



# First Nations Tax Administrators Association

c/o Westbank First Nation 101-515 Highway 97 South, Kelowna BC, V1Z 3J2



OCTOBER 2008

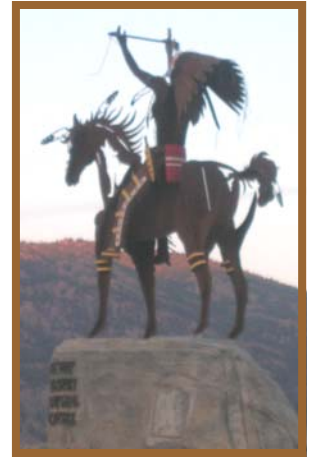
NEWSLETTER - ANNUAL REPORT

VOL. 1 NO.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Do you hear it? The sound of a legitimate profession being born. You take the eight courses in the Certificate in First Nation Tax Administration Program and add it to your years of experience and on the job training and you become a highly trained professional with the credentials to prove it. It's been a long time coming and has been a priority of mine and the Association for the past five years. I have always been an advocate for professional development. Well it is here and I am excited. I have enrolled in the program and have taken the first course "Introduction to First Nation Taxation." I will be taking the next two courses being offered this November "Budget & Tax Rate Setting" and "Assessment & Assessment Appeals." It will not be a hard sell to convince your Chief and Council to approve this training which will support you in getting that next raise.

The recently held 15<sup>th</sup> Annual FNTAA National Forum on Property Taxation was a resounding success. With the participation of new taxing First Nations Administrators, FNTC; BC Assessment, Tulo, Fiscal Realities and with Osoyoos Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band Cultural Centre and Spirit Ridge as our hosts, this conference had the right blend of innovative tax information, cultural sharing, relaxing fun tours and entertaining recreational activities.



## Community Profile Series: Chemainus First Nation

Located in central Vancouver Island, Chemainus First Nation is comprised of 4 reserves, with 1200 hectares of primarily forested land. Most of the 600 on-reserve band members reside on Chemainus #13, situated along the Ladysmith Harbour among beautiful Cedar and Arbutus trees. The Administrative offices and Band-owned enterprises, Husky and A&W, are located in a park-like setting along the Trans Canada highway, 5 km north of Ladysmith and 15 km south of Nanaimo.

Chemainus First Nation began to exercise property tax jurisdiction in 2005. Currently they have two utility folios and two light industry folios related to logging activities. Many economic development opportunities exist for Chemainus First Nation as they consider a balance between development and maintaining the quality of life their members enjoy in an idyllic setting.

Edi Brett has been their Finance Manager and Tax Administrator for one year. Edi is currently enrolled in the Certificate in First Nation Tax Administration Program through the Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics and credits this program as well the FNTAA for helping to prepare her and Chemainus First Nation for their impending economic growth. She places great value on the support of other Tax Administrators through the FNTAA.

Edi recognizes the importance of the property tax regime not only as a source of revenue for Chemainus First Nation's, but also as a mechanism to facilitate economic development by contributing to the improvement and expansion of quality infrastructure.

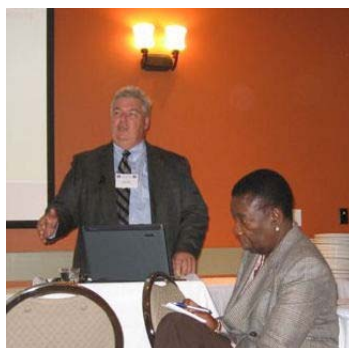


# FIRST NATIONS TAX ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

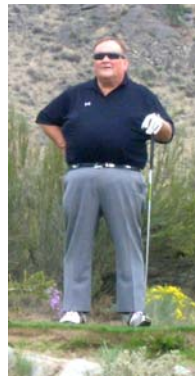
## The 15th Annual National Forum

September 24-26, 2008 Spirit Ridge, Osoyoos BC

Presentation Materials have been posted on the Resource Page of our Website: [fntaa.ca](http://fntaa.ca)







# Annual General Meeting Report

The First Nations Tax Administrators Annual General Meeting was held Friday September 26, 2008 in Osoyoos BC

## In Attendance:

### Board of Directors:

President Ernest Jack, Westbank First Nation  
Vice President Freda Jules, Tk'emlúps Indian Band  
Treasurer Jim Prodger, Millbrook First Nation  
Secretary Christina Clarke, Songhees Nation  
Terry Nicholas, Akisq'nuk First Nation  
Dana Henderson, Campbell River Indian Band  
Calvin George, Tsleil-Waututh Nation

