 components, managing the campground, volcano tours and visitor tours.

President Clayton:

- + NLG does not want to interfere with local entrepreneurs in their work. Thank you Mansell for your explanation. This joint management of BC Parks will be on the next Executive agenda.

*\*Zoom Q&A for this session is on Page 21 of this report, following the Economic Development / Tourism Report.*

## Question & Answer Session

# Economic Prosperity

**Q&A SUMMARY /** In this session, several speakers raised the issue of impact benefit agreements between the Nisga'a Nation and project proponents. Additional concerns covered environmental assessments, bottled water, protecting underwater resources, the rising cost of living, tourism funding and water turbidity.



**SUBJECT / Impact benefit agreements (IBAs)**

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**Comments**

- + Impact benefit agreements: how will our leadership prepare for that? There is a dark underside to these industries. How will Nisga'a entrepreneurs be supported to work for these entities?

**Response**

Bartek Keinc:

- + There are always cost overruns. Investors will always look to fulfill their legal obligations, as you said. I agree, China will not stop burning coal just because we build one LNG terminal.

**SUBJECT / Impact benefit agreements**

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**Comments**

- + Seabridge KSM agreement negotiated in 2013. In 2021 they've just recently applied for permitting, and they've applied for an increase in their permits. In 2015 the Nation negotiated an arrangement with Pretivm (Brucejack) for 2700 metric tonnes per day. The agreement the Nation negotiated with Pretivm carries over under new management. Formerly Long Lake Hydro, and they also have first right of refusal at that facility. That's 33% increase to the revenue stream. PM Trudeau stated that Canada can't be land locked with our resources.

**Response**

Collier Azak:

- + We have a IBA with Long Lake Hydro. Long lake hydro also provides hydro to Pretivm.

**SUBJECT / Environmental Assessment, Bottled Water**

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**Comments**

- + I like your robust environmental assessment process.
- + Who receives the applications for bottling water? Is it possible to get a permit?
- + Who receives applications for environmental assessment?
- + Funds: I get quarterly reports from my mutual fund provider? We have to start moving away from Government owned business. Give our houses a fair opportunity?

**Response**

Mansell Griffin:

- + Bottled water: we have a very substantial water supply and it is reserved for domestic use.
- + Hydro-electric reserve that expired May 11, 2020. You could pull out of the stream specific reserves.

**SUBJECT / Benefits**

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**Comments**

- + What benefits has NLG received to date? This is public funds, should be public information.

**Response**

Collier Azak:

- + Long Lake Hydro-electric project.

**SUBJECT / Underwater Resources**

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**Comments**

- + Underwater resources: are we protecting those as well?

**Response**

Mansell Griffin:

- + Won't be crossing the Nass River until it gets to the ocean.

Bartek Keinc:

- + No oil use cathodic protection to prevent rust overtime. Underwater pipelines are encased in a concrete case. Pipelines over lava beds are quite common, and they've operated safely.

**SUBJECT / Cost of Living**

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**Comments**

- + Gas, food and hydro have increased substantially.

**Response**

Mansell Griffin:

- + Cost of providing service to an apartment block is substantially cheaper than providing hydro to each home, ie, transmission line to substation, substation to individual homes.

**SUBJECT / Tourism Funding**

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**Comments**

- + Can we put some funds towards tourism? Marketing is a very big part of tourism.

**Response**

Collier Azak:

- + Communications is tasked with increasing the image of the Nisga'a Nation.

Charles Morven:

- + Thank you for suggesting that we increase the image of the Nation.

**SUBJECT / Water Turbidity**

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**Comments**

- + Turbidity of water after machine drove through our creek.

**Response**

- + Issue at hand is right of way for transmission land, water supply is right out of the creek.

*\*Zoom Q&A for this session is on Page 21 of this report, following the Economic Development / Tourism Report.*

## Question & Answer Session

# Economic Development / Tourism Report

**Q&A SUMMARY /** In this session, citizens raised questions and concerns regarding accessing NEST funding, hot springs maintenance and upkeep, and the new Nisga'a tourism website. Additionally, concerns were raised about travel for strategic planning, wood harvesting on Nisga'a Lands, and the need for a local grocery store.



**SUBJECT / Economic Development & NEST**

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**Comments**

- + Economic Development: hot springs, need to tend to those pools, clean them up.
- + NEST: non-existent in Gitlaxt'aamiks, what's happening with that funding?
- + Haven't received Headstart funding in past 2 years, what's happening with that funding?

**Response**

- + Hot springs: in early April had a contractor clean up hot tub, and lands is doing some other maintenance. Should be opening soon.

**SUBJECT / Tourism Website, Team Travel**

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**Comments**

- + Tourism Website: needs full review as there are a lot of mistakes.
- + Team travel to Durango: who decides on these trips? Spending dollars, going there to create wealth. Why not do this locally?

**Response**

- Secretary-Treasurer:
- + Strategic Planning off Nisga'a Lands: good to get away to a place with less distraction to get work done.
  - + Durango: travel was to view the indigenous group there on how they are successful in creating wealth.
  - + I'm available for any more questions during the week.

**SUBJECT / Wood Harvesting, Grocery Store**

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**Comments**

- + Wood: Nation mill, see other companies hauling out of the Valley.
- + Suggestion: have our own grocery store.

**SUBJECT /  
LANDS, RESOURCES, FISHERIES, WILDLIFE, LITIGATION & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**

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Q: How are we to know the views of our elected members if we do not hear their voices on issues. Gives us better understanding on how they work for the people. Is general council the one giving direction on the Andre Cardinal issue, as it has been a silent issue?

A: *Thank you for the question. General Counsel has no involvement in any litigation regarding Mr. Cardinal, and therefore no information to answer questions about the litigation.*

Q: What is NLG doing to ensure that outside influences and decision making authorities, like DFO, do not create conflicts between the Nisga'a and its neighbors, by allowing fishwheels to be developed that infringe on Nisga'a Traditional Lands?

A: *Thank you for the question. This general issue is one that is raised to be resolved in the ongoing dispute resolution with the Government of Canada. One of the potential ways to resolve it is for NLG and DFO to jointly develop a handbook for DFO to ensure they are aware of and implement the Nisga'a Treaty in a way that respects Nisga'a rights.*

Q: Why has DFO allowed Gitinyow access to the Nass river for fish studies when the Nisga'a already have a great fisheries program for the Nass River. Should Gitinyow be fishing on the Skeena River? Please clarify.

A: *Thank you for the question. There is nothing in the Nisga'a Treaty that is aimed at stopping DFO or another group from conducting studies on fish. Typically, the more information we can get to add to NLG's own studies and data, the better. We are in the process of resolving an issue, however, that makes sure that all studies and data that relates to Nass River fisheries are disclosed to NLG for the Nisga'a Nation's purposes.*

Q: I'm new to hunting but for the last few years when we go hunting we've noticed our neighbors are hunting more on our lands during the permitted season for Nisga'a and we notice just before we started hunting they start hunting and chase off the moose in our lands. One day a hunter in our hunting party was stopped and questioned in our own lands by a Gitanyow marked vehicle, and we reported it right away to lands officers but we never heard back. What will be done to prevent this from happening?

Q: Concern: What can be done about the logging trucks and big rigs with heavy machinery that travel on the 113? There are numerous stories of people having close calls; trucks crossing over the yellow line and having the oncoming traffic (our people in the valley) having to run off the road and/or ensure that they have enough room to be safe on the road. Our people need to be safe on our roads with the proponents coming in and out what can be done to ensure the safety people that do not follow the road rules?

A: *These are issues that should be reported to the RCMP however its worth noting that we do work with the Province – the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) on highway safety issues and continue to raise issues about road standards etc to improve road and travelling safety.*

Q: Why can't firewood be supplied to community by Tsimshian who hold TFL#1, as part of accommodation to Nisga'a, rather than being pile burnt?

A: *Regarding firewood being available to communities from Coast Tsimshian Resources (CTR) the company that owns Tree Farm Licence #1 (TFL 1).. This is a good question and one probably best put to CTR themselves. However most of the wood in burn piles is often not the most suitable for firewood. While some of it is undersized wood they can't sell most of it will be pulp and while pulp can be used as firewood its the best for it. On Nisga'a Lands we have available to people Firewood permits, which are free, that allow people to harvest dead/down wood to be used as firewood. This enables wood that could fuel a forest fire to instead be used to heat our homes.*

Q: Good morning from Gingolx residing in Terrace, my question is about the Nisga'a toll booth on land and water, will it ever be considered?

