



SEVEN KEY ISSUES AND QUESTIONS WERE THE FOCUS OF DISCUSSIONS DURING THE THINK TANK PROCEEDING. THE FOLLOWING REPORT NOTES:

1. EACH OF THE SEVEN KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED
2. MAJOR QUESTIONS GUIDING THE DISCUSSIONS
3. MAJOR COMMENTS IDEAS FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

1. KEY ISSUES

- I. GOVERNANCE
- II. LEADERSHIP

MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What must happen for First Nation's communities to achieve self-Governance?
- What are some "best practises" to deal with the host of DIA rules, hoops, onerous processes, and regulations?
- What concrete steps can be taken to deal with the onerous reporting and bureaucracy?
- What can outside agencies (Federal, Provincial and Funding agencies) do to help us with the issues of red tape and onerous bureaucracy?
- What steps can be taken to improve leadership skills and abilities within our communities?

MAJOR COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- Projects that communities take on alone are difficult to move forward. In the Nass Valley we have signed an MOU so that the respective First Nation's communities will work together cooperatively and help each other with economic development.
- In regards to Governance, we need to look at who is the governing body and do they have "buy-in" from the community as a whole. We need to look at the service providers and who are they are accountable to.
- Some successful models are Nuu-chah-nulth and Oysoyoos. Look at what was the behind their success.
- Most planning documents are not always that useful as they are not grounded in community needs and vision but are designed to meet the requirements of outside interests.
- Community "Buy-in" is paramount. Communication is necessary to make this happen.
- Government doesn't want projects "set in stone" but are willing to look at pilot projects.
- Political will of people (membership and band councils) needs to be there and it is not there now. Expectations are not high enough for self-governance. People need to become more aware of the elements of self-government. Need to believe in self government to make it work
- Best practises of dealing with INAC are difficult and have evolved over time. It use to be that we just dealt with the Indian agent, then a period of lobbying seemed to work; however

INAC started building buffer zones so we could not go directly to them. Now partnerships are the name of the game. INAC is personality driven. If they like you they help, if not some other community will gain favour. Now finesse is needed and the necessity to make their job as easy as you can. Need to try new things to get something to work.

- We do not have standards for our civil service or don't seem to have a way to make standards work. The FN Financial Officers Association has put together a resource we need to look at.
- We need lots of input to help us move to good governance. The new governance institute that is emerging holds some promise.
- Other agencies may be able to help us with the red tape but you can't make other organizations work with us.
- Treaty does not have to give up anything. Accommodation of interests is possible.
- There aren't any rules for leadership in communities, no guidance on reserve i.e. Municipalities have rules to follow. Work is so limiting that good leaders get frustrated and give up. Typically they get very little support from their membership; someone is always mad at you. They have no real control, can't meet expectations. Everyone but the leaders themselves make policy for their operations. You must follow them or your money is cut off. We need dedicated people to put up with the headaches
- To be successful you need:
 - Stable government
 - Government that can or is helped to identify a vision
 - Set of plans to reach that vision
 - Not afraid to ask for help if you do not have that expertise
- The two main ingredients for success are:
 - Dynamic leadership who does what it takes to get things done
 - Some resources
- Location and leadership is key. Community buy-in is also a crucial component
- Pilot projects are being done with software to reduce work time and this assists with better governance
- Need arms length distance between the policy body and economic development body. Need some checks and balances to make this work
- Leadership and generating political will is important.
- The Nuu-chah-nulth worked a system to separate the band administration from the economic development arm through a protocol agreement. The Shellfish Development Corporation has only five directors that were appointed because of their experience and expertise in this business.
- Leadership has a key role in developing the environment conducive to business
- A clear consistent vision, a buy-in from the people and a cultural match of the leadership with the people are keys to success.
- Other governments have to create room for First Nations government to operate. We need to keep lobbying government to make sure this happens.
- We need to generate our own finances so we can move out from under the control of those who hold the purse strings
- Need to integrate the traditional governance of the territories with leadership that governs the communities. It is extremely difficult to reconcile these two leadership and governance structures.

