

**TLA-O-QUI-AHT NATION BUILDING STRATEGY: *HA'WIIH AND  
MA'UAS* (CHIEFS AND HOUSES)**

By

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## **Project Background information**

For one hundred and fifty years, Canada has tried to assimilate and deconstruct the identity of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations people. Their family based governance structure was replaced with tools of the oppressor, and the existence of their nationhood has been denied. This has made for difficulties in obtaining a just and fair modern day “treaty” process that recognizes the connection to the land that the Tla-o-qui-aht have. This project details Tla-o-qui-aht’s present and past governance structure, and outlines paths that Tla-o-qui-aht are taking to reach their goals of self-governance and of ultimately creating a ‘Tla-o-qui-aht Nation Constitution’ which is based on their values and traditions, by conducting Chief and Elders forums. In taking steps to revitalize the tools within the Tla-o-qui-aht Ancestral Governance Model (AGM: which refers to the pure, pre-colonization governance structure and traditions that the Tla-o-qui-aht ancestors once practiced), Tla-o-qui-aht’s main objective with this project was to consult with the oral historians of Tla-o-qui-aht, and to document their knowledge pertaining to *Ha’wiih* (Chiefs: see definitions, Appendix A) Lineages.

This project does not presume that Tla-o-qui-aht will revitalize all of the tools that our ancestors possessed within the Ancestral Governance Model; however, Tla-o-qui-aht is aware of how healthy our peoples and lands were under the old regime and are striving to reconcile our values, teachings and kinship with contemporary governance needs. Even though Tla-o-qui-aht is striving to revitalize its Ancestral Governance Model, it must be acknowledged

that the end result will more likely be a blend of the contemporary and traditional systems.

The urgency to commence this project is enhanced by the ages of our historians. Within recent months and passing years, Tla-o-qui-aht has suffered the loss of several key historians. Coupled with the internal and external pressures to have clarity of the Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* structure, the elders decided that the time to document this work is NOW. If we do not do this work now, we may lose the opportunity to do it properly.

## Introduction

This community project was borne out of Tla-o-qui-aht Self Governance initiatives.

Tla-o-qui-aht has been involved in the B.C. Treaty process for many years now, but has yet to see any 'real' recognition of *Ha'wiih* (Chiefs) *Haahuulthii* (Tla-o-qui-aht ancestral Lands and resources, see definition Appendix A) from Canada's mandate. The delays in the treaty process led Tla-o-qui-aht to focus their efforts on internal work. That is to say, that Tla-o-qui-aht wanted to prepare for self-governance, and to also have a meaningful connection to the land through their *Ha'wiih*, for treaty negotiations and for the health of the grandchildren.

To ensure a strong connection to the land through the *Ha'wiih*, it was necessary for Tla-o-qui-aht to reassemble the foundation of their governance structure, since it had been deconstructed by the Indian Act. There was, and is, strong senses in the community that their governance structure and Laws are not taken seriously by the industries and communities that are living in their *Haahuulthii*. "How do we get our rights recognized in our Homelands?" was the unsaid question.

Thus, among other strategies, (such as Treaty negotiations, litigation, rights assertion, relationship building) Tla-o-qui-aht started down the long road of Nation-building as a means of getting their *Ha'wiih* authority recognized. The Nation-building strategy encompassed everything from embracing jurisdiction, (taxation, fisheries, forestry, communal bylaws...); deconstructing the Indian Act;

Constitution development; capacity building; enhanced *Haahuulthii* management, and economic initiatives. All of these initiatives are intended to be steps that will lead towards the self-governing and healthy self-determination of Tla-o-qui-aht.

Tla-o-qui-aht wants to ensure that the foundation of where their laws flow from is irrefutable. There shall be no question as to “Who’s Laws are you referring to?” Or, “How is it that you say you own these lands?” The confusion that results from the Indian Act authority and *Ha’wiih* authority must be rectified for our people to embrace self-governance.

Tla-o-qui-aht envisions building up jurisdiction by ratifying communal bylaws, developing fisheries acts, forestry acts, etc. that would flow from their *Ha’wiih* ‘Constitution’<sup>i</sup>. Through preliminary treaty discussions with the elders, it was noted that the word *Huupik<sup>w</sup>anum* would be a more suitable description of where the *Ha’wiih* Laws originate<sup>ii</sup>.

It must be noted; that Tla-o-qui-aht’s Laws have not disappeared, nor have the *Ha’wiih* relented in their responsibilities to care for the *maastchim* (the Chiefs people; Citizens or commoners, See Appendix A for definitions) or the *Haahuulthii*. The *Ha’wiih* have allowed the Indian Act band council to act on their behalf. In fact, within Tla-o-qui-aht, it is common practice for the band council to acknowledge that their powers are delegated from the *Ha’wiih*.

When starting the process of rebuilding the foundation of Tla-o-qui-aht governance, the first item to be observed is the *Ha’wiih*. Who are they? What are their Names? What is their *Haahuulthii*? Who is the *Ta’ii Ha’wiih* (‘Head Chief’)? What are the *Ha’wiih* ‘rankings’?

All of these questions are questions of clarity. They are questions that have been asked up and down the coast by other Nations, and even our own citizens. In fact, a written mural that describes *Ha’wiih* rank was taken down from the band office in display of disagreement over specified rank and structure. With such key questions of clarity surrounding the foundation of Tla-o-qui-aht governance, it was evident where immediate attention was needed.

It must be reiterated, that the urgency to commence this project is enhanced by the ages of our community historians. The elders are here and available to share their knowledge. If we do not do this work now, we may lose

the ability to effectively take steps towards reconnecting to the *Ha'wiih* structure and *Haahuulthii* management.

These circumstances led to the developments of my community project. The project was intended to provide answers to the uncertainty surrounding the Tla-o-qui-aht governance structure. An attempt would be made to have the necessary gatherings, elders, and information available to come to some sort of conclusion on the *Ha'wiih* structure. Once the *Ha'wiih* structure has been concluded, the elders can continue to work on the remaining structures and tools of governance that are necessary for the *Ha'wiih* to operate.

Eventually, all of these governance tools and structures will be identified, clarified and incorporated into a Tla-o-qui-aht *Huupik<sup>w</sup> anum* ('Constitution'). A list of future work and recommended next steps is provided in this document to be used as a guide towards Tla-o-qui-aht Nation building. The written 'Constitution' will be extremely useful for providing clarity within the community and will also be useful to explain our governance structures to external agencies such as the Canadian and B.C. governments, the municipality of Tofino, and industry. As Stanley Sam said in our July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, "it is important work because the Government doesn't understand how we work... we should strengthen our structure."

## **Research and Process**

There is a well-established literature that has been created by Tla-o-qui-aht people, which documents the traditions and rituals of the Tla-o-qui-aht. This literature is mainly focused on recording and transcribing quotes from various elder's workshops of the past. I have consulted and relied upon these documents in working with the elders. Most of the documents from elder's workshops were compiled by Ron Martin of Brentwood Research Associates in the late 1990's. They have been important overview materials in getting this project started. Even though there have been efforts in the past to document the teachings of our ancestors, no solutions have yet been presented to revitalize the culture, nor have the workshops been part of a larger, Nation-building strategy. This community project attempts to address this issue, by focusing the work on

what was identified as one of the primary impediments to disbanding the Indian Act: the lack of clarity surrounding the *Hawiih* structure.

Furthermore, this community project focused on community led direction and consensus on Tla-o-qui-aht governance structures, in the hopes that action will be easier to follow through on. To achieve consensus, several strategies were utilized. Throughout this project I acted as a facilitator in the elder's discussions, and attempted to capture their main points on flip chart or note pad. However, before writing down each elder's statements on the note pad, I would paraphrase my understanding of their discussion, and seek agreement on my synopsis.

Thereafter, I would create the summary for review at the next meeting, so that we may continue to build on the work. This manner of consensus and confirmation was achieved with respect to each recommended action item; which elders/advisors were to be invited to each meeting, and with respect to each individual statement pertaining to the *Hawiih* structure. This ensured that the elders were comfortable with each of their recommendations, and that we attempted to gather the proper advisors at each meeting.