A: *We are in the process of considering access fees for Nisga'a Lands. However legislation will need to be considered and adopted to be able to do so.*

Q: I agree with Mansel's plea for more to get education. When we were in high school, we had the NLG Seniority come to the high school to let us know what is needed. So we knew where to gear our desired education. I do not see very many youth in the crowd. It would have been nice to facilitate students to attend.

Q: What can we do to develop an orchard locally to grow our own fruits? Cherry, pears, plums, apples, strawberries, raspberries, etc., considering the climate is perfect. A greenhouse to ensure we grow local vegetables, large enough to provide local employment.

A: *Outside of the communities, under the Nisga'a Land Act you can apply for a Licence of Occupation for lands on which you could use as a commercial garden, greenhouse and/or orchard.*

Q: I do believe the question was skirted, from Steve Johnson, the process for BC bid was answered on how it was awarded. No answer was given to why KATC decided to compete against an individual entrepreneur. End result was KATC took over the opportunity Steve J was overseeing for 12 years.

A: *There are things Steve didn't mention about the adequacy of his proposal. KATC as an independent business submitted their proposal and were chosen on their merits by BC in its process. I am unfamiliar with Steve's proposal as we weren't involved in its review just that he has admitted previously that something in it fell short of the bid requirements.*

Q: Bottom line re: Steve Johnson. Had Kali aksim Lisims Timber Corp not put in a competing bid, Steve would have been the sole bidder disqualified due to technicality. The bid would have been re-tendered again, so he could fix his error and resubmit. Why does KATC compete against local entrepreneurs? I have to ask myself, who else will they "run" out of business? I do understand the BC Bid process well, having numerous "procurement courses" and overseeing government contracts for BC Timber Sales.

Q: Seeing all the reference to environmental work on pipeline, what is NEST doing to create opportunity for training? Specifically, Environmental Technician certificate (takes 4 months) I see neighboring Gitksan are already doing this. While NEST shared the training from Gitksan online, they should be offering these in the Nass Valley (UNBC satellite) or Terrace college campus.

Q: Not once have I heard involvement of the title holders to the land, how or do you intend to have them Inclusive to what is being planned on their traditional lands? I ask because it's the title holders who have an intimate connection to the lands.

Q: Is the natural gas going into Ksi Lisims plant sweet gas or sour gas? If it's sour gas how will you deal with the by-product of cleaning the gas before exporting ie: condensate and butane for example? Or do you know yet?

A: *The pipelines are only certified to carry sweet natural gas.*

Q: Who will build that "hotel" for the workers Wil mahlit? The presenter said when it's all over, everything goes. Why can't Nisga'a Nation take that responsibility and build that worker "hotel"? The presenter outlined how they'll construct that area being negotiated for LNG, etc, and Nisga'a Nation appears to have no part in its total construction.

A: *As we will own both the property and be a partner in the company it will be up to us what stays on the property. It is certainly possible for example for us to decide to keep the hotel when/if the project ends in 30+ years. What Bartek was referring to was the floating facilities, when the project ends they will be floated away, making cleanup of the project much more simple.*

Q: Do we have plans in investing in renewable energy and saving Nisga'a households on hydro, etc? Maybe making households more eco-friendly? Great response on the budget, Mansell!

A: *Yes, we continue to examine small hydro specifically and are open to ideas and proponents who may wish to explore and develop other opportunities such as wind farms, solar plants and geothermal energy plants.*

## Question & Answer Session

# Language & Culture

**Q&A SUMMARY /** In this session, a number of citizens spoke of the trauma of residential schools and the loss of their language. Speakers shared comments and questions regarding language & culture revitalization and the importance of early language learning. Additional topics raised included feast protocol, a language & culture centre, the language authority and Urban Nisga'a Youth. Further comments touched on the effect of the pandemic on education, access to training, and music instruction.



**SUBJECT / Feast Protocol, Language**

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**Comments**

- + Nisga'a Language for schools in Urban areas.
- + Woman speak at memorial, only when men are not around? Feast protocol: would like to learn the proper process.
- + Encourages youth, got my BA in Culture, at my age and is very happy about it.
- + Don't ignore me, when you see me, acknowledge me in Nisga'a.
- + Was strapped because I spoke my language. (barrier). Still need help with language and culture. (to become more confident).
- + Everybody has feelings. We must remember to be kind to one another.

**Response**

- + Don't have the authority, can have an agreement.
- + Partner with other areas.

**SUBJECT / Language & Culture Revitalization, Residential School Trauma**

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**Comments**

- + Challenge of revitalizing, continuing to preserve.
- + Was ripped out of our family (Residential School), trouble coming back (home). Many are elders that still struggle (on a daily basis). They were emotionally abused, isolated, shamed, starved. Trying to take the indian out of indians, aggressive shaming process.
- + Feeling shame now I cannot converse in Nisga'a. There are barriers to learning. Challenges we don't know how to face. Can't get full buy-in if we don't see the crutch. *T'ooyaḵsiy' nisim.*

**Response**

- + Living that access.

**SUBJECT / Language Revitalization**

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**Comments**

- + All our children are capable of learning Nisga'a. Grandson is taking Nisga'a in Kindergarten.
- + Knows / does not know the meaning, learning by rote memory. Knows what they are saying. Slowly learning.
- + Language Nests: only Nisga'a spoken.
- + Headstart (demonstration)
- + T'aan.... follow words that she says.
- + Nisga'a training done outside the school.

**SUBJECT / Language & Culture Centre, Language revitalization, Trauma, Language Authority**

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**Comments**

- + Thank you, good information.
- + Language & Culture Center: Each community can get a L&C center? Arts & Cultural center, that could be our language & culture center.
- + We want our people to learn our language, our babies and children. Visible everywhere, head start, nursery. Nisga'a alphabet in every single class. Can read and write by knowing the alphabet.
- + WVN teaches L&C in Urban locals? It should be continued.
- + A lot live in that trauma. Told we were dumb indians. It happened in our own schools.
- + How do you become a part of the Language Authority? Want to be a part of a lot of things. Scared to apply for CoE. Can't speak the language.
- + Get the people into the language authority.
- + Silent speakers: how many know the language but can't speak it? Told not to talk our language. Treated bad.

**Response**

- + Thank you.
- + Reviewing the language authority.

**SUBJECT / Early Language Learning**

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**Comments**

- + Manager of Aiyansh Headstart. Language is the most important to learn for Preschool age.
- + Please speak Nisga'a at home.

**SUBJECT / Early Language Learning**

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**Comments**

- + Develop Nisga'a early Learning, Headstart.
- + Have a lot of Nisga'a Elders in ts'amiks, how can ts'amiks elders and council of elders work together in the best interest of children of youth?

**SUBJECT /** Language, Urban Nisga'a Youth

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**Comments**

- + I want my elders to speak Nisga'a.  
I want to learn Nisga'a.
- + Language & Culture makes kids more connected.
- + What about our youth in cities, what are we going to do about our youth in Vancouver?
- + How will we grow if we were all to move back here? There would not be enough space.
- + How are we going to connect Vancouver to the culture here? When?

**SUBJECT /** Loss of language

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**Comments**

- + Not here to be silenced. Will not be silenced.
- + Have been participating for 45 years. Mom and dad are Nisga'a. Dad died when I was 6.5. Six Children. Did not learn the language. Thrown in her face she does not know Nisga'a Language.
- + How many generations do we have to correct? Are we going to continue to hurt each other?
- + Commend Nisga'a Treaty 101.

**SUBJECT /** Education

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**Comments**

- + Education at NESS.
- + Sons that live away from home. Schooling is one of the roadblocks to coming home. Red tape, funding is stressful.
- + A lot of bright people but not enough experience.
- + Education is not high enough.

**SUBJECT /** Housing

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**Comments**

- + Certified education assistant. No homes available, how is this being dealt with?

**Response**

- + Only school district in BC that provides housing.
- + Working the best we can with goal to have qualified Nisga'a leadership.

**SUBJECT /** Pandemic Effect on Education, Access to Training

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**Comments**

- + Post secondary and Elementary students 2 years behind because of the pandemic. Chain reaction right down to high school.
- + Road blocks, when students go out for training, rentals, living allowance.

**SUBJECT /** Land Based Learning

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**Comments**

- + Challenge: make it a reality and work together – land based experiential learning.
- + Designated Indian, brought up on the land

**SUBJECT /** Health

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**Comments**

- + Missed a lot of the time, way of life – quality of life, historically. Time of fast access, McDonald's for families, what we can afford.
- + Address our kids in a healthy way, strength, agility, functional training, swimming, gymnastics.

**SUBJECT /** Music Instruction

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**Comments**

- + NESS does not have any musical requirements, No outlet for our children to express other than basket ball and other physical sports. Need options for those not athletically inclined).
- + Good musicians in the Nisga'a Nation.
- + Struggled with teachers here in the Nass, we have a high turnover.

