

NextEra offers Confederacy \$7.5 million deal, band got \$8 million

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Writers

Negotiations between NextEra and the Confederacy on the Summerhaven Wind Project are complete, with a 20-year, \$7.5 million deal expected to be signed by the chiefs next month.

Haudenosaunee Development Institute (HDI) board member Aaron Detlor and NextEra reps Brian Hay and Micheal Laing presented some details of the agreement to Chiefs and Clanmothers last Saturday, but the meeting was cut short when the Confederacy learned that morning of a death and the deal could not be ratified.

The HDI, which acts as the planning department of the Confederacy, has faced accusations of secrecy in the past two months for not making de-

tails of the NextEra deal public and refusing at least one band member's request to see the document.

Detlor said the HDI reached an agreement with

"Nothing that the HDI does finalizes anything," he said. "The chiefs need to designate the signatories. From my understanding there's going to be a chief from each bench to



NextEra representatives Brian Hay and Micheal Laing attended Confederacy council Saturday where HDI director Hazel Hill and lawyer Aaron Detlor presented the company's offer to council. (Photo by Donna Durie)

NextEra on Apr. 26. The agreement won't be finalized until a chief from each bench signs it, said Detlor.

finalize it." He said that suggestion came from the Mohawk bench last Saturday.

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NextEra - Six Nations Deals:

NextEra, a Florida-based company, is building a 125 Mw wind farm called the Summerhaven project. It consists of 59 wind turbines on 800 acres of Nanfan Treaty land clustered around Jarvis, Fisherville and Rainham Centre in south Haldimand and is expected to be in operation this summer.

What they got:

Six Nations governments negotiated \$18,550,000 in land leases, scholarships, an eagle monitoring program and to buy land.

What the band got:

Total \$11,050,000.00

Details:

- \$400,000 a year for 20 years (\$8 million) for land lease
 - \$50,000, one time fee, for an eagle monitoring program
 - \$15,000 a year for 20 years for scholarships (\$3 million total)
 - \$1 million for scholarships to Indspire (formerly National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation)
- Band says it will establish a trust fund for the leasing money.

NextEra provided the band with money to hold community consultation meetings.

What Confederacy got:

Total \$7.5 million

- \$250,000 a year for 20 years (\$5 million) for land lease
- \$2.5 million to buy 500 acres of land

Confederacy has not said what the money will be used for nor held public meetings on details. HDI received \$28,000 in application fees but no money for negotiations or community meetings.

Confederacy hears 20 year NextEra land lease deal

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day.

However, representatives on the Mohawk Bench Saturday said they did not put

forward any suggestion on signatories.

Mohawk Chief Allen MacNaughton said the Mohawk Bench did not make the suggestion. "I

only heard Brian Doolittle (HDI board member) mention it in conversation that's all. No decisions were made and the Mohawks did not suggest anything."

The deal with NextEra includes \$250,000 a year for 20 years, totalling \$5 million, while the remaining \$2.5 million will be used to buy 500 acres of land to be placed under the Haudenosaunee Land Registry, said Detlor. "We will use the money to purchase land from whoever is a willing buyer," said Detlor.

The HDI did projections on land costs and estimated it will cost \$2.5 million to buy 500 acres of land in southern Ontario, said Detlor.

NextEra, a Florida-based company, is building a 125 Mw wind farm on south Haldimand lands expected to be in operation this summer.

Band Council is also in the midst of negotiating an \$8 million, 20-year deal with NextEra on the same project, that also includes: \$50,000 a year for an eagle monitoring program and \$15,000 a year for local scholarships, but NextEra is also giving Indspire (formerly the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation) \$1 million in scholarships.

The details of the band's negotiations have been made public in community meetings.

Detlor claims a number of chiefs attended negotiation meetings with NextEra but would not discuss how many chiefs attended, names or if they were actively involved in negotiations. Some chiefs told The Turtle Island News they haven't seen the agreement yet.

The agreement was not passed out at Saturday's session.

Detlor said chiefs gave the HDI "broad direction" to work out an agreement with NextEra.

Detlor wouldn't give a copy of the agreement to Turtle Island News, saying that would be up to the chiefs once it's signed. "It's publicly available through the whole negotiation process; we just can't send it out to the world at large," he said. "When it's finalized, the chiefs can distribute it as they see fit."

Detlor said the agreement was public in that any "Haudenosaunee citizen" can come into the HDI office, located inside Detlor's law office at the GREAT building, to view it. However, when a Turtle Island News reporter, who is Mohawk, went to the office to view the agreement two weeks ago, he was abruptly turned away by HDI Interim Director Hazel Hill. That was after Detlor

had already made arrangements with the reporter to come to the office to view the agreement. But Detlor was not present in the office, due to a sudden illness, at the time the reporter came in to view the agreement. Hill did not provide an explanation on why the reporter wasn't allowed to view the agreement.

However last month HDI director Hazel Hill refused to allow at least one band-member access to the document ordering him to leave her office.

"This agreement recognizes your interests in the land," Detlor told the Confederacy last Saturday. "You're not surrendering anything. You're giving them (NextEra) permission to use the land."

Detlor said the HDI will present more details of the agreement at its next quarterly community meeting.