- In Steven Cornell model there are many steps between being reactive to that of being proactive.
- Need to define roles and responsibilities for i) communities and ii) territories. Communities will always want to select their leadership.
- Need peace, reconciliation and friendship treaty amongst ourselves. We need to do this internally before it happens externally.
- Tribal councils can work, however tremendous pressure is put on their operations. They are often perceived as a threat.
- A key economic base that is separate from government interference is needed.
- Give good young leaders a chance. They may be diamonds in the rough in our communities. We need strong leaders to open up possibilities
- For good governance the less regulations the better. Rules and regulations have got out of hand.
- Need freedom and independence
- Continuity in the governance of communities and leadership is needed to make projects work from the beginning to the end.
- Tangible benefits from the range of agreements must flow to the membership. Communities are too isolated from the decisions and issues that are being made. They need to be involved in how the benefits are distributed.
- Set high standards for sustainability.
- The province has no mechanism to deal with us. There are no rules or structures. They make it up as they go along and it is often hard to get them to the table.
- A broad based organization like NWTT can take on a very proactive role in development issues.

2. KEY ISSUES

I. PLANNING

II. EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE

III. EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS ADVISORY & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What prevents us from developing our vision, goals and a comprehensive strategy of on-going activities, in contrast to individual economic development projects or other isolated attempts at community betterment?
- What steps must we take to develop our vision, goals and a comprehensive strategy of on-going activities?
- What steps need to be taken to develop and effective professional public service to support community economic planning?
- What steps need to be taken to develop effective professional business advisory and development services?

MAJOR COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- We are so dependant upon funding we are unable to plan. We always limit ourselves. We never say, "This is what we want" and work towards that, it's more "This is what we can

get”. This needs to change. Once we have a “vision” other goals will eventually come to fruition. It is the first step in planning anything tangible.

- We need effective training and an accountability system that works
- We need people to have a professional background no matter where they come from. First Nations are reluctant to pay higher salaries but the reality is that you get what you pay for. If you don't pay a good salary you are not going to attract qualified people.
- Before movement in these areas happens, issues surrounding governance needs to be worked out.
- Government takes a fragmented approach to economic development. This is problematic. They fund and create organizations like SNDS, 16/37 etc. etc. This needs to be centralized or at least streamlined and connected so that it isn't so disjointed.
- There is tension between the traditional and contemporary system.
- Volunteer groups in communities are very valuable. These contribute to a strong and healthy community. Need to recognize these and commend them for their efforts. They contribute to community wealth in a big way.
- Free enterprise rather than central committees
- Band owned business results in very wealthy bands with a poor surrounding community. In order for this to change community members need to create wealth rather than the band.

3. KEY ISSUES:

I. ACCESS TO OUR RESOURCES

MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What additional steps must First Nations take to ensure that their communities have control over their resources?
- What is meant by compensation and accommodation and what processes are in place so others address these requirements?
- How can we ensure our rights are exercised and appropriate consultation and accommodation occurs?
- Are there any “best practises” or “models” available to give us direction in this area?

MAJOR COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- When looking at the development of resources it should be about more than simple job creation but more about developing community wealth.
- An additional step that must be taken is to make communities beneficiaries to the process. If this is done more communities will buy into the interim processes. Without some tangible benefit to the communities involved then they will always feel marginalized.
- The Draft Oil and Gas Ayookw by the Gitksan Nation is a good example of “best practice”. It is a well thought out plan and vision for land use and resource development.
- If we are consistent in our approach to development we will be very successful. This is key.
- Seeing Nations like Kitselas and Kitsumkalum signing forestry deals and the presence of small use camps being visible in our territories are all stepping-stones to taking charge. Good movement towards our goal.

- We need control over access to resources, as well as control over the money that has come from these resources. Communities need to have some say in this.
- There is no provincial process right now to deal with resources. There is no way of telling us how to do things. There are no rules right now.
- Develop resource councils to force government to come to the table and speak with us ie: Energy Council to talk about Oil and Gas initiatives in our traditional territory
- How can our young people benefit from resource development? They can benefit from the infrastructure needed to make this resource development possible and from the infrastructure needed to support these industries.

4. KEY ISSUES:

I. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- Why doesn't the array of economic development and finance programs work for us?
- What are our biggest needs or priorities and what would the programs or services look like that would best meet these needs?
- What successful models for funding support are there?
- What do we propose to provide access to both debt and equity capital?

