

Confederacy planning meeting with new Ontario Premier

By Donna Duric
Writer

Six Nations Confederacy chiefs are planning a meeting with new Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne.

The Haudenosaunee Development Institute (HDI) is organizing the meeting.

Wynne had signed an exclusive communications agreement with the Confederacy last summer when she was the provincial Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and HDI lawyer Aaron Detlor said because of that, it may be beneficial to arrange a one-on-one meeting with Wynne because "she's actually in charge" now. The HDI is also meeting with former provincial negotiator

Tom Molloy this week to discuss the status of the Burtch and Plank Road lands with Molloy and Wynne, and the significance of the 1701 Nanfan Treaty.

The HDI told Confederacy it could be creating up to 200 jobs in the future as it becomes more involved with the provincial Ministry of Transportation's road and highway construction planning.

Currently, the HDI employs anywhere between 30 and 50 people through its various monitoring programs, he said.

Detlor said the HDI recently met with the MTO and stressed that the HDI

needs to be better informed of road construction plans throughout the 1701 Nanfan Treaty area. "We've never taken the position they can't build a road anywhere but we want to know where they're building the road," said Detlor.

"If they build a major highway in an area, it means they're wanting to put a whole bunch of people there. We told them we want to participate in the planning process. The HDI is generating a significant amount of employment."

In other news, the Confederacy Council's planning department is pushing for more involvement with archaeological digs in the

province through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, which deals with cemeteries, burials and archaeology, council heard last Saturday. "They want to have a meeting with us because we've been kicking them in the shins," said Detlor. Currently, said Detlor, the province's mandate says it should consult with aboriginal groups when it comes to archaeological digs, but it doesn't have to.

The HDI is looking to change that, he said.

"We want to make it mandatory that when the archaeology process begins, we want to have the Chiefs involved."

He also said the HDI re-

cently met with the province's Cemeteries Registrar Michael D'Mello, who "wasn't very happy with us because we challenged his jurisdiction." The registrar was told they have no jurisdiction over burials in the province, said Detlor.