**Response**

- + Musician posting going out.

**SUBJECT /  
LANGUAGE & CULTURE**

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Q: Will there be discussion on how to better receive back the lost ones, sixties scoop, youth in care and others who want to return but housing has rejected and denied this through ignoring emails or just saying one has to get a bank loan and prove they are worthy of gaining access to land? How do we return home if the door is closed? Also development of a university language course for long distance learner.

Q: Will there be discussion on supporting members interested in returning home to grow the economy through opening nursing homes, medical stores, bed & breakfasts and hospital? Currently there is no set office that walks with the members to guide them in Nisga'a protocol or laws to use to process these businesses.

Q: Will the language movement include support for those with learning disabilities and require accommodations for one who can't learn if this support is not given? Long distance courses need to also be offered and not just hold hostage to the 4 villages. More in Nanaimo, Vancouver and Victoria needs to be offered and by the nation, not the societies. The government needs to take ownership.

Q: Can the government develop a directory of photos of our leaders and those we all see in functions? As some are new or returned citizens, we don't know or see who is who and sadly an elder then is not recognized. Can we have a list in pictures that names the person and their ranking? Covid-19 stopped the feasts and now it is hard to know who is leading and head of houses.

+ Residential school survivor, still trying to find my way home. Love to be a part of this program. I am one who is scared to speak. I would love to have a book on our language.

Q: Why not through the school system and Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a? Send home assignments that both parents and student can do together.

+ When introducing late Frank Calder he should use the appropriate chief and leadership title in respect as you all have been for the other chiefs. Sad this is not being done. It helps to teach the newer members who our late chiefs and leadership were.

Q: Where can I get the lyrics to the song that was just taught all of us and teach it to our dance groups to learn? I would like a copy of today's slides.

A: *Great feedback! We encourage you to follow up with the Communication Department of NLG on this inquiry. It would be especially helpful if you note which presentation – as best you can – that you're hoping to obtain, as many are presented throughout the day and week.*

+ I am beyond happy that lateral violence is being addressed now, in this wonderful presentation. I talk about lateral violence in all functions I partake in and often I get raised eyebrows.

Q: There is the Nisga'a language app, it would be nice if on the app they had someone saying the words and sentences so you could hear how to say it yourself. That's free to use.

A: *Hi there, great feedback! The app is actually equipped to have audio playback of the words and/or phrases that are entered into the system. Although, not all words or phrases have this audio playback, but most do. To enable the audio playback, you'll need to ensure that you're connected to wifi or cellular data and click the "audio" button underneath the word (should the audio be available). This will play it for you!*

Q: I have a question on culture, I remember when taught going to the feast, when someone is speaking during the feast. You couldn't get up and go. You had to stay seated and wait till they finished and then you could move.

Q: In response to reverence (5th of the four "R's"), is the practice of the children and youth serving the elders still implemented? I grew up doing this in the urban setting of Vancouver BC during gatherings and ceremonies? I mention this because as a Zoom viewer, I heard the speaker before lunch and breaks on the 1st day mention the young people charging ahead before the elders for food and beverages? No disrespect intended to anyone, just curious about elder reverence?

Q: Good Morning I have a question about passing down hereditary names on wills and estates. In our culture and what we were taught, was that it was passed on through lineage. Why are they allowing this change, because wills and estates are a whiteman's paper.

Q I see more and more Wilps with members who are calling themselves Simooghets and even putting Wilp in front of their names, our Ayuukhl our laws our Hereditary Chiefs being disrespected. Names willed to others, oldest brothers or sisters pushed aside. Protocols ignored. Ayuukhl traditional laws ignored. There is one Wilp in each house, the names belong to that Wilp held by the Simooghet and Matriarch. You see someone with lower name trying to elevate themselves above the Wilp Simooghet. That is wrong and disrespectful. This is a topic that needs to be dealt with. Thank you.

A: *T'ooyaksim' n'iin, there will be a presentation on Lip Wilaa Loom' which includes Simgigat and Sigidim Haanak' authority and the Wilp (Huwilp), after the lunch break with the Council of Elders.*

+ The TRC events had a week long event where Survivors had a half hour to speak, so people can hear. Each Nation and each community needs to bring that to our communities. So the elders can get it out! And the youth can hear and understand, then we can heal as a community.

+ For some reason – and it's a block I can't get past – I can't speak. I've taken courses in high school and WWNI. I think I need to study it on my own and try to figure out what's going on, why I can't speak. I understand some words, but I really want to speak.

+ Yes, please be gentle with the returned home members. I am one and it is very scary when shunned or not shared the protocol and often this comes across as rude or pushing out. We then leave hurt. The trauma department should be there for brushing or residential support. Thank you Andy for speaking to this and the elders in foodline. We need to hear the teachings.

Q: Are there any programs offered by distance ed? If a BA, and currently Nisga'a won't help pay for another degree if one already has, will the language BA be financially supported or will one be financially held back due to financial barriers? Language still will be held out of one's reach if the student can't get supported from the nation.

+ In regards to Wilps, Simooghets House Chiefs, the Hereditary Chiefs are been disrespected. NLG has a list of Wilps and the Simooghets and Matriarchs associated with the Wilps. Today you see lower ranking members putting Simooghet or Wilp in their title. Why is this allowed to continue? Another issue is our Ayuukhl, our laws and protocols not being followed. Names being willed or the oldest sisters or brothers bypassed and high names given or taken by nephews. My biggest concern is our Ayuukhl, laws and protocols not been followed. Each Wilp has the House Chief and Matriarch. They are the holders of the names. All too often we see a lower ranking chief elevating themselves and putting Wilp in front of their name. Disrespectful to our Hereditary Simooghets. This is going too far. It must be addressed and stopped.

Q: Where can one get more information on the Nisga'a language fluency program? Will the Nisga'a language fluency program be offered outside of the valley?

Q: I'm curious, can the Lisims government put funds in place to set up satellite cultural and language programs with WWN for Terrace, Prince Rupert and Vancouver for the urban areas?

Q: If one has a Bachelors of Art (Honours in Native studies) and a Bachelor of Social Work (structural focus on First Nations), can they still take the Nisga'a Fluency program? I ask because I viewed the website and the program states it "ladders" into a BA program. Thank you.

+ Wish I knew about the mentorship program earlier. Applications are now closed, this program should be shared and advertised heavily so those interested have plenty of time to prepare the application. I hear it mentioned lots at the Assembly, heard very little before this!

Q: I was wondering about the songs that we sing for dance groups, are there ways we can get the songs spelled in our language to have the correct spelling? There are some songs that have variations on the spelling when looking at song books.

A: *Tooq̄siȳ n̄isim̄, your question will be passed on to the language department.*

Q: Is there going to be language and culture camps/immersion for each community? Or is it just going to be held in New Aiyansh? As on core lands it's all 4 villages and also the local outlying communities, not just New Aiyansh.

A: *Tooq̄siȳ n̄isim̄, your question will be passed on.*

Q: I have been hearing how our language & culture is really important to the people we are and yet here in this forum it seems that the ones who had so much to share were told to share it in two minutes. The information is too important to be given what amounts to an honourable mention. Could it be shown the respect it deserves in a forum that is not mixed up with political agenda time constraints? Thank you.

Q: Will the viewers (in-person and virtual) have a healing session/ceremony to lift the heaviness due to the truth-speaking of our elders, the incidence of emotional release etc? Thank you for this wonderfully powerful Nisga'a Day gathering!

A: *ᑏooyak̓siy̓ ᓃisim̓ for your suggestion, it has been noted.*

Q: What's the email for questions to be emailed to? And where do we find the answers?

A: *Hi, your question may be forwarded to the Manager of Ayuuk̓hl Nisga'a Department, Lydia Stephens, lydias@nisgaa.net*

Q: Where can I purchase a Nisga'a flag? My girl been in taekwondo 11 years now and we didn't have something like that when I took her to Australia represent that we are Nisga'a. City of Terrace gave us bags of pine and pens to hand out to show their support.

A: *Hi there, thank you for the question. You can purchase them through NLG, please call 250-633-3000.*

## Question & Answer Session

# Education

**Reference Document:** School District #92 (Nisga'a) / Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI)  
Power-Point Presentation: Nisga'a Language Program Overview

**Q&A SUMMARY /** During this session, participants expressed concerns regarding high-school graduation rates, heating and designated lunch areas in schools, and staffing at SD#92 Nisga'a. In addition, participants spoke about issues with the combining of multiple grades at SD#92, increasing costs of living for post-secondary students and the COVID-19 Pandemic. Citizens also asked about volunteers for teaching Nisga'a language & culture, as well as Nisga'a language & culture instruction in urban areas.