Glenda Paul, Penticton Indian Band  
Wanda Burns, Penticton Indian Band  
Katherine Stevens, Shuswap Indian Band  
Lydia Archie, Skowkale First Nation  
Mia Harry, Sliammon First Nation  
Kay Shottanana, St. Mary's Indian Band  
Lynn Gottfriedson, Tk'emlúps Indian Band  
Cindy Currie, Tobacco Plains Indian Band  
Denise Birdstone, Tobacco Plains Indian Band  
Joanne Williams, Tsawwassen First Nation  
Penny Baird, Tsawwassen First Nation  
Sylvia Baker, Westbank First Nation

### Members:

Edi Brett, Chemainus First Nation  
Larry George, Cowichan Tribes  
Donald Kraus Coldwater Indian Band  
Elaine Kenny, Kwantlen First Nation  
Melinda Nunez-Shular, Osoyoos Indian Band Dev. Corp.  
Steven Bryson, Osoyoos Indian Band

### Guests:

Kathryn Deo, Cedar Law  
Jeanie Lanine, Cedar Law

## President's Report - Ernest Jack

Introduction of Board Members: Freda Jules Vice President, Jim Prodger Treasurer, Terry Nicholas, Calvin George, Dana Henderson and Christina Clarke Secretary.

Some of things we have accomplished this year include:

- The Restoration of our Society which lapsed under the legal council we had previously.
- The website was redone and it will be updated with conference information.
- The quarterly newsletters are meant to keep you informed of what is going on in our field.  
If you want to submit something, or want to know about something you think should be published, please let us know.
- The Salary Survey was sent in several ways to Tax Administrators across Canada.
- We had input into the Software Development.
- We had input into the Development of the Curriculum for the Tulo Certification in Tax Administration Program.



As for the future of the Tax Administrators Association, where are we going? We will be involved with the FSMA as it provides further tools for us. We are building a Resource Library - and we invite your submissions. Your participation in this Association will help grow the Association. Membership fees will bring the financial resources to do the things we need to do. We are your advocates to bring forward issues which challenge Administrators. We are trying to arm you with the best tools to do your job the best you can.

## Treasurer's Report - Jim Prodger

The Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2007 are in your binder. We were getting audited financial statements up until now which was costing us a lot of money. We discovered that we can have a review engagement instead. This reduced the fee from about 900 to about 375. You will note the Review Engagement Report at the beginning of the statements.

The Statement of Financial Position shows Assets in the amount of 63,716 and Liabilities in the amount of 375.

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures shows 23,900 in conference fees and donations. Last year those amounts were combined. Our expenses total 42,847 with the largest expense items being the AGM at 20,458 and 15,881 in wages and office costs.

*Motion by Jim Prodger to accept the financial statements. Seconded by Elaine Kenny  
All in Favour: 25 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 0 Motion Carried*



## Election of 2008/2009 Board of Directors

Ernest Jack: Call for interested members. [No one stepped forward.] Is there a motion to re-elect?

*Motion by Katherine Stevens to re-elect the current board: President Ernest Jack, Vice President Freda Jules, Treasurer Jim Prodger, Secretary Christina Clarke, Members At Large: Terry Nicholas, Dana Henderson and Calvin George.*

*Seconded by Sylvia Baker. All in Favour: 25 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 0 Motion Carried*

Ernest Jack: Thank you very much for your confidence in us.

### Location for Next Year's Annual National Forum

Ernest Jack: Where would you like to hold the conference next year? Here? [Nearly everyone raised their hand.] Anywhere else?

Dana Henderson: I propose Campbell River, BC

Ernest Jack: Some of the other First Nations venues would include Quaaout Lodge, St Eugene's Mission and also Westbank.

Terry Nicholas: Last year the executive reviewed the options.

Ernest Jack: Yes, we did a cost comparison and made a selection. We will review the options and let you know.



## FNTAA Bylaw Amendment

The FNTAA Board of Directors proposed an amendment to our Society Bylaws to implement membership dues in order to maintain financial stability and meet the mandate of the Association.

**The amendment is as follows:**

**Part 2 Section 6 The following wording is deleted:**

6. The amount of first annual membership dues must be determined by the directors and after that the annual membership dues must be determined at the annual general of the society.

