

Cree Nation Government

51st Annual General Assembly

August 26–28, 2025

DAY 1 – AUGUST 26, 2025

1. Opening

The 51st Annual General Assembly of the Cree Nation Government was opened with a prayer by **Reggie Neeposh**.

The meeting was called to order at **9:47 a.m.** by **Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch**.

Resolution AGA 2025-2026-01

Appointment of Recording Secretaries

It was resolved to appoint **Priscilla Bosum** and **Prestin Shecapio-Blacksmith** as Recording Secretaries.

- **Moved by:** Gaston Cooper
- **Seconded by:** Daniel Mark Stewart
- **Status:** Carried

2. Opening Remarks Chief Gaston Cooper

Chief Gaston Cooper welcomed the delegates to the 51st Annual General Assembly. He spoke about the history of the community and acknowledged the work and contributions of the previous leadership.

Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch

Grand Chief Murdoch reflected on the history of Cree leadership and the teachings of Ted Moses. He recalled the circumstances in which five communities came together to stand collectively against the federal government and emphasized the importance of unity when facing challenges.

He also acknowledged the contributions of Robert Kanatewat and other past leaders and stated his intention to maintain an open dialogue with the communities and leadership.

Grand Chief Murdoch acknowledged the directors and other leaders in attendance and invited **Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer** to address the delegation.

Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer

Deputy Grand Chief Spencer thanked Chief Gaston Cooper and the community for hosting the AGA and thanked those who supported his election.

He stated his commitment to working collaboratively and ensuring that the positions of the Cree Nation Government reflect the Eeyou way of life.

3. Delegation Roll Call Delegates and representatives:

Whapmagoostui Delegates:

- Deputy Chief Rachel Kawapit
- Lizzie Masty
- Wesley George
- John Petagumskum Jr.
- Larry Wapachee
- Roy Mamianskum

Chisasibi Delegates:

- James Bobbish
- Christopher Napash
- Lily Napash
- Charlotte Kanatewat
- Shannon Fireman
- Edna-Rose Fireman

Wemindji Delegates:

- Chief Christina Gilpin
- Arden Visitor
- Drayden Mistacheesik
- Dennis Georgekish
- Gilbert Georgekish
- Arianna Atsynia
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Eastmain Delegates:

- Chief Raymond Shanush
- Daniel Mark-Steward
- Johnny Tomatuk
- Edward Gilpin (wife Sally Gilpin)
- Lillian Moses
- Curtis Ratt-Shanush

Waskaganish Delegates:

- Chief Greta W. Cheechoo
- Susan Esau
- Alfred Jr. Gilpin
- Tyrone Blackned
- Charlie Diamond
- Mary Diamond

Nemaska Delegates:

- Chief Clarence Jolly
- Brittany Moar
- Steven Neeposh
- Carol Ann Tanoush
- Norman Wapachee
- Joshua Iserhoff

Waswanipi Delegates:

- Chief Irene Neeposh
- Elizabeth Ottereyes
- Sehoneh Masty
- Tyson Gull
- Don Saganash
- Judy Longchap Saganash

Ouje-Bougoumou Delegates:

- Chief Gaston Cooper
- Reggie Neeposh
- Sam R. Bosum
- Miguel Shecapio Blacksmith
- Hattie Wapachee
- Alicia Bosum-Longchap

Mistissini Delegates :

- Chief Michael Petawabano
- Louise Blacksmith
- George M. Shecapio
- Sally Jimikin
- Benoit Matoush
- Evelyn Gunner

Washaw Sibi Delegates:

- Chief Annie Mapachee
- Adriana Wapachee
- Betty Trapper
- Billy Katapatuk Sr.
- Minnie Otter Sherrill
- Tasha Mowatt

MoCreebec Delegates:

- Abraham Jolly
- Michael Jolly
- Stacey Jolly
- Charlie Alisappi Jr.
- Klaire Kapashesit
- Kayrene Kapashesit

4. Resolution Committees

Resolution AGA 2025-02

Appointment of Resolution Committees

- **Moved by:** Don Saganash
 - **Seconded by:** Raymond Shanush
 - **Status:** Carried
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5. Review of Agenda and Previous AGA Mandates

Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch reviewed the proposed agenda.

Presentations and agenda items included:

- Cree School Board – Dr. Sarah Pash
- 50th Anniversary of the JBNQA – Dr. Philip Awashish
- Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay – Jeannie Pelletier
- Follow-up on mandates from the previous AGA

Delegates raised a number of issues for discussion, including:

- Governance and the role of Council
- Funding for the Cree Trappers' Association
- Justice and community safety
- Violence, gun violence and spousal abuse
- Transportation
- Transportation for hunters and trappers
- Education and student well-being
- Miyupimaatisiun
- Housing
- Special-needs services
- Diabetes
- Land-based programming
- Curriculum development and accreditation
- Cree youth budgets and programming
- Cultural exchange and collaboration

Chief Irene Neeposh and other delegates emphasized the importance of strengthening community-based approaches and ensuring that the work of the Cree Nation Government responds to local priorities.

Resolution AGA 2025-03

Review of Agenda – Additional Items

The Assembly considered additional items for inclusion on the agenda.

- **Moved by:** Daniel Mark-Stewart
- **Seconded by:** Joshua Iserhoff
- **Status:** Carried

A health break was called at **10:43 a.m.**

The meeting reconvened at **11:20 a.m.**

6. Additional Agenda Discussions

Don Saganash raised the issue of additional funding for the Cree Trappers' Association.

Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch requested that a resolution be prepared regarding the matter. Carol-Ann Tanoush raised the possibility of an open dialogue concerning cultural exchange and relations with other nations.

