

March 8, 2021

Greeting Members of Samahquam

By now, many of you have received the first package for amending Appendix H (Samahquam Election Act) and have had the chance to read my brief letter of introduction.

In my letter, I have demonstrated that I have been working with Custom Elections Codes since the mid 1990's. My main experience has been working with my own Nation. At the time that I was hired to develop our very first Custom Election Code, my Nation was in turmoil. Our Elections were governed by the Indian Act and at the time, our Nation had elected 3 different Chief & Council bodies at the same time. Obviously, Indian Affairs did not support or recognize any of the elected bodies. As a result, my Nation was placed under third party management until a proper election could be completed.

I along with an Electoral Officer from Vancouver Island worked together over several months to develop our first Custom Election Code as well as to change our designation from an Indian Act Election Band to a Custom Election Band.

When it came time to develop a second version of our Election Code, a new Electoral Officer was hired to work with our Band and in 2013, we completed our second version of our Election Code and successfully ratified this with our members.

This Electoral Officer continues to work with our Nation and the two of us have worked closely together since the first that he was appointed to work with us.

I consider my 27 years' experience working with Custom Election Acts as a way of helping other Nations to take that First Step towards Independence from the Indian Act. Yes, I have a strong passion for the Sovereignty for our Indigenous Nations of Canada.

I am aware that other public media platforms such as Facebook will be utilized by members to express concerns. My experience, as an Electoral Officer, is that concerns will always come up with just about every Nation that have been designated as a Custom Election Nation.

As Electoral Officers, we are always happy when someone shows concerns and questions. This shows us one of two things,

- 1) That the members who show concerns, they may be ready to take a step forward and be of great help to move their Nation forward.
- 2) As common among many Nations, there may be a few members who do not support the current direction of their current Chief and Council.

Now we as Electoral officers will always recognize and respect the views and opinions of these members; we will always take the stand that we are committed to stay impartial to the issues. Our Roles are to assist with Ratification Votes and/or the Elections of the Chief and Council in Indigenous Nations.

I humbly ask that you use my website and Blog to share your thoughts. This will ensure that your comments are heard and gives other Samahquam Members the opportunity to see them. Please remember to keep your comments related to the amendment of Appendix H. We cannot have any comments to slander any other members, staff or Chief and Council for Samahquam.

Should you wish to communicate directly with me, Please send an email to me at xemtumus@hotmail.com or call me at 1 (604) 807-5238.

I am honored to have this chance to work with you, the members.

hay čx™ q̇ə(“thank you”)

Stephen Armstrong

Electoral Officer.