

**Council of Yukon First Nations
24th Annual General Assembly
September 14 to 16, 2004
Hosted by Council of Yukon First Nations
11 Nisutlin Drive
Whitehorse, Yukon Territory
Summary Minutes**

Contents:

	Page Number
Attendance	1-4
<u>Agenda Items:</u>	
1. Introductions and Opening Remarks	4
2. Rules of Order	7
3. Acceptance of the Agenda	7
4. Elders Address	7
5. Appointments to the Resolution Committee	8
6. Review of Resolutions from the 2003 GA	8
7. Guest Speakers	9
8. Gwich'in Joining CYFN	13
9. Gwich'in Joining CYFN – continued discussions	16
10. AFN Presentation on Residential Schools in Canada	27
11. Office of the Grand Chief	27
12. Assembly of First Nations Report	28
13. Constitutional Summit Process - Commissioners Appointed	31
14. Minutes of the GA 2003 - Resolution	34
15. First Nation Forestry Program - Resolution	35
16. Tulsequah Chief Mine - Resolution	35
17. Transboundary Negotiations - Resolution	35
18. Community Concerns	36
19. Closing Remarks	36
20. General Assembly Resolutions #1 - #8	39
<u>Motions:</u>	
#1. To accept the Rules of Order as presented	7
#2. To accept the agenda as amended	7
#3. To move the GA into in-camera status	16
#4. To move the GA out of in-camera status	25
#5. To close nominations for the Constitutional Summit Commissioners	34
#6. To table Community Concerns to the next Leadership meeting	36

Attendance: (We apologize for any errors or omissions).

Grand Chief Ed Schultz, Council of Yukon First Nations
 George Henry, Chair for the General Assembly
 Brian MacDonald, Co-chair for the General Assembly
 Roddy Blackjack, Executive Elder
 Percy Henry, Executive Elder
 Daryn Leas, Chief Legal Advisor for CYFN
 Dave Joe, Legal Counsel
 Roberta Yeomans, Executive Assistant to the Grand Chief of CYFN
 Rick O'Brien, Assembly of First Nations Yukon Vice Chief
 Denise Beattie, Constitutional Summit Office
 Lulu Tizya, Self Government Secretariat

Brenda Bosely, Self Government Secretariat
 Lucille Jack, CYFN
 Marie McLaren, CYFN
 Cassandra Puckett, CYFN
 Gayle Corry, CYFN
 Brenda Jackson, CYFN
 Lori Duncan, CYFN
 Liz Walker, CYFN
 Anna Fraser, CYFN
 Ann Marie Swan, CYFN
 Keith Maguire, CYFN
 Gail Barnaby, CYFN
 Joan Graham, CYFN
 Graham Tracy, CYFN
 Tribal Chief Hammond Dick, Kaska Dena Tribal Council
 Tribal Chief Andy Carvill, Dahk-Ka Tlingit Tribal Council
 Dene National Chief Noeline Villebrun
 Chief Johnny Kay
 Chief Peter Ross
 Chief Richard Nerysoo
 Chief Charlie Furlong
 Chief Gary Harrison, Chickaloon Village, Alaska
 Louise Gordon, Taku River Tlingit First Nation
 Charlene Belleau, AFN
 Michelle Tochacek, AFN
 Clarence Alexander, Fort Yukon, Alaska
 Larry Bagnell, MP
 Lorraine Peter, MLA
 Peter Jenkins, Deputy Premier, YTG
 Warren Holland, Executive Assistant to the Premier
 Shari Borgford, INAC
 Dave Shewchuk, RCMP
 Doug Graham, Association of Yukon Communities
 Fran Asp
 Bonnie Harpe
 Joanne MacDonald
 Steve Smith
 Angie Wabisca
 Mary Jane Jim Cant
 Tim Cant
 Tiffany Smith
 Ray Jackson
 Judy Gingell
 Shirley Adamson
 Richard Sidney
 Sandra Johnson
 Roy Buyck
 Dennis Buyck
 Norma Kassi
 Patti Boss
 Clifford McLeod
 Bob Charlie
 Agnes Mills
 Greg Charlie
 Dan Cresswell
 Kenn Roberts
 John Burdek
 Millie E. Johnson
 Norma Shorty
 Christine Hager
 Jean Gleason
 Anne Marie Miller
 Louise Clethero
 Dave Roddick
 Gloria Adamson
 Bessie Bayne
 Ken Hodgins
 Heather Saggars
 Dixie Stevenson
 Ken Kane
 Barbara Hare
 Rita Tisiga
 Edie Bohmer
 Elizabeth Moses Asp
 Betty Martin Sjodin
 Carl Sidney
 Delilah Adamson
 Corinne McKay
 Victoria Fred

Eileen Koe
Johnnie Charlie
Betty Firth
Sheila Greenland
Brian Martin
Leslie Blake
Wilburt Firth
James Andre
Dale Semple
Danny Greenland
John Koe
Peter J. Kay
Phillip Blake
Effie Norman
Charlene Blake
Darby Blake
Darren Blake

Shawn Van Loon
Melanie Blake
Norm Snowshoe
Melba Mitchell
Tom Wright
Elizabeth Hansen
AJ Johns, Cameraman
Luke Smith, Keyah Productions
Elaine Chambers, dāna Nāye Ventures
Bruce Luzner, YIDC
Vic Istchenko, CBC
Dave Croft, CBC Radio
Jason Small, Whitehorse Star
Roxanne Livingstone, CHON FM
Chuck Hendrie, CHON FM
Jenn Kelland, CHON FM
Ron McFadyen, CKRW

Carcross/Tagish First Nation (CTFN)

Chief Mark Wedge
Bill Barrett Jr.
Eileen Wally
Cindy Huebschwerlen
George Shepherd
Robert Wally
Winnie Atlin

Charlene Burns
Harold Chambers
James Miller
Coralee Johns
Frances Woolsey
Carol Chambers Boss

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN)

Chief James Allen
Kathy Van Bibber
Shadelle Chambers
Doris Anderson
Moose Jackson
Gerald Brown
Paul Birckel

Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation (LSCFN)

Chief Eddie Skookum
Shirley Bellmore
Clyde Blackjack
Johnny Sam
Robbie Cashin
Joseph O'Brien
Mary Tulk

Kluane First Nation (KFN)

Chief Bob Dickson
Robin Bradasch
Kluane Martin
Tosh Southwick
Richard Dickson
Pauly Sias

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH)

Chief Darren Taylor
Clara Van Bibber
Lisa Hutton
Roberta Joseph
Peggy Kormendy
Doreen Olsen
Christine Blanchard

Selkirk First Nation (SFN)

Chief Lucy McGinty
Lizzy Hall
Sharon Sims
Carmen Baker
Danny Joe
Audrey Baker

First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (NND)

Chief Steven Buyck
Roberta Hager
Albert Genier
Alice Buyck
Laura Crowthers
Robert Hager
Jimmy Lucas
Dorothy Profeit
Cathy Germaine
Dorothy Genier

Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (TKC)

Chief Ruth Massie

Teslin Tlingit Council (TTC)

Chief Eric Morris
Peter Johnston
CJ Marion Sheldon
Sam Johnston
Matt Thom
Gwen Wally

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN)

Chief Joe Linklater
Esau Schafer
Phares Thomas
Glenna Tetlich
Tammy Josie

White River First Nation (WRFN)

Chief Angela Demit
Stanley Jack
Jessie Barrett

Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN)

Chief Mike Smith
Leslie McDiarmid
Jessie Dawson
Steven Shorty
Elaine Shorty
Rose Charlie

Day 1 – Tuesday, September 14, 2004.