7. Adoption of 2024 AGA Minutes

Resolution AGA 2025-04

Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Assembly – Review and Adoption

The minutes of the 2024 Annual General Assembly were presented for review and adoption.

- **Moved by:** Christopher Napash
- **Seconded by:** Reggie Neeposh
- **Status:** Carried

The Assembly also acknowledged receipt of the minutes and resolutions of the Cree Nation Government and the Board of Compensation.

8. Presentation on Consolidation of Cree Nation Government Laws

A presentation was made regarding the consolidation of Cree Nation Government laws. A presentation concerning **ACCI** was also provided by **Kathy Shecapio**. Special open hours were announced for **6:00–8:00 p.m.**

9. Financial Statements – Cree Nation Government

The meeting reconvened following lunch at **1:28 p.m.**

Matthew Swallow, Treasurer, and **Sylvain Faucher** presented the audited financial statements and an overview of the financial results for the year ending **March 31, 2025**.

The presentation included:

- Overview of financial results
- Board of Compensation funds
- CTA-related funds
- Unappropriated accumulated surplus
- Current-year financial results
- Allocation of funds

The presentation noted a current-year surplus of approximately **\$3.6 million** and an operational surplus figure of approximately **\$635,577**, subject to confirmation against the audited statements.

Approximately **\$1 million** in unappropriated accumulated funds relating to CTA/ISP was also discussed.

Resolution AGA 2025-05

2024–2025 Audited Financial Statements of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government

- **Moved by:** Chief Clarence Jolly
- **Seconded by:** Chief Raymond Shanoush
- **Status:** Carried

Questions and Discussion

George M. Shecapio asked how the Grand Council has used the funds received through the JBNQA and whether alternative methods of generating revenue could be developed for the Cree Nation Government.

He referenced the approximately \$1 billion associated with the JBNQA and the approximately \$3.5 billion associated with the Paix des Braves and encouraged leadership to consider innovative revenue-generating opportunities.

Matthew Swallow acknowledged the question and indicated that an answer would be provided later during the AGA. He also referred to agreements that were coming to an end.

Davey Bobbish discussed the ongoing nature of obligations arising from the JBNQA, including Section 9 and matters relating to local governments, education, well-being and ISP. He emphasized the significance of the 1975 agreement and the constitutional protection associated with the modern treaty framework.

Robert Kanatewat discussed historical compensation and funding arrangements and emphasized that Cree leadership had fought to secure these resources.

Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch spoke about the importance of recognizing the historical struggle associated with obtaining the funds and rejected misconceptions that Cree communities simply receive government funding without having fought for it.

Carol-Ann Tanoush suggested strengthening relations with other nations and countries as part of a contingency and long-term strategy. She noted that the Cree Nation is increasingly recognized internationally as a strong nation.

Chief Irene Neeposh raised concerns regarding the characterization of approximately \$16 million in housing funds as a surplus. She clarified that the funds were unspent funds rather than necessarily excess funds.

Grand Chief Murdoch agreed that the funds should be viewed as resources that remain available to be spent on housing priorities.

Grand Chief Murdoch also indicated that the CTA should be included in future discussions concerning relevant funding so that its representatives can raise questions and concerns.

Joshua Iserhoff expressed support for his Chief and indicated that he looked forward to reviewing the following year's financial statements.

10. Board of Compensation Financial Statements

Sylvain Faucher presented an overview of the audited financial statements of the Board of Compensation.

Resolution AGA 2025-06

2024–2025 Audited Financial Statements of the Board of Compensation

- **Moved by:** Susan Esau
- **Seconded by:** Norman Wapachee
- **Status:** Carried

Discussion included the approximately **\$134 million** group fund and the amount retained for reinvestment.

George M. Shecapio asked why a full document concerning the Board of Compensation presentation was not available and raised questions regarding investment activities.

Grand Chief Murdoch indicated that he had discussed the matter with Derek Neeposh and that there should be coordination between the Board of Compensation, Creeco and the Cree Nation Government to ensure that relevant financial statements are brought to the CNG AGA.

Matthew Swallow explained that approximately \$134 million was associated with the group fund and that approximately \$50 million had been retained for reinvestment.

11. Appointment of Auditors Resolution AGA 2025-07 Appointment of Auditors

- **Moved by:** Daniel Mark-Stewart
- **Seconded by:** Chief Clarence Jolly
- **Status:** Carried

12. Reforestation Drone Demonstration

Chief Gaston Cooper announced a demonstration involving the use of drones for reforestation.

Delegates were invited to view the drone at the baseball field at approximately **5:00 p.m.**

A health and exercise break was held at **3:00 p.m.**, facilitated by **Diane Bosum, Suzanne Bush and Gaston Cooper.**

The meeting reconvened at **3:31 p.m.**

13. Cree Nation Government Annual Report

14.

Davey Bobbish, Executive Director, presented on behalf of the Cree Nation Government. He:

- Congratulated Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch and Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer;
- Thanked the previous leadership;
- Discussed changes in negotiations with Canada and the new federal government under Prime Minister Mark Carney;
- Raised matters concerning wind turbines;
- Discussed the 2008 NRA and its 2026 horizon;
- Thanked the directors and staff;
- Gave special recognition to Matthew Swallow and Nancy Bobbish; and
- Tabled the annual report.

Grand Chief Murdoch emphasized the importance of working together as a council and board.

15. Cree Nation Youth Council

Youth Grand Chief Jade Mukash and **Former Youth Grand Chief Adrian Gunner** presented on the work of the Cree Nation Youth Council.

The presentation acknowledged the contributions of Tania Richmond and others who

supported the Youth Council.