**SUBJECT /** Designated lunch area at NESS for students

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**Comments**

- + Concerns with lunch for students, received letters of concerns by parents.

**Response**

- SD 92 Board Chair:
- + Still under COVID-19 Pandemic protocols, continues in seeking a suitable and accommodating space for students to have lunch on site.

**SUBJECT /** High-School graduation rates, Group homes

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**Comments**

- + Concerns on graduation rates each year, numbers are decreasing.
- + Concerns in-group homes, they are being redeveloped and converted to housing and board offices.

**Response**

- SD 92 Board Chair:
- + SD 92 is a small district; the student ratio in meeting graduation requirements varies.
  - + In regards to the agreement, when SD 92 Nisga'a disbands, then the buildings (group homes) will be reverted back to the Village Government.

**SUBJECT /** Heating in schools

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**Comments**

- + Concerns over heating systems in schools during winter months.

**Response**

- SD 92 Board Chair:
- + The safety of our students is paramount within the district. Students are to be sent home when there is power failure.

**SUBJECT /** SD 92 Nisga'a Superintendent

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**Comments**

- + Why is the Superintendent not in attendance at the Special Assembly?

**Response**

- SD 92 Board Chair:
- + The Superintendent is attending training sessions.

**SUBJECT /** Certified Staffing at SD 92 Nisga'a

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**Comments**

- + Concerns with certified staffing at SD 92 Nisga'a.

**Response**

- SD 92 Board Chair:
- + Recruitment and retention remains challenging within our district. Housing for teachers is limited and will see as an improvement and positive outcomes to coordinate with the Village Government on housing needs.

**SUBJECT /** Combining of multiple grades at SD 92 Nisga'a

---

**Comments**

- + Concerns in combining multiple grades for elementary students with the district.

**Response**

Principal, Gitwinksihlkw Elementary:

- + Due to shortage on funding allocations, the district cannot accommodate on recruitment of teachers for each grade. The students are grouped together.

**SUBJECT /** Post-Secondary Students

---

**Comments**

- + With post-secondary education, the first road blocks students are challenged with is finding suitable rental units and need to consider the increases to costs of living.

**Response**

Chair:

- + The Village Governments can review and discuss the post-secondary policy in regards to costs of living increases.

**SUBJECT /** COVID-19 Pandemic

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**Comments**

- + During the current COVID-19 Pandemic, while buildings remain closed, students are remaining in attending school.

**Response**

SD 92 Board Chair:

- + In regards to the pandemic, will bring forward onto the Superintendent.

**SUBJECT /** Music Program at SD 92 Nisga'a

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**Comments**

- + Why does NESS provide no music program for students?

**Response**

SD 92 Board Chair:

- + The district placed an employment posting on recruitment for a position for a music teacher.

**SUBJECT /** Volunteers for teaching Nisga'a Language & Culture, Urban language teaching

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**Comments**

- + Why has there been no call-outs on volunteers to teach Nisga'a Language and Culture
- + Does WWNI still teach Nisga'a language and culture in urban areas?

**Response**

CEO WWNI:

- + Will consider this in supporting for volunteers
- + Nisga'a citizens residing in urban areas can utilize the First Voices app.

*\*Zoom Q&A for this session is on Page 42 of this report, following the Health Report*

## Question & Answer Session

# Health / A Journey to Healing

**Reference Document:** Nisga'a Valley Health Authority (NVHA) Power Point Presentation

**Q&A SUMMARY /** During this session, participants expressed concerns on a wide range of health-care issues that included Canada Life Health Benefits, Nisga'a health benefits, patient travel – medical bus and ambulance services – and the need for more equipment. In addition, concerns were expressed regarding the need for more medical staff including pediatrician services, and addressing staff retention and recruitment. Citizens also spoke on the topics of mental health services, treatment & wellness centres, community consultations and language for mental health.



**SUBJECT /** Ten goals, Canada Life Health Benefits

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**Comments**

- + How is NVHA going to reach the 10 goals?
- + Observed the Nation is paying twice for West Life health benefits and feels ripped off.

**Response**

- + NVHA: community engagement is in process, and a priority of strategic planning.
- + NVHA: agreed that a review of the premiums (Canada Life) needs to occur and the Board is looking into it.

**SUBJECT /** Ambulance services

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**Comments**

- + Will the Nation provide services to accidents that happen on highway or on the waters?

**Response**

- + BC Health Services oversee the ambulance services and direction comes from them.
- + NVHA provides emergency medical responders. Staff take 4-day shifts and are available 24 hours per day.

**SUBJECT /** Nisga'a nurse observations, Urban patient travel services

---

**Comments**

- + Former staff of NVHA, in the past, NVHA led the way with providing services enhanced by technology, eg Telehealth
- + Nisga'a health benefits do not meet the FNHA health benefit services. Wrote letters of concern and went unacknowledged at various levels of government.
- + Will patient/travel be offered for residents of greater Vancouver area for attending appointments around greater Vancouver area?

**Response**

- + NVHA: appreciation for all the points of concern.
- + Aware of concerns regarding provisions of health issues and resources needed.
- + Challenged with the unionized rates, wage inflation, and the agreement doesn't keep up with the market. The union agreement in place will be renegotiated.
- + A Health Care Assistant cohort has started this week with intent of starting next year and following. This is part of recruitment and success for Home Care coverage as much as possible.
- + Palliative care service is being considered.
- + Patient travel for urban residences is being reviewed. Currently reviewed on case by case basis.
- + Currently enhancing cultural sensitivity orientation and training.

**SUBJECT /** Equipment, Pediatrician services and Air Ambulance services

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**Comments**

- + Do you plan to get better equipment?
- + Can we hire Doctors or Pediatricians?
- + Can we get our own air ambulance instead of waiting for a medivac? Willing to do the training to become a pilot so no one would have to wait long for a medivac. Asking because our (late) son had to wait 6+ hours for medivac to get from Terrace to Vancouver.

**Response**

- + NVHA: recap PPT presentation on roster of physicians.
- + When acquiring equipment the challenge is space and qualified personnel to operate it.
- + We do have a Nisga'a citizen whose son is a pediatrician and considering touching base to provide specialized care and consultations for the Nass Valley.
- + Air Ambulance services is responsibility of Emergency Health Services, and there's opportunity once fully operational. Encourage you to connect with a recruit from Victoria for Air Ambulance Paramedic training.
- + Condolences on loss of son.

**SUBJECT /** Patient travel, Navigator service, Health benefits, Mental health

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**Comments**

- + When will the patient travel bus service resume?
- + Not enough home care services, is this due to lack of funding?
- + Urban locals have (health) services right there for citizens to access, and citizens living on Nisga'a Lands do not. Why can't we get the (Navigator) service in the Nass Valley?
- + Patient travel does not seem to be always available as advertised.
- + Health benefits and prescription coverage: had to pay for one of family member's (an Elder's) prescription costing \$385 who wasn't able to pay. Orthodontic service coverage: FNHA is \$7500 while NVHA is \$2500. Suggestion to negotiate when needs happen.

**Response**

- + Aware of issues raised.
- + Having challenges fulfilling bus driver position and will resume service soon.
- + Intent for Patient Navigators is for citizens when traveling to Vancouver, including for services under exceptions coverage.
- + Current phone system impacts patient travel services. Currently looking for a new phone system. Also recruiting for part-time employment (students) to answer phones 1.5 hours per day.
- + For the surplus, our intention is to claw back on FFA and provide facilities for health care and all staff including health programs.
- + NVHA is committed to improving coverage with mental health service coverage and patient travel coverage.
- + If any citizens are experiencing any challenges, we'd like to know about. Call or email NVHA.

**SUBJECT / Recommendation for NVHA and FNHA**

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**Comments**

- + If one required knee replacement (example), would NVHA consider enhancing services and empower citizens with option to reimburse, eg., up to \$1000 per year for fitness?

**Response**

- + In discussions with Medical Director, Dr Chan regarding prevention services. Including meaningful support by reviewing all the programs and how we can be responsive to the needs of the citizens.
- + Once Communications Director is recruited, we want to ensure programs are communicated to the citizens.

**SUBJECT / Community consultations, Retention and recruitment, Service report 2018**

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**Comments**

- + How soon will the community engagement begin?
- + The last community consultation, said they'd be back and haven't. Bring and support the community engagement.
- + NVHA health plan: quite some time since received and haven't received new plan.
- + Barriers may be limiting retention and recruitment. Encourage to review this before assisted living facility starts.
- + Interested in service report (or Health Plan) from 2018 to current.

**Response**

- + NVHA is committed to begin consultations as early as June and attending all communities.
- + The accredited process is happening this Fall and are committed to meet or beat health delivery standards.