Kits with a variety of handouts were distributed and made available to delegates.

The Annual General Assembly (GA) was called to order at 9:45 am. Opening prayer said by Percy Henry. A moment of silence was held.

1. Introductions and Opening Remarks

GEORGE HENRY introduced himself and welcomed his co-chair Brian MacDonald and all delegates to the 24th Annual General Assembly of the Council of Yukon First Nations.

RODDY BLACKJACK said everyone was together as one people. He spoke about traditional knowledge and culture, and its importance for Yukon First Nations.

PERCY HENRY said he had begun his work over thirty years ago, and welcomed everyone to the GA.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ addressed the GA standing at the podium. He welcomed everyone to the 24th GA of CYFN. It was his privilege and honour to invite everyone to take part in the dialogue. Guests included Gwich'in people from the NWT who share the same issues as we do in the Yukon he said. He wanted to establish a commission as directed from past General Assemblies. A commission at 'arms length' from the Grand Chief's office, to undertake constitutional hearings with all the communities in the Yukon. We are confronted with issues in health care, education, social development, and extraction of our natural resources. Our only success will be in keeping our bonds strong, to anchor our rights as Indigenous peoples, the rights that our grandparents had before us. The constitutional review process will help in that. The Grand Chief was seeking nominations for individuals to be appointed to this commission, to develop a new regional entity. To ensure all forms of government are willing to work with our people. We have our Gwich'in brothers and sisters here at the table today, they wish to develop a stronger alliance he said. We have strong ties to the Gwich'in people. The Dene National Chief is also in attendance he said. Issues include economic development, biodiversity and climate change. We know that the oil and gas industry is interested in our land. There is no

doubt they want to be in our backyard. Our only realistic chance for a satisfactory arrangement is to ensure that we protect vital resources such as our wildlife. If we fail to forge the necessary alliances, then they will divide and conquer, and that is unsatisfactory because it's not in keeping with who we are. I look forward to the dialogue during this GA.

GEORGE HENRY asked the Chiefs to introduce themselves and their delegations.

CHIEF MARK WEDGE welcomed everyone and introduced his delegation for CTFN. It was an honour to be here he said. He was looking forward to new endeavours.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS welcomed everyone and introduced his delegation. He thanked TKC and KDFN for allowing everyone on their traditional lands. He spoke about the sacrifices previous leaders had made, saying it was an honour to be in attendance.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN welcomed everyone and introduced his delegation. He expressed his anticipation that the GA would be successful.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE welcomed everyone to the TKC traditional territory and introduced here delegates.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM welcomed everyone and introduced his delegation. He hoped to have a good GA.

CHIEF LUCY MCGINTY introduced her delegation. She thanked the Grand Chief, and the KDFN as well as TKC for their part in hosting the assembly. It had been planned for SFN but the forest fires caused it to be cancelled she said. She hoped that in 2005 Selkirk First Nation would host the GA. She welcomed everyone to the GA.

CHIEF STEVEN BUYCK introduced his delegation. He said they were embarking on a journey to make themselves strong, a solid people. We need our people together, making this change and we'll do it. I look forward to the next few days he said.

CHIEF ANGELA DEMIT welcomed everyone and introduced her delegation. She thanked TKC and KDFN for the invitation to their traditional territory. She had great respect for the Leadership she said. She invited people to assist her First nation.

CHIEF HAMMOND DICK spoke in the traditional language as Tribal Chief for the Kaska Tribal Council. He welcomed everyone to the GA, including those visitors from elsewhere. The next few days would be important, and as Kaska people we are open to discussion and to explore new avenues. We want a strong organization in place, and we believe working together is a goal we all seek he said.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR introduced his delegation. He was honoured to be in attendance, and wanted to develop an organization that met the needs of self governing First Nations. He looked forward to good discussions.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER introduced his delegation. He thanked KDFN and TKC for allowing everyone to their traditional territory. He especially welcomed the Gwich'in from the NWT. He also welcomed the Leadership from the AFN. He encouraged KDFN to join in at the table during the GA, saying we cannot move forward as a whole unless we all sit together. He reminded everyone this was the culmination of work, the actual work itself happens all through the year he said.

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN said it had been a busy year for the AFN. He thanked both Tiffany Smith, and Nicole Kuster for their past hard work. He looked forward to seeing the KDFN delegates during the GA.

CHIEF JOHNNY KAY introduced his delegation from the NWT. He said it was an honour to be in attendance.

CHIEF CHARLIE FULONG said he was from the Aklavik Indian Band. He thanked all those in attendance for welcoming them. He introduced his delegates. The President of the Gwich'in Tribal Council, Fred Carmichael, speaks through our leaders at this table he said. He spoke about the importance of unity among the First Nations. He looked forward to a sharing of ideas and information and said our Northern resources are being looked at by Canada and big companies, so there is a need for unity among the First Nations. He spoke about the oil and gas pipeline saying it would have a large impact on both the Yukon and NWT.

CHIEF PETER ROSS said it was an honour to be sitting at the table on KDFN and TKC homeland, to have us sit and discuss common issues from both territories. He introduced his delegates. He hoped that one day he would see a strong nation that could work together.

CHIEF RICHARD NERYSOO introduced his delegates saying he had a personal connection to many of the people around the room. He was pleased to be included at the table, saying the time is short. When things are hard we need the strength to go on. We have an honourable history, and honourable leaders. He spoke about the value of all the Leadership working together and coming together.

GEORGE HENRY recognized some guests in attendance, and spoke about the planned agenda for the next three days.

2. Rules of Order

BRIAN MACDONALD referred everyone to the Rules of Order as handed out in the kits. He read them aloud as everyone followed along. The following motion came forward;

Motion 1.	To accept the Rules of Order as presented.
Moved by:	CJ Marion Sheldon
Seconded by:	Harold Chambers
Passed by:	consensus

JESSIE DAWSON introduced the delegation from KDFN, saying Chief Mike Smith was expected to attend later during the GA.

3. Acceptance of the Agenda

BRIAN MACDONALD reviewed the agenda as handed out in the kits. Kathy Van Bibber asked if people could speak to the reports rather than having them all read out loud. Chief Angela Demit asked for some additions to the agenda. Robert Hager asked that constitutional issues be moved forward on the agenda. Chief Eric Morris said any remaining outstanding concerns could be addressed at the upcoming Leadership meeting. Chief James Allen asked that time be set aside for in-camera constitutional discussions on day two. Issues that were discussed during the GA will be evident in the sequence of these minutes. The following motion came forward;

Motion 2.	To accept the agenda as amended.
Moved by:	Chief Eric Morris
Seconded by:	Kathy Van Bibber
Passed by:	consensus

JAMES ALLEN said he was unsure of protocol, but requested a frank discussion among Yukon First Nations and the visitors from the NWT. He asked that those discussions be held in-camera, without the media in attendance.

4. Elders Address

PERCY HENRY addressed the GA saying it was time to take government to task for the way Yukon First Nations were being treated. He spoke about hunting rights for First Nations. He reminded everyone to think back to Together Today...For Our Children Tomorrow. He spoke about the youth and the need to involve them in the First Nations government process. He encouraged the Chiefs around the table to work in unity. In the Yukon we have healthy land, but people are coming in and taking over he said.

RODDY BLACKJACK spoke about First Nations culture. We have to stick together as First Nations, for our future generations. My grandfather told me to protect our rights as First Nations. We are getting away from what I heard from my Elders, we are getting away from the past traditional and cultural ways he said. He spoke about his displeasure with the Canadian gun laws and the infringement on First Nations regarding their hunting rights. He encouraged everyone to unify and make themselves strong as First Nations, saying he was glad to see the NWT at the table.