Adrian Gunner

Adrian Gunner reflected on his term as Youth Grand Chief and highlighted:

- JBNQA treaty negotiation simulation;
- Winter Journey;
- 7th Inspire Hope Conference;
- Cree youth participation at the United Nations;
- Cree Youth Exchange;
- Work with youth internationally and between Indigenous nations.

He described the responsibility of being the voice of Cree youth as an honour and privilege. He congratulated the candidates in the CNYC elections and emphasized collaboration among the elected representatives.

He also congratulated **Jade Mukash** and **Darius Neacappo-Pelchat** on their respective terms.

An eagle feather was formally transferred to Youth Grand Chief Jade Mukash. The significance and history of the feather were explained, including its connection to the Cree Youth Council and the late James A. Shecapio, recognized as the first person to hold the title of Youth Grand Chief.

Jade Mukash

Youth Grand Chief Jade Mukash introduced herself and congratulated Darius Neacappo-Pelchat on his election as Deputy Youth Grand Chief.

She presented highlights from the Youth Council's work, including:

JBNQA Negotiation Treaty Simulation

Youth participated in discussions regarding the future of the JBNQA and Cree governance.

Moose Management – Zone 17

Approximately 50 youth from each community and urban areas participated in the initiative, including a gathering in Ottawa in November 2024.

Winter Journey

An overview of the Winter Journey and its trail was provided, with acknowledgements to participants and organizers.

7th Inspire Hope Conference

The conference took place **March 6–9, 2025** and included:

- Cultural programming;
- Workshops;
- Team challenges;
- Mental health programming;
- Capacity-building activities.

Alberta Youth Exchange

The Youth Council participated in an exchange with the **Ermineskin Cree Nation** and other

youth representatives.

Jordan Masty was acknowledged for encouraging relationships among Indigenous nations, emphasizing that nations may need each other in the future.

Cree Youth at the United Nations

The Youth Council participated in the Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus and developed connections with Indigenous youth from other regions, including Innu and British Columbia.

The initiative was supported through collaboration with the Justice Department and the Grand Council office.

Strategic Action Plan

The Youth Council is working on:

- Governance matters;
- Guidelines;
- Code of ethics;
- Youth resources;
- Strengthening youth participation.

Youth Grand Chief Mukash read the CNYC mission and vision and emphasized that investing in youth is an investment in the future.

16. Upcoming Youth Events

36th Cree Nation Youth Council AGA

- **Location:** Wemindji
- **Dates:** September 26–28, 2025
- **Theme:** “Moving Forward Together as We Grow”

2nd Youth Council of Eeyou Istchee Summit

Theme: “The Youth of the JBNQA – Getting Ready for the Next 50 Years”

- **Dates:** November 11–13, 2025
- Entities and organizations will be invited to participate.

Youth Grand Chief Mukash thanked Tania Richmond for her support.

17. Discussion – Cree Language and Youth

Susan Esau congratulated the Youth Council and challenged youth leadership to prioritize the Cree language.

She expressed concern regarding the decline of the Cree language among youth and encouraged parents and communities to speak Cree to children from an early age. Youth Grand Chief Mukash responded that she had gained the Cree language over the previous two years and discussed the importance of ensuring that youth programming supports language revitalization.

She stated that language revitalization has become part of the CNYC mandate and that the Council would seek ways to acknowledge the knowledge and teachings of previous

generations.

Carol-Ann Tanoush offered words of encouragement.

Grand Chief Murdoch thanked Jade Mukash for attending and spoke about his own experience learning and maintaining the Cree language. He acknowledged the people who helped him and emphasized the importance of maintaining relationships so that youth are prepared for the future.

Youth Grand Chief Mukash stated her commitment to incorporating Cree language into her work as much as possible and expressed her intention to do her best to speak Cree.

Robert Kanatewat discussed the place of Cree language within the JBNQA and acknowledged the work of Ted Moses, Philip Awashish and others in advancing Cree rights and relations.

18. Closing – Day 1

Closing Prayer: Christopher Napash

The meeting was adjourned at **5:00 p.m.**

DAY 2 – AUGUST 27, 2025

19. Opening

The agenda was reviewed by Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch.

The opening prayer was provided by **Chief Greta Whiskeychan**.

The meeting was called to order at **10:03 a.m.**

20. Cree School Board Presentation

Dr. Sarah Pash addressed the delegation, congratulated the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief, and introduced members of the Cree School Board leadership.

Members introduced included:

- Caroline Mark, Director General
- Debbie House, Deputy Director General
- Catherine Rutherford
- Angela Bearskin-Gates
- Darlene Cheechoo
- François Bobbish

The Board presented its annual report for the **2024–2025 school year**.

21. Cree School Board Strategic Action Plan

The Board reported that it was in the final year of its current Strategic Action Plan, which is organized around three pillars:

1. Eeyou lituun

The Board emphasized Eeyou lituun as foundational to student identity and development.

2. Student Experience

Areas of focus included:

- Student empowerment;
- Miyupimaatisiun;
- Curriculum development;
- Community-based needs;
- Breakfast programs;
- Driver education;
- Equal access to education;
- Socio-economic collaboration.

3. Educational and Student Success

The Board is:

- Assessing schools and programs;
- Realigning the Board;
- Analyzing data;
- Developing targeted responses;
- Implementing literacy initiatives;
- Supporting post-secondary and higher learning.

22. Student Attendance

The Board reported that attendance remains a major concern.

Attendance rates were reported at approximately **68–70%**, with schools continuing to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 period.

The Board emphasized that students with higher attendance rates are significantly more likely to succeed academically and graduate.

The Board identified approximately **30% attendance** as equivalent to missing roughly two years of school and emphasized the importance of supporting parents and families.

Chief Irene Neeposh requested an attendance strategy and stronger outreach initiatives.

