



Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs
P.O. Box 148, Kitwanga B.C. V0J 2A0
PHONE: 250-849-5373 FAX: 250-849-5375

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We have reviewed the concerns and questions that were raised in the feast hall over the past week. Some of the matters relate directly to decisions or activities of the Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs Office, and we are able to provide some information on those matters.

Other questions relate to Wilp governance, names, membership, representation and decisions made within the feast system. Those are matters for the appropriate Wilp and traditional processes to work through. GHCO does not want to overstep its role or make decisions that properly belong within the feast.

New Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs Office Building

For approximately 30 to 40 years, the Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs were homeless, so to speak. We did not have a permanent home and operated out of a number of run-down buildings throughout the community.

The effort to build a permanent home has taken many years, with different plans and a number of setbacks along the way. Throughout that process, we provided regular updates at community events and through our quarterly newsletters, which have been widely distributed in hard copy and by email in Gitanyow and to Wilp members in Gitwangak and Gitsegukla.

When we finally secured the funding to build a permanent seat of government, our first proposed location was next to the museum. Human remains were discovered in that area. Ground-penetrating radar was then undertaken and indicated that there could be additional remains. We made the decision that we could not build there and began looking for another location.

There are very few suitable building sites remaining within Gitanyow, and many of the available lots were simply too small. The location on the hill was the only practical site we identified that could accommodate the building and the required infrastructure. GHCO received permission from Gwaas Hlaam and Bii Yosxw to build at this location, along with support from the other Gitanyow Chiefs. We worked hard over many years to raise the significant funding needed to construct the building and bring the necessary infrastructure to the site. Total cost today was \$12.5 M and we are grateful to Newmount Mines for a contribution of \$1 M. We also secured a loan of \$4.23 M.

There were many setbacks during this process, and at times there was serious consideration given to simply purchasing temporary trailers to house our operations. Leadership remained persistent. Our governance system has operated for thousands of years and will continue long into the future. We believed it was important that it finally have a permanent home.

Sindihi House of Learning

The Gitanyow Education and Training Institute began in 2015. Since then, more than 800 people have received training within their home community of Gitanyow, approximately 150 full-time jobs have been created for Gitanyow Wilp members, Gitanyow community members and surrounding areas have been supported in pursuing further education.

Robert Good, whose name was Sindihi, was a strong supporter of the Education and Training Institute, a respected leader within Gitanyow, and was often referred to as the Heart of the Huwilp. In considering the name Sindihi House of Learning, discussions were held with his family and the Hereditary Chiefs. The intention was to honour his contribution and legacy within Gitanyow.

Firewood

GHCO has helped coordinate firewood for various Wilp over the past two years. In the case of Wilp Gwaas Hlaam, the loads were directed to be dropped at a key Elder of Wilp Gwaas Hlaam's home in Gitanyow. GHCO did not determine how that firewood was distributed after it was delivered or who within the Wilp received it.

We are also aware that some families purchase their own logging-truck loads of firewood independently of GHCO. We cannot confirm whether the other firewood referred to in the concerns raised was privately purchased or part of the firewood coordinated through GHCO.

Again, for matters relating to Wilp governance and the feast system, we believe those discussions need to remain with the Wilp and within the appropriate traditional processes.

Sincerely,



President Malii/Glen Williams
Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs Office