**The following wording is added:**

6. (1) The Annual Membership Dues are:
  - (a) Regular Membership \$250.00,
  - (b) Associate Membership \$250.00,
  - (c) Affiliate Membership \$500.00, and
  - (d) Life Membership Dues are Waived
- (2) Membership dues may be waived at the discretion of the Board of Directors for First Nations who demonstrate financial need.

*Motion by Terry Nicholas to adopt the proposed amendment to the bylaws. Seconded by Jim Prodger. All in Favour: 25 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 0 Motion Carried*

**Please complete the enclosed Membership Application Form**

## Salary Survey Results as of October, 2008

The purpose of the Salary Survey is to help us form a baseline of the current salary range for First Nations Tax Administrators. We will compare this with Salary Ranges for Tax Administrators in the public sector. We will use this information to develop a Salary Range which reflects the unique skill set and professional expertise of First Nations Tax Administrators. We will seek to inform Chief and Council and Administrators Nationwide of the true value of their Tax Administration staff.

We distributed the questionnaire with the April 2008 Newsletter, by email and also with the conference materials in September. We have received 20 Results so far. This low number of responses is not statistically representative. However, the responses provided some interesting results.

**Reported Assessed Values:** Ranged from 23,137 to 569,756,200 million.

**Tax Department Composition:** We were not surprised by the diversity of our tax regimes. Of the 20 respondents, 5 have stand alone Tax Departments, 5 are combined with Lands Management, 5 are combined with Finance, 1 is combined with Lands and Finance, 1 is combined with Lands and Treaty, 1 is combined with Band Administration, 1 is combined with Indian Registry and Estates and 1 is combined with Reception.

**Staffing:** 20 report being staffed by a Tax Administrator or Surveyor, 4 also have a Tax Clerk (1 has 2 Tax Clerks.) A total of 25 positions were reported.

**Years of Experience:** Tax Administration Employees reported from 1 year to 20 years of experience. The average is 11.5 yrs. The 25 employees have a combined total of 205 years of experience. Respondents are likely including their experience in finance and lands management.

**Education Level:** Responses range from high school (or equivalency) to University Degrees and Accounting Designations. 8 reported high school, 14 post secondary education and 3 with accounting designations. Nearly everyone indicated workshops as part of their education.

**Part Time or Full Time:** This is complicated by the combination of jobs. Some people work full time, but only part of that time on taxation. 8 indicated part time employment status.

**Other Functions:** Tax Administrators do a lot of other things including Band Administration, Finance Management, Lands Management, Leasing, GST & Tobacco Tax, Economic Development, Reception, Estates & Trusts and Indian Registry.

**Annual Salary Ranges:** The salary range for Tax Administrators is very broad, from 20,000 to 96,000. Salary is correlated to assessed values as well as to the combination of functions performed by the Tax Administrator. Tax Administrators in stand alone departments have annual salaries ranging from 39,000 to 60,000. Tax Administrators who are also Lands Managers earn between 16,000 and 36,000. Tax Administrators who serve as Finance Managers earn the highest salaries ranging from 55,000 to 96,000. For Tax Clerks, the sample is too small to be representative, however the reported range is 15,000 to 39,000.

### Conclusions:

As First Nations Tax Administrators we are keenly aware of the extensive skill set required to fulfill our responsibilities. This depth of this skill set is evidenced by the variety of other key functions Tax Administrators are providing. The survey responses suggest that Tax Administrators are not only highly skilled professionals, but they may be overworked and underpaid. While many respondents reported post secondary education, we now have the option of formal Certification in First Nation Tax Administration. Completion of this training should further demonstrate our professional status.

### Next Steps:

We need more surveys to make the sample truly representative. Survey Forms are posted on the Resource Page of our website, [fntaa.ca](http://fntaa.ca). Your responses are confidential. We will compare our results with the AFOA Salary Survey and research comparable salary scales in the Public Sector. This information will be used to prepare a position paper from the FNTAA to state that Tax Administration is a profession and the pay scale should reflect the highly skilled nature of the work.



*Providing skills to realize economic opportunities*

**tulo.ca**  
250.828.9857  
250.828.9881  
info@tulo.ca

REBUILDING THE FIRST NATION MARKET ECONOMY  
First Nations have a long history of trading to create sustainable economies. The *Certificate in First Nation Tax Administration* is intended to help First Nations implement the new powers and develop the skill set for First Nation tax administration using the *First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act*.



### Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics

#### The Certificate in First Nation Tax Administration

First Nations have not been able to participate in the economy because the legal and administrative framework to facilitate investment on First Nation land is largely missing. During the last 20 years, First Nations have begun to legislate their way back into the Canadian economy. This new movement started in 1988 with the first change to the *Indian Act* ever led by a First Nation – the Kamloops Amendment. This allowed First Nations to collect property tax on their lands. Subsequently, the *First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act* (FSMA) was passed in 2005. It provides a number of new powers for First Nations including debenture borrowing, development cost charges, taxation of businesses and improved relations with taxpayers to name a few. This certificate is intended to help First Nations implement these new powers and develop the skill set for First Nation tax administration using the FSMA.

#### CFNTA CLASSES

##### INTRODUCTION TO FIRST NATION TAXATION

An introduction to First Nation taxation under the authority of the FSMA. It will focus on the workings of the FSMA.

##### ASSESSMENT & ASSESSMENT APPEALS

A study of property markets and assessments and assessment regulations and requirements under the FSMA.

##### BUDGET & TAX RATE SETTING

An overview of establishing rates through a local services budget.

##### ADMINISTRATION: TAX NOTICES, COLLECTING & ENFORCEMENT

A focus on administration including taxpayer notification, local revenue billing, collecting and enforcement.

##### COMMUNICATION & TAXPAYER RELATIONS

An introduction to establishing a mutually beneficial working relationship between First Nation tax authorities and taxpayers.

##### SERVICE AGREEMENTS AND JOINT CONTRACTS

An examination of developing service and joint agreements with local governments and/or private partners.

##### DEVELOPMENT COST CHARGES

Looking at how to developing a fair and transparent Development Cost Charges system under the authority of the FSMA.

##### CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEBENTURE FINANCING

Learning how to use long term debenture financing as a tool to provide local infrastructure under the FSMA.

## 2008/09 FNTAA Board of Directors

**Ernest Jack**  
President  
Westbank First Nation  
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**Freda Jules**  
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(250) 828-9784

**Jim Prodger**  
Treasurer  
Millbrook First Nation  
panda1@eastlink.ca  
(902) 897-9199 ext 109

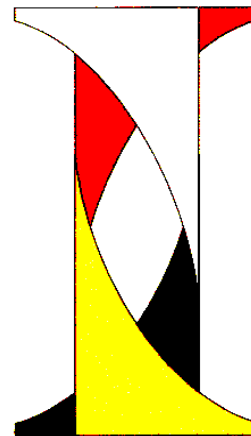
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**Calvin George**  
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**Terry Nicholas**  
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**Dana Henderson**  
Campbell River Indian Band  
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(250) 286-6949

**We invite you  
to contact us**



**The First Nations Financial Management Board** has developed Financial Administration Law Standards, a Sample Law, and Financial Management System Standards for First Nations who are, or plan to begin, collecting property tax revenues under the *Fiscal and Statistical Management Act* and are seeking opportunities to borrow against these cash-

flows for the purpose of improving on-reserve infrastructure and economic development opportunities.

For more information, copies of these and other documents, a presentation in your community and help developing capacity to achieve your economic development goals, please contact the FNFMB by phone at 1-877-925-6665 or by email at [mail@fnfmb.com](mailto:mail@fnfmb.com). Our website is [www.fnfmb.com](http://www.fnfmb.com).

**What would you like to see**  
in future editions of the FNTAA newsletter?  
Please send your ideas, articles, comments and  
photos to [taxation1@songheesnation.com](mailto:taxation1@songheesnation.com)



# First Nations Tax Administrators Association



## Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Please specify the form of membership applied for

\_\_\_\_\_ **Regular Membership** \$250.00  
 Employees of any First Nation or Indian Band who are interested in or engaged in the development, implementation, or administration of a programme or department of taxation or revenue generation on behalf of the First Nation or Indian Band.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Associate Membership** \$250.00  
 Members who have left First Nations or Indian Band employment or service through retirement or resignation, and to employees of a First Nation or Indian Band not otherwise eligible for regular membership.  
 A person granted an associate membership is not entitled to vote at general meetings or to be a director.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Affiliate Membership** \$500.00  
 Persons having an interest in First Nations or Indian Band taxation and revenue generation issues.  
 Each application for affiliate membership is subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.  
 A person granted an affiliate membership is not entitled to vote at general meetings or to be a director.

Please make cheques payable to First Nations Tax Administrators Association  
 Please mail to FNTAA c/o 1500D Admirals Road, Victoria BC V9A 2R1

Amount Received \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Received By \_\_\_\_\_ Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_