The inclusion of interviews in this research will ensure that rituals and roles are interpreted properly and will provide a 'sounding board' for the 'possible next steps.' This research project could not have been completed without input from Tla-o-qui-aht elders. The interviewees are respected elders and *Hawiih* in the Tla-o-qui-aht community. They are Ray Sietcher, Howard Tom, Reginald David, Ernest David, Marie (Precious) Martin, Tom Curley, Archie Thompson, John Tom, Joe Curley, Barney Williams Jr., Jasper Frank, Randal Frank, Ben David, Stanley Sam, Dixon Sam, Bruce Frank, Nelly Joseph and Alfred Tom.<sup>iii</sup>

Before the interview process began, the Tla-o-qui-aht band council was informed of the research topic and its objective. The Tla-o-qui-aht elected Chief councilor Barney Williams Jr. (he is also one of Tla-o-qui-aht's 'Beach-Keepers') has participated in this project as one of the project directors. Subsequently, with support from the treaty team (which has strong ties to the hereditary Chiefs) and the elected Chief and council, approval was granted to conduct the interviews and the research in the community.

I start by acknowledging that this project is not, a complete record of the Tla-o-qui-aht governance tools, nor is it purported to be the absolute and only path of change for the Tla-o-qui-aht people. A complete record of their governance tools, and the ultimate outcome of their governance model can only be obtained via thorough and efficient community consultation.

By first looking at the present governance structure, which was imposed by the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), the reader will come to an understanding of the necessity for a political restructuring movement. It is referred to as a 'movement,' because the implication of reviving the ancestral governance system requires tremendous vision, effort, pride and dedication to/by the community. The transition to an AGM model may take many years, but Tla-o-qui-aht is willing to take this difficult journey of rebuilding its governance structure.

## **The Current Government of Tla-o-qui-aht:**

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation currently operates under the D.I.A. imposed elected council system. This system, which is foreign to the Tla-o-qui-aht has been the root of many internal problems for the band. The electoral system is plagued with inefficiencies and hindrances varying from nepotism, to bogged-down decision-making processes. Tla-o-qui-aht operates with the elected portfolio system, whereby elected officials take on responsibilities of one of the nation's various portfolios, (e.g. forestry, fishery, education, treaty, economic development). Each newly elected council member must be trained and paid to attend costly workshops or conferences to become experts on their respective portfolio. As elected officials, these portfolios do not have job descriptions or deliverables. After a two year term, when someone new is elected into office, the training process and the learning curve commences all over again. The problems of this system are obvious and costly.

The decision making process of the council is often slower than necessary due to the council involving itself in administrative duties. This is a symptom of the portfolio system, which constantly brings administrative tasks to the council table.

To better understand the current state of Tla-o-qui-aht governance, one must observe the steps that the Canadian government took to dissolve it. With the Canadian government attempting to tame the 'savage' Indians, and to dispossess them of their land, the government took drastic steps to assimilate the Indians. Traditional governments were such a threat to Canadian control over "Indians" and their land, that Canada took very calculated steps to dissolve the power of the traditional system.

Firstly, Canada banned the 'potlatch' and made it illegal for Tla-o-qui-aht to gather its citizens for governance purposes for the better part of the last century. Only in recent generations has Tla-o-qui-aht been allowed to host 'potlatch feasts'. The potlatch was one of the cornerstones of Tla-o-qui-aht governance. The potlatch is what gives great Chiefs their 'greatness.' The sharing of wealth to the community, and the reaffirmation of power and authority that was associated with hosting a potlatch contributed tremendously to the respect that the *maastchim* had for the *Ha'wiih*. "Distribution of goods could no longer take place in the potlatch and the chiefs no longer received goods to redistribute. The poor turned to the Indian Agent for help from the federal government rather than to the chief."<sup>iv</sup> Therefore, without the ability to gain respect from the community through 'potlatching', the *Ha'wiih* became displaced in the community.

Secondly, in 1958, the Indian Act removed the Tla-o-qui-aht hereditary Chief from power and installed an elected Chief and Council. The Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih's* role in the community, that was at one time so esteemed, became marginalised. This served to eliminate the need for the hereditary Chief, once again disenfranchising these individuals and all of the individuals in their support network.

Another example of Canada's actions that led to Tla-o-qui-aht's current state of affairs is the land reservation system. The reservation system delivered a particularly devastating blow to the power and political structure of Tla-o-qui-aht. By creating reservations, the *Ha'wiih* and their *maastchim* no longer had free access to their *Haahuulthii*. The requirement for fishing licenses and the

formation of forestry licenses also served to restrict the Tla-o-qui-aht people from accessing their *Haahuulthii*.

The conversion of the land into reservations and forestry licenses, also served as a colonial tool designed to convince Tla-o-qui-aht citizens that the land belonged to Canada. This weakened their negotiating position in the modern day treaty process; a process that was entered into to acknowledge and recognize the original owners of the land.

The newly imposed electoral system and land reservation system came loaded with problems. The 1951 *Indian Act* specified that Band Councils must consist of one Chief and one councilor for every 100 members. A minimum requirement of two and a maximum of twelve councilors were also imposed by the Act. In some instances on the West Coast, Canada appointed Chiefs themselves, or required that Chiefs swear an oath to support the federal governments plans<sup>v</sup>. In 1958, Tla-o-qui-aht finally adopted the elected system. Unfortunately, the elected representative was burdened with suspicion from the community that he was being controlled by the Indian Agent. Frank Charlie was the first elected Chief for Tla-o-qui-aht. He outlines some of the problems with the electoral system in his commentary in the discussion document: Tla-o-qui-aht Government: Where have we been and where are we going?

The elected chief did not have the respect of the people, like the hereditary chiefs had because in the hereditary system all the families had a role in the government. With the elected system all the power was placed in the hands of a few and benefits were often extended to only a few families. Later, band office jobs became coveted often being the only employment for band members, yet many believed those jobs were reserved for the family members of elected officials.<sup>vi</sup>

The above description summarizes several of the problems of the electoral system. It characterizes the lack of respect that resulted for the *Ha'wiih*, and details the large transfer of power into certain hands that tended to abuse it. The lack of accountability that was associated with the elected system allowed for nepotistic practices and corruption in the decision-making process. In addition, the D.I.A. system of governance did not recognize the voting rights of Tla-o-qui-aht citizens that lived off of the reservation. This provided a dichotomy in the community, and led to internal disputes over representation.

The above discussion also alludes to the problem of jobs. The imposed governance structure tended to provide jobs for only a few citizens of the Nation, whereas the AGM created a position for all citizens. The citizens' contribution to the community, which was recognized as valuable under the ancestral system, was no longer deemed to be worthy of a livelihood under the D.I.A. structure. This served to displace the majority of the community that was not employed by the band office and the newly formed, elected government. There was no place for them to work on the reservation, and there was no place for them to work in the 'White' world.

Above and beyond the afore mentioned issues, there are still many problems that oppress and plague the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation that are beyond the scope of this paper, such as: severe unemployment; suicide; substance abuse; structural underfunding; internal and external racism; poverty; disease, etc. Most of these problems stem from the oppressive policies of the Indian Act and the multi-generational impacts that arrived with it. Fortunately, the healing of our kinship houses, traditions and political structure will strike at the heart of many of the above-mentioned symptoms of colonialism. This project strives to address the problems that arise from Tla-o-qui-aht's loss of cultural identity and traditions.

Over the last forty years, the electoral system has become entrenched in the community and our *Ha'wiih* have lost effectiveness to manage their entire *haahuulthii*. It is time to reform the political structure, and rid Tla-o-qui-aht of the illnesses of the Indian Act, the inefficiencies of the portfolio system, and disrespect for their *Ha'wiih* and *Haahuulthii*. It is time to look back to what has worked for our people since time immemorial, and find a respected place in the community for every Tla-o-qui-aht family. It is time for the political restructuring movement to begin.

## **Tla-o-qui-aht Governance: Ha'wiih, Clans and Social Rank**

Since time immemorial, the Tla-o-qui-aht people have been respecting and taking care of their land and resources for the creator. To obtain a complete understanding of the Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* structure (ancestral governance

model), the subject must be approached from many angles. This is necessary because much of the governance and relationships were so integrated into the culture and society, that they can be perceived as invisible.

The leading chiefs of the Tla-o-qui-aht are known collectively as *Ha'wiih*. They are responsible for their *Haahuulthii*. *Haahuulthii* is often mistranslated to refer to the Chief's traditional territory. This is a mistake, for *Haahuulthii* means much more than land or territory. *Haahuulthii* includes responsibility for certain rivers, animals, food, medicines, songs, masks, names, dances and ceremonies. Each of these items is passed down to the *Ha'wilth* through inherited rights or marriage. It is said that the Chief has a responsibility to the Creator to take care of this *Haahuulthii*. Based on this statement, it is sometimes insinuated that the right to the *Haahuulthii* was passed on to the first Chiefs from the Creator.