23. Cree School Board Upcoming Events

Upcoming events identified included:

- **Special Needs Symposium:** December 3–4, 2025
 - **Post-Secondary, Adult and Higher Learning Conference:** February 20–22, 2026
- Additional announcements were expected in September.

The Board also discussed partnerships with entrepreneurs and Cree communities to identify employment opportunities for students returning home.

A total of **154 graduates** was reported for the 2024–2025 school year.

24. Iiyiyuiyihtiwin Research and Development Department

Angela Gates, Director of Iiyiyuiyihtiwin Research and development, presented on the Iiyiyuiyihtiwin department that was established in **2022**.

Its mandate includes:

- Supporting Cree culture, language, values and worldview;
- Developing a holistic educational system grounded in Cree language and culture;
- Supporting teachers and schools;
- Working with Elders and knowledge keepers;
- Developing pedagogical models;
- Supporting land-based education;
- Maintaining language and cultural resources;
- Providing liaison services within and outside the Cree School Board;
- Developing protocols for the use of cultural and language resources.

The department's organizational model is inspired by traditional roles and responsibilities within a camp and emphasizes collaboration and specialized knowledge.

25. liiyiyuiyihitiwin Initiatives

Initiatives discussed included:

- Building archives;
- Academic programming;
- Parent engagement;
- Eeyou/Eenou at Work;
- Eeyou/Eenou in everyday life;
- Land-based and Cree culture support;
- Teacher training;
- Elder and knowledge-keeper participation;
- Cultural teaching and evaluation;
- Elder circles;
- Protocols for inviting Elders and knowledge keepers.

Schools are being encouraged to host “tea time” sessions with Elders and knowledge keepers to increase Elder presence and strengthen relationships with teachers.

The Board also emphasized incorporating **liiyiyuwaayitimuwin** into its work.

26. Cree Language and Culture Symposium

The **2024 Cree Language and Culture Symposium – “Let's Speak Cree”** was highlighted. The symposium provided opportunities to:

- Exchange ideas;
- Network;
- Share cultural knowledge;
- Promote Cree language;
- Strengthen community relationships;
- Support teachers.

Four workshops were held with participation from Elders and knowledge keepers.

Feedback from teachers was generally positive, with participants reporting that the teachings and information would assist their classroom practices.

27. Cree Language Resource Development

The Cree Programs Department continues to develop resources including:

- Posters;
- Flashcards;
- Books;
- Videos;
- Updated Cree lexicon;
- Materials for **eastcree.org**;
- Other resources requested by schools.

Work is also underway on the framework and guiding principles for the Cree language component.

A Cree language study and mentor program for Pre-K, Kindergarten and Grade 1 was discussed, originating from a 2019 Council mandate.

28. Student Support Services

Catherine Rutherford, Director of Complementary Services, presented on student support programming.

Areas included:

- Special education services;
- Socio-emotional wellness;
- Response to intervention;
- Modified pathways;
- Work-Oriented Training Pathway (WOTP);
- Literacy intervention.
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Modified and WOTP programming provides students with:

- Increased confidence;
- Practical skills;
- Attestation opportunities;
- Pre-work training;
- Semi-skilled training;
- Competency development.

29. Literacy Initiatives

The Board reported that additional literacy support became increasingly necessary beginning in 2022.

Three principal intervention approaches were identified, including the **Lexia Core5** program.

Approximately **31% of students** were reported to be working at or above grade level through the program.

Structured early-literacy programming is also being implemented in Grades 1 and 2.

30. Higher Learning

The Department of Higher Learning reported approximately **492 students** enrolled through Post-Secondary Student Services.

Reported enrolment included:

- 328 college students;
- 136 university students;
- 28 vocational students;
- 15 master's students;
- 8 doctoral students.

Language of instruction included approximately:

- 481 English;
- 11 French.
-

Approximately four students were identified as being in medical-related professional programs, including dentistry.

The **SAES 2025–2026** process included approximately:

- 310 applications/enrolments;
- 172 pending;
- 138 accepted.
- Additional initiatives included:
- Community vocational training;
- Higher learning programs;
- Iiyeskwiu Program – approximately 14 students;
- Cree Springboard/Nursing Program – approximately 25 students;
- Teacher training;
- Bachelor of Education;
- Bachelor of Social Work.

The Board also reported approximately **94% qualified teachers in Waskaganish**, subject to confirmation.

31. Discussion – Special Needs, Sports and Culture

Chief Raymond Shanush identified three local areas of concern:

1. Sports programming;
2. Culture and Elder involvement;
3. Special-needs support.
- 4.

He emphasized the need for stronger support for post-secondary students with dependents who have special needs or autism.

Discussion included:

- Jordan's Principle funding;
- Physiotherapy;
- Additional financial support for families;
- Early evaluation;
- Special-needs services;
- Land-based learning;
- Technology;
- Life-skills programming;
- Psychosocial support for parents.
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Catherine Rutherford explained the off-community student support process and the role of schools in assisting students with applications and determining available services.

The Cree School Board described collaboration with the CBHSSJB concerning special-needs services.

32. Student Early Intervention

Caroline Mark, Director General of the Cree School Board discussed assessment and early intervention.

The Board is working with consultants in Pre-K and Kindergarten to identify students who may require additional support.

Early identification was emphasized as an important factor in improving outcomes.

The Board also reported approximately **194 school visits** through socio-emotional wellness programming.

Speech and language services were discussed, including the lack of a speech-language Pathologist in Eastmain.