Lunch break.

5. Appointments to the Resolution Committee

GEORGE HENRY said nominations would be accepted. Those named to the Resolution Committee were:

- Steve Smith
- Daryn Leas
- Bonnie Harpe

They would assist in drafting the resolutions for the GA.

6. Review of Resolutions from the 2003 GA

GEORGE HENRY referred everyone to the minutes of the CYFN 23rd Annual General Assembly, July 7-10, 2003 as included in the kits. He asked that delegates review those minutes and a resolution would come forward later during the GA.

CJ MARION SHELDON asked for a review of the 2003 GA Resolutions.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ reviewed the resolutions out loud as they were included in the minutes of 2003.

Regarding #1 – Compensation for Volunteer Chiefs, he had tried to work on a First Nations public service initiative. It's been a slow file, and we've not gained consensus among the communities, nor have we secured funding. Looking forward to meeting the new Minister for HRDC to move it forward said the Grand Chief.

#2 – Yukon Territorial Tribal Policing, a committee was struck and has tried to put together a proposal that could be funded. This falls into the realm of Justice. There has to be cohesion on how to implement this. We had asked for letters of support, but only some responded. Some First Nations did not want CYFN to respond in this area. Trying to identify funding streams. Given the complexities on the current negotiations on Justice, it is a challenging resolution to implement he said.

#3 – First Nation Employment, we do have a First Nation Public Service initiative. Our own citizens will have priority employment status. We implemented wage parity. We lend information to all the communities in this area.

#4 – Elders Summit, we directed staff at CYFN to line item participation of all Elders. We continue to advocate that there be a standing Elders Council and they will be part of the constitutional review discussions.

#5 – TKC Tutor Assisted Homework Program, the Grand Chief asked his staff to follow up on this issue. There was no resolution #6.

#7 – Education Conference, we have not been successful in getting funds to hold this conference. The challenge is finding funding.

#8 – Yukon First Nations Cemetery, a letter had been sent to Whitehorse Mayor and Council to allow for the building of spirit houses and cemeteries. No response to the letter had been received to date. This is an issue of importance, especially since the recent vandalism, these are cultural sites that need respect said the Grand Chief.

#9 – Constitutional Summits, we have the constitutional review on this agenda.

#10 – AFN National Chief Candidates, made those representations to the entire AFN executive. Will try to ensure that it comes forward.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said during the course of Leadership meetings throughout the year, many resolutions are dealt with and followed up.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said regarding home tutoring, YTG had put funding forward for a home tutoring program that communities could apply for.

7. Guest Speakers

DEPUTY PREMIER PETER JENKINS thanked the GA for inviting the Yukon Government to speak to the delegates. Premier Fentie was unable to attend due to his attendance at the First Ministers' Health Care Summit in Ottawa. Aboriginal health care in Canada is one of the foremost items on our agenda, and is extremely high on the Northern Premiers' list he said. He spoke about three priorities for YTG;

1. cooperation in governance,
2. formalization of government to government relationships, and
3. making First Nations full partners in the economic development of the Yukon.

The objective in government to government relationships is to remove barriers. Results of these discussions is a commitment enshrined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). It establishes a Yukon forum, formalizing our relationships as governments where leaders will determine common priorities. Intention of our government is to protect this in territorial legislation, we are making these principles law he said. Our government entered into a protocol with First Nations. We have identified reform processes which include consultation, and are looking for a product at the end of the consultations. Under economic development partnerships we have discussed economic independence. Commitment is regional economic development. Our government is continuing in efforts to ensure First Nations are full partners. The North Yukon economic development agreement is an example of responsible governance. There are potential benefits when partnerships are created among the private sector and First Nations. This results in mutual benefits for all of us. Cooperation and collaboration is fundamental to our government. Benefits are happening in the NWT due to this. We believe the successes are a result of this inclusive approach in partnership with First Nations. He conveyed best wishes from the Yukon Government to the GA.

CHIEF STEVEN BUYCK said when referring to last year's minutes, the speech given today by Minister Jenkins was almost identical to the one he gave last year. We haven't moved very far. There doesn't seem to be collaborative government. We had developed an education report and established a child welfare protocol agreement, but we didn't move forward on them. Our peoples' education and health issues are not being dealt with. Premier Fentie said health was a priority, but it doesn't seem that way. Where is this collaborative governance asked the Chief, we aren't being heard.

PETER JENKINS said he didn't agree entirely with the remarks, education issues had moved forward under Minister Edzerza which would be addressed. You have the right to draw down education. Health care is the focus because of initiatives by the three Northern Premiers as well as others in Canada. It's an issue we recognize as contributing to the difficulties that First

Nations are experiencing. We could do a better job in delivering health care to First Nations, and the Federal Government has a fiduciary responsibility in this case. We have a number of commitments on which we are moving forward and we are making strides in all those areas. Advice given me on the review of the Children's Act was to not to do anything. Our government didn't take that approach, we put together a consultation process that recognizes First Nations in the Yukon. We are prepared to sign agreements with First Nations. It is important to have one uniform approach to the Children's Act. Self governing First Nations have a right to draw down that authority. There are a lot of social issues we must address. He extended an invitation to Chief Buyck to review the issues through a follow up meeting.

ROBERT HAGER said he saw no new jobs for his people in his community. The road into Mayo was in dangerous condition. Things are not happening. Chapter 22 is not being upheld. There are supposed to be a certain percentage of First Nations people at work. After 12 years we're still sitting in the same place, there's no education, no health care, and nothing in place. I want sit down with you said the NND Elder.

PETER JENKINS said our government has made commitments. There's been brush clearing along the roads from Stewart Crossing to Pelly, with the assistance of First Nations people. Pelly airport was cleared with a local initiative. In Mayo there has been involvement on the mining front, dealing with United Keno Hill Mines. The amount of government jobs in Mayo, is not a political undertaking, that's done by the Public Service Commission who does the hiring in all cases. There will be additional brush clearing along the highways he said.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ thanked the Deputy Premier/Minister for his attendance.

LARRY BAGNELL approached the podium. He would be in attendance during the GA to answer any questions. He spoke about his appointment as parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources. As programs came forward, he would bring them to the attention of First Nations. Great potential for jobs. He spoke about greenhouse effects in the Yukon and North. The government is looking at strategies to increase capacity and training he said.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN said as self governing First Nations we realize that with some of the issues we face, we must deal directly with Ottawa. Programs coming out of DIA are for on-reserve that we can't access. If you could bring that issue up in Ottawa that would be appreciated. Canada has to set up something separate for self governing First Nations.

LARRY BAGNELL said there had been examples in previous federal budgets for people on-reserve, and I brought us (Yukon First Nations) forward. Sometimes money for off-reserve has been given to agencies. He asked the delegates to provide him specific examples, and he would try to help them with Ottawa. There are lots of federal departments that don't know what Canada has signed with Yukon First Nations.

DOUG GRAHAM approached the podium greeting everyone saying it was a pleasure to be in attendance. Many of the difficulties facing First Nations are the same as those faced by Yukon municipalities he said. The Association of Yukon Communities also wants to cooperate with First Nations and the communities, and a number of programs were coming out that could be

utilized. We want to cooperate with you to address issues he said. He spoke about a local government leadership forum scheduled to be held in Whitehorse, and asked First Nations to send their representatives. As a City Councillor I want to assure you that we will do all that we can to carry out the changes in bylaws necessary to meet your needs in relation to cemeteries he said. He thanked the GA for inviting him to speak.