The Tla-o-qui-aht village was organized according to Houses or family Clans. People descending from one lineage belonged to a specific House. From this lineage, each House had an appointed 'Head of the House'. These individuals served as representatives of their 'House' in the decision making process and were referred to as *Ta'ii aqkin*, meaning 'our eldest'<sup>vii</sup>. The House and the *maastchim* had access to the names, songs, rivers and land that belonged to their *Ha'wilth's Haahuulthii*. Therefore, each House fell under the care of a *Ha'wilth* and had access to his *Haahuulthii*. One *Ha'wilth* can have several or many 'Houses' that fall under his care, and therefore have many *Ta'ii aqkin* to appease. This provided a distinction between the *Ta'ii aqkin*, and the *Ha'wilth*. The *Ha'wiih* are the stewards of the Tla-o-qui-aht *Haahuulthii*, and the *Ta'ii aqkin* access the *Haahuulthii* of their *Ha'wilth*.

With the potential for so many Chiefs, a system for determining rank was important. Dr. Drucker, an anthropologist that studied the Northwest Coast Indians, provides a description of how a Chief obtained social status under Tla-o-qui-aht's social ranking system: "social status, involving the so-called system of rank, derived neither from hereditary alone, nor from wealth, but from a combination of the two."<sup>viii</sup> When taking this definition into consideration, it is important to note that, for the Tla-o-qui-aht people, wealth meant much more than land or money. A Chief's wealth was determined by the wealth of his

people, and also by the wealth of his *Haahuulthii*, which included songs, masks, names etc.

Ron Martin describes the political power of a Chief as coming from his lineage.<sup>ix</sup> For example, a Chief can assert a certain social rank by claiming a direct descendant relationship to a powerful Chief from the past. At a public gathering, (for witnesses) the powerful Chief's *Haahuulthii* and perhaps his name is passed on to a successor. Therefore, the successor inherits a powerful lineage, and a wealthy *Haahuulthii*. Both are important in determining social rank.

Social rank was constantly reaffirmed at social gatherings, such as potlatches, where the seating order was arranged according to seniority. The precise seating of the *Ha'wiih* is the duty of the Seating-Master. If a *Ha'wilth* is incorrectly seated, it can be perceived as disrespectful, and insulting. The Seating-Master had a particularly keen knowledge of the social rank of the society. Generally, it was well known which Chief had rights to the most important *Haahuulthii*. That is it to say, that everyone in the community had knowledge of who the *Ha'wiih* were, but the Seating-Master had a focused knowledge of their ranking. To this day, there are six lineages that claim titles of *Ha'wilth* in Tla-o-qui-aht: Alex Frank, George Frank; Ray Seitcher, Howard Tom, Robert Martin, and Bruce Frank.<sup>x</sup>

The absence of hierarchical titles for social rank provides room for disagreements regarding the relative statuses of Chiefs. Due to marriages, amalgamations and divisions, the precision of the seating and social rank contained ambiguity. However, with this it also provided room for fluidity and adjustment<sup>xi</sup>.

## **Decision-Making, Other Offices and Roles:**

The *Ha'wiih* were responsible for making decisions regarding all aspects of community life. Aside from their lifelong training to be a leader in the community, and schooling of traditional teachings and ethics, the *Ha'wilth* would rely on his advisors for council on decisions. The *Ha'wilth* would appoint *iihpiit*, or advisors, to every part of community life and would seek their advice from them whenever knowledge was required from their field of study<sup>xii</sup>.

In certain areas of Tribal life, the authority of the Chief was absolute. The veto power of his authority typically rested in upholding the law or maintenance of order, and the many decisions directly involving his *Haahuulthii*. However, in most other decisions affecting the community, it was normal for the Chief to consult with his House and his advisors<sup>xiii</sup>.

In these decisions, the *Ha'wilth* would consult with whichever advisors were relevant to the decision being made. In this process, final decisions were reached on a consensus basis. Ray Martin, describes this process:

Consensus meant that the advisors spoke back and forth about an issue between the people, each other, and the chief until there was a decision that everyone could support the idea. The chiefs and their advisors did not rush decision-making---it was often a very slow process. Decision-making was highly respected, Tla-o-qui-aht took as much time as was needed to reach consensus. A decision was final once the Head Chief was directed to make such a declaration.<sup>xiv</sup>

## **Creating a Chief Through Teachings:**

To carry out the responsibilities of governing a Nation, the *Ha'wilth* had to be given the skills and the traits of a leader. "From the time a future *Ha'wilth* was in the womb, parents taught the child of his or her future duties. Special herbs were placed in the bed of the chiefly babies to ensure they grew strong in body and mind..."<sup>xv</sup> Rose Cootes, describes this upbringing:

...Chiefs were told to remember... he was going to set a good example in the village as a Chief. That he was there to take care of his people, he was there to look out for the ones that are in need, not only for his own family, for his own tribe. So he was there to be a walking example... a good example in the village. He had men that were councilors that had wisdom and knowledge. So he had help and didn't do things by himself. He didn't plan things by himself. He planned with those who were as a councilor, who had wisdom, who had knowledge.<sup>xvi</sup>

The above extract illustrates some of the teachings that go into rearing a Chief and that the process is constantly ongoing. The Chief was constantly counseled by his advisors on his decisions and his actions. This provided a lifetime of teaching for the Chief. Plus, with the community constantly looking to the Chief as an example setter, he was accountable to the community for his actions.

Reginald David, a Nuu-chah-nulth elder, commenting on traditional teachings, the importance of the creator and the virtue of humbleness:

Every morning... you'd wake up, and you'd go outside and look at the sun... and you'd thank the creator for everything he's given you. You thank him for the sun, the trees, the air you're breathing... and the good rest you had. hehe.<sup>xvii</sup>

It is not only important for the *Ha'wilth* to be humble in life, but to be thankful and appreciative of his people. The *Ha'wilth* always acknowledged the significance of the reciprocal relationship he had with his people and was appreciative of this relationship. By exemplifying a balanced and respectful life, and feasting with the *maastchim*, a Chief gained the respect of his people.

If a Chief were to act disrespectful in regards to the traditional teachings, (ie. lead a life of imbalance, and fail to adopt an honourable lifestyle) there existed controls in the traditional governance structure to remove the Chief from office. As with the transmission of Chieftainship to the eldest son, if the son has not adopted an honourable lifestyle worthy of a Chief, then he would forfeit his right to be heir.<sup>xviii</sup> The Chieftainship would then be transferred to the next eldest son, or perhaps a brother's, eldest son. Since, the community is constantly looking to the *Ha'wiih* as good examples of citizenry, it is important that they lead a balanced and honourable life based on traditional teachings and values.

## **Transition to an Ancestral Governance Model:**

Now that the reader has a general notion of how the Tla-o-qui-aht ancestral governance model (AGM) works, and an understanding of the necessity to abandon the Indian Act governance model, it is time to examine how it would be possible to utilize the tools of our ancestors to heal our fractured people. It is time to turn these events around and elevate the great leaders that lie within our *Ha'wiih*. It is time to use our traditional teachings to give our *Ha'wiih* the skills and the foundation, to make decisions that will reflect our values and tend to our Nation's future.

Tla-o-qui-aht has the tools of its ancestors to ease the transition of possibly returning to the AGM and recognizing the authority and place of the *Ha'wiih*. This project performed eight meetings with Tla-o-qui-aht historians and documented their knowledge of Tla-o-qui-aht governance and *haahuulthii*

management tools. Every effort has been made to have community support and to utilize a methodology that is respectful of Tla-o-qui-aht values and teachings. This has meant that I made effort to have the appropriate and relevant historians (advisors: *iihpiit*) gathered, and that the objectives of the project were supported by all of the leadership bodies in Tla-o-qui-aht, (elected Chief and Council, *Ha'wiih* and elders table and treaty team). Also, each of the meetings was conducted according to Tla-o-qui-aht teachings and protocols, such as an opening prayer and words of guidance from the creator; consensus decision-making, and decision making based on concern for unborn generations. As with Tla-o-qui-aht teachings of respectful hosting, the elders were always provided with lunch and snacks at the meetings.

It is foreseeable that some citizens will not want to participate in a model governed by dishonourable *Ha'wilth*. This problem is alleviated by the 'removal of office instrument' of the ancestral model. This allowed for the removal of a Chief that led a disrespectful lifestyle. In this situation, an alternate is put in his place that is hopefully a more respected leader.