**SUBJECT / Wellness Centre**

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**Comments**

- + Personal journey of addiction: worked to overcome this and is currently going for Masters and then Doctorate degree. Would like to offer services to the Nation.
- + Currently working on a proposal to bring a wellness centre to the Nation, as many other Nations are doing this. Welcomes suggestions and anyone who would like to work with her.
- + Commend all for carrying the load, let us carry the load with you.

**Response**

- + Welcome home and congratulations.
- + Mental health department is continually seeking space for a Wellness Centre, and continuously committed to meeting the needs of citizens with the new improved services for alcohol & drug addiction recovery.

**SUBJECT /** Language for Mental Health, Drug Overdose Stats, Ambulance, Treatment Centre

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**Comments**

- + Time spent as CHR in 1980's and there are noticeable changes.
- + Request to change the language for mental health as it implies stigma of being crazy. Suggestion to use a Nisga'a term.
- + On behalf of family member, is there a faster way to attend a treatment centre? When inquired, was told she needed a certain amount of counseling sessions. On own initiative, attended and paid for her first month's treatment. A six month wait is too long.
- + What are the stats of drug over-doses?
- + The ambulance bay is now used for home care services and would like to see it given back.

**Response**

- + Acknowledge the need for more services.
- + Concur with suggestion for a Nisga'a term for the mental health program and currently consulting with a language keeper for a Nisga'a term for mental health and wellness.
- + With approved \$500K for enhanced services, can now reach out to other treatment centres where there's a one-week waiting period. Also working to develop day treatment program in Gitlaxt'aa-miks that will include a physician and capacity on-site to oversee.
- + The ambulance bay sat empty for years and when there was a need for home care services, there was a decision to convert. With assisted living, there's a possibility of housing home care services within the facility and will consider reverting back to the ambulance bay.
- + Acknowledge the confidentiality is challenging with the building not sound-proof and understands why some citizens prefer not to seek counseling services on-site. The survey will support to use as business case.

**SUBJECT /** Treatment Centres

---

**Comments**

- + Personal journey at treatment centre and now is on a Board and would like to connect regarding addictions and recovery.
- + 60% success rate for culture based treatment centres.

**Response**

- + Acknowledge the success rates and are currently developing a model with best practices. Open to doing things in culturally appropriate manner.

**SUBJECT /** Staff shortage and retention

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**Comments**

- + Commend NVHA for restructure and acknowledge the hard work and that we need to be patient.
- + Suggest working together with village governments that would help with retention, eg. housing.

**Response**

- + Appreciate and acknowledge a common-thread from various departments and observing the factors to the lack of retention.

**SUBJECT / Nisga'a advocate**

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**Comments**

- + Need for advocacy, and our own Nisga'a liaison in hospitals. Personal experience at an emergency ward at a northern hospital.
- + Recommend similar to what they do in Alaska. Test brown babies for CP1A and educate parents, grandparents if comes back positive.
- + Feelings of turmoil when accessing patient travel service and recommend more professional development.

**Response**

- + NVHA acknowledged her courage and passion of concern, and supports the need for advocacy.
- + With the new hospital going up, they're on a committee that is addressing issues of prejudice and profiling. Attended and requested a room for a Nisga'a patient liaison and be located at the new facility.
- + Would like an off-line discussion with speaker to address the needs of patients and avoid hardship as part of our commitment to you.

**SUBJECT / Acknowledging new graduates, Medical Bus driver wages**

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**Comments**

- + Commends daughter and niece for completing their nursing programs.
- + When recruiting for a bus driver for the medical bus to meet or beat the professional driver rate. There's a demand for drivers.
- + Commends CHR program in Gingolx, as he lost weight through their Fit Nation program and encouraged citizens to join.

**Response**

- + NVHA congratulates new graduates
- + Acknowledge the wages for a bus driver is a union issue and can get very challenging with the union contracts, not meeting market rate.

**SUBJECT / Elders, Medical bus**

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**Comments**

- + Consider a medical bus when travelling to Terrace. Where patients don't have to wait long.

**SUBJECT / Child & Family Services**

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**Comments**

- + Very surprised there's no presentation regarding MCFD as I feel our children are very important.
- + Job is to work with families and support them, and keep close to our culture.
- + Has a letter for NLG COE and NLG child and family services regarding children in care and keeping them connected to culture.

**Response**

- + Received letter.

**SUBJECT /  
EDUCATION & HEALTH**

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+ Addiction, alcoholism, domestic violence and mental health are a huge influence on the students ability to focus. Why not have the nation build a committee that is a wrap around for students and families. This would allow all departments of mental health, schools, families, medical and agencies to come together and form a development on how to confront the issue in the home, help the students and then an extension solution that if the family is unsafe then the community has a building that allows extension of parents to help heal and provide a safe place to reside. Place the children in this wrap around system.

Q: How does one get this Picture Dictionary?

A: *Hi there, I'm referring you to the School District 92. Please phone 250-633-2228 or email school\_ness@nisgaa.bc.ca. Please specify that you would like to obtain a copy of the Picture Dictionary that Peter McKay presented to the Special Assembly.*

+ As a graduate, I am more happy to hear of new protocols for the school to look into the root of things. I do hope no one goes through what myself and many others have. I graduated with communications, last two weeks before exams was told I'll be in English class still but doing communications. I worked hard finishing but could not hand in when I had it ready, course was changed on the spot. WWN, I got questioned why I needed arts, my transcript was great, advanced classes until grade 12. Aced my arts and language, furthered my English. I did not hesitate to tell my story as to why I had to have a longer route. Will the compassion and empathy, understanding fall towards students with grades and assignments as well? Or will that be just for when troubles occur for the students? I emphasize empathy because, I did not feel that for myself after what I had gone through. I felt like a failure, and I do not wish for our students, our future leaders, to go through this. As this was not good for my own mental health.

+ Very impressive, 19 year old university graduate! This goes to show how the proper cultural supports etc brings out the best in our people!

Q: I'd like to know why don't the Urban locals get funding to help support students that want to get funding to go to college or university?

Q: Why are we not gearing up for the future job opportunities with LNG? There are numerous trade jobs that could be offered at college level. We cannot rely on just Nisga'a language and culture. You need to diversify into other fields in order to survive.

Q: I know we have so many amazing stories of our culture, stories behind our communities. Where can we find them and how much do they cost? Also, being urban local, I'd like to teach my child some Nisga'a, where can I find books of these stories for kids to help teach the basics?



Q: Why does the NLG Nisga'a Executive control who sits as NVHA Board Members? Will NVHA become further autonomous?

Q: I want to know if with this new plan you will stop telling interviewees that due to not speaking language you won't hire us. I have more than enough qualifications to come home to work but the three times I interviewed when I asked why I was not hired, was told because I did not speak Nisga'a and that was why I was not hired by the Health department. Then next term, was asked to reapply but was again rejected. When will you stop screening citizens and like a band office, judge and chose only who you personally want?

Q: When will Nisga'a build a retirement home, hospital and create an education program to educate our own to be home aids and nurses? Bella Bella has their own, I think we could create this too.

Q: I would be willing to be a nurse if funding would be provided. I have been willing to return home but funding, housing and the government resistance to support has been a barrier. When will the government stop reacting as a band office and step up to accept urban citizens return? You work in the in grouping and out grouping mentality that creates shunning and systemic actions. When will the nation admit this and confront it to promote healing?

Q: I have a question for Health and Wellness. When a person is nearing end of life, and the individual wishes to remain home to be with family, services for the patient is nill. What are future plans for those who want to remain at home and maintain quality of life to the end? My second question: what are the plans to improve assessments for mental disabilities? There are a few who have been waiting 6-8 years for an assessment.

Q: Why not work with school district 92? Get students to train in health sciences, health care/home health care, and or trades training. Perhaps this can assist the students with the direction of their educational endeavors? If the students are unsure, they can try different avenues of finding out what they are passionate about. I ask this because I work in the construction industry, I see young people that are in grades 10/11 that are at construction sites and trying different trades. This can be done in the health field as well.

Q: Regarding Nisga'a Health Benefits, what is the process for access to service or prescription that Canada Life does not approve?

Q: How soon will we be able to access a portal for NVHA services, up to date health education, service delivery and created for the people served?

Q: Will NVHA and NLG support for a grassroots development of a non-profit addressing substance misuse, addictions etc? This will be far more successful in addressing the health and wellness challenges some of our people face.

Q: What are the plans for NVHA capital projects for effective, efficient service deliveries in each Village for all health needs?

