

HDI accusations range to condoling chiefs to not fixing HCCC

(Continued from page 3)

Williams questioned again where the \$800 million went. "Where did it go then."

Detlor told her, "it doesn't exist. We weren't successful in getting a partnership with Samsung so the equity doesn't exist."

Others criticized the HDI on forming a land acquisition fund.

"The Chiefs have said on a number of occasions we're not going to dispossess people of their lands," said Detlor. "We needed a way to move them off the land so Haudenosaunee people can come in. The companies are the ones technically buying them out not the HCCC."

Detlor said all information goes to council. "We take all of these issues to the Confederacy Council," Detlor said. "It's in all of our reports."

Community member Mick Thomas said she did not believe the information was being relayed to chiefs and clanmothers because her chief, Sam General, was not aware of any of the details of the deals.

"I think you have an issue with your chief and clan

not the HDI," said Hazel Hill. "At the August council meeting I handed him a package, he refused to take it. I can't make him take it."

People questioned what's going to happen to the money once it starts flowing in.

Hill said the chiefs and clanmothers have discussed developing a financial management plan and a notice for estimates has gone out to consultants recommended by the HDI auditor KPMG.

Detlor told the meeting "Through these agreements, we are trying to begin a process of decolonization. We are trying to find a peaceful way of moving non-Haudenosaunee people off the land and Haudenosaunee people on the land because the government is not giving it back."

A visibly angry Levi Elijah shouted at chiefs and clanmothers present accusing them of interfering in Oneida business by condoling two Oneida chiefs who sit at HCCC.

Hazel Hill told him, "I don't condole chiefs. That has nothing to do with the HDI. Your issue is with the Onei-

das not the HDI."

Hill said it was not the HDI's job to fix the structure and process of missing chiefs and clanmothers.

"Your issue is with the clan families. It's not my job to go out there and fix that process. I agree with you that it's not working right. Everybody's got a different version. The women don't overpower the chiefs. They're not dictators to our chiefs. My point is it's not our job to run out to the clan families; that's the chief's and clanmothers' responsibility and we keep giving them that information. I give the clanmothers and chiefs the information."

On one green energy project alone, the Veresen project, there were at least 20 meetings with chiefs and clanmothers.

"We do a public meeting every month and it's in council," Detlor said, adding that their terms of reference require them to report to the HCCC.

"We report back to the Confederacy...we leave it to the chiefs and clanmothers to take that information and put it out to their clans."

Clanmother Gloria Thomas said the HCCC was not perfect and said she hoped things could get back on track.

"We're not perfect. The Confederacy is not perfect. We've been fighting to keep our history and who we are. The frustration is always there. I've seen grown chiefs in council cry about their own frustration. I've seen all the work the HDI is doing. I hope we can get things back on track."

Within minutes community member Mick Thomas launched a series of accusations against legal adviser Aaron Detlor accusing him of being involved in a shady legal contract with the Whitefish Lake First Nation after an area publication claimed a Toronto lawyer accused Detlor of overcharging the nation in a land rights issue a number of years ago. Detlor has served notice of libel on the publication.

"You tried to scam Whitefish Lake," Mick Thomas yelled. Detlor told her "I haven't scammed anyone. Those things are not true." Thomas claimed to have spoken to a former elected chief of Whitefish Lake First

Nation who made the accusations.

When asked if it was the White Lake First Nation former chief who was in jail on alcohol related charges, Thomas said she could not remember.

Thomas claimed she had also spoke to a well known "forensic auditor," but could not remember his name, before finally saying it was an "auditor" named Jim McReynolds.

A lawyer by the name of James McReynolds reviewed Detlor's retainer agreement with the First Nation in 2012 and wrote a report that has been widely circulated.

Detlor said that lawyer would be breaking solicitor-client privilege if he did indeed speak to Thomas about the Whitefish Lake report. "Did he talk to you about the client," he asked Thomas.

She told him, "yes he did." Detlor "We'll follow up with that," he said. "It's on the record."

Detlor asked Thomas if she was there to ask questions or on a "witchhunt." he said.

"Yes I am," she said before turning to elder Elvera Gar-

low and shouting "I'll get you too, Elvera."

Thomas accused Detlor of having to "pay back millions" to the northern First Nation.

Detlor denied the accusation saying. He told her "I don't have millions to begin with."

White Fish had hired McReynolds' firm to look into Detlor's billing practices seeking advise on lowering legal bills.

"It's all in a report," said Thomas.

Turtle Island News obtained a copy of the McReynolds' report, it does not say Detlor had to repay "millions" to the band.

The report is a review of legal costs for the band and recommendations on future contracts.

The report says if the band wished to dispute any of his fees they could "subject them to assessment...It is quite likely that the accounts would be significantly reduced," he said in a summary.

McReynolds said his firm would be happy to provide additional services to the band.

He did not return Turtle Island News calls.