

2026 AGM –Questions & Answers Summary

Facilities & Operations – Ken White

- **Comment:** The presentation felt backwards and it would have been helpful to first review the lands, buildings, and infrastructure that O&M is responsible for.
- **Q: What is happening with the buildings at Bluebird Point? Are they being rented?**
A: The buildings are currently not inhabitable and are being used by bat colonies, so they are not rented. Assessments have not yet been completed, and future use will involve community consultation.
- **Q: Is the Rykerts property being rented?** A: The property was purchased primarily for the land. The structures on site are deteriorating and not inhabitable.
- **Q: What are the main plans for 2026?** A: Plans include FireSmart initiatives, completion of the fitness centre, landscaping at the healing centre, and ongoing services such as firewood distribution.
- **Suggestion:** Install cameras at major access points to address trespassing concerns.
Response: The department is sourcing cameras and lighting solutions for about 30 locations and is working to ensure compatible monitoring systems.
- **Q: Will the fitness centre include a sauna?** A: No sauna is currently planned.
- **Q: Who should residents contact regarding firewood or driveway concerns?** A: Debbie is the main contact for housing-related requests and coordinates with facilities and maintenance staff.

Housing – Debbie Edge Partington

- **Q: How many homes are CP homes?** A: There are currently 16 CP homes.
- **Q: Are there available lots for members who could afford to place a home?** A: Currently, there are very few lots available for new homes. Potential options include Lot 60, Lot 32 and 33. The ball diamond may be considered a potential building site, subject to community agreement. Future subdivision potential for the property above Riverview Road, which may provide more opportunities. However, this question cannot be fully addressed until a new allotment policy is finalized.
- **Q: Is the housing policy being updated?** A: Yes. I (Debbie) will be working with the Housing Committee, Chief & Council, and Community members on updating housing policies, agreements, and bylaws this year. The current housing policy is available on the LKB website.
- **Suggestion: Hold regular housing meetings and workshops for renters and CP holders.** Response: Yes. There will be a Basic Home maintenance workshops held in the fall, and FortisBC info session on energy efficiency tips this summer.

Social Development – Lindsay Ward

- **Q: Who qualifies for assisted living and caregiver support?** A: Assisted living services are assessed by a nurse and are generally available for PWD clients through BCANS.
- **Q: What does reliable home support include?** A: Services such as homemaking, meal assistance, non-medical transportation, firewood, and home support for eligible members.
- **Request: Bring back the paper newsletter because some members miss events.** Response: Staff acknowledged the request and will work toward resuming printed newsletters.
- **Q: Are certifications like FoodSafe available?** A: Yes, members interested in certifications can contact Matty regarding training opportunities.
- **Suggestion: Expand food preservation programming such as canning, freezing, and drying.** Response: Staff plan to collaborate with FNHA, the farm, and the health department to improve food preservation programming this year.
- **Comment: Elders should receive more caregiver support even if they are not on PWD.** Response: Staff acknowledged the concern and will review options within funding limits.

Community Garden – Brandon Hines

- **Suggestion: Include medicinal and herbal plants with educational materials.** Response: Brandon welcomed the idea and invited further discussion.
- **Q: What happened to the bees? Interest was expressed in becoming a beekeeper.** A: The farm is open to future initiatives and community members are encouraged to bring forward ideas.
- **Suggestion: Have a quarterly community garden newsletter and/or questionnaire to allow for community to have input.**

Finance – Bev Bull

- **Q: Why is there no dedicated funding line for language and culture?** A: There is no specific government funding pot for this, but Own Source Revenue (OSR) could potentially be used depending on community decisions. A: Before a budget is created using funding allocated from Own Source Revenues or from various grants, there ideally should be community input on what members would like to see in the way of language and culture programs, projects, resources and services. Once that is determined, additional planning will be needed as to who will be doing the work, what resources will be needed and are there any other funding sources to make this all happen. The 2024-2025 budget did include funding for various language and culture projects such as the Yaqan Nukiy song and video project, a youth Paddling Together film project and the YN PHS Society for hosting the pow wow. In 2025-2026 budget included the final phase for both film projects, an Elder's and Youth Advisory committee along with continued cultural programming at the school.