- Q: How is NVHA Administration capacity building with the young people who demonstrate high interest, passion, who are trained, certified and a good fit for the Nation?
- Q: NVHA: why can't you pay for people to be trained to drive medical buses?
- Q: What about Pre and Post Natal care? Immunizations for babies at the Health Center in Aiyansh? Traveling to Terrace costs a lot of money, and NIHB only covers so much for mileage.
- + We need better prenatal care in New Aiyansh especially for high risk moms. My fiancé had severe preeclampsia that went undetected to the point I almost lost her and our beautiful twin boys. Why don't we have more for prenatal care in the Valley especially during the winter months?
- Q: Mental health is highly important, and we need someone who isn't local to deal with our mental health. I understand everyone is certified but comfort is not there, and my trust in a counsellor back in 2010 was broken (and they were local). The information I gave went to my abuser.
- Q: When will chiropractors, massage therapy and acupuncture be a part of coverage? Spine alignment is essential to self care and living balanced. There needs to be an acknowledgment of these medical practices, our people need to know it's essential to have a good spine alignment from birth. How and when can this be incorporated at a higher rate of coverage for longer periods of time?
- Q: When will there be presentations by NVHA, in person and via zoom to understand the health care system?
- Q: One of the biggest concerns is health care reactions to people seeking health care services. They have stories of challenges and barriers that need to be addressed. Too many times I have observed "no answers" or "unanswered questions" and delivery of information is done with negative energy attached.
- Q: Any program accreditation processes are based on global measures and items. Do we have a Nisga'a accreditation specific process that aligns with Nisga'a Programs & Services as per the Treaty, contribution agreement and the principles of our Ayuuk?
- Q: Why do you need to look for building, why can you not build something that will suit our people? There have been so many surveys done, time to take the steps to build what our people need.
- Q: Regarding Medical referrals that come from actual doctors, actual physicians themselves out of their office, why is it being questioned when the referral has been sent in? My grand daughter was referred to Prince George for and emergency to meet with a pediatrician, and on a Wednesday, we had to wait for approval from patient travel, before anything could get processed from their office. If a doctor is sending in a referral, it shouldn't be questioned, right? While waiting it wasn't mentioned that we had missed the deadline therefore, we had to figure out what to do in helping us get to and from Prince George. What patient travel couldn't understand is "Why" not go to Terrace? Why Prince George? It wasn't the parent's decision on where to go, it was based on who was available for this emergency referral from the doctor themselves, to find out why, my grand daughter was going through the medical issue she was encountering. In future, referrals shouldn't be questioned. Travel expenses should be met especially when going out of the valley.

Q: When will NVHA incorporate Shamans, acknowledge and accept their wisdoms as is? It cannot be measured in western culture.

Q: Why is there no coverage for people that go on medical trips for food? I have gone to so many appointments where my mom paid herself for the driver food and hers covered 50 dollars for gas, 20 for my meal. Went to major eye surgery where they dilated my eyes and laser surgery and cannot see after finished, in pain, and I get bad anxiety. The doctor is writing letters saying that due to the medical problems I have, I do need the help.

Q: How do we get support for training to be a recovery coach? I have to pay my own flights and hotel for the week. I had no response to emails I sent. I have been sober since July,5,2010. I had a lot of hoops to get into tsowtseley-lum trauma treatment in 2018 and family treatment in 2021. Trauma a lot of work and I want to work with our people to heal from the pain from drugs, pills and alcohol. It took me almost 5 years to get sobriety. I'm thankful for stepping stones in Terrace.

Q: It's frustrating as I leave to Kamloops with my 17 year old for taekwondo she's been in since 6. I asked for information and again don't get reply and miscommunication. Trying hard to keep her away from drugs and alcohol. I was already pregnant at 17. Would like more support it's a lot of discipline. Can we get a solid list of all resources phone numbers and emails please, to add onto the calendars?

+ Thank you, to NVHA, for the services you have provided for me and my family when we had to travel. While struggling with the tumor and constant struggles with the abscess, you provided us with comfort. We are a blessed Nation to have the services you provide. It may not be perfect but it helps us not go in the hole as it would with others. Thank you so much!

+ We need a Nisga'a liaison in Prince George, that can help with our healthcare here especially when it comes to our cultural practices.

Q: I agree with Lily & Fran with MCFD & NCFS, it should be mandatory for parents who split up (each party should take part in Respectful Relationship program right away) to avoid the child/children feeling like they're torn from one side of their family. Children's needs aren't put first in most cases especially when one side of a family chooses not to follow court orders. Children get caught in the parties feuds!

## Panel Discussion

# Youth Panel / Investing in our Future

**SUMMARY /** In this session, participants spoke of the hope for increased youth involvement in special assemblies, public meetings and governance. Speakers emphasized the importance of education for youth and not giving up on their goals. Youth were also encouraged to continue to express their opinions, to practice public speaking and not to be afraid to speak up and share their ideas and points of view.



## YOUTH PANEL / Investing in our Future

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### **SUBJECT / Youth involvement, Language & culture**

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#### Youth Comments

3 most important observations of the Special Assembly:

- + 1. Hopes in the future for more Youth involvement in the Special Assembly.
- + 2. Culture and Language are dying out.
- + 3. If you're not from the village's band you cannot buy a house in those other villages.
- + Why can't we as Nisga'a profit off of the Nisga'a Land?
- + What are the chances of going to school?

### **SUBJECT / Youth & Governance**

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#### Comments

- + Saw the disconnect between Youth and Governance. Hope the disconnect between events and governance is lessened by youth becoming involved.

### **SUBJECT / Education, Encouragement**

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#### Comments

- + Graduated from the School of Theology. Education doesn't stop here. Encourage the youth to keep it up. Blessings to continue to reach your goals.

### **SUBJECT / Thank you, Urban youth**

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#### Comments

- + Good to hear what is going on. I am Laxgibuu from Laxgalts'ap. Thank you everyone for allowing me to be here today. From the Tsimshian Nation.
- + Happy to see the youth going in their direction and staying on their path.
- + Will there be an invitation to the Urban Locals Youth to sit on the panel?

**SUBJECT / Encouragement, Youth involvement**

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**Comments**

- + Proud of Owen Azak in his growth.
- + Encourage the youth to take part in the government, the assemblies and the executive meetings. Encourage the youth to stand up and practice public speaking.

**SUBJECT / Encouragement**

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**Comments**

- + Encourage the youth to express their opinions and their feelings. Standing in front of the elders presenting. Encourage the youth not to give up.
- + Many years of work and volunteer experiences in hopes to encourage the youth to further their education.

**SUBJECT / Encouragement**

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**Comments**

- + Working with the students at NESS could see their ability to stand tall.
- + Proud of the students' growth and encourage the youth to stand up for their rights, and to always speak up. Encourage the youth to use their skills and always share their knowledge.

**SUBJECT / Encouragement, Confidence**

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**Comments**

- + Missing links of engaging each community and those that will prosper and receive the support.
- + There are a lot of shy youth out there but I encourage the youth to come out of their shell.
- + The youth that are hard to find are the ones who are afraid to speak.

**SUBJECT / Encouragement, Youth involvement**

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**Comments**

- + Biggest statement this week is to encourage the youth to keep going, to continue on their journeys.
- + Loved the videos shared this week.
- + If we don't remember the statements that the youth made those statements might get lost.
- + Disconnect between youth and governance is accurate. At 36 years old was elected a WSN member and was the youngest member.
- + Encourage the young parents to get involved and determine how their kids will be involved.
- + Need to remember to be strong, take our kids along with us, ask them what they feel our nation should look like because that is the strategic planning going forward.

**SUBJECT / Encouragement, Language & culture preservation**

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**Comments**

- + Standing ovation for the youth for accepting the invitation to address the Special Assembly.
- + Smallest ideas might change the life of a youth so never give up.
- + Late mother taught about tools I would need and where to attain the knowledge of culture and language in the feast halls.
- + Only way to sustain the culture and language is to stay and listen to the last speaker during feasts.

**SUBJECT / Governance, Encouragement**

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**Comments**

- + Noticing the changes overtime – a large gap between the nation and governance. A self-made gap.
- + You're only going to be as good as the people you have working for you.
- + Wisdom is taking the knowledge that affects your eyes and ears
- + Encourage the youth to close the gap and provide excellent service delivery in the professional settings. Work as hard as you can with resilience.

**SUBJECT / Importance of education, Sharing traditional knowledge**

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**Comments**

- + Father and Albert Stephens Sr told that the most important thing they attained from residential school was to read and write.
- + Very important to continue your education.
- + Acknowledge the young staff of the NVHA CHR Department and the good work that they do.
- + Would like to share knowledge of traditional food prep and traditional medicines (ethnobotany).