In the current state of Tla-o-qui-aht governance, the *Ha'wilth* have been separated from much of their power for many generations. In returning to the AGM, we have the option of utilizing yet another tool of our ancestors: 'partial retirement of Chief'. In this practice the *Ha'wilth* retires from office and transmits the Chieftainship to his eldest son whom is still training, but the retired Chief remains with the son to advise and guide. "Retirement, for a leader, does not necessarily mean a total withdrawal from active life. Such persons can continue to act behind the scenes. They can have considerable influence if they so choose."<sup>xix</sup> In this regard, Chieftainship was transferred to the suitable heir as soon as possible, but the young Chief only held the position in name. The retired Chief remained in background to guide, while the young Chief learned the role and started the process of building the respect of the people. This practice is a prime example of traditional tools that can be utilized to ease the transition to the AGM.

The use of *Ha'wilth* in contemporary times is certainly plausible. To those who question the ability of the *Ha'wilth* to lead the Nation, it must be pointed out

that it is time to build new leaders that have the ability. The AGM will work in present times, because under the model, *Ha'wilth* have a lifetime of Chiefly upbringing to guide them in their decision-making. It must also be highlighted, that the Chief is never alone on decisions. Mention of advisors and consensus decision-making will ease the skeptics mind.

Furthermore, the return to the House system of representation will ensure that all citizens have access to culture/*Haahuulthii* through their lineages, and that all citizens have a voice. The *Ha'wiih* and 'House' system is almost ideal for a Nation that is characterized with a majority population that lives away from their *Haahuulthii*. The House system of governance would put the responsibility to be involved in the Nations affairs back into the hands of the families. It would be the responsibility of each 'Head of Household' to participate in the decision-making, and inform his/her family about the outcome.

As another example of the AGM's modern compatibility, in the Nuu-chah-nulth Treaty document, *Hawilthpatak Nuu-chah-nulth: Nuu-chah-nulth Ways of Governance*, February 2, 1999, the elders describe how we traditionally had 'fishery officers' called *Tsatsook*. "Every nation had an equivalent to the DFO known as *tsatsook*. These people looked after the rivers...the *tsatsook* closed the rivers when the fish were about to spawn. The *tsatsook* went to the rivers to tell how much fish were spawning to determine future catch levels."<sup>xx</sup>

It must be noted that a subtle form of 'House' governance is already practiced in Tla-o-qui-aht, since, under the Indian Act election system, most families vote for their own family's candidate for council. Therefore, due to kinship, the outcome from the elected system already closely mirrors the process of our ancestors, whereby each family clan had a voice through their 'Head of Household.' Furthermore, the Tla-o-qui-aht elected band council holds regular community meetings to tend to normal business and make announcements. The elected band council also feeds the *maastchim* at these gatherings, which again closely mirrors the purpose and process of *Ha'wilth* 'feasts'. Therefore, it is not a far stretch of the mind to see that it would be possible to return to some form of the ancestral governance model.

The following section details the eight meetings and processes that this project performed in striving to revive the governance and *haahuulthii* management tools that made our people healthy and prosperous.

## **Review of Elders meetings**

### **Elders Gathering: One (April 27, 2005)**

Thus, as a small piece of the larger vision of completing a Tla-o-qui-aht *Huupik<sup>w</sup>anum* (Constitution), we began gathering knowledgeable elders that have contributed in the past to Tla-o-qui-aht initiatives. For a list of meeting dates and elders in attendance see Appendix B.

The first elders gathering for this project was intended to be preliminary. The objectives completed for this meeting were:

- Preliminary review of project intentions;
- Identify possible sources of information;
- Confirm who should be invited to the next meeting;
- Obtain direction on the best course of action for the project.

The small gathering of elders provided several recommendations on possible information sources and past work. Most of the information requested was available from either the Tla-o-qui-aht Treaty Office or the Band Office.

The elders also wanted to ensure that we keep the work internal to the group until the end result is achieved. In this light, the elders wanted to ensure that we gather primarily with our 'Historians' and not with every Tla-o-qui-aht elder that happens to be over 65 years of age. This would allow the elders group to come to consensus on their work before bringing it to the larger community. Recommendations were put forward to contact and invite certain elders.

### **Elders Gathering: Two (May 11, 2005)**

Recognizing that this meeting was to be the first formal gathering of many to come, the objectives for the second meeting were simple:

- Review Tla-o-qui-aht governance situation;
- Review Treaty position and strategy;
- Review documents requested;

- Share any stories and information that is relevant to the *Ha'wiih* structure;
- Confirm who should be invited to the next meeting;
- Obtain direction on the best course of action for the project.

At this second meeting, I provided a copy of the *Ha'wiih* rank as identified in the 'contentious' band office copy (see Appendix C), a 'draft' chart of the *Ha'wiih* Names and 'sub-chiefs' (see Appendix D); a visual representation of the *Ha'wiih* and their 'Houses' (see Appendix E), and a map of the Tla-o-qui-aht *Haahuulthii*.

The meeting began with an opening prayer and guiding words from elder Marie Martin (Grandma 'Precious'). I then proceeded to contextualize the work ahead of them, explaining what led to this project, and suggested some possible starting points for discussion. After my synopsis of the Tla-o-qui-aht governance situation, the elders merely began sharing knowledge about the *Ha'wiih* and other ancestral governance tools.

This second meeting's discussions brought about a variety of loose ends with respect to the Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* structure. Discussions arose pertaining to the histories of where certain *Ha'wiih* were from; the ranking of *Ha'wiih* as recalled by the elders present as compared to the rankings on the provided 'draft' charts; and other histories pertaining to Chieftainships. From this information sharing, we achieved a greater understanding of where our attention was needed.

After this opening information sharing was documented, further direction was sought with respect to whom should be gathered at the next meeting. It was understood that I would provide a recap of the discussion at the next meeting.

### **Elders Gathering: Three (May 30, 2005)**

The objectives for the third meeting were as follows:

- Recap summary of previous meeting's notes;
- Continue to share any stories and information that is relevant to the *Ha'wiih* structure;
- Confirm who should be invited to the next meeting;
- Obtain direction on the best course of action for the project.

The next meeting had a few more elders in attendance that were requested by the preliminary group. After an opening prayer and guiding words from our elder, a summary of the previous meeting was presented and the work continued on knowledge sharing. I facilitated and documented the discussion for summary. The group provided more specifics on certain Chieftainships, and provided a lengthy discussion surrounding *Ha'wiih* responsibility, accountability, and the process of removal/reinstating of a *Ha'wiih*. The elders also identified an important governance tool that is missing from the support network of the *Ha'wiih*, namely, the *Tiikawilth* (similar to the parliamentary Cabinet). In addition, this meeting discussed how 'Chieftainships' are passed on.

At this meeting, it became evident that the history being provided was different than that which was portrayed on the band office chart. Specifically, there were concerns over rank; *Tiikawilth* that may be incorrectly identified as *Ha'wiih*; and concern over bringing out of certain 'Chieftainships' that had 'gone to the grave' with past *Ha'wiih*. Since these discussions were very contentious, the elders wanted to be clear that they were not making up this information to hurt anybody..."they did not *create* this or make it up...it is how it existed."

The discussions over *Ha'wiih* rank seemed to be less concerning to the elders than the discussions surrounding what may be incorrectly-identified *Ha'wiih*. The elders stated that a word did not exist in Tla-o-qui-aht language that meant 'Sub-Chief'. In most instances, people that have been referred to as 'Sub-Chief' would more suitably be referred to as *Tiikawilth*, a supporter of the *Ha'wiih*. *Tiikawilth* refers to a seat in the longhouse. *Tiikawilth* had responsibilities to the *Ha'wiih* and sometimes were acknowledged at feasts for their great support. In fact, the elders indicated that this may be what led to the confusion surrounding one of the identified *Ha'wiih*: Robert Martin. The Robert Martin family was a great supporter of the *Ha'wiih*, and sat in a high ranking position in the longhouse, however, due to the disappearance of Tla-o-qui-aht language, citizens had no word to properly identify the individual and perhaps people came to call the head of family a *Ha'wiih*.

The second contentious issue to be discussed surrounded the Chieftainship of *Moochink*. The elders in attendance could recollect how old man *Moochink* had asked Chester Brown to carry the Chieftainship after his passing, but he declined, as did Alex Frank. Eventually, old man *Moochink* did not pass the title at a feast or announce any title heir. This left questions and uneasiness surrounding the present day claim to the *Moochink* title.