- Q: How are decisions made on distributing funds?** A: Broadly, funds are allocated to operations through the annual operating budget. In this case ‘funds’ are considered to be grants from other organizations such as the Columbia Basin Trust or from other levels of government such as Indigenous Services Canada or from own sources. Annual operating budgets are approved by Chief and Council. Ideally, decisions regarding the allocation of Yaqaan Nukiy resources (money, people, assets) should be reflective of a comprehensive community plan, a strategic plan, a 5-year financial plan and a long-term capital plan. All these plans would have some level of community engagement with a view to long-term financial resiliency. As for the distribution of funds to members, there typically has been a referendum requiring the approval of members prior to distribution. Additionally, there is a Per Capita Distribution Policy (2020) which, provides guidance on who is eligible to receive a distribution payment, any debts to be deducted from a payment and for the keeping of minor member’s payments until they reach the age of majority. Per Capita Distributions are usually made from payments negotiated with other levels of government as compensation for economic or environmental impacts. Starting in 2024-2025 and beyond, unallocated funds not required to be returned to the funder (ie: all Indigenous Services Canada funds not used must be returned to Canada) are placed in a reserve for tracking purposes and future decision-making.
- Comment: Members appreciated transparency but requested more meetings to discuss how funds should be spent before decisions are made.** Response: Agreed, there needs to be more information sharing and opportunity for input on budget decisions including those for long-term capital investment into community infrastructure and savings for future generations remembering that today’s houses and water system will not last forever
- Comment: I would like to see the band open up a band meeting around the Own Source Revenue.** A: It would be expected that the Own Source Revenue Committee would be responsible for engaging with members and informing them of the committee’s activities along with gathering input on policy development, developing consensus requirements, etc. The number of engagement sessions, information update meetings and policy review sessions would be up to the committee to determine with input from membership.
- Q: What is the difference between Lower Kootenay Band Financial and Yaqaan Nukiy Financial?** A: They refer to the same entity.
- Q: Where do legal fees come from, and do we have a dollar amount on how much has been spent the last few years?** A: Generally, all legal costs are paid from Own Source Revenues with the exception of Specific Claims tribunals in which case legal costs are partially funded by CIRNAC (Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada). All other legal costs, challenges and court costs come directly from Own Sources. A report is being drafted with this information.
- Q: Has home insurance increased?** A: Yes, insurance costs have increased due to industry impacts relating to weather incidents such as wildfires and flooding along with the cost of construction materials for rebuilding. In 2025, insurance costs for all on-

reserve houses (member owned and band-owned) were \$ 113,474. In 2026, insurance costs are estimated to be \$123,542 or roughly a 9% increase. Home insurance is paid from Own Source Revenues. Members should also be aware that each house only includes \$ 3500 worth of contents insurance. This amount is only enough to cover the replacement of appliances in the case of a loss from fire. Members may wish to consider seeking additional contents insurance directly for personal items such as televisions, computers, furniture, etc as these replacement costs are not included in Yaqan Nukiy's policy.

- **Q: What is the Health Living Center?** A: It is the fitness gym that is currently in the design process. Some consultation with membership has occurred already, more will be needed once planning and design stages are further along. The final cost of construction and ongoing operation (cleaning, utilities, maintenance) is not known at this time.
- **Q. Is BC First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Limited Partnership funding one-time funding?** A. No, beginning in 2019, this agreement has a term of 25 years. The agreement itself contains specific terms and conditions around the use of funding for community purposes only and that it cannot be distributed to individuals. From the beginning, funding received from this agreement has decreased due to a reduction in the number of people gambling at provincial casinos.
- **Q. Is the Residential School Settlement (Four Pillars) funding one-time funding?** A. No, however; there are certain requirements to access these funds including creating a plan to meet the funds objectives of:
 - protection of language,
 - revival of culture,
 - heritage stewardship, and
 - traditional wellness

Each objective must be addressed in the plan as developed through engagement with members. Next, the plan is reviewed and approved by the Four-Pillars Society and then funded. The amount of funding may vary from year to year based on the annual distribution level approved by the Society along with the amount requested by Yaqan Nukiy necessary to make its plan come alive. The process of creating an acceptable plan will likely require additional people resources and a great deal of community input over a number of years. While creating a forward-purpose plan is not insurmountable, it will require some upfront organizational and community planning as to how all the work can be done and by whom.