*\*Zoom Q&A for this session is on Page 59 of this report, following the Refelctions from the Executive Officers.*

## Concluding Remarks

# Reflections from the Executive Officers

### Panelists

**Eva Clayton**, President

**Brian Tait**, Executive Chairperson

**Charles Morven**, Secretary-Treasurer

**Herbert Morven**, Chairperson, Council of Elders



**PRESIDENT CLAYTON**

**Thank you**

- + Thank you to the Host Community.
- + Thank you to the NLG Coordinator of the Special Assembly.
- + Thank you to the Interpreters for a job well done.
- + Thank you to the children of the Alvin A. McKay School for your beautiful presentation.

**Procurement Policies**

- + Thank you for the comments on Procurement and procurement polices – this is a work in progress.

**Economic Development Corporations**

- + Nisga'a Government – whether it's Nisga'a Lisims Government or the Village Governments on the homelands – can establish economic arms of government, separate from government. These are known as corporations, corporations owned by the government.

**Resource Development**

- + The question about the Benefits Agreements is important and sets out the need for our government to become more accountable on the revenue streams. Thank you Secretary-Treasurer for committing to get you the report on the NTL benefits agreement.

**Complaints with Administration of Village Government**

- + NLG does not have the authority to address concerns or complaints with a Village Government.

**How are elected Members held accountable?**

- + The *Nisga'a Government Act* sets out the structure and responsibility of NLG, Villages, Urban Locals, Council of Elders, and WSN. Attached to the *Nisga'a Government Act* is the Member's Code of Conduct. Every elected Member of Nisga'a Government must uphold their respective Offices, and provide good and accountable government.

**Business Forum / Career Day**

- + Very good suggestion.
- + Nisga'a Business Forum is currently in the works.
- + SD #92 has Career Day.

**Water**

- + Very good question about what the Nation is doing to take ownership of the waterways. This has been noted to begin discussions with our Treaty partners.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS / Reflections from the Executive Officers**

### **Climate Change**

- + NLG is very serious about climate change.
- + We were accepted as one of the founding Nations on the First Nations Climate Initiative.

### **Nisga'a Elder's Assisted Living Facility**

- + This is a work in progress.
- + Begin building a data-base with certified health officials.

### **Nisga'a Language & Cultural Centre**

- + Many of the needs of the Nation are budget driven.
- + The question of having a Nisga'a language & cultural centre in each community is a decision of Nisga'a Government based upon feasibility and budget.

### **Elected Members**

- + Those that don't get re-elected – what models are being looked at.
- + This is a work in progress.

### **Nisga'a Cannabis Act**

- + Nisga'a Government is considering a Nisga'a Cannabis Act.

### **Grocery Store**

- + We agree that grocery stores are needed but Nisga'a government cannot get into business.
- + This certainly can be an initiative of individual Nisga'a entrepreneurs.

### **Tsimshian Language**

- + NLG will look at how we can bring the Nisga'a Language into the Northwest schools.

### **Women speaking in Memorials**

- + We certainly can do more research on this through our Ayuukhl Nisga'a department.

### **Hawa'althis**

- + Agree workshops need to happen.
- + Ayuukhl Nisga'a has taken note of this.

### **Nisga'a Language**

- + Many concerns raised on how our children are learning the language in the school(s), but cannot carry it on in the home. We want our adults to learn the language so they can converse with their children in the home.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS / Reflections from the Executive Officers**

### **Language Authority**

- + NLG will review the structure of the Language Authority.

### **Head Start Program in the NUL**

- + Encourage Urban locals to work with established bodies that are in the Urban local areas.

### **Bullying**

- + Much concern raised, and this is everywhere.
- + How we carry and express ourselves.
- + All of the entities in the Nass to start considering lateral kindness.
- + Workshop to happen.

### **SD #92 and WSNi presentations**

- + Thank you.

### **Minister Jennifer Whiteside**

- + SD #92 has invited the Minister to the Nass on June 21st.
- + Minister has requested a meet with officers on this date.

### **NVHA**

- + A lot of issues.
- + Look forward to sit and meet with NVHA and new CEO.
- + Review of the service delivery agreement.

### **Mental Health & Wellness**

- + Many concerns raised and for government to address mental health & wellness.
- + Members of Nisga'a Government have, and continue to bring this to the government – the importance of bringing our people to health & wellness. It continue to be a work in progress.

### **Homelessness**

- + Nisga'a government continues to address this matter.
- + Your government has been working with the city of Terrace, mayor and council, so we can assist in what we can do with the homelessness in Terrace.
- + NLG executive accepted city of Terrace's invitation and appointed Mr. Art Mercer, WSN representation, and the alternate is CC Elaine Moore.
- + The next meeting there will be reports to the government.

### **NEST**

- + The government will look at NEST location.

### **Youth**

- + To our future – thank you for your presentations.
- + Proud of the work you are doing.
- + Proud you are reviewing the history of our Nation.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS / Reflections from the Executive Officers

### EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON

- + Happy to see citizens that remained for ending of the Special Assembly.
- + Very important to make sure we got it right as we listen to all of the speakers throughout the 5 days.
- + Nothing is going missed as we have many recordings – Zoom recordings.
- + Happy to see those citizens attending by Zoom.
- + Promised you last year to address procedures.

#### Procedures

- + Spoke to last Assembly in Gingolx, broke rule to pose a rule to cut zoom off when it comes to items of controversy – turned backed on after a vote from Special Assembly floor.
- + We need to understand the functions of government.

#### Principles and values of work you do – states this in the Constitution

- + As Executive Chairperson, we are guided by this in the Constitution.
- + We have heard from citizens of what helps us work together.
- + Not to point, not to blame.

#### Roles as Executive Chair;

- + We need to learn how to appreciate and respect each and every one of us.
- + Our culture is the backbone of everything we do, Ayuuk, government, school, survival today.

#### Residential schools

- + The healing and recovery, and to come home to share that healing journey.
- + Attended school – programs.

### SECRETARY-TREASURER

#### Questions on Finances from NLG to respective Villages / Urban Locals

- + How are we spending those resources?
- + One of the commitments in platform and mandate was to carry out a review of all the financials of the Nisga'a Nation.
- + As a government we need to begin that discussion and work together.
- + Look for ways to improve on how we expend the resources of the Nisga'a Nation.
- + Following this Assembly our government will have to work together so we hold ourselves accountable to the citizens of the Nisga'a Nation.

#### Questions to Benefit Agreements (BAs)

- + Know financials of those BAs.
- + How the Nation used those funds from the BAs.
- + Important to be open and transparent.
- + Another part of the work for us to do following Special Assembly.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS / Reflections from the Executive Officers**

### **Work toxicity and bullying within NLG**

- + We began the discussion with a person who often gets called BC government.
- + When there are issues and looks for solutions on how to move forward together.
- + We have a contractor coming into our organization to do a organizational review.

### **How to structure our Special Assemblies so that we can be inclusive of all Nisga'a citizens**

- + Where we are not having this type of set up where we are giving reports and receiving Q&As and not seeing solutions to be better.
- + We need to make those changes to include everyone so all is heard and find good solutions to better our lives.
- + Need to begin those discussions as a government for next Special Assembly.
- + Hold our offices with creditability and integrity.

### **Words of encouragement to our youth**

- + Take a serious look to include youth in our way of governance.
- + Look forward to these discussions.

Thank each of you for being part of the work done this week.

### **CHAIRPERSON, COUNCIL OF ELDERS**

#### **Governance and Government**

- + In governance our Council of Elders seem to be a symbolic gesture.
- + We continue to remind ourselves that we have a place and responsibility.
- + We are encouraged by our Officers and Executive members who have accepted our recommendations.
- + Through working together we will accomplish great things.
- + Governance is a shared responsibility.

#### **In closing**

- + We pray each of you continue to guide us as a government through your questions and recommendations.
- + You are the ones that plant the seeds on what we need.
- + Thank you.

### **PRESIDENT CLAYTON**

- + Thank the youth about the disconnect.
- + Request copy of the report.
- + Information of the Assembly – your government recognizes that the Nisga'a Nation website is outdated.
- + Work is in progress.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS / Reflections from the Executive Officers

### CO-CHAIR

- + registration – total 492 participants.

### EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON

- + Business on the floor.

### TANYA CLAYTON

- + During week a lot of point of orders
- + Made a point by the Chairs that can't do much of point of orders.
- + Need change on assembly rules.

