



## **Frank A. Meness, *M.A., J.D.***

Frank was called to the Bar in Ontario in September 2013. He practices in Ontario and regularly obtains approval from the Quebec Bar to appear in court on specific matters in that province. He practices in the areas of Indigenous Law, Wills, Estates and Trust Law, Taxation and Corporate Law, Elder Law and recently, Mediation.

He has an undergraduate degree with a concentration in Political Science (B.Sci.Soc.) from Ottawa University (1993) and a Master of Arts Degree (M.A.) from Carleton University (2006). Frank completed his Juris Doctor degree (J.D.) at Ottawa University (2012).

In 2019, he opened Penosway Kichi Atàsowogamig, a self-storage business in Kitigan Zibi. Being an entrepreneur provides a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities that face us here in KZA.

During his spare time, Frank pursues traditional activities including hunting, trapping, fishing, and attending cultural events. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Debbie Assiniwe, and their three children (Dolcy, D'Arcy and Maxie). Frank is an active member of his First Nation community.

### **KZA Trust**

I would like to encourage all KZA members to be active participants in the discussion of opportunities for the use of the Annual Income from our KZA Trust.

The KZA Trust should be used to improve all aspects of the KZA (i.e., economic, social, political, legal, cultural etc.). The annual income is meant for spending not saving.

I also believe that off reserve members should be able to benefit from the KZA Trust, from wherever they live, beyond the one-time Per Capita Distribution (i.e., housing/repair loans, business loan, social and cultural initiatives etc.).

### **Indigenous Rights and Title**

This is a big one. I believe that addressing our title and rights is critical to our advancement. We receive approximately fifty consultation letters a month from all different government ministries, departments and agencies. All seeking our input. We need to actively engage provide our perspective. Litigation is always an option.

## **Infrastructure**

There is room for improvement (i.e., fixing roads, improved street lighting, provide access to all our lakes, additional camping sites, new roads). All these areas need attention. We should also regularize third party uses of our reserve/territory (permits, additions to reserve (ATR) initiatives need to be realized).

## **Housing**

Remains and continues to remain a top priority. There are many in need and the approach maintained thus far does not go far enough. Multi-unit dwellings may be an option. Even a small apartment building? All demographics are equally in need, so I support housing initiatives that include spots for elders, singles, couples, and everything in between.

## **Human Resources**

KZA sorely needs employees at all levels and in all sectors. Existing positions and staff need to have access to yearly training (paid) to improve their skills and to learn new ones as well. Salaries need to be commensurate with duties and responsibilities. I am a firm believer in “**A fair day's wage for a fair day's work.**” Salary reviews should not take years.

KZA would benefit from a labour force strategy. What do we need? When do we need it? How do we get it? (i.e., tradespersons, professionals, educators, mechanics, contractors etc.). All these positions are relevant and required for KZA to succeed.

## **Language, Culture and Education**

Another big one. Emphasize anishinabemowin in everyday situations. Learning means making mistakes but not repeating them. We are more than hunters, gatherers. Occupying our territory requires “a paradigm shift” from living and working “on reserve” to living and working in our territory (remote work, living away from main community but still close). Encourage our young ones to venture in the world learn skills and bring them back so KZA can benefit. Engage our Elders to provide continuity. They still have lots to contribute 😊.

## **Membership**

Our membership is growing. Canada adds people to our band every month. We should encourage our new members to learn about KZA and our values so that they can be proud to be an Anishinabe. It is more than just a card.

I could go on, but if what I have presented appeals to you and is something you can support; then vote for me and I will do my best to work with council to move the yardsticks as we all work together for the benefit of all. Meegwetch.

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