The elders presented information pertaining to how a Chief would normally pass a Chieftainship on. To pass a title on, the *Ha'wiih* would consult with advisors to discuss who would be next; he did not talk to his family, he used his *taapaatsii* (advisors). The *Taapaatsii* helped choose the next in line from the Chief's family and House. By having the *taapaatsii* aid in the selection of the next Chief, it served to reduce infighting within the Chief's House.

Other information captured from this meeting mostly pertained to the accountability and conduct of honorable *Ha'wiih*. The elders were concerned with the amount of effort they were putting in to raise the profile of the *Ha'wiih*, while the conduct of certain *Ha'wiih* might be seen as unbecoming. Thus, a great deal of discussion revolved around how our ancestors would be able to remove a Chief from office temporarily while the Chief made preparations to be a better leader. The Chief would not be stripped of his title; the title was merely set aside. The elders affirmed that our ancestral Laws provided that if a Chief was acting unfavorably, another Chief can be groomed for the position.

Further to discussions of Chiefs responsibilities pertained to the relationship that existed between the *Ha'wiih* and the *maastchim*. In Tla-o-qui-aht history, every citizen of Tla-o-qui-aht was cared for by the *Ha'wiih*; every citizen's voice and interests was accounted for through the 'House' system of governance. "Every one was healthy under the old regime," was said by Tom Curley. The *Ha'wiih* had a complete understanding of the needs of the *maastchim* and the needs of the *Haahuulthii*, because the governance tools and system provided for healthy governance.

In review, this meeting captured discussions pertaining to:

- the important governance tool that is presently missing (unutilized) from the support network of the *Ha'wiih*, namely, the *Tiikawilth*;

- Lengthy information sharing of the Robert Martin title, and the *Moochink* title;
- Process of selecting the next Chief from his 'House';
- *Ha'wiih* responsibility, accountability, and the process of removal/reinstating of a *Ha'wiih*;
- Direction was given to gather the elders for further information sharing;

## **Elders Gathering: Four (June 2, 2005)**

The fourth meeting was a meeting with *Ha'wilth Naaq<sup>w</sup>a* (Howard Tom). Mr. Tom had spoken over the phone with *Ta'ii Ha'wilth Seitcher* and wanted to share concerns with the elders group that they both had. I sat in the home of *Ha'wiih Naaq<sup>w</sup>a* to debrief and review the information that is being brought forward by the elders group. Since the elders were bringing information forward pertaining mainly to history from generations past, Mr. Tom wanted to make sure that recent history is accounted for in the project.

Mr. Tom was concerned that in more recent history, 7 - 9 years ago, the Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* accepted gifts from *Moochink* and the Robert Martin family at a potlatch. In this light, the Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* may have recognized and affirmed those individuals as *Ha'wiih* by accepting those gifts. The Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* did not want to be seen to have made a mistake. Therefore, the *Ha'wiih* felt comfortable reaffirming a statement from the Treaty Process, whereby they stated that Tla-o-qui-aht operates under one common *Haahuulthii*, and anything that pertains to the *Haahuulthii* will have ALL of their signatures on it. The *Ha'wiih* will stand as ONE body. This option would allow the group to avoid having to correct the identified *Ha'wiih*, since they would be standing and operating as one *Ha'wiih*.

In review, this meeting brought about the following information and recommendation:

- The *Ha'wiih* accepted gifts from *Moochink* and the Martin family at 'Potlatches,' which may be construed as one *Ha'wiih* passing gifts to another *Ha'wiih*;

- To avoid the possibility of hurting families and the possibility of being seen to be in error, the two *Ha'wiih* are offering the option of standing as ONE Chiefs body;
- This information should be brought to the elders group for consideration.

## **Elders Gathering: Five (June 13, 2005)**

The objectives for the fifth meeting were as follows:

- Recap summary of previous meeting's notes from meeting three;
- Review information that has been brought forward from the *Ha'wiih*, (meeting Four);
- Determine implications of the *Ha'wiih* submission;
- Confirm who should be invited to the next meeting;
- Obtain direction on the best course of action for the project.

At the fifth meeting, I presented a summary of the concerns that *Ha'wilth Naaq<sup>w</sup>a* and *Ha'wilth Seitcher* had conveyed to me. In response to the Chiefs concerns, the elders group wanted to reaffirm what they had said in the previous meetings: "We are not making up a new structure...this is how it is known to be...how it existed..." Furthermore, they stated that, "for treaty purposes, and for healthy governance, Tla-o-qui-aht needs to work with the elders to identify *Ha'wiih Haahuulthii*, *Tiikawilth* and the 'Clans or Houses' that are under the care of the *Ha'wiih*." It was also identified that for treaty purposes, and for potential disputes with the Government, our 'title' to *Haahuulthii* must be solid and unquestioned. As well, the elders noted that the discrepancy of Tla-o-qui-aht's *Ha'wiih* structure has been remarked upon by other Nations up the Coast. The concern over Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* was an external matter, as well as an internal one. The elders wanted to continue with the objectives of the project and attempt to remedy the fractured state of the *Ha'wiih* structure. From this meeting, the elders sent me away to the treaty office and band office to gather in-depth information on lineages and maps for review by the elders, and subsequently the *Ha'wiih*.

In summary, this meeting captured the following information and direction:

- The elders reaffirmed their commitment to continue with the objectives of the project and attempt to remedy the fractured state of the *Ha'wiih* structure;
- The elders assert that it would be inappropriate to have a *tiikawiih* identified as a *Ha'wilth*, because it will be important to have *tiikawiih* identified for the proper functioning of the Chiefs structure;
- The elders believe that when all of the information is gathered, it will be possible to convince the people of the proper course of action;
- Direction was given to obtain family trees, and in-depth lineages from written sources;
- Once the information is gathered, it was suggested that only our keenest historians would sift through the amassed information.

### **Elders Gathering: Six (July 7, 2005)**

The objectives for the sixth meeting were as follows:

- Compare and confirm the information that the elders were presenting with other documents and sources;

I spent the next couple weeks gathering documentation from the treaty office and other files in the band office. The elders agreed that the sixth meeting would be dedicated purely to reviewing the information gathered. The group also decided that it would be more efficient to have a focus group of elders to review and sort through the amassed information.

Thus, the elder's focus group reviewed several versions of lineage trees, and other historic information from early Indian Agents. The information gathered and presented to elders enabled them to be more prepared to meet with the *Ha'wiih*. The focus group suggested that we meet firstly with the *Ha'wiih* that the elders are most certain and have the most accurate information on. It was hoped that as the elders met with those *Ha'wiih*, some of the uncertainty surrounding the other lineages would be clarified.

In summary, this meeting captured the following information and direction:

- Meet firstly with the *Ha'wiih* that the elders are most certain and have the most accurate information on;
- Bring the lineage trees and summary of work to date.

## Elders Gathering: Seven (July 14, 2005)

The objectives for the seventh meeting were as follows:

- Present the information and work that the elders have accomplished to date, to the *Ha'wiih* that the elders are most certain and have the most accurate information on;
- Seek possible options and recommendations for addressing inconsistencies within the *Ha'wiih* structure.

Therefore, at the seventh meeting, the *Ha'wiih* were invited to meet with the elders and the work that was amassed to date. Much information was gathered on each lineage, and the governance tools of our ancestors. Since we were supposed to meet with the *Ha'wiih* that they were most prepared for, only certain *Ha'wiih* were invited. However, at the meeting, people were wondering why other *Ha'wiih* were not invited. By the end of the meeting, a recommendation for a final gathering of all the *Ha'wiih* was suggested to conclude the work.

However, prior to concluding our seventh meeting a good deal of information was gathered pertaining to the governance tools that supported the *Ha'wiih*. As Dixon Sam phrased it, "*Ha'wiih* must be supported if our Nation's governance is to be taken seriously in our Homeland...They must be supported by all the tools of our ancestors, such as: advisors, speakers, decorated regalia, strong Names, *tiikawilth*, and Heads of Households..."

The *Ha'wiih* were protected by these tools. Chiefs Names and regalia were guarded as possessions to ensure that nobility and respect followed with it to the next *Ha'wiih*. Advisors and Households were involved in decision making to ensure that the *Ha'wiih* made the best decisions for the Nation and that the community respected the actions of the *Ha'wiih*. It was also recommended from this meeting that *Ha'wiih* should utilize their 'speakers'. "*Ha'wiih* only spoke at feasts when delivering good news. This was their cloak...their protection" said Marie Martin. The refining and identifying of these tools are left for further work with the elders group, however it must be noted that the elders feel that the *Ha'wiih* structure must not be left isolated, it needs these other tools and bodies in place to work effectively.