- **Q. How much do companies pay KNC and how do we attain funds from KNC?** A. In this response the term 'companies' is referred to as resource-based companies such as Teck Coal now EVR and others who extract resources from Ktunaxa traditional territory.. Over the last 25 or so years a number of impact benefit and revenue sharing agreements have been negotiated by the Ktunaxa Nation Council (all 20 of the Chiefs and Councils from the 4-Ktuanxa First Nations) with these companies and the Province of BC. Early on in the process, KNC along with the companies and the province agreed to pay the Ktunaxa Nation Council Society directly, who in turn; would then issue payments to the four Ktunaxa First Nations based on a pre-determined percentage. The

percentage and the amount of each payment was based on the Internal Revenue Sharing Agreement or IRSA between the four Ktunaxa First Nations and the Ktunaxa Nation Council Society. The purpose of this agreement was to ensure that KNC had money grow and operate as the main Ktunaxa government. This percentage has now changed since the original agreement was put into place with more of the money now coming to the four First Nations and less to KNC under a new agreement signed in 2022. KNC still receives the funds from the province and in turn, distributes them to the four Ktunaxa

Administration – Heather Suttie & Matty Fedorowich

- Discussion regarding Council honorarium changes and the implementation of a pension for past Council members. There was a discussion about the process for approving such policy, as there is an inherent conflict of interest in Council approving its own financial benefits. Legal opinion was obtained stating that a vote at an AGM with a limited number of the total membership present was not going to create a policy that was robust and able to withstand a legal challenge.
- **Motion:** A motion was made to discuss Council honorarium and the creation of a past Council Pension at the next community meeting and discuss a process for community engagement and approval. Moved by: Carol Louie, Seconded by: Carrie Luke - Motion passed with 11 votes in favor and none opposed.
- **Q: Could the pension and honorarium discussions be combined and addressed through community engagement meetings?** A: Yes. Multiple meetings would likely be needed so membership can understand the long-term financial impact and provide input.
- **Q: Does a referendum need to be held for the pension and honorarium changes, or could Chief and Council make that decision?** A: The legal opinion recommends that a referendum be held. Chief and Council should not vote on policy that would benefit them personally.
- **Q: Could the pension and honorarium discussions be combined and addressed through community engagement meetings?** A: Yes. Multiple meetings would likely be needed so membership can understand the financial impact and provide input.
- **Q: How much has been spent on legal fees defending LKB from actions initiated by Band Members?** A: Finance is compiling a report on total legal costs.
- **Q: Are there plans to have a land committee? Suggested having a youth and elder on the committee.** A: Curtis can answer that question during his land's presentation
- **Q: Is there a human resource manager for education?** A: Currently, the principal, Kat Coleman is responsible for HR at the YN School with support, if required, from the CAO Heather Suttie.
- To move forward with policy development and work on improving our ethno-historical report, there will need to be considerable community engagement and the creation of committees to support the work. In the past we have spent money on legal fees for policy/bylaws etc. that were never successfully approved by the membership. We need to do more work on the front end to be able to gain enough consensus to justify hiring lawyers to draft the actual written policies.