DAVE SHEWCHUK thanked the GA for the invitation to speak. First Nations policing is a priority for the force he said. He spoke about a recent tour of the RCMP Training Academy in Regina by the Grand Chief, where Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizen, Mark Janus had graduated and is now working as a police officer in the Watson Lake detachment. He spoke about a protocol signed with TTC and other accomplishments undertaken over the last year. He intended to visit each community to meet with Chiefs to discuss issues and needs, and he asked for help in recruiting Yukon First Nations people for the RCMP.

ROBERTA JOSEPH said in past the aboriginal policing program had not been successful.

DAVE SHEWCHUCK said he supported the hiring of as many First Nations in the Yukon as is possible.

ROBERT HAGER asked when the Police Superintendent would visit Mayo, as he had some issues to discuss.

DAVE SHEWCHUCK responded that he would be visiting Mayo, and would speak to the First Nations.

DANNY JOE asked when would the RCMP visit his community of Pelly. He had many issues to bring forward he said.

DAVE SHEWCHUCK said he would make it a priority.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN asked about drug problems. The RCMP seemed powerless in the apprehension of dealers in the communities. A drug strategy needed to be developed so as to deal with the crisis.

DAVE SHEWCHUCK said the RCMP had a plan, and over the next few months things would be happening. We are trying to identify the major problem in each community.

CHIEF HAMMOND DICK asked about tribal policing, and enforcement initiatives.

DAVE SHEWCHUCK said he supported tribal policing. He was interested in having First Nations help the RCMP within the communities.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said in past he had spoken with Chief Superintendent Shewchuck, who had a background in organized crime. He would be a big help in reducing the drug problems facing the Yukon, and he thanked him for his presentation.

SHARI BORGFORD approached the podium. She spoke about changing relationships between INAC, First Nations and the Yukon Government. Elizabeth Hanson had been appointed as Regional Director General for the Yukon region. The Yukon region would see a greater convergence of INAC Aboriginal and Northern agendas, and self government and Indian Act agendas. Strengthened ties with headquarters resources, among federal departments and other governments, the sharing of services among regions and departments and a strong emphasis on policy capacity. The Yukon region has four new directorates, each of which reports to the Regional Director General she said. They are Governance, Environment, Strategic Investments and Services, and Corporate Services. Information sheets were available which expanded on the functions of each Directorate. Further information was available at www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/yt/index.

JUDY GINGELL said what about employment for First Nations, especially in senior management positions. What are the processes that had been established so that Yukon First Nations are placed into those positions she asked. There are no senior management positions held by First Nations within the federal department.

SHARI BORGFORD said we have 38 percent Aboriginal employees within the department. There are vacancies, and the director is looking at promoting and giving them to First Nations people.

JUDY GINGELL said she would be watching, and following up on the situation. She wanted to ensure that some high level, senior Federal Government positions would be occupied by Yukon First Nations.

Break.

8. Gwich'in Joining CYFN

CHIEF CHARLIE FURLONG said the Gwich'in Tribal Council represents four First Nations. He provided historical facts as to how their Tribal Council had been formalized and what had taken place in recent history. Last April the CYFN Leadership welcomed the Gwich'in to the table he said. Emphasis is on cultural and family ties, our tradition and culture knows no boundaries. We offer 25 years of experience in dealing with government. We offer the hard lessons learned and valuable experience from our Elders who guide us. We offer you the opportunity to strengthen your organization and to work with the Gwich'in while we too plan our future. We have many commonalities. It is only natural that we become members of the family again. He referred everyone to the draft resolution as had been handed out. The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline is one of the largest economic initiatives North of 60. Impacts on our governments will be huge. I believe a collective force will strengthen the powers of our Leadership. It will give us a voice. I believe that by accepting the Gwich'in, it will increase our voice on the political front with Canada and industry. We will have a strong voice North of 60. I believe the time for our nations to unite is now. I believe it is critical that we set aside our personal agendas and refocus, look at the larger picture. If they want our resources, they have to pay for them, and a united voice will show our control of our land. We want to set conditions with better government services. We view this as family coming back home, the prodigal son coming home.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said there had been dialogue among the Yukon First Nations Leadership on the matter of the Gwich'in joining CYFN. If there was a desire by the GA to go in-camera during discussions, that could be done. If we are to undertake this decision, we do so with absolute due diligence, and regardless of the outcome on discussions, we still stand as brothers and sisters. The Grand Chief asked delegates how they wished to proceed. The resolution handed out was to be considered a draft. Over the last months he had heard various opinions associated to the Council's administrative capacity, and he asked how to proceed.

GEORGE HENRY asked for direction from the GA.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR said an in-camera session needed to be considered. Due diligence needed to be taken into consideration. I'm all for a central organization, we do have a lot of common interests, but we must carefully consider our amalgamation. Still a lot of unanswered questions, and I'm not prepared to say yes or no at this time.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said the media could be asked to leave, but all other participants could remain in the assembly.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN said he wanted discussions among only the Yukon First Nations. He suggested each First Nation be asked their opinion on how to proceed.

CHIEF RICHARD NERYSOO said everyone from their group would respect the need for private discussions among the Yukon First Nations.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN said it would be easier to ask the hard questions if the GA went in-camera.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS suggested consulting the Elders for their advice.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ suggested general discussion continue for the day, and the Chair could reconvene the GA tomorrow in-camera. We could ask our Gwich'in brothers and sisters to join us later he said.

SAM JOHNSTON said there was no need to go in-camera. They are related to us, why are we pulling out on this. They come to us in good faith and I don't think we want to turn them away again.

CHIEF MARK WEDGE said there were difficult questions to be asked, but it was not necessary to go in-camera. He wanted to ensure that First Nations with difficult questions be allowed to voice them.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS suggested to move the resolution and open the floor to discussion.

GEORGE HENRY asked the GA, should discussions be held in-camera from the media.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS said he wanted the discussions open, it was a historic moment.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR asked the media to be removed since there would be some hard questions asked.

CHIEF MARK WEDGE said it would be easier for us to have discussions without the media in attendance.

CHIEF BOB DICKSON said he agreed, in-camera from the media.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM agreed, in-camera from the media.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said my people in Old Crow demand accountability. There is nothing here that we cannot discuss in public.

CHIEF ANGELA DEMIT said discussions should be open but the media should be dismissed.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE said only the media should be asked to leave.

CHIEF HAMMOND DICK said the discussions were really important to the Yukon public. Media plays a role in providing communications to our grass roots people. I am still undecided on the in-camera issue.

CHIEF STEVEN BUYCK said he agreed there was nothing to hide, so he was in agreement either way. Media could be asked to leave.

CARMEN BAKER said SFN agreed to leave the media involved.

GEORGE HENRY said he needed clear direction from the GA.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said we need to be decisive. The people we represent in the communities are listening to our voices as we speak. He acknowledged that some issues may be sensitive and media should be blocked out on that front. He proposed to reconvene the following day in-camera from the media.

GEORGE HENRY announced that the GA would reconvene in the morning in-camera, with media blocked.

CHIEF CHARLIE FURLONG said we don't want to drain your resources or take away from your programs and services. We come to you as a Gwich'in Government. Benefits of us coming together is that we have a large delegation of Gwich'in people in Whitehorse. It may be possible and a benefit to set up structures in Whitehorse that can deal with land claims issues. It may benefit us to have representation in Whitehorse.

GEORGE HENRY said the in-camera sessions would be held as needed.

