

Council reinstates finance director, financial controller

*Darny, Vyse to reprise senior
positions in finance department*

By Paul Baswick

SIX NATIONS — Two of the most controversial staffing decisions of the previous council's term have been reversed with the reinstatement of Tom Darnay as Six Nations' director of finance and Debra (Bedge) Vyse as the band's financial controller.

Council announced that Darnay and Vyse will be returning to their the positions in a press release issued late yesterday afternoon.

The re-hirings, which fill a vacancy of almost five months at the top level of the band's finance department, also mark the end of a wrongful dismissal suit for over half a million dollars Darnay launched against council over two months ago.

The council release states "[b]oth Chief Jamieson and Mr. Darnay confirm that with this announcement all outstanding issues between Council and Mr. Darnay have been resolved and they are looking forward to a strong and healthy working relationship."

Darnay, when contacted by the Teka Tuesday, confirmed the resolution of those "outstanding issues" includes an end to his litigation against council.

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A march on the Band Administration by over 100 protesters followed the previous council's decision to oust director of finance Tom Darnay and financial controller Debra (Bedge) Vyse. The current council announced late Tuesday afternoon Darnay and Vyse will return to their former positions after an absence of almost five months.

While he didn't offer specifics on the terms of his reinstatement, Darnay did say he was content with the conditions of his return.

"It's fair and reasonable. It's not in the outrageous," commented Darnay, who returns to his job Jan. 14.

He added his reinstatement comes on the heels of a number of recent meetings with council representatives.

"It's been going on pretty well since probably a little before Christmas and during the holidays. It basically involved my legal council and the council's legal counsel."

Vyse, meanwhile, said negotiations didn't play into her reinstatement, and that she was surprised when Darnay called her late last week to tell her the job of financial controller was again hers.

"This is just unreal. It's been like...I don't know what the hell it's been like," Vyse said Tuesday.

Vyse said professionally she has been in a state of limbo

since she was let go from the finance department last September.

While it was reported council voted in August to transfer Vyse to Six Nations Tourism at the same political liaison meeting the decision was made to fire Darnay, Vyse said she was never informed by council of any such transfer.

"I asked them where they were transferring me to. Nobody ever did tell me," says Vyse.

"When I asked [former] Chief Staats, he said 'I'm not at liberty to tell you.' I said 'Well, who are you at liberty to tell because it's me your talking about'..Basically what he said was he didn't want me in the building."

She said she still isn't clear about how she feels about returning to her former position.

"Well, we'll have to see when I get back there. I don't know. I really don't know what to think."

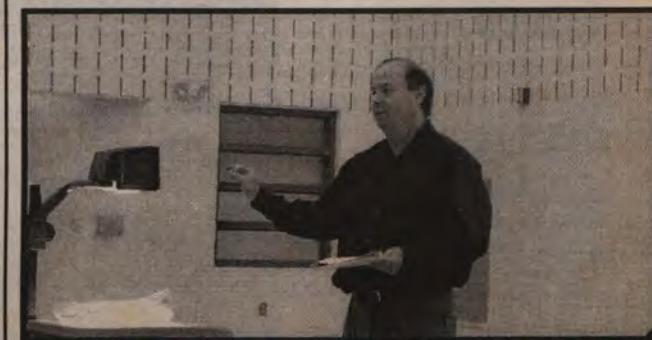
Also unclear to her, she adds, is when exactly she will be returning to the Band Administration Building.

"As far as I know I'm supposed to go back on [Jan.] 14th, too, but they just don't let me know what I need to know."

Reasons given by the previous council for the dismissals in the finance department last August ranged from performance issues to informing the public of details concerning the imminent failure of the Grand River Mills project in early 2000.

The firings sparked a demonstration by over 100 protesters outside the council chambers on Sept. 5, and continued calls for Darnay's and Vyse's reinstatement throughout the balance of the previous council's term.

Until recently Darnay has held a position in the finance department of the Mississaugas of the New Credit. He also served on Six Nations Chief Roberta Jamieson's three-member transitional team in the days leading up to the current council's inauguration on Dec. 4.



Six Nations Land Claims Research director Phil Monture provides band council an overview of his department's activities at a public orientation meeting at Oliver M. Smith Elementary School Monday night. Monture told council many of the responsibilities which have been passed off to Reasearch over the years need to be shared among other departments, allow ing Research to focus on Six Nations' ongoing litigation against the federal and provincial governments. Six Nations is seeking a full accounting of lands which were held in trust by the Crown.