33. Community Concerns and Curriculum Implementation

Chief Irene Neeposh thanked the Cree School Board and raised concerns regarding:

- Implementation of curriculum in schools;
- Monitoring of implementation;
- User-friendly educational packages for parents;
- Monthly calendars communicating curriculum content;
- Parent engagement;
- Trauma incident response plans;
- Local emergency response plans;
- Psychosocial support;
- Financial literacy;
- Support for post-secondary students.

Dr. Sarah Pash, Chairperson of the Cree School Board explained the accountability framework of the Council of Commissioners.

Caroline Mark discussed curriculum monitoring, teacher assessments and classroom walkthroughs.

The Board is also developing financial literacy initiatives within higher learning.

34. 50th Anniversary of the JBNQA

Following lunch, the Assembly heard a presentation from **Dr. Philip Awashish** concerning the 50th anniversary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Dr. Awashish discussed:

- Colonization;
- The politics of exclusion;
- Cultural assimilation;
- The history of the Cree people;
- Displacement;
- The development of Cree governance;
- Eeyou lituun;
- Aboriginal rights;
- Opposition to the hydroelectric project;
- The lack of access roads to many communities in the early 1970s;
- The development of the Grand Council of the Crees.

He emphasized that **Eeyou lituun is at the heart of the JBNQA** and described the historic struggle to establish and defend Cree rights.

Grand Chief Murdoch thanked Dr. Awashish for his presentation.

Robert Kanatewat

Robert Kanatewat thanked Grand Chief Murdoch and Dr. Awashish and acknowledged Ted Moses.

He reflected on the negotiations surrounding the JBNQA and the challenges faced by Cree negotiators in having their position taken seriously. A photo opportunity followed.

35. CBHSSJB – Youth Protection Commission

Jeannie Pelletier, Chairperson of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, addressed the Assembly.

She congratulated the new leadership and introduced **Bella Petawabano** and **Lorraine Spencer**.

The presentation concerned the **Cree Youth Protection Commission** and the current situation affecting children and youth.

The presenters emphasized:

- Shared responsibility for children's well-being;

- The role of communities;
- Cultural safety;
- Youth criminal justice;
- Youth protection;
- Collaboration among Cree organizations.

Approximately **1,177 people**, including CBHSSJB employees, were interviewed.

The process generated approximately **70 recommendations** intended to improve youth protection.

Due to time constraints, the full presentation could not be completed.

Carol-Ann Tanoush supported moving the remainder of the presentation to August 28. Grand Chief Murdoch indicated that approximately one hour would be made available.

36. Youth Protection Recommendations Presented

Among the recommendations presented were:

Mental Health and Emergency Responders

Recommendation #1: Relevant entities should prioritize mental-health support for emergency responders, including Youth Protection, EEPF, ambulance services, public safety and fire departments.

Poverty and Social Inequity

Recommendation #2: The CBHSSJB Public Health Department should periodically report on poverty and social inequities in Eeyou Istchee and collaborate with the CNG Department of Social and Cultural Development.

Social Circumstances

Recommendation #3: The CBHSSJB DYP should inform Public Health regarding the social circumstances of families involved with its services.

Culture and Values

Recommendation #4: DYP should coordinate with caregivers and local community partners to ensure that children and youth in care can participate in rites of passage and special days.

Recommendation #5: Cree First Nations and the CNG should encourage discussion toward a coherent and unified vision of Eeyou values, with Miyupimaatisiun committees developing value-based community action plans.

Cree Language

Recommendation #6: Develop a Cree Language Plan for CBHSSJB in accordance with CNG legislation concerning the Cree language.

Recommendation #7: Provide CBHSSJB staff with training in the Cree Youth Protection glossary so Cree language can become commonplace in youth protection services.

Parenting

Recommendation #8: Develop general and specialized trauma-informed parenting programs based on Cree teachings and delivered in Cree.

Eeyou Charter for Children and Families

Recommendation #9: Support development of an Eeyou Charter for Children and Families based on Cree teachings, values and language, with the initial version developed in Cree.

Youth Protection Legislation

Recommendation #10: Rather than immediately negotiating a new youth protection law, address the situation through implementation of the recommendations of the relevant task force and continued work toward adapting the Youth Protection Act.

Recommendation #11: Continue discussions with Quebec to ensure that youth protection and youth criminal justice legislation can be applied in Eeyou Istchee in a manner grounded in Cree values and practices.

Youth Protection By-law

Recommendation #12: Establish monitoring and follow-up mechanisms concerning implementation of the CBHSSJB youth protection by-law and related psychosocial-service policies.

Recommendation #13: Adopt an implementation plan for the recommendations of the AUS task force and establish mechanisms for tracking progress.

Strategic Regional Plans

Recommendations #14–15: Establish senior management responsibility for tracking youth protection objectives and report publicly on progress.

Trauma-Informed Services

Recommendations #16–20: Integrate trauma-informed knowledge into policies, practices, preventive programming, employee training, employee assistance programs and supervisory practices.

Collaboration and Service Silos

Recommendations #21–23: Strengthen cross-cutting collaboration, including between Youth Protection, community services and relevant partners, and ensure families identified with potential issues receive appropriate offers of preventative or early-intervention services.

Protocols

Recommendations #56–57: Ensure existing collaboration protocols are fully implemented and monitored and that the relevant steering group continues developing and revising collaboration protocols.

Nishiiyuu

Recommendation #27: Ensure the Nishiiyuu group informs the development of services incorporating Cree values and teachings, including cultural plans, land-based programming and culturally informed parenting programs.

Bella Petawabano indicated that the remainder of the presentation would be completed on August 28.

Grand Chief Murdoch thanked Bella Petawabano and Jeannie Pelletier.