Health – Rhonda Basil & Shannon Maddess

- **Q: Are services only available for members living on reserve?** A: Funding from FNHA restricts many services to members living on reserve, although transportation and some supports are available for all members.
- **Q: What is block funding?** A: It is a lump sum provided for various health services, though it does not cover the entire membership.
- **Suggestion: Hold quarterly meetings to share updates about health programs and services.** Response: Staff agreed this would be beneficial.
- **Q: Is medical travel only for local trips or out of town as well?** A: Medical travel is for in and out of town medical appointments.
- **Q: How much is the annual health subsidy and does it cover off reserve members?** A: Health subsidy is \$2000.00/year, only for those on reserve, and covers things such as prescriptions and glasses that aren't covered by FNHA.
- **Q: Is there support for addiction and psychosis education?** A: The health department plans to expand programming and work with families and individuals dealing with addiction and mental health challenges.
- **Comment: Home visits by community nurses could improve connection with members.** Response: Home visits are part of the role but must respect privacy and professional boundaries.
- **Q: Who do we contact to give feedback on services and staff?** A: you can give feedback to Rhonda Basil – Health Director at healthdirector@lowerkootenay.com or phone 254-428-9834. We are always open to providing other services that members are looking for.
- **Q: Is there any support available for caregivers who are providing 24/7 care for family members dealing with complex health or recovery challenges?** A: Would like more information on what type of support? i.e. mental health support, respite, home health care? Please come and see us and we can discuss options.
- **Q: If staff are aware of certain health needs in the community, could there be planned check-ins or wellness visits, potentially with health staff attending in pairs?** A: If members would like check-ins, we can definitely do that, but that request would have to come from the member.
- **Q: Could the health department host a luncheon or information session to explain available services, introduce health providers, and provide information on programs such as Plan W and how to access care?** A: For sure, we held separate gatherings on Health benefits and Plan W but we can plan to hold more.
- **Q: With the upcoming treatment centre opening, will this impact the current health centre's services or staffing, such as doctor days or nursing availability?** A: The yaqan nukiy health centre is not directly connected to the Treatment centre. Any services or staff that is at the Health centre will stay at the health centre.

Membership – Rhonda Basil

- **Q: Do we have a program to assist those in passport applications and associated costs?** A: Yes, Matty can help complete applications, and we have a budget for those costs.
- **Q: Regarding border crossing issues, are there verification letters available that may assist members when crossing the border?** A: Yes, verification letters can be provided by the Membership department.

Lands – Curtis Wullum

- **Q: Which lands are fee simple?** A: Fee Simple Lands are included in the EC Dev Presentation and include Kinsman Park, Bluebird Point, Rykerts Property and Guide Outfitting Property located at 7 km on Goat River FSR.
- **Q: How are pictographs being protected?** A: Although not specifically mentioned in the Act, they would be protected under the Heritage Conservation Act as a Cultural Heritage Site, but protecting all sites would require acquiring large areas of private land.
- **Q: What were the results of the flats restoration project?** A: Approximately 1,200 acres have been dedicated to wetland restoration, with more work planned over the next five years including ecosystem and riparian restoration along Kootenay River and around wetlands.
- **Q: Is there land available for cattle grazing?** A: Possible areas exist, though winter access and water availability may limit options.
- **Q: The airport is located close to the reserve and there are concerns about potential pollutants from aircraft. Does the airport provide any compensation for flying over reserve lands, and are there regulations regarding training flights over the Kootenay River?** A: The Band does not receive any funding from the airport. There are federal regulations under the Transportation Act that govern minimum flight heights over fee simple and reserve lands.
- **Q: Some cottonwood trees appear to have been moved or fallen due to wind. Are there plans for replanting trees or removing fallen trees along driving trails?** A: Staff would like to review the locations on a map and assess the areas where trees have fallen. Cleanup of trees blocking access will be considered, and restoration work in the area is being explored pending funding opportunities.

Ainsworth – Jake Murfitt

- **Comment:** It was noted that it was positive to see signage and pictures highlighting that the business is Indigenous-owned, as this was not previously visible.
- **Q: A concern was raised regarding a sage allergy. Sage had been included in the bannock, and it was asked whether there could be an option available without sage?** A: The concern will be brought to the chef. When sage is already included in menu items, it can be difficult to modify, but the feedback will be shared for consideration.
- **Q: An elected official from the Kootenay Tribe of Idaho is planning to attend a gathering in April and asked about contact information and room bookings.** A: The resort office is open five days per week. On Mondays the office closes at 1:30 pm and

reopens on Wednesday. Email is often the easiest way to reach staff for booking inquiries.