CHIEF RICHARD NERYSOO said we made gifts for the Chiefs. He handed out beautiful zippered briefcases embossed with both the CYFN and Gwich'in Tribal Council logos. The two emblems, together, portrayed unity he said.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Day 2 – Wednesday, September 15, 2004.

Meeting came to order at 9:30 am.

GEORGE HENRY welcomed everyone back to the GA. He thanked everyone who had made last evening's celebration so great. The following motion came forward;

Motion 3. To move the CYFN Annual General Assembly into in-camera status, asking all members of the media to please leave immediately.
Moved by: Carol Chambers Boss
Seconded by: Kathy Van Bibber
Passed by: consensus

At his time all media left the room.

IN CAMERA

9. Gwich'in Joining CYFN – continued discussions

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ addressed the GA saying over the course of time the relationship with First Nations in the NWT had evolved. In recent years we have expanded our relationships through the Arctic Athabaskan Council. President Fred Carmichael had met with Leadership and indicated a desire to improve relationships. To rekindle historical relationships. The Yukon-NWT boundary is a jurisdictional boundary for the government of Canada, that's how Canada chooses to represent itself. We were neither consulted nor asked where those boundaries were placed. If we are truly self governing, that means we define who we are. It's not somebody else defining you. The Gwich'in First Nations have their own final agreement, and both theirs and ours clearly defines who has those agreements, and any funding agreements state that only those that are signatory can participate and benefit. It's explicit and clear. In the arena of funding in general for either federal programs or initiatives, we do share some commonalities in that we get our allocations from Ottawa. Formula for financing First Nations programming for them is channelled through Yellowknife, ours through Whitehorse. The Yukon region has defined itself as with 17 First Nations in it, three of which are in British Columbia. Yet again there is no cross pollination among them. The only way that we can create funding relationships, is if we create them ourselves. This organization would need to become more aware of the NWT agreement, but that's not an impediment. We are both in a territorial jurisdiction, they are both still statutes of government and final fiduciary still lies with the Federal Government. It would not be an extraordinary task to be able to assist. Another thought is that we have been saying, as a people, we would like to have our nations reunited and organized in a way that we ourselves want to be organized. Even the CYFN mandate stipulates that I am to do everything to help First Nations achieve that. If this organization can demonstrate

that it is achievable, it sends out the right signal to all our citizens, and particularly to government and industry. There are existing trust funds CYFN oversees, but they are very explicit as to who the beneficiaries are. If there was a desire to amalgamate with others, that could be done, others could buy in. This isn't about money. I wanted to share this perspective with you said the Grand Chief. Regarding decision making, we can find methods and means to hone our skills to make a regional body that can assist and support what each First Nation wants. First Nation(s) is a foreign term, you are either Kaska, Tlingit, Southern Tutchone, Gwich'in, etcetera, they are the nations. With self government, we can make the definition any way we want it to be. I am honoured to be the Grand Chief, I made it clear that I stand for unity. I've stood for that for several reasons, firstly as a young child I was raised among non natives, 2000 miles away from my people. Yearning and trying to learn who I was and where I came from. People who inspired me are people like Dave Joe and Elijah Smith. It's no surprise that I support and advocate unification of the Kaska and Kwanlin Dun. No surprise that the three Northern BC nations be part of this organization. It's who we are, it's the government who has carved us up, and we let ourselves believe it. From time to time there would be issues that are solely Yukon or NWT, but in past we have respected that, and whenever we needed to back each other up, we were there. What we have today is recognized self government in its infancy. The recognition of self government is in its infancy. It's a small seed that will grow into what we would like it to be. At the same time we are confronted with issues right now, both our Gwich'in friends and us. There are big governments and industry trying to occupy our lands for their interests, not ours. We recognize the global demand for alternative energy sources. We could resign ourselves to deal with it tomorrow, but that may not pan out. We have to be organized and prepared on how we will respond on these issues, be prepared to fight that fight. This alliance would be useful for us all at a political level, where we deal with people yielding big power and money. They would like to see us segregated into different camps. I share these thoughts with you. We will need to define levels of administrative decisions. There are some issues regarding the YESAA, and we'd like one of the Federal seats appointed to the Gwich'in. Even amongst our communities we sometimes disagree, but we always agree on where we want to get too. It's encouraging to see us all here said the Grand Chief.

CHIEF RICHARD NERYSOO spoke about renegotiating the land claim implementation agreement. A lot of it is unfinished business. Canada was clear that our discussions involved only the NWT, but we have citizens in the Yukon. It's strange when dealing with implementation and funding, we are responsible and obligated to negotiate terms with DIA in the Yukon, in Whitehorse. It's been a process struggle for us. Another challenge is that the process laid out in the transboundary agreement required us to develop relations with Yukon First Nations. We are to be partners with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. Under the present arrangements the authority we have is subject to question, because we've never been assigned an identification within the Yukon. When we closed out negotiations one of the things that was evident was that Canada was not prepared to consider how we implemented the objectives of the land claim agreement, and that's a struggle we all have. They focus on the issue of their obligations. The Auditor General of Canada said Canada needed to expand their view on how the land claim agreements were to be implemented. He spoke about the similarities in the obligation of Canada to provide employment opportunities for both Yukon and NWT First Nations. They ask us to do business in the Yukon, but none of the funding arrangements within the Yukon or NWT allows us to cross

boundaries for access to funding. It's a strange situation, that's how the problem exists. We understand the struggles of Yukon First Nations, because we too are confronted with problems on a regular basis. We respect Yukon First Nations who have authority over their lands, and we do not want to interfere in those rights in any way, but we want to be allies. This kind of table allows us to discuss these issues. It's an opportunity to hear each other. It allows a process by which we can resolve our differences. Boundaries throughout the world have divided nations of people. Our aim is to create alliances and arrangements where all First Nations feel their interests and rights are long lasting, forever. The issues for us are about how we will participate. We don't want to take away any resources from your communities, but we must ensure the Government of Canada is accountable and responsible to our First Nations' agreements. It's my view that we can solve problems around this table. We've had some internal struggles, but we know that it belongs to all Gwich'in, we deal with specific issues directly. He spoke about the many Elders who had been born in the Yukon. When we first signed our transboundary agreement, we talked about the issue of the YESAA, and we accept it. If there are fiscal issues, we want to resolve them. We've been struggling to ensure there's a mechanism for our people in the Yukon, to have access to information and services and programs. We've thought about opening an office in the Yukon, and I know that it would be a positive working relationship. We would like to work with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to get their support to offer services with them, and other Yukon First Nations. We want to work directly with you, as opposed to working around and through, we need to create a relationship.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said he wished he had a copy of his enrollment files which would show that every Gwich'in person at the table has familial ties to Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. That's important to remember. Our people had to choose where they wanted to belong, between one community or another. I exercise my Gwich'in rights wherever I go. That right was given me by my ancestors, and cannot be given away. When looking at this issue before us now, I see positives more than anything. When we look at the challenges we face, the questions, the uncertainty around the Alaska Highway pipeline, we can stop speculating, these people have some experience, we simply have to ask them. Next year we will see the 10 year FTA final negotiations, and we can approach them as to what they did. We've borrowed millions of dollars in the finalization of our lands. The Gwich'in of the NWT are not asking for land or money, they only want to be included in our organization. They will respect our jurisdictions as we respect their jurisdictions. The Gwich'in Tribal Council has had to give up land and they are now going through self government negotiations, and we can lend our experiences to them. This organization exists because we make it exist, we're the decision makers. He urged all First Nations to continue open and frank discussions around the table.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN said the Southern Tutchone had a caucus and they wanted to bring up some issues. Some had been answered already. One issue is rights and benefits. We have trust funds that come out of land claims agreements. When you say full rights and benefits, what does that include. What would happen to the UFA boards. Internal membership issues, Kaska and KDFN, we are still trying to get them to join CYFN, what happens to those issues. It's a Yukon First Nations issue. The Kaska and KDFN should have a say as to what happens in this decision. We felt that we haven't had time to consult with our members, we need to see how they feel about this issue. What happens in the election of the Grand Chief, a community wide election process had been discussed in past. What if someone from the Gwich'in in the NWT becomes