Closing Prayer: Abraham Jolly
The meeting adjourned at **5:10 p.m.**

DAY 3 – AUGUST 28, 2025

37. Opening

The opening prayer was delivered by **Billy Katapatuk**.
The meeting was called to order at **9:47 a.m.**

38. CBHSSJB – Youth Protection Commission (Continued)

Bella Petawabano and **Pauline Lameboy** continued the presentation concerning children and youth.

The presenters emphasized the importance of working together and improving communication and information-sharing while respecting confidentiality.

Additional recommendations discussed included **Recommendations #32, #52 and #53**.

The presenters also discussed the **RTS intake service in Chisasibi**, including **Recommendations #49, #50 and #51**.

39. Next Steps – Youth Protection Task Force

The Assembly was informed that:

- The Task Force was reviewing the report of the **Chaashtipishtihch** and would determine whether to endorse or modify recommendations;
- The Task Force would make final recommendations to the CBHSSJB Board of Directors;
- The Task Force includes representatives from multiple Eeyou organizations involved in the safety and well-being of children and youth;
- Task Force members would consult their respective organizations' leaders by **September 5, 2025**;
- The Task Force would meet in late September or early October to finalize recommendations;
- The final report was expected to be made public in fall 2025;
- Community-specific consultation reports would be shared with each Cree First Nation;
- The CBHSSJB would begin preparing an action plan in response to the recommendations.

40. Discussion – Youth Protection and Community Responsibility

John Petagumskum raised concerns concerning first responders, search and rescue and youth safety.

He shared experiences relating to an incident in Mistissini and emphasized the importance of being able to support youth in crisis.

Youth protection issues affecting Whapmagoostui and Inuit youth were also discussed.

Chief Raymond Shanoush

Chief Shanoush thanked leadership for the opportunity to speak and emphasized:

- Miyupimaatisiun;
- Special-needs services;
- Early evaluation;
- Collaboration between CBHSSJB and CSB;
- Social issues;
- Justice;
- Prevention.
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Carol-Ann Tanoush

Carol-Ann Tanoush acknowledged the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief and reflected on the concerns raised during the AGA.

She referred to the 2024 report and justice-related concerns, including incarceration.

She emphasized that Cree communities are experiencing a crisis involving youth and violence and asked the delegation to consider why youth are experiencing such difficulties.

She emphasized that the problem is not solely an organizational issue but a **community-wide issue** requiring collective action.

She referred to:

- EEPF;
- Emergency response;
- Emotional regulation;
- Complex and intergenerational trauma;
- Safe spaces;
- Cree identity and unity.

41. Susan Esau – Cultural and Community Responsibility

Susan Esau expressed support for the work of Bella Petawabano and the Commission.

She emphasized the importance of returning to the teachings of Elders and using Cree approaches rather than relying exclusively on non-Cree systems.

She discussed the historical impact of residential schools, language loss, cultural disruption and the separation of children from their families and communities.

She emphasized that parenting and responsibility for children extend beyond the age of 18 and that Cree communities have traditionally viewed child-rearing as a collective responsibility.

She also raised concerns regarding violence, confidentiality, family involvement and the need for families to understand what is happening when children are involved with services.

She questioned when the Cree Nation would fully exercise self-governance and reduce dependence on outside governments.

42. Joshua Iserhoff

Joshua Iserhoff asked Bella Petawabano and Pauline Lameboy what they needed from the delegates.

The response emphasized the need for:

- Support;
- Follow-through;
- Collective action;
- Ensuring the recommendations do not simply “collect dust.”

A resolution concerning the recommendations was discussed.

43. Pauline Lameboy

Pauline Lameboy thanked the delegates for their questions and emphasized the importance of acknowledging the reality of the challenges facing Cree communities.

She reflected on the history of the JBNQA and the creation of the CSB and CBHSSJB.

She questioned how Cree communities can take greater responsibility for parenting and social issues rather than relying exclusively on government systems.

She emphasized that the responsibility belongs to the Cree community as a whole. She called for:

- An action plan;
- Concrete implementation;
- Community initiatives;
- Unity;
- Collective responsibility.

She emphasized that the issue is not solely a CBHSSJB issue but a community issue.

She also spoke about the need to incorporate Cree family values within Cree institutions and address the workload and pressures placed on social services.

44. Chief Gaston Cooper

Chief Gaston Cooper thanked the leadership and reflected on the longstanding discussions concerning **Miyupimaatisiun**.

He expressed concern that youth are taking one another's lives and that leadership has been discussing these concerns for many years without sufficient action.

He proposed that an AGA or dedicated gathering focused on Miyupimaatisiun be held to identify solutions.

He emphasized that the issue has been discussed for approximately 10–15 years and that the time has come for action.

Chief Cooper also raised the issue of Cree people living away from home and the importance of creating ways for people to return to their communities.

45. MoCreebec Acknowledgement

The Assembly acknowledged the contributions of the late **Chief Allan Jolly** and other leaders associated with MoCreebec.

The statement emphasized the aspirations of MoCreebec people for:

- Self-determination;
- Cultural strength;
- A community to call home;
- Equality within Eeyou Istchee.

The contributions of past leaders, including **Randy Kapashesit**, **George Small Jr.**, and the late **Chief Allan Jolly**, were acknowledged.

46. Eastmain – JBNQA 50th Anniversary Monument

Chief Raymond Shanush announced plans for a monument commemorating the **50th anniversary of the JBNQA**.

The monument is expected to include photographs of the original signatories. The project is anticipated to take place in **September/October 2025**.

Tim Whiskeychan was identified as the person contracted to work on the monument.

47. Cree Trappers' Association Presentation

Allan House, Executive Director, and **Thomas Stevens** presented on behalf of the Cree Trappers' Association.