Read the proposed motion into record and consideration of Assembly floor:

### Tanya Clayton / Darlene Morgan

CONSIDERING THAT the Nisga'a Nation is celebrating 22 years under Nisga'a Treaty at the Special Assembly of the Nisga'a Nation, May 2022;

CONSIDERING FURTHER THAT Nisga'a citizens have voiced concerns with regard to the Special Assembly Rules of Procedure, specifically,

1. Rule 9, the two minute time limit for questions; move to change the time limit from 2 minutes to 5.
  - + Each citizen who stands to voice their concerns and questions, I personally know how much courage it takes to FINALLY voice your concerns or questions (as some questions, no matter how many emails or letters written do not get answered, sometimes it takes a public forum such as this to get the person's responsible to answer those important questions)
2. Rule 11, where it reads, Nisga'a Lisims Government employees will not address the assembly during question periods'. Move to change to allow Nisga'a Lisims Government employees be able to question during the "External entity's" presentations.
  - + I understand the part pertaining to NLG employees not being able to question NLG directorates but, for "External Nisga'a Entities" that also present at this assembly, we as Nisga'a need to have this opportunity to voice our concerns and questions no matter where we're employed. As some of these external entities have not held public meetings or AGM's for a few years now. And if they do hold AGM's their meetings seem to coincide with regular work hours making it near impossible to be in attendance.

MOVED THAT the Nisga'a Lisims Government Special Assembly Rules Committee consider the concerns and implement suggested changes for the Nisga'a Nation Special Assembly 2024.

VOTE: 1 abstention

Motion passed unanimously

Next Special Assembly is in the community of Gitwinksihlkw.

**SUBJECT /**

**INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE & REFLECTIONS FROM EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

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Q: Will the youth have access to internships/placements during the summer to get a better understanding of the professional governmental operations?

Q: I would like to know how they chose who they fund for education? I know when I was accepted as one of the 1st social worker students the then UNBC campus in Prince George was denied because I was told I wouldn't make it as I was a young mom. I hope when we are denied, the reasons are written in our reports, signed and mailed to us or emailed so we can have a reason why we were denied. I feel this is a reason why many don't even bother. I hope this would be considered.

+ Good Job Owen. Thank you for taking your opportunity. For those of the Government who will hear this. It's about time. Everyone has a perspective that isn't always thought about at the table. Get them younger than youth, 0-7 is where they learn how to be who they are.

+ This was a great reminder that societies and nations are built on more than a few "trades." Art is fundamental to our well-being, it has helped many move beyond the cycles of dysfunction developed by the genocidal policies and indoctrination. I hope all areas are given equal attention in capacity building.

+ My heart wants to be in attendance at the special assembly. My heart also wants to be in my classroom teaching my students. I truly appreciate the opportunity to attend virtually, but for elementary teachers, this is not easily possible. My hope for the future assemblies (education assembly as well) is that somehow, it is made possible for teachers who want to, to be able to attend in person, at least for one day.

+ Madame President and members, so good to hear you address the concerns. Thank you. This is needed for more citizens see you live, the stronger the trust and understanding bond is built. I am so proud of my nation.

+ Many assume we should know the way the system of our nation and government runs, but if you developed video or even cartoon like video of this would help reach those that are distance or visual learners. The information she is sharing now would be good to have for online video or teaching tools. Why not develop a set of videos that help to teach this since I am too old to go back to the grade school where you teach now.

Q: Thank you Madam President. I just wanted to ask the question that in Lip wila loom' of the w'ahlin Git Lisims, In the absence of the men during hunting and other various reasons for their absence, who carried out their role? We know the women, children and Elders didn't stop living and wait, as who knew when that would be?

+ Controversy is a part of government and it will always be there. Legal advisors are exactly that, advisors, they do not make the decisions and should not question the authority of our government. I totally agree with the direction to decolonize. It is time to see the Nisga'a Ayuuk to super cede the current process of meeting the standard of Federal and Provincial laws.

- + As a Nisga'a citizen living off Nisga'a Lands, I am very happy to participate virtually and being able to voice my concerns, and express my appreciation for the work that is being done by our elected member for the nation.
- + Thank you Mr. Executive Chair, thank you for ensuring procedure and explaining the ones I didn't understand before.
- + Thank you for all this valuable teaching from our government. My heart is full for I feel our ancestors message as they speak and I love hearing the laws passed on. Thank you all, and thank you to all those providing food and video viewing for me. You work hard and I see you, thank you. Cousin Bobby, I am so very proud of you. I love you all in our nation.
- + I am so thankful for Zoom and taking in the special assembly the last 2 days. Madam President thank you for addressing the nation with the concerns and thank you Mr. Executive Chairperson for bringing forward and passing the motion for Zoom for people like us who cannot attend in person! Your dialogue right now is so very true and I am so very proud to be Nisga'a.
- + Often when new laws or changes are being announced, those on land know but I don't, for it is assumed we see all the FB announcements. Will you please begin to send out emails of the monthly newsletter that the village gets or can you please tell me where to go regularly to see when these changes take effect? For example it was news to me of the school or older adult classes available. Being urban, no one tells us and the branch on the island here is very slow in supporting. How do we hold them accountable to pass important news on to us?
- + Just for your information, that is the specific reason for the Urban Societies, to ensure our citizens wherever we are "are informed." Register with the society catchment area and request to receive Nisga'a updates/information.
- + Thank you for your words and I have signed up but sadly when you are on the island nobody comes over to the island to have meetings and when they do it is little information and they just tell you that you need to contact the nation up in the village. This is very sad because when Sheldon was doing this he did come to the island but now we have nobody coming to the island and we have to sit here for days having to hope that somebody will share information because we don't get it. I have been a member of the society and the society has been quiet. We have not been getting the information that we should be getting. I hear a lot of news up there and none of it is filtered down here.
- + Amazing to hear that Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond will be brought in to assist in a good way. For those that don't know, she conducted the leadership process of the "In Plain Sight Report" which is addressing racism within the BC public health system.
- + Thank you NLG for setting up this Zoom so I could watch from home. Listening to Charles speak on toxicity and bullying in the work place, one thing each and everyone needs to do is leave their pride out of their job. No disrespect to anyone, but this is a start. We are all equal.

- + Thank you CoE. Thank you for taking on the leadership of the CoE, we encourage you to continue to work with those who can provide the back up for the governance of our Nation. We encourage you to keep lip wilaa loom' in the organization as our people had a gentle way of hearing and acknowledging everyone. It is when we stop hearing and actively listening where we lose our lip wilaa loom.'
  - + I have so much I wish to share with my nation, I look forward to seeing all these words shown. I have attempted three times to come home at the direct words of late Andy and my mother late Wilma, "come home." I find (I am) being told that I need to prove I have enough money to build a house before I am given my ancestors land of my grandmother Dorothy Smart Clark, before I will be allowed to find housing. If it is land I should be able to reside on, why does it matter if I have a white man's house? If I live in a tent, a tiny house or other form? So will the new members hired please provide how I can get the land that in letter was originally approved by government in 2016? It costs a lot to live in a hotel and rent a car just to come home.
- Q: Can Elders have longer time during Q&A period (i.e.,10 min)? I dislike seeing them moved along too fast.

# Zoom Report Summary

Total registrants: 340, while 338 were approved (the remaining 2 did not provide enough information)

## ATTENDEE AND Q & A

DAY	UNIQUE ATTENDEES	TOTAL ATTENDEES	CONCURRENT ATTENDEES	QUESTIONS POSED BY ZOOM	QUESTIONS RELEVANT TO PRESENTATIONS AND/OR TOPIC
1	129	277	78	26	8
2	163	345	104	31	13
3	161	324	109	113	20
4	187	368	112	100	40
5	131	213	109	78	4

Survey: 154 attendees anonymously and voluntarily participated in a user experience survey that was comprised of 3 questions:

	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
1	Please rate your experience using Zoom to attend the 2022 Special Assembly (1 through 10)	+ 89 attendees rated 10 + 16 attendees rated 9 + 15 attendees rated 8 + 34 attendees rated 1-7, or not at all.
2	For future Special Assemblies and where COVID-19 is not an issue, would you recommend that NLG implement the Hybrid-Zoom model again? (single choice answer)	+ 129 attendees answered "Yes, I would like the option to attend virtually, via Zoom." + 1 attendee answered "No, I do not recommend the use of Zoom for future Special Assemblies." + 24 attendees answered "I have no preference."
3	Specific to the use of Zoom being used for the Special Assembly and the Nisga'a Nations hybrid model of in-person and virtual attendance, do you have further feedback?	45 attendees provided written responses, varying from suggestions and feedback on technical issues, to positive feedback and appreciation about the use of Zoom.

Further, a lot of attendees used the "Q&A" function to field comments, statements and/or feedback. The most common feedback was, and in no particular order:

- + Provide the slideshow presentations to the attendees.
- + Provide the Zoom recording to the attendees .
- + They can still hear people (mostly on the panel) talking, even when they're not on the mic (i.e. side conversations).
- + Include the virtual audience in the door prizes.