MAJOR COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- Funding levels don't allow First Nations to be successful; they will never meet the need.
- There needs to be an additional 10% on top of original budget in order for training to occur.
- Salary levels need to be high in order to attract qualified people.
- Longer term funding is needed to develop projects and vision. This has been done in some communities. The Gitksan has had long-term agreements with DIAND in the past. It met its demise and we should learn from this and develop guiding principals to make future long term funding initiatives successful.
- Develop a business advisory council. Can use this council to learn from and for guidance in business development. Learn from successful people in the community.
- There are examples out there where investors can invest in small business and get a tax right off. This provides an incentive for outside business to partner with small business. Is there something similar that can be created for aboriginal business ventures?
- Hard work is required to build up equity for business ventures. Do not rely on government money or outside funding for equity. Keep on re-investing in your business; this is a way to build equity.
- Why are other groups successful? Because they are a collective with a central organization that gathers and administers their money.
- Create a lending institution that recognizes equity on reserve.
- First Nations programs are not going to work because they are always considered separate; it is the design of the bureaucracy. Need to convince province to treat First Nations issues as provincial issues not "Indian" issues. We can eventually go after the Feds to do the same.

5. KEY ISSUE

- I. EDUCATION
- II. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What positive steps can we take to ensure improved success in our 1) Public education? 2) Employment training? 3) Entrepreneurship development?

MAJOR COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- Need to specifically target the long term and step up career counselling.
- Ensure that we take advantage of students by finding summer employment in order to build skills. The same goes for postgraduate work, develop programs and jobs so that when people graduate there are options for them.
- In the short term youth should be pulled together and asked what they think. TRICORP has a youth conference yearly to do this very thing.
- Entrepreneurial spirit is something that needs to be pulled out and encouraged. Often you can teach the basics of management but a successful entrepreneur is often a person who has skills that cannot be taught it is just natural to them.
- Often there is too much emphasis on entrepreneurship. 100% of the people are not going to be entrepreneurs.
- Short cuts in skill development are often taken. People may take a crash course and are then expected to provide great things. They don't have the capacity to do this. A little knowledge is dangerous; need to take the time and get a proper education. Need to give youth a menu of choices of the skill sets they will need post –treaty and then guide them to success.
- Rather than concentrating on how people see us we should look at how we see ourselves.
- A great deal of the problem lies in family members not wanting the youth to leave the communities. The youth are then afraid to step out and experience other things. We need to encourage them to be unafraid to leave the territory to gain a skill set. Encourage youth to travel; to experience the outside world, this is essential to their development. They will eventually find the time when they are needed again at home.
- Promote our own successes. Show youth reasons why these people are successful and guide them to follow these examples.
- Must identify what the community needs are and encourage youth in that direction rather than having an overload of skilled people in one area.

6. KEY ISSUES:

I. SEPARATION

II. RECOGNITION OF FIRST NATIONS AS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What effective steps can we take to build trust with our surrounding communities and be involved in meaningful economic development efforts in the region and in our surrounding Non- First Nation's communities?
- What activities might help build increased trust and cooperation?
- What structures or organizations might we belong to get involved in meaningful economic development efforts in the region and in our surrounding communities?
- What structures or organizations might we develop to ensure we have meaningful involvement in economic development efforts in the region and in our surrounding communities?

MAJOR COMMENTS AND IDEAS:

- The key is how we view ourselves rather than how people view us from the outside.
- Deal with separation and trust in terms of barriers like the Indian Act. The way the Indian Act treats commercial activities is very unfair. It creates a high degree of risk in doing business.
- Example of doing business and seeing First Nations as a Community Partner can be seen with the Prince Rupert Economic Development Commission. This organization is taking steps to make a triangle partnership agreement with the City of Price Rupert, the town of Port Edward and the Tsimshian Nation. All three partners will work together on interests and initiatives surrounding Economic Development in their region. This is a model that could work elsewhere and has the potential for great things.
- We can build trust by sharing information and making the public aware of what is going on in our communities. We can show the public what we are ready to do and talk about our successes i.e.: Tempo Gas Station at Kitsumkalum.
- We can build trust and recognition through joint planning sessions, talk about a vision for the future with other organizations.
- We can use the media as a way to promote and share with the public i.e.: Websites.
- If you create healthy partnerships then people start to see you as a citizen of the community. Sometimes it will be up to us to extend the olive branch to others in order to get talking.

7. KEY ISSUES:

I. TRUST

II. COOPERATION

MAJOR QUESTIONS:

- What effective steps can we take to build trust with our surrounding First Nation's communities and cooperate in meaningful economic development efforts in the region?
- What cooperative structures might help us to develop sustainable economic growth within our communities?

MAJOR COMMENTS AND IDEAS

- Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations is on the right path to build trust in Co-operation across the region.
- Much of the response for this issue would be the same as issue #6.

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