Allan House thanked Grand Chief Murdoch for the invitation and introduced the presentation. The presentation covered:

- The history and mandate of the CTA;
- The relationship between the CTA and the JBNQA;
- CTA governance;
- Regional summits;
- Wildlife management;
- Land stewardship;
- Trapper support programs.

48. 2023 Regional Trappers' Summits

The CTA presented highlights from two regional summits held in 2023.

Coastal Summit September 13–14, 2023

Approximately **300 participants** attended.

Inland Summit August 15–16, 2023

Approximately **325 participants** attended.

Topics included:

- Mentoring youth;
- Preserving Cree culture;
- Moose and Cree harvest management;
- Caribou management;
- Cree governance of land and wildlife;
- Cabin insurance;
- Role of tallymen;
- Eeyou Hunting Law;
- Cree language;
- Niskamoon programs;
- Land-based programs;
- Medical bush kits.

49. Wildlife and Land Stewardship

The CTA reported on initiatives involving:

- Eeyou Istchee land keepers;
 - Wildlife protection officers;
 - Sturgeon management;
 - Forestry and wildlife directives;
 - Economic security programming;
 - Protected areas;
 - Marine wildlife management;
 - Climate change;
 - National Marine Conservation Area feasibility work. Key themes from the summits included:
 - Sustainable harvesting;
 - Policy development;
 - Programs and initiatives;
 - Youth involvement;
 - Role of tallymen;
 - Environmental stewardship.

50. Eeyou Hunting Law

The CTA presented an action plan concerning implementation of the Eeyou Hunting Law.

Proposed steps included:

- Implementation of a dispute-resolution process;
- Education;
- Increased regional support from the CNG;
- Meetings with leadership;
- Meetings with the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief;
- Engagement with the Youth Grand Chief;
- Local administration involvement;
- Consultation with the former CTA President;
- Legal review;

- Preparation of plain-language materials;
- Q&A sheets and seminars;
- Submission to the CTA Board of Directors;
- Approval at the CTA AGA;
- Finalization of the Eeyou hunting governance document.

51. Trapline Management

The CTA explained that the trapline system was established historically to support beaver preservation.

Technology and changing territorial information have resulted in overlaps and disputes concerning trapline boundaries.

The CTA indicated that it would initiate processes to address these issues and emphasized the importance of community participation.

The role of tallymen was also discussed.

52. CTA Special Projects

Thomas Stevens presented updates on CTA programs, including:

- Cabin insurance;
- Firearms courses;
- Cree medical bush kits;
- Community freezer projects;
- Traditional food;
- Local CTA strategic planning;
- Wildlife harvest database;
- Fur sales;
- Blueberry harvesting;
- Cabin rebuilding.

Cabin Rebuild Project

For 2024–2025:

- Approximately 50 cabins;
- Approximately \$2 million in costs.
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The 2025–2026 project was reported as suspended due to lack of funding.

The CTA indicated that it would subsidize **50% of the cabin insurance program**.

53. Trappers' Training

Phase 2 of the training initiative aims to train approximately:

- 15 people per community;
- Approximately 135 Cree trappers overall.

Approximately **54 students** had been trained at the time of the presentation.

54. Cree Land Stewardship – Eeyou lituun Program

The CTA highlighted the Cree Land Stewardship/Eeyou lituun program.

The program:

- Provides a collegiate attestation;
- Celebrated 10 years;
- Is fully accredited and certified by the Quebec Ministry of Education;
- Has produced two cohorts;
- Has approximately 20 graduates from the first two cohorts;
- Has a third cohort underway.

55. Wildlife Research and Monitoring

Research projects discussed included:

- Caribou;
- Moose aerial surveys;
- Wildlife health;
- Sturgeon;
- Fisheries;
- Climate change.

Zone 17 Moose

The CTA reported:

- A decline of approximately 35% over 12 years;
- Low numbers of males and females;
- Low calf-to-female ratios;
- A harvest limit of 104.

An aerial survey of moose in Zone 17 was planned for **2026**. Other measures included:

- Moose conservation permits;
- Monitoring systems;
- Permission forms;
- Tags/permits;
- Continued closure of Zone 17 to non-Native harvesters;
- Poaching hotline.

56. Fisheries

The CTA discussed ongoing work to better understand fisheries in the region and ensure that traditional Cree practices are incorporated.

Research and initiatives referenced included activities from **2019–2025**, including expeditions and marine research.

The presentation also referred to the Eeyou Marine Region and a pre-feasibility study.

57. Wildlife Health and Climate Change

The CTA reported on:

- Wildlife disease monitoring;
- Avian influenza;
- Rabies;
- Climate change;
- Terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystem impacts;
- Development impacts.

The CTA noted concerns regarding declining:

- Moose populations;
- Woodland caribou;
- Migratory caribou;
- Sturgeon populations.

58. Questions – Cabin Rebuild Program

Don Saganash asked for an update on burned cabins and the request submitted by the CTA to the CNG.

He referred to information indicating that approximately **14 cabins had been completed** and that funding had been exhausted.

Grand Chief Murdoch indicated that the matter had been brought forward on **July 24, 2025**, and that further information regarding available funds remained to be confirmed.

Additional discussion involving John Petagumskum, Allan House and Carol-Ann Tanoush is contained in voice recordings and should be transcribed and incorporated into the final minutes.

Carol-Ann Tanoush also raised broader questions concerning:

- International relations;
- Future relations with Canada;
- The next 50 years;
- Relevant provisions of the JBNQA;
- Cultural exchanges;
- Collaboration among nations;
- Political relations.

Additional comments by Christopher Napash, John Matoush, a Nemaska Elder and Grand Chief Murdoch are contained in the recordings and require transcription.