- **Q: Is there a space, such as an interpretive or display area, where community members could showcase their artwork? If so, who should they contact?** A: The resort supports local artists and may display items in the gift shop. Interested artists can contact the resort through the general email at info@hotspringsresort.com.

Morris Flowers – Kristen Brennen

- **Q: The downtown shop has closed, and operations have moved to the Erickson location. Was the downtown building being rented, and what are the plans for that property?** A: Yes, operations have moved to the Erickson location. The Band owns the downtown building and is currently assessing the extent of mold damage. Next steps will be discussed with Chief and Council.

Economic Development – Curtis Wullum

- **Q: Are the cabins currently being used?** A: The two small cabins are occasionally used for guiding purposes. The outfitter who built them uses them periodically during guiding trips and holds a lease for guiding tours. To create a camping area we would need to upgrade wastewater and water systems. The property does not have power but does have a Water Licence on Anchor Creek
- **Q: How large is the guiding territory?** A: A map of the territory can be provided and will be posted on the website as soon as it is ready.
- **Q: Who is Yaqa Nukiy Farms LLP and who sits on boards?** A: It is a limited liability partnership (LLP) overseeing Morris Flowers and the greenhouse. The LLP is made up of a Limited Partner which is LKB and a Managing Partner which is a Corporation owned 100% by LKB and is called kawiskoonook MP Ltd. Board members are the Chief and Council at the time of purchase.
- **Q: How does the community benefit from business interests?** A: Revenues are reinvested into community projects such as housing improvements, feasibility studies, development planning, and infrastructure.
- **Q: Why partner with other businesses?** A: Partnerships generate revenue with reduced risk and provide capacity building, employment, training, grants, and sub-contracting opportunities.
- **Q: Is the Kinsmen Park property currently unused, and what are the associated town fees? What was the reason for purchasing the property, and has selling it been considered?** A: The property was originally owned by School District 8. Both the Town of Creston and the Band were interested in purchasing it, so the land was split, with the Band acquiring approximately 2.5 acres. The long-term intention is to develop affordable housing and potentially daycare. Because the land is fee simple and Indigenous owned, there may be opportunities to access funding for housing initiatives such as apartments, townhouses, or small homes,

possibly including housing for staff. The property is currently zoned for recreational use, so it will need to be rezoned to residential and commercial use before development can proceed. The rezoning process may take approximately 6–8 months and cost around \$25,000. Selling the property is not recommended, as it is expected to provide long-term benefits to the community.

- **Q: The board of directors for Yaqaan Nukiy Farms has not yet been established. How will the board be formed, and what qualifications will be required?** A: The structure and membership of the board of directors for the Market Garden have not yet been finalized as it is currently not a business. The intention is to involve community members in determining the approach, although this will take time and will not be decided at the next community meeting. Board members could potentially include community members, Chief and Council representatives, or individuals with relevant professional expertise, such as financial or business experience.
- **Q: Is there an updated list of Band-owned businesses and enterprises available, and is this information current on the website? How does the membership benefit from these business interests, and has per capita distribution been considered?** A: It is uncertain whether the website currently reflects a fully updated list of enterprises. The commitment has been to reinvest revenues back into the community through initiatives such as home improvements, feasibility studies, development planning, engineering work, and other community projects. Funds may also be retained to earn interest. Per capita distributions are not currently part of the reinvestment strategy.

Education – Kat Coleman & Jenni Jacobs

- **Q: Is there a formal language and culture curriculum?** A: Resources exist and have been developed by educators, but delivery varies depending on the instructor.
- **Q: How are transferring students assessed in language and culture education?** A: Indigenous education committees and structured curriculum frameworks guide this process.
- **Q: Is there a parent advisory group?** A: Yes, a Parent Club meets monthly and is funded by FNEESC.
- **Q: Is there extended education available beyond YNS that focuses on language and culture?** A: A committee member is working with the College of the Rockies to develop Ktunaxa 101 and 102 courses that could be offered for second-language credits.
- **Q: Does the committee have Terms of Reference, and who oversees them?** A: The YNS budget is developed collaboratively by YNS staff and the LKB Finance Department and is then approved by Chief and Council, with no involvement from the Committee in the budgeting or approval process; the Committee instead focuses on programming decisions and operates under a Terms of Reference, while Chief and Council remain the final decision-makers.

- **Q: Of the 95 students enrolled, how many identify as First Nations?** A: Approximately 20–30% of students live on reserve, while many of the remaining students also identify as Indigenous.
- **Comment/Question:** Concerns were raised about the representation of Ktunaxa culture in local schools, noting that some classrooms contain more information about the Sinixt than the Ktunaxa. Response: Education staff have communicated with school districts, particularly in the Nelson area, to clarify that LKB is no longer part of the Sinixt structure and to update land acknowledgement statements. Program evaluations and discussions are ongoing, and LKB now has stronger representation on regional committees.
- **Q: Given that education is a priority for the community, could funding for post-secondary students be increased through the Post-Secondary Living Allowance (PSLA) so students have better support for living costs?** A: This would be an appropriate discussion for the Own Source Revenue (OSR) Committee, which will examine priorities such as education and health funding. Leadership noted caution about allocating OSR funds without broader community input and emphasized the importance of developing long-term funding solutions
- **Q: How are committee members selected, and are Elders included?** A: A call for committee members was issued last year and only one application was received. Additional members are welcome, and applicants must be members of the Lower Kootenay Band.

Chief and Council – Jason Louie, Robin Louie, Cherie Luke & Leona Basil

- **Q: Are there council portfolios assigned for specific areas of responsibility? If so, how are these roles communicated to the community?** A: Due to changes at the KNC, Council members no longer hold portfolios. Information regarding Chief and Council activities is shared through meeting minutes posted on the LKB website.
- **Q: What is a bundle claim and what claims are included?** A: A bundle claim refers to multiple claims being addressed together rather than individually, which helps streamline the process. In this case, the bundled specific claim relates to a number of smaller road trespasses. Additional information can be provided.
- **Comment:** It was suggested that each LKB committee include representation from both an Elder and a youth member.
- **Comment/Question:** Concerns were raised about communication and unity among Ktunaxa leadership across communities. It was noted that collaboration between communities is important for addressing shared priorities and planning for the future.
- **Q: Who is Cst. Dave Bickle and what is his role?** A: More than 10 years ago, Indigenous Policing Services (IPS) announced plans for four positions to support the Ktunaxa Nation. While it was initially suggested that each community would have its own IPS officer, the positions were ultimately based out of Cranbrook. In the past, IPS presence in the community was inconsistent, so the community primarily relied on the local RCMP detachment for support. Dave Bickle worked in the area as IPS for over a year while another member was on leave, spending time building relationships within

the community. After retiring, he applied to the RCMP Reservist Program and was accepted in January. As a reservist, he can support policing services on an as-needed basis and help serve the Lower Kootenay Band community once the necessary administrative approvals for his position are finalized.

- **Q: Members expressed interest in more interaction with Council and asked about meetings attended, priorities for LKB, and current areas of focus.** A: Council noted that information about meetings and activities is publicly available through Chief and Council meeting minutes and that members are welcome to speak directly with Council if they have questions.
- **Comment:** It was noted that many members do not use social media or regularly access the website and suggested that short summaries of Council activities could help improve communication with the community.
- **Comment/Question:** Concerns were raised about low attendance at some community meetings and the importance of continued follow-up and engagement with members.
- **Suggestion:** Consider providing monthly updates or reports from Chief and Council, potentially rotating responsibility among Council members.