our Grand Chief. The Gwich'in would have five members at the Leadership table. Maybe the four Gwich'in nations could be ex-officio until the constitutional review process. The wording of the constitution would have to be changed and the organization would have to be renamed. We do see the benefits of the Gwich'in joining us, a stronger voice from the First Nations of the North being one he said.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said all those points were valid. Under the current charter, full rights and services makes you a member. One of the rights is to have me, a host, an executive officer. The benefit is clear, a collective voice on universal issues. The ability to sit down together with some high ranking political representatives allows my office to present your issues to those representatives. There would be no financial benefits, CYFN doesn't have land or money or resources, but we have excellent people within our organization who negotiate with others on your behalf as well as with your communities. The constitution doesn't delineate any benefits other than you become a part of the delegation to the CYFN. Any community that becomes a member would have that ability. The trust funds are explicit as to who benefits, the Gwich'in could buy in. Regarding the Kaska and KDFN, it would be desirable to have them as full members participating in the constitutional process. They chose not to be members, and have not signed onto the current constitution. That has not stopped us from inviting them to participate at every Annual General Assembly and at our Leadership meetings. Time for consultation within the communities is important, but most citizens appear to be in agreement. If they were full members they would have the right to nominate people as the Grand Chief. The Grand Chief must be a member citizen, but amendments could be made. He agreed, at the Leadership table there would be four new Chiefs. Many of the issues are administrative, this General Assembly tells the Leadership what we are to do in the next year. Maybe there could be another level of acceptance. When looking at the constitution (included in the kits) I don't see a list defining who the members are. It doesn't differentiate regarding levels or ranks of membership. Those are options we can discuss further. When we get to a conclusion, there are still options. The Grand Chief said not all the details would be worked out during the GA, but he wanted delegates to find a comfort level, and then the issue would be further dealt with during the constitutional review process.

MATT THOM said he had a lot of respect for those around the table. Our forefathers and grandfathers had a strong voice, they were there for us and we for them. We were here before the Europeans came, and we should support each other. Something good can come out of this.

SAM JOHNSTON said he was one of the Chiefs who represented our Elders and citizens in Ottawa. The Elders said we want our grandchildren back. We wanted and still want one voice. We should leave this table with a good mind and know that we will have a stronger voice right from the top down. I don't think it's our right to deny these Gwich'in people, we should give them the right to come in. We will not lose anything, we will only gain. We can share in their expertise in how they deal with issues. Let's remember Together Today...For Our Children Tomorrow.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS said our existence is similar to a river of water that knows no boundaries. We've always wanted unity. The Teslin Tlingit Council has a goal, always first looking at being a Tlingit. Carrying on the work of our forefathers is a priority. He spoke about

the history of the First Nations and the need for unity among them. We respect each other's traditional lands and cultures. What we are dealing with today is significant and related to our history. It sends a message to governments that they must seriously consider who they are dealing with in terms of CYFN. I see this as a very significant time in our history.

CHIEF STEVEN BUYCK thanked the Chiefs for their open and frank discussions. Our Elders have always said in order for us to move forward, we must be strong and united, we must stand together, tall, proud and speak with one voice. A solid people with one voice. On behalf of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, we would be honoured indeed to invite our brothers and sisters of the North to join us. Make this one solid organization to move forward with one voice. Ottawa will probably object, but together we can move forward. The Federal Government utilizes divide and conquer tactics. He suggested an agreement in principle be formalized, but then each First Nation could gain input from their citizens. He wanted to move forward on the alliance, it would only make First Nations stronger he said.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said one of the reasons the constitutional review process is being undertaken, is because institutions make up the body of the Council of Yukon First Nations. It is wholly in your power, as this body, to make decisions. You are CYFN. How citizens fit in, is a big part of the whole constitutional review process.

ROBERT HAGER said he was a Gwich'in man. There were still outstanding transboundary agreements, and where would that leave us he asked. I know there are other First Nations who want to negotiate their transboundary agreements as well, that needs to be addressed. We have applied to the Federal Government to bring this to a conclusion.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said transboundary issues are wholly within the realm of your self government. CYFN would not be involved unless the communities had determined that we did have a role. We have no mandate to negotiate on your behalf, it would remain the same as it is now, the relationship between two First Nations would remain as now, it's up to those First Nations.

CHIEF MARK WEDGE said he was appreciative of the discussions. As I look at our members and citizens I see many amalgamations among us. Not from the top down, but from the communities up. Prior to contact, we saw intermarriage and other arrangements were made. Within the Dakh-Ka we work together and have formed affiliations. Leadership tries to pick a leader that will accomplish a job for the citizens. Some organizations are not able to accomplish what others can, and we see this as a growing process. The Carcross Tagish First Nation supports the Gwich'in participating, and the strength of an alliance will provide us with better opportunities.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said the National Chief is not Northern Tutchone, he is Cree, but none of us find that a discomfort. Once you are a part of a constituent group, you are that way, because you are drawn together by your commonalities.

Lunch break.

GEORGE HENRY welcomed everyone back saying the Rules of Order outlined five minutes per speaker. Discussions continued.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR said he was not against moving interests forward, but he had concerns in that the constitution referred to Yukon First Nations, and could anyone be invited in prior to changing that through an amendment. This assembly probably has the right to do that under article 27. We have to notify all First Nations prior to that amendment. We don't have our own house in order and we invite other groups into the organization, two of our own First Nations' agreements have been rejected. Those are my immediate concerns, I only want to ensure that we follow protocol, and I am not against this he said. I worry about the other First Nations that are supposed to be a part of this organization and we really haven't addressed them yet. We can invite them in, but until these amendments happen I don't know if there may be some legal ramifications.

DARYN LEAS said the current constitution is somewhat inconsistent in some areas. He provided legal clarification. The definitions in the constitution flow from final agreements. I don't think it's an obstacle.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR said he only wanted to make it clear to people what the constitution stated. Until we make changes to the constitution, those joining would not have full rights.

DARYN LEAS said the other option is a simple easy amending process. The amendment process requires some notice, but it's only a reasonable time. I don't see this as an obstacle.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR said some First Nations wanted to further discuss the issue with their citizens and legal counsel.

CHIEF BOB DICKSON said some of his questions had already been answered. He suggested waiting until the constitutional review process was complete before the inclusion of the Gwich'in. During the constitutional review, this could be further developed. We need to address some of the issues we have with the Kaska and KDFN.

CHIEF MIKE SMITH said he was pleased to be in attendance on behalf of Kwanlin Dün First Nation. We left CYFN nine years ago. We are prepared to work with any First Nation on the common issues. We believe in supporting each other, especially in important decisions with government and industry. We do not want to compete with other First Nations. KDFN believes ourselves to be self governing. Our position is clear, we're a government and we are prepared to sit with any government to negotiate for our people. We have told government we are not here to plead our case to them. I look at CYFN and I want to work with them. KDFN wanted to share some views as in regard to the resolution on the table he said. I believe in the Gwich'in people, and if it means we have to sit down and work out a protocol, then that's important. I believe we could work this out. When we get together it would allow us a stronger voice. We do have some issues that we have to work out between ourselves as well, one size does not fit all.