59. Cree Economic Prioritization Agreement

Grand Chief Murdoch presented information on the **Cree Economic Prioritization Agreement** on behalf of Anthony MacLeod.

Key issues included:

- Priority for businesses that are at least 51% Cree-owned;
- Concerns regarding tax exemption arrangements;
- The Cree Nation Business Registry;

- Recognition of Eeyou businesses;
- Prioritization of businesses owned and operated by Eeyou people.

Discussion

Tyrone Blackned raised concerns regarding construction projects in Waskaganish and the use of outside companies.

He advocated for stronger participation by Cree businesses and workers, including requirements concerning Cree ownership of trucks and local employment.

He also raised the issue of outside companies bringing workers into communities for short periods and then sending them home.

Questions were raised concerning whether the Cree School Board and CBHSSJB could prioritize Cree contractors and businesses.

Grand Chief Murdoch referred to a previous business conference and the importance of giving priority to Cree companies.

60. Adoption of Resolutions AGA Resolution 2025-08 Adoption of Resolutions

Moved by: Reggie Neeposh

Seconded by: Greta Cheechoo

Status: Carried

The Assembly proceeded to the adoption of resolutions on August 28, 2025.

Resolution #1 – Increased Staffing and Support for CNYC

- **Moved by:** Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer
- **Seconded by:** Darnell Gilpin
- **Recommendation:** In collaboration with local youth councils.
- **Youth age range clarified by YGC:** 13–35

Status: Carried.

Resolution #2 – Cree Nation Youth Advocacy

- **Moved by:** Carol-Ann Tanoush
- **Seconded by:** Drayden Mistacheesick
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #3 – Cree Trappers' Association

- **Moved by:** Don Saganash
- **Seconded by:** Christopher Napash
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #4 – Follow-Up on AGA Resolutions

- **Moved by:** Steven Neeposh
- **Seconded by:** Don Saganash
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #5 – CBHSSJB Youth Protection Commission

- **Moved by:** Suzanne Esau
- **Seconded by:** Greta Cheechoo
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #6 – Prioritizing Miyupimaatisiun in Eeyou/Eenou Istchee

- **Moved by:** James Bobbish
- **Seconded by:** Greta Cheechoo
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #7 – Youth Transitional Housing for Returning Students – Infrastructure and Program Investment

- **Moved by:** Reggie Neeposh
- **Seconded by:** Rachel Kawapit
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #8 – Expansion of the CNG Private Home Program

- **Moved by:** Irene Neeposh
- **Seconded by:** Raymond Shanush
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #9 – Review Compliance Agreement with the Cree Nation

- **Moved by:** Raymond Shanoush
- **Seconded by:** Lance Cooper
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #10 – Economic Security Program

- **Moved by:** Don Saganash
- **Seconded by:** Darnell Gilpin
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #11 – Route du Nord & Billy Diamond Highway Improvements

- **Moved by:** Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch
- **Seconded by:** Reggie Neeposh
- **Status:** Carried.

Resolution #12 – 2026 Annual General Assembly

- **Moved by:** Irene Neeposh
- **Seconded by:** Greta Cheechoo
- **Status:** Carried.

All twelve resolutions were carried on August 28, 2025.

61. Closing

The Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief delivered closing remarks.

Deputy Chief Angel Mianscum provided final remarks.

The closing prayer was delivered by **Reggie Neeposh**.

The 51st Annual General Assembly was adjourned at **5:42 p.m. on August 28, 2025.**

CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS TABLE

Resolution	Subject	Moved by	Seconded by	Status
AGA 2025-2026-01	Appointment of Recording Secretaries	Gaston Cooper	Daniel Mark Stewart	Carried
AGA 2025-02	Resolution Committees	Don Saganash / committee appointment	Raymond Shanush	Carried
AGA 2025-03	Review of Agenda – Additional Items	Daniel Mark Stewart	Joshua Iserhoff	Carried
AGA 2025-04	2024 AGA Minutes – Review & Adoption	Christopher Napash	Reggie Neeposh	Carried
AGA 2025-05	2024–25 CNG Audited Financial Statements	Clarence Jolly	Raymond Shanoush	Carried
AGA 2025-06	2024–25 Board of Compensation Audited Financial Statements	Suzanne Esau	Norman Wapachee	Carried
AGA 2025-07	Appointment of Auditors	Daniel Mark Stewart	Chief Clarence Jolly	Carried
AGA 2025-08	Adoption of Resolutions	Reggie Neeposh	Greta Cheechoo	Carried
#1	Increased Staffing & Support for CNYC	Linden Spencer	Darnell Gilpin	Carried
#2	Cree Nation Youth Advocacy	Carol-Ann Tanoush	Drayden Mistacheesick	Carried
#3	Cree Trappers' Association	Don Saganash	Christopher Napash	Carried
#4	Follow-Up on AGA Resolutions	Steven Neeposh	Don Saganash	Carried

Resolution	Subject	Moved by	Seconded by	Status
#5	CBHSSJB Youth Protection Commission	Suzanne Esau	Greta Cheechoo	Carried
#6	Prioritizing Miyupimaatisiun	James Bobbish	Greta Cheechoo	Carried
#7	Youth Transitional Housing	Reggie Neeposh	Rachel Kawapit	Carried
#8	CNG Private Home Program	Irene Neeposh	Raymond Shanush	Carried
#9	Compliance Agreement with the Cree Nation	Raymond Shanush	Lance Cooper	Carried
#10	Economic Security Program	Don Saganash	Darnell Gilpin	Carried
#11	Route du Nord & Billy Diamond Highway Improvements	Paul John Murdoch	Reggie Neeposh	Carried
#12	2026 Annual General Assembly	Irene Neeposh	Greta Cheechoo	Carried