During this seventh meeting, the elders were reviewing all the records that they have obtained, with the *Ha'wiih* that were invited. By the end of the discussions, the elders had a sentiment that they could no longer deliberate amongst themselves about these lineages and were ready to bring their work to all of the *Ha'wiih*. The *Ha'wiih* titles that are being questioned should be given the opportunity to explain where they get their titles from.

It was acknowledged that the elders can merely present the histories and knowledge to the group, and let the group decide the next steps and outcome. One of the objectives of this project was to document the information from our elders before it disappears. The work that comes out of it can arrive at a later date. We must capture the knowledge of the elders, while they are here and available. That is what has transpired.

In summary, this meeting captured the following information and direction:

- The *Ha'wiih* have many items and tools, (advisors, speakers, decorated regalia, strong Names, *tiikawilth*, and Heads of Households) that contributed to the success of their governance...all of these should be available for the *Ha'wiih* today;
- The oral histories have been exhausted, and the literature that was gathered did not contradict any of the elders presentation;
- The *Ha'wilth* titles that are being questioned should be given the opportunity to explain where they get their titles from;
- The elders will present the histories and knowledge to the group, and let the group decide the next steps and outcome.

### **Elders Gathering: Eight (August 22, 2005)**

The objectives for the eighth meeting were as follows:

- The elders shall explain the importance of this work to the *Ha'wiih*;
- Emphasize the importance of having *tiikawilth* to support the *Ha'wiih*, and for proper and healthy governance;
- The *Ha'wilth* titles that are being questioned should be given the opportunity to explain where they get their titles from;

- It anticipated that there will be discrepancies between the two accounts, therefore, through patience and understanding, the table shall obtain direction on the best course of action for resolving inconsistencies.

At this final meeting, all of the work that the elders had produced was presented to the *Ha'wiih* and advisors. Every *Ha'wilth* was to be invited to this meeting. The elders were to come forward with their information and let the results be arrived at by the larger group. Unfortunately, one of the *Ha'wilth* whose title was in question did not show up to the requested meeting, and consequently, the group was not given the opportunity to hear out the Chieftainship of Mr. Robert Martin.

Discussions at this eighth meeting were vibrant nonetheless. At this meeting it was pointed out by Reginald David that certain confusion may be arising out of the right to live and occupy in an area, versus the concept of *Haahuulthii*. It was noted that families were given plots of land to locate their family houses (*ma'uas*), but in the modern times, people are claiming that they were given land as a Chief (*Haahuulthii*). This was insightful information, since bringing awareness to the proper terminology will aid in reducing the number of claims to Chieftainships and reducing animosity and fear. The concept of *ma'uas* will be crucial to the upcoming work for the elders.

Even though a vital figure was not present at this meeting, the elders made significant progress and made some stern recommendations. The *Ha'wiih* and elders recommended that they sit for a day with old audio/video tapes that were recorded from elders in previous generations. These tapes are archived at the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, and in the libraries of elders Nelly Joseph and Marie Martin. The group would like the opportunity to sit patiently with a VCR and tape player to listen to past elder's presentations on Tla-o-qui-aht Chieftainships and lineages. Even though the elders presented everything they know as truth, they still wanted to be absolutely sure of their words. They wanted the opportunity to confirm their words with yet another source that they were aware of: Court Case tapes, and Treaty Negotiation presentations to the Governments. Their desire to want to double-check their work, only

demonstrates how touchy and contentious the work that is being asked of these elders is.

Immediately after the direction was given to retrieve these archival tapes, I placed a call to the Nuuchahnulth Treaty Department to locate them. Unfortunately, the tapes will not be available until mid-September. The elders are determined to make it through this part of the Nation building process and will be prepared to patiently review these tapes prior to meeting with the Chiefs again.

In summary, this meeting captured the following information and direction:

- The importance of the distinction between *ma'uas* and *Ha'wiih Haahuulthii*;
- The *Ha'wiih* and elders must sit for a day with old audio/video tapes that were recorded from elders in previous generations to be absolutely, positively, sure of their direction;
- After reviewing the audio/video tapes, the group will reassess their presentation, and determine the parameters of the next meeting.

## Final Project Analysis

This project was successful in its objective to consult with the oral historians of Tla-o-qui-aht, and to document their knowledge pertaining to *Ha'wiih* Lineages. Appendix F has the breakdown of information and stories pertaining to each *Ha'wiih* Lineage as captured from the elder's meetings. Appendix F was utilized alongside a large multi-family lineage tree to summarize the elder's discussions. It was consistently affirmed by the elders that the most important thing to do, is to document the knowledge. Our elders are disappearing quickly, so we must act quickly to record their knowledge. If we don't act on the information immediately, at least the information will have been captured so that our descendants can finalize the work.

It must be noted, however, that by no means is that the desired outcome of the elders group. The elders are eager to continue to contribute to the creation of the Tla-o-qui-aht *Huupuk<sup>w</sup>anum* document. From the workshops that were held during this project, the elders have more clarity as to what steps are

ahead of them to meet the long-term vision. The elders merely acknowledge that the time is now, which is still long overdue, , to clean up the *Ha'wiih* structure as a means to leading towards self-government.

This project has led the elders group to the point where they have exhausted the oral histories that they can provide. The remaining task will be to review the tapes that are on order from the Tribal Council Archives to confirm their accounts, and to bring their final presentation of information to the *Ha'wiih*. At that time, it will be up to the *Ha'wiih* and *iihpiit* (Chiefs and advisors) to come to a decision that will provide finality to the *Ha'wiih* structure, so that the elders group can start working on the many other tools and systems that are necessary for healthy governance and healthy communities. The following is a list of next steps, tasks and recommendations that came from the elders group over the period of the project.

## Next Steps and Recommendations

The following steps come out of our eight meetings and are deemed necessary to reaching finality with respect to the uncertainty surrounding the Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha'wiih* structure:

1. Gather and review information, tapes, transcripts: Records from DIA, Archives, Ottawa, Meares Island Court Case transcripts, Audio tapes from various elder's personal Libraries...
  - Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council – Maht Mahs videotape of Nuu-chah-nulth *Hawiih Haahuulthii* presentation for treaty negotiations grand opening. Should obtain these videos. The elders requested that these videos be transferred onto DVD. (*Hyoueh & Wikkinninnish* positions are discussed on NTC “video tape”)
2. Organize meeting of elders and **all** *Ha'wiih* to present information and work that has been completed to date, inclusive of oral histories and archival audio transcripts.
  - Who should be gathered for this type of decision?
  - Are the proper advisors gathered at this meeting, the ones that will be utilized to aid in the decision-making with respect to *Ha'wiih* rank and structure?

- If yes, proceed to step 3.
  - If No, Organize meeting of the *Ha'wiih* and the appropriate *iihpiit* and then proceed to step 3.
- 3. Make presentation of information and opportunity to hear from all of the parties, then next steps and outcomes will be discussed.
  - What guides the decision?
  - Remind the group of the reasons why we are doing this work. (Cultural resurgence, connection to the homeland, enhanced homeland management, treaty negotiations, connection to *maastchim*...)
  - What decision will lead to the re-establishment of Tla-o-qui-aht strength and good governance of the *Haahuulthii*?
- 4. Once the outcome is decided upon, it is recommended that some sort of formal announcement be made to the community. This is intended to reduce misinformation within the community. The statement would be some form of summary of the work of this project, with the main focus being a presentation of a *Ha'wiih* structure that will provide finality within the community and the vision that we can move forward and build a healthy Nation from this point.

With finality and resolution of the *Ha'wiih* structure, the community can proceed to work on the remaining tools that will be necessary for effective, efficient, healthy and strong *Haahuulthii* governance.

The following recommendations are deemed as necessary steps to meeting the long-term goal of providing the *Ha'wiih* with the proper tools for healthy governance.

5. Should identify each of the Chief's speaking-masters. This tool protected the *Ha'wiih*, and ensured a shroud of respect followed him.
6. Identify the *Tiikawilth* of various positions that will be necessary for the *Ha'wiih*.
7. Utilize the 'beachkeeper' position to manage the waters and shorelines more effectively, and to welcome guests according to our traditions.
8. Identify and train seating masters to ensure that rank is acknowledged at feasts, and that the Chiefs supporters are appropriately acknowledged and sat.

9. Identify the 'Houses' or the families that fall under the care of the respective *Ha'wilth*.
10. Once the 'Houses' are identified, the families will require help to prepare and elect a 'Head of Household' to be their voice in the ancestral governance model.
11. Teachings and training should be made available by the elders, to prepare each individual for the tasks demanded and expected of them by each position.
12. The elders group should carefully examine the tools that our ancestors possessed that ensured honorable and accountable *Ha'wiih*, and what tools they had for the removal/reinstatement of *Ha'wiih*.
13. Must ensure *Ha'wiih* Names are used only by *Ha'wiih*... Lessen the Confusion over representation.
14. Evaluate the 'feast' structure as a means of communicating regular governance to the *maastchim*.
15. The only way to ensure that this work continues is to continue to gather this elders table. We need to talk further about the support structures of the *Ha'wiih*, and the processes that ensured good *Ha'wiih* governance.

## Appendix A: Definitions

*Haahuulthii* - refers to the rivers, beaches, forests, animals, food, medicines, songs, masks, names, dances and ceremonies that the *Ha'wiih* were responsible for.

*Maastchim* - Being of or belonging to a particular House. Translates as follows: (*maas* - house. *tchim* – with.) Not a definition of people, per se, but a definition of a relationship. One is *maastchim*; a participant in and supporter of a House and its Chief. In this regard, the word refers to the commoners of the Nation.

*Ha'wiih* - refers to a Chief in singular. *Ha'wilth* are the caretakers of the *haahuulthii* (see below). They controlled access to the *haahuulthii*, and had many executive responsibilities to the Nation's governance. Chiefs were ranked according to the richness of their *haahuulthii* and the strength of his House.

*Ha'wiih* – refers to Chiefs in plural.

*Ta'ii* – translates to mean 'Big'. Often used to refer to the head Chief, ie. *Ta'ii* Chief.

*Tiikawilth* – Not a Chieftainship, but a supporter of the Chief. It refers to a spot or seat in the LongHouse, (similar to parliamentary Cabinet.) May relate to many various duties or responsibilities, such as: protecting the *Ha'wilth*, speaker, seating master, warrior, Chief's Wolves...

*Ta'ii aqkin* – translates as follows: (*Ta'ii* – Eldest or biggest. *aqkin* – our.) Thus, the *ta'ii aqkin* refers to a specific House's chosen representative, which, traditionally, was the eldest male of the family. Each House often identified four *ta'ii aqkin* to support the family. *Ta'ii aqkin* did not necessarily possess a *haahuulthii*. They had access to these through their *Ha'wilth*. Therefore, some families were so large that they were considered 'Houses' of their own, and had their own House representatives, but they accessed the *haahuulthii* of their *Ha'wilth*.

*Ma'uas* – refers to groupings of family units that commonly resided with each other in the village. Each family grouping was acknowledged *Ma'uas* to reside and situate their families. It may take one, two, or as many long houses as necessary to fully accommodate the need of one *Ma'uas*. *Ma'uas* is specific to the village, and is not regarded in the same manner as *Ha'wiih Haahuulthii*.

*Huupuk<sup>w</sup>anum* – refers to the *Ha'wiih* powers. It is where the *Ha'wiih* get their power from. It is where their treasures are. It is where their laws flow from. When a *Ha'wiih* is throwing a feast, he must use the tools within his *Huupuk<sup>w</sup>anum* to ensure good governance and so that order and balance is maintained. *Huupuk<sup>w</sup>anum* has been utilized to refer to the work on a Tla-o-qui-aht modern day Constitution.

*iihpiit* – refers to the *Ha'wiih* advisors. Utilized in reference to the individuals chosen as advisors to the Chief for the purposes of decision making. Different *iihpiit* would be called upon depending upon what the issue of decision was.

## Appendix B: meeting dates and elder's names

Mtg #	Date	Names
1	April 27, 2005	John Tom, Marie (Precious) Martin, Ernest David, Joe Curley
2	May 11, 2005	Barney Williams Jr., John Tom, Reginald David, Marie (Precious) Martin, Ernest David, Joe Curley
3	May 30, 2005	Randal Frank, Jasper Frank, Barney Williams Jr., Reginald David, Ernest David, Joe Curley, Marie (Precious) Martin, John Tom, Tom Curley
4	June 2, 2005	<i>Ha'wiih</i> Howard Tom, Relaying discussion with <i>Ha'wiih</i> Ray Seitcher
5	June 13, 2005	Ray Sietcher, Howard Tom, Reginald David, Ernest David, Marie (Precious) Martin, Tom Curley, Archie Thompson, John Tom, Joe Curley, Jasper Frank and Randal Frank
6	July 7, 2005	Reginald David, Marie (Precious) Martin, Ernest David
7	July 14, 2005	Marie (Precious) Martin, Ernest David, Tom Curley, John Tom, Stanley Sam, Dixon Sam, Jasper Frank, Ray Seitcher
8	August 22, 2005	Alfred Tom, Reginald David, Ernest David, John Tom, Elmer Frank, Bruce Frank, Howard Tom, Nelly Joseph

## **Appendix C: ‘Draft’ *Ha’wiih* rank, provided at first elders meeting**

Chief Klaumxahunikinish – Chief Joseph  
Chief Joe Jim

Chief Wickininnish – Chief Edward Joseph Sr.

Chief Wickininnish – Chief Edward Joseph Jr.

Chief Wickininnish – Chief George Frank

Chief Hiyoueh – Chief Ray Seitcher

2<sup>nd</sup>. Chief Moo-chink – Chief Jimmy Jim

Chief Hyou-sunup-sheelth – Chief Bruce Frank

3<sup>rd</sup>. Chief Nakkuh – Chief Alec Jones

Chief Katherine Tom

4<sup>th</sup>. Chief Tsitukinum – Chief Francis Frank

Chief Hahee-thik-shette – Chief Alec Frank

5<sup>th</sup>. Chief Hyoueah – Chief Bob Martin Sr.

oots hetinkus

ounuk hetinkus

Amoothd- Mary Johnson

Hishtookmayeek – Barney Williams Jr.

## Appendix D: 'Draft' *Ha'wiih* and 'Sub-Chiefs'

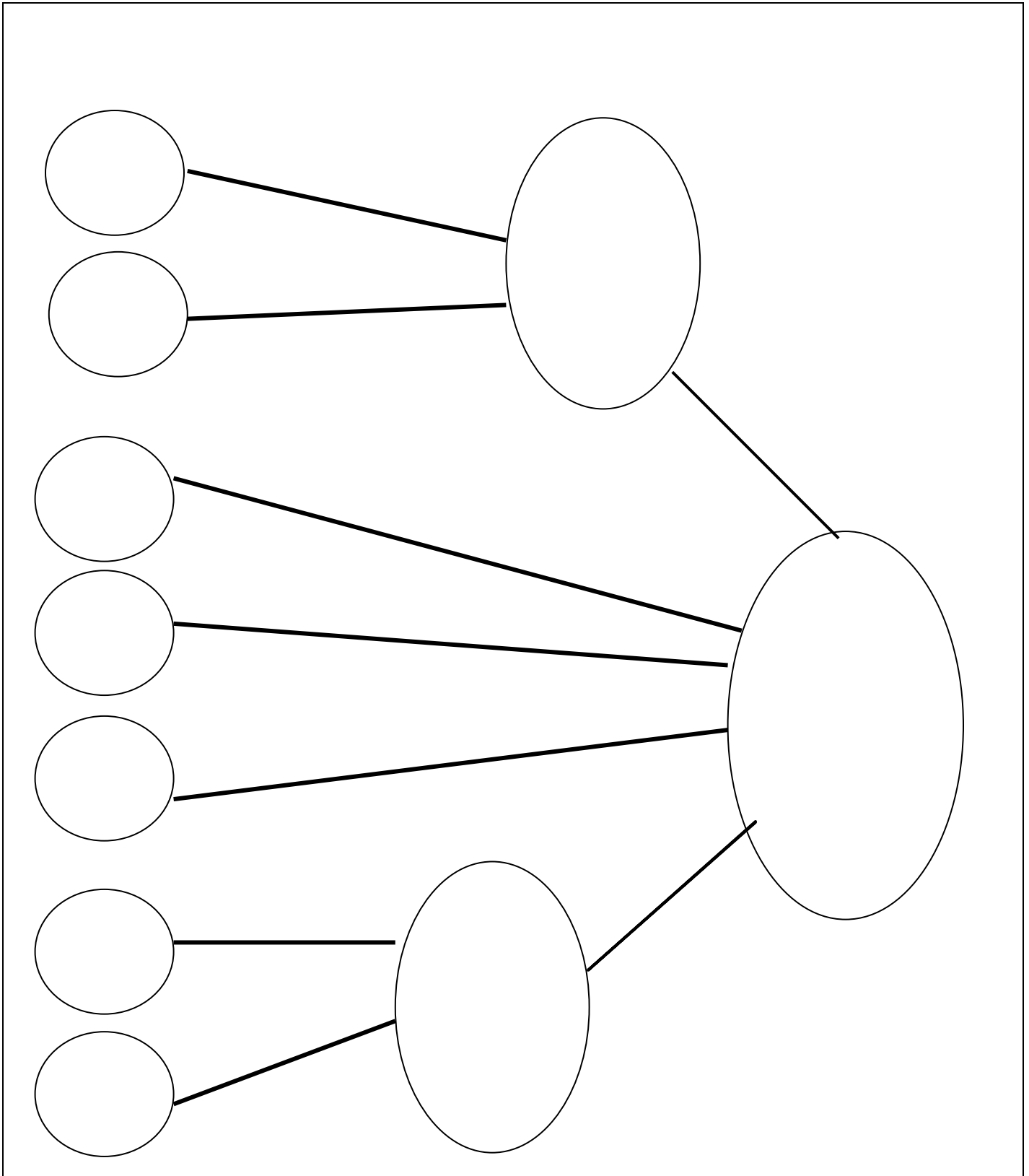
Hyuueh – Seitcher - Co-Chief	Wikiininnish – George - Co-Chief

2 <sup>nd</sup> – Hisquiisinupshiti – Butch
Sub-Chief – Tsitikinum

3 <sup>rd</sup> – Moochink – Bruce
Sub-Chief – Hyuusinupshiti

4 <sup>th</sup> – Nakkuh – Howard Tom

**Appendix E: *Hawiih* and their 'Houses' (yet to be identified)**



## Appendix F: Information specific to each *Ha'wiih*

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- ***Hyousinapshiilth***

- Tla-o-qui-aht wanted Tla-o-qui-aht roots in Chieftainship→ALEX FRANK. Found to be true descendant of Tla-o-qui-aht blood...
  - This lineage descends from *Hicqa* (1<sup>st</sup> son of *Nuukmis*)
  - *Hyousinapshiilth* (Alex Frank) son of *Nuukmiis* (F. Frank)
- 

- ***Hyoueh – Ray Seitcher***

- Ray Seitcher is descended from *Hyoueh* (2<sup>nd</sup> son of *Nuukmis*) 3<sup>rd</sup> marriage.
- 

- ***Wikininish***

- Edward Joseph descends from *Hyoueh* (2<sup>nd</sup> son of *Nuukmis*) 1<sup>st</sup> marriage.
  - Ed Joseph -> no children...thus passed title to sister's (Nellie Joseph) son (George Frank)
  - R.Seitcher and G.Frank (*Wikinnish*) agreed to stand at same status at a feast...
- 

- ***Naaq<sup>w</sup>a*** – Howard Tom:

- Alex Jones is descended from *Hyoueh* (2<sup>nd</sup> son of *Nuukmis*) 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage.
  - Felix Tom, was distant Nephew to Alex Jones.
  - Felix Tom – *Muchalaht*.
  - Mrs. Alex Jones passed it to Katherine Tom.
  - Reference to draft Chart...Should have Howard Tom identified as *Ha'wiih* now...Not Katherine Tom.
- 

- ***Moochink*** (Jimmy Jim) was to Pass Chieftainship to Elmer Joseph...But Elmer Joseph passed away before.

- Jimmy Jim felt that *maastchim* were not looking after him, so he wanted the 'title' to pass away w/ him.
- It very contentious to bring 'title' back (*nuumaak*) or to play w/ these things.
- Jimmy Jim – *Moochink*...did not pass 'title'...
- Other Nations up the coast have spoken to this discrepancy.
- ***Moochink*** – Chieftainship not passed on;
  - Chief did not announce it or host a feast;

- Old Man *Moochink* asked Chester Brown to sit in his seat for him...He said “*Wik*” (No)
  - He then asked Alex Frank Sr., but Columba recommended that he not take the seat. He also said “*Wik*”.
- 

- ***Hyoueh*** – Robert Martin
- Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha’wiih* accepted gifts from the Martin family in previous Potlatches and stood with the respectful family at feasts. We must continue to acknowledge them...*Ha’wiih* cannot be seen to be in error...
- Nations up the coast invited to witness the statements in the past.
- Those feasts affirmed the Tla-o-qui-aht *Haahuulthii* to include those *Ha’wiih*.
- 5 – 7 years ago, Tla-o-qui-aht *Ha’wiih* stood together to state that they will operate under ONE *Haahuulthii* for treaty purposes... therefore anything related to *Haahuulthii* should have ALL of their signatures on it to support this fact.
- 5<sup>th</sup> seat noted on draft Chart→Bob Martin was a Great Supporter of *Ha’wiih* at Potlatches.
- We must utilize all of the resources to support our *Ha’wiih*... Our *Ha’wiih* **need** *tiikawilth*... the Martin family were acknowledged in rank as *tiikawilth*.
- People given “Seat” to sit beside *Ha’wiih* (in support of the *Ha’wiih*), not given ‘chieftainship’

## Appendix G: References

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- <sup>i</sup> Tla-o-qui-aht Treaty Self-Government Strategy. (July 25, 2005). P.3.
- <sup>ii</sup> Nuu-chah-nulth Treaty table. (June 2004). Jurisdiction and Governance Mandate working group: Nuu-chah-nulth Huupikwanum/Constitution development. Somass Hall, Tseshah reserve, Port Alberni, BC.
- <sup>iii</sup> Each of the participants referred to above, are related to the researcher in some manner or other, mainly as Grandparent or Aunt/Uncle.
- <sup>iv</sup> Martin, Ron, and Oslen, Sylvia. (1998). Tla-o-qui-aht Government: Where have we been and where are we going? Victoria, BC. P. 33.
- <sup>v</sup> Martin, Ron, and Oslen, Sylvia. (1998). Tla-o-qui-aht Government: Where have we been and where are we going? Victoria, BC. P. 46.
- <sup>vi</sup> *Ibid.* P. 47.
- <sup>vii</sup> As described by Reginald David. November 16, 2000.
- <sup>viii</sup> Drucker, Philip. (1955) Indians of the Northwest Coast. The Natural History Press, New York. P. 108.
- <sup>ix</sup> Personal communication to the author. November 16, 2000.
- <sup>x</sup> As described by Calligraphy Mural in Tla-o-qui-aht Band Office.
- <sup>xi</sup> Barbara Lane. Ethnographic and Ethnohistoric Background of the Native People of Meares Island, Clayoquot Sound. P. 28.
- <sup>xii</sup> Ron Martin. (1996). Principles of Tla-o-qui-aht Self-Government. Victoria, BC. P. 65.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Ron Martin. (1996). Principles of Tla-o-qui-aht Self-Government. Victoria, BC. P. 65.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Martin, Ron, and Oslen, Sylvia. (1998). Tla-o-qui-aht Government: Where have we been and where are we going? Victoria, BC. P. 22.
- <sup>xv</sup> Martin, Ron, and Oslen, Sylvia. (1998). Tla-o-qui-aht Government: Where have we been and where are we going? Victoria, BC. P. 23.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Rose Cootes in Nuu-chah-nulth Community & Human Services, (August 1996). Governing Self: Self Government. Port Alberni, BC. P. 17.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Reginald David is the Grandfather of the author and a respected elder in the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations. His guidance and persistence has been integral in my own cultural rediscovery. His participation and sharing of his knowledge is also greatly appreciated.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Nuu-chah-nulth Community & Human Services, (August 1996). Governing Self: Self Government. Port Alberni, BC. P. 19; and Martin, Ron, and Oslen, Sylvia. (1998). Tla-o-qui-aht Government: Where have we been and where are we going? Victoria, BC. P. 23.
- <sup>xix</sup> Barbara Lane. Ethnographic and Ethnohistoric Background of the Native People of Meares Island, Clayoquot Sound. P. 41.
- <sup>xx</sup> Anonymous. (February 2, 1999). Hawilthpatak Nuu-chah-nulth: Nuu-chah-nulth Ways of Governance. Background paper from the Jurisdiction and Governance Mandate Working Group. Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, Port Alberni, B.C. P.36