RODDY BLACKJACK said as First Nations, we've been together in many situations. We are all together here, and we should be strong enough to send back that message to government. He

related some traditional and cultural similarities between all First Nations, and the unity displayed historically among the people. He spoke about the future generations, and the need to entrench their rights to the land.

PERCY HENRY said Elders are saying to get ready for what's coming, and it's not good. Everyone says a depression is coming. I say we must get together and protect the land and save what we have. A pipeline would only mess our kids up again, with alcohol and drugs. It's time First Nations trust one another. We have to put our heads together now he said.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE said as a newly elected Chief, she had not had the opportunity to meet with her citizens, but the Ta'an Kwäch'an Council was holding their General Assembly next week. Transparency and accountability to citizenship is of prime importance to TKC. I believe in the constitutional review process for CYFN, and it will allow the opportunity to talk with all Yukon First Nations citizenship. We too have Gwich'in citizens. I agree in building unity around this table, and supporting each other when dealing with government. At this time economically, we are already tied to NWT through NASCO. We are talking about economic initiatives at that level.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM said he agreed, we must stand together and work together, share ideas. The last say is usually the Elders council, and our citizens at large, based on our constitution. We have ongoing talks through the Northern Tutchone Council. The concerns expressed about protocol are legitimate. He spoke about the many other issues facing First Nations including the need to show respect among one another. When the constitutional review people come to your community, encourage your citizens to express their opinions. I think we have to look at this issue closely.

CHIEF LUCY MCGINTY thanked everyone for their input. She hoped that an agreement could be reached, where everyone felt comfortable. People want to reach out and accept this proposal. By acceptance, this could have been a historical event. Many of our communities are facing elections, so there are lots of time constraints. I am happy that people want to join our organization. There appear to be a boundary issues in some instances, but our Elders say there were never boundaries among us. When it comes to the North there appears to be little representation, and by expanding, and involving and accepting the Gwich'in membership, we would all be strengthened. I believe that by joining together, we will all benefit. The North is being viewed for its resources. It's important to be unified, they need us and we need them, the land is important. I hope that we can come to some agreement, maybe accepting their membership in principle, or offering an honorary membership, or something similar, to allow for the timeframe required on the constitutional review.

CHIEF ANGELA DEMIT said she wanted to take the issue back to her membership, to see what they had to say, and for them to make a decision. She thanked Chief Mike Smith for his words. We have issues with enrollment. We have limited resources. We need to look at the CYFN constitution and I'm glad they are coming to the communities. We can be a stronger voice and that's what our First Nations people need. We can look at having a protocol or something similar so as to accept other First Nations she said.

CHIEF HAMMOND DICK thanked the Gwich'in nation for allowing this debate to take place. It was a worthwhile undertaking. He had seen many changes in the years of his involvement with First Nations politics. The Kaska nation had also changed, taking more control of the developments that affect our lives and communities. This evolution we are discussing is healthy, it will benefit the organization he said. We feel it's important to build relationships with other First Nations, we can only benefit from these exercises. These processes take time, and changes will continue. We need to build these relationships, and I'm glad that the Leadership and Grand Chief have undertaken a process to address the rejoining of us to CYFN, as well as this proposal by the Gwich'in. I applaud the Grand Chief and Leadership for this initiative. I want to say to delegates that I want to take part in whatever process comes out of the constitutional review.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said it concerns me that a decision may not be made here. We are ready to do business. We have four communities that have travelled a long way to join in this discussion with some expectations, and I hoped to give them an answer. We as a delegation are ready to move on this issue. We need to understand what it is we are deciding upon. It's our constitution and we can change it. He spoke about other organizations which deal in cross border issues. This organization will make decisions on YESAA regulations. Something of a compromise could be an associate membership. There have been no votes in five years he said. We rarely ever vote, it's always by consensus. We need some mechanism by which the Gwich'in have a way to represent themselves in the Yukon.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said it was in 1995 when KDFN and the Kaska did not sign onto our constitution. That was the last vote. We decided as a Leadership and assembly to work diligently to achieve consensus. In hindsight, I wish we were as diligent in letting people leave as we are in having them come in. On the point that the Kaska and KDFN are not members, that is by their choice. There may be a time when they do participate. Child welfare falls under the YTG common law associated with child welfare. I want to ensure that delegates understand that numerous briefs and correspondence had gone out publicly, we spoke about the Gwich'in joining our Leadership meetings. This issue was spoken about on many occasions. I propose to the Chair of the GA that we break and have caucus with some of the legal people, to try to find an acceptable proposal to satisfy the delegates.

CHIEF CHARLIE FURLONG apologized for taking up so much time, but he understood the decision was hard, questions needed to be answered. I know in your hearts it's a simple decision, but I know that the politics of our day makes it complicated. I've listened to all the people, and your concerns are no different than the concerns we have at our assemblies. I wanted to address some concerns before we carry on he said. Our people were guided by basic principles that allowed them to survive and if one was breached or broken, it was usually a conflict among the parties. In today's politics a lot of our principles have been clouded and confused by policies that have been developed. I remember an Elder from Ft. McPherson, Willy MacDonald, he told me, you get paid to take criticism. I remember in Old Crow we had to come to consensus among ourselves. Willy said you never needed any paper, our people have lived together for many years, they had respect for one another. Once you put lines on a map it causes you to argue said that Elder. Your concerns are very valid, I would ask the same questions were I in your shoes. Our land claim states that we cannot benefit from two claims, we believe the resolution can be interpreted by the Leadership from CYFN and the Gwich'in. We would only

participate in issues pertaining to our overlap issues in both our agreements. Our involvement in elections would be minimal, however out of respect we could work out an understanding in regards to the election process, possibly only those living in the Yukon could vote. I strongly believe that the resolution shows respect for the Gwich'in position. To adopt the Gwich'in into your organization we can gain recognition as a Yukon First Nation and together we can hold the government of Canada accountable. I believe adopting the resolution will send a strong message to the Government of Canada and industry, that two nations have united. They will not like it, government policy is divide and conquer. I have faith and believe in the Leadership of CYFN and the leadership of the Gwich'in. We can work out an understanding and build a relationship. This is the start of a powerful union between all First Nations. It is direction from this GA to Leadership from both our nations to adopt the resolution and work out the details. This would allow us status as a Yukon First Nation. We can then hold Canada accountable. One of our biggest obstacles is financing for our self government agreements. If we were allowed to set up a process for negotiating for more dollars, then the Yukon First Nations could benefit as well. We bring that possibility to the table. Respect for one another is the guiding principle that we must incorporate into our decision.

CHIEF RICHARD NERYSOO said he wanted to reiterate the unity of the Gwich'in in this effort. The key for us is that we see so much benefit in our relationship, first as First Nations and secondly as managers. You already have working relationships with others who have no authority at this table. We still have huge tasks as Gwich'in leaders to deal with transboundary issues. We want to be part of the process, we think there's room for us, we have lots to offer. Over 50% of Gwich'in territory is actually in Alaska, so we struggle for what we have left, we need to get rid of our differences. We thank all the Leadership for your comments and concerns and we hope that during deliberations a wise outcome will come forward.

Break.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ read aloud GA Resolution #1 as handed out. During the constitutional summit process all rights will be examined as well said the Grand Chief. At this time the resolution was moved and seconded.

