

President's Message

October 13, 2016

There are so many opportunities for the Métis Nation's Manitoba Métis. There are many ways you, our Métis Citizens, can participate in continuing to shape the direction of not only the Métis Nation, but also our role within our province, our Homeland, and our country and beyond.

Right now the province is asking for input on the upcoming provincial budget. This is an opportunity for you to express how you want your tax dollars invested. I've said it often before, Métis people are hardworking taxpayers. For far too long governments have ignored our voice and with recent court cases such as Daniels, it is clear they have missed the opportunity to engage the largest and fastest growing Indigenous population in Manitoba. We proved in the last provincial and federal elections that we can create change when we showed up in the polls in high numbers. Let's not wait for elections to make things happen, let's engage now – everyday.

In the next couple of weeks, the provincial government will be seeking your input into how your tax dollars will be spent in the upcoming year. I encourage you to engage in this process. To aid you in this process, your Métis government has developed a webpage with links and tools for you to use in communicating with the provincial government about what is important to the Métis. We have identified areas such as accessible healthcare, education, housing and sustainable development as needing additional investment for the Métis. Take some time and add your voice to this pre-budget consultation process. Visit our website at **www.mmf.mb.ca** for more information.

Speaking of sustainable development, your Métis government will be participating in a special Métis National Council assembly on climate change in BC this week. Climate change will have a large and great impact on our people in the years to come. It is already impacting traditional territories and environments changing the make up of the land, its resources and the animals that live there. It is also having a great impact on how we are able to transport goods and how we are able to help our harvesters get their resources to market. We need to be proactive in how we continue to work in areas of conservation and economic development in light of our new and changing reality.

With all the things your government is involved in, communications is paramount. We are in the process of revamping our website and social media properties to make sure the information you want and need is readily available and accessible. I have tasked the Manitoba Metis Federation Communications department to begin soliciting feedback from our regions, our citizens and the various departments of the MMF on how our communications can be increased. I have directed them to analyze the media and materials we are using to be sure they are being used effectively and to see if there are other ways we should be using to reach as many of our Métis Citizens, other governments and agencies, partners and investors as possible. Please stay tuned for the opportunity to share your ideas with them via an online survey available through email, our website or other social media like Facebook or Twitter.

Written surveys will also be available at the Regional Offices of the MMF over the next few weeks. Your feedback will help ensure we are able to reach you in a timely, appropriate and effective manner.

In the meantime, please feel free to submit your thoughts and ideas for how we can best communicate with you by contacting the Communications Department directly at communications@mmf.mb.ca or by mailing the department at the Home Office at 300-150 Henry Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 0J7. Also as we discussed this past summer during our land claims consultations, please submit your ideas on our land claim to ideas@mmf.mb.ca or send in a letter. It is also important that your contact information is up to date. You can update your info by contacting our Central Registry Office at (204) 586-8474. Having this information up to date and accurate will permit us to get important information to you quickly and directly.

In closing, I want to send my thoughts and prayers to those of you who may be sick, shut in or away from your family for work. Remember to care for and support one another. How we care for, love and support one another will be a testament to others of who we really are. We are a community – a society of generous ones. Take care, be safe and good luck to each of you this fall harvest season.

Meeqwetch,