Please note, all resolutions passed at the GA are included in their entirety at the conclusion of these minutes.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR said this resolution will alleviate our concerns and the constitutional review will iron out issues. He wanted everyone to understand that his comments were not meant in any disrespect, only that he wanted to ensure there was due diligence. He was glad that a compromise had been reached and a good resolution had been brought forward.

JUDY GINGELL thanked the GA for allowing her to speak. I sense a need for a process to be established where we can deal with issues like this, and options should be in place. This resolution reads very clearly. Timing is very important. We are building business alliances because we know the pipeline is coming she said. She spoke about the strength of the First Nations people. We need to move ahead, the river has no borders she reiterated.

CHIEF MARK WEDGE said he also appreciated the debate and moving forward. This resolution accommodates the desires expressed from around the table. Pros and cons must be further reviewed and pooling of resources could be considered.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN thanked the Elders for their words on the issue. He thanked the Gwich'in people for their patience during discussions. This resolution alleviates our concerns and the question of the role of the Gwich'in nation will be included in the community constitutional review discussions. We certainly have put a lot of our concerns to rest. This organization has moved a long way ahead, and it shows in our respect for each other he said.

JESSIE DAWSON spoke about item (G) within the resolution, saying the wording could be strengthened.

GEORGE HENRY asked if the GA wanted to come out of in-camera, and continue the remainder of the GA in a public forum. The following motion came forward;

Motion 4.	To move the GA out of in-camera, back to a public forum where the media could attend.
Moved by:	CJ Marion Sheldon
Seconded by:	Carol Chambers Boss
Passed by:	consensus

OUT OF IN-CAMERA

CHIEF MARK WEDGE asked that Atlin be acknowledged, that it be brought forward during the constitutional review process.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said discussions had been held with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. At their next meeting they would discuss a resolution regarding membership at CYFN. They unfortunately were unable to attend the GA said the Grand Chief.

GEORGE HENRY said the GA was now open to the media. The draft resolution #1 was read aloud again, and it passed by consensus. At this time the Gwich'in were formally recognized by greetings and handshakes around the room.

CHIEF CHARLIE FURLONG thanked God through a prayer, and said it was a historic day in history. Our children will remember today. We are reunited and fighting a common cause. One of our great leaders, the late Chief Johnny Charlie was a strong believer in keeping those ties. Alone we are small, but united we are strong. The vision of Fred Carmichael was strength in our unity and he approached the Yukon Leadership. The Gwich'in will be forever grateful to the Yukon First Nations. We will bring a rich and proud culture, experience in our deliberations with government, and share our knowledge. We look forward to being at the table and sharing with you. He thanked his delegation, those who had travelled so far to be in attendance. The Elders always amaze me with their patience, and guidance. He thanked the Grand Chief for his efforts in making this a reality today. Thank you from the bottom of my heart he said.

CHIEF RICHARD NERYSOO said it had been a bit of a homecoming for him. Separation had created heartbreak for many people, but today it was a celebration of unity, and building our nations strong and leaving a legacy for our children. There is a weight off our backs, I want to say thank you very much. It's personal for me, because I know many of you and I appreciate you taking us back. He announced there would be a feast at 7:00 pm and entertainment at 8:00 pm. A celebration for today, we want to dance. He thanked Chief Joe Linklater and the VGFN as well.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said all the words spoken today were true. I want to assure you on behalf of Leadership, that we will hold steadfast with you to seek your counsel and include your interests. I look forward to a time when we have collective positions to put forward in Ottawa. I welcome you to this Council and GA. To my existing communities, I commend you for your strength in character, and for opening your minds and hearts. I am honoured to serve you. I am firmly committed to our people and to you.

RODDY BLACKJACK thanked all the delegates saying he felt very strong and happy.

PERCY HENRY said what had happened today was very important to the people. It makes us strong.

10. AFN Presentation on Residential Schools in Canada

RICK O'BRIEN and CHARLENE BELLEAU came forward. An overhead Power Point presentation was provided regarding Residential Schools in Canada. The goal was to resolve the Indian Residential School claims. It was noted that the AFN website had additional information available on the subject. Contacts were 1-866-869-6789, or email Charleneb@afn.ca.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Day 3 – Thursday, September 16, 2004.

Meeting came to order at 9:30 am.

GEORGE HENRY welcomed everyone back, saying there was still a lot on the agenda and a five minute speaking time would be enforced.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ thanked everyone for the wonderful celebration last evening. He presented the four new CYFN members with their own engraved wooden fishes, identical to those displayed by the other First Nations at the table. He hoped that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation would soon be at the table he said. Applause was exuberant.

11. Office of the Grand Chief

a) Finance and Administration

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS and GAYLE CORRY addressed the GA and referred everyone to the CYFN Audited Financial Statements, Year Ended March 31, 2004 as were included in the kits.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS said the Council was in good financial shape.

GAYLE CORRY read aloud portions of the document, and provided clarification as required.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said the Chiefs of the Finance Committee are made very aware of financial issues throughout the year. The audits had been in good standing, and he was proud that this year was another good report.

GEORGE HENRY directed the GA to the Resolution #4 as handed out. He read it out loud and it passed. It is included in its entirety at the conclusion of these minutes.

b) CYFN Reports

GEORGE HENRY referred everyone to the CYFN 24th General Assembly 2004 Report as included in the kits. The Table of Contents included:

- Finance and Administration
- Human Resource Development
- Natural Resources and Environment
- Health and Social Development
- Justice Programs
- Self Governing Secretariat
- Yukon Native Language Centre
- Circumpolar Relations Unit
- Constitutional Summit Office
- Appendix - Audited Financial Statements

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said the reports had been developed between CYFN staff and those in the communities. As in keeping with decisions made at past General Assemblies, we now table the reports with you, and respond to any queries you may have. It frees up time so we can discuss issues, rather than reading and reviewing written reports. The CYFN 24th GA 2004 Report was tabled. If it comes to your attention later, even after the GA, that you want to question something, we are at your disposal to respond at any time.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said his questions on the reports could be postponed to the upcoming Leadership meeting.

KATHY VAN BIBBER spoke about the Self Government Secretariat report saying it looked like an executive report. She asked for a political report. A report where issues that were discussed, or those outstanding, would be identified. An update on where things were at.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said he could get a political report prepared utilizing the Chiefs Committee, and it could be prepared in time for the upcoming Leadership meeting.

12. Assembly of First Nations Report

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN congratulated the Gwich'in on their joining CYFN. A booklet titled AFN Yukon Region, CYFN AGA Information Packages, September 14 to 16, 2004, Whitehorse, Yukon, was available to delegates. It included tabs as follows:

1. AFN Yukon Regional Office Update
2. AFN Committees
3. Education
4. Languages
5. Recognizing and Implementation of First Nations Governments
6. Health
7. Economic Partnerships/Housing
8. Specific Claims Resolution Act
9. Residential School Unit
10. Other Information

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN said at the national level he holds the Veterans file, which is almost completed. Another file he held was Languages. Chief Mike Smith is the Yukon representative. Tiffany Smith and Nicole Kuster had both left their positions. He spoke about a variety of issues as included in his handed out booklet. The language money received is minimal, and there is no control over YTG's spending. Our languages need to be recognized at the top level, and they should earn credits towards a university education. Regarding education, we have Chief Joe Linklater who holds that portfolio for the Yukon. We are dominated by the southern parts, their agendas are pushed forward, many of the programs are not accessible by the Yukon. Gathering Strength is being phased out and the new initiatives will be harder to access. Frustration is felt. We have to find out from YTG how much Yukon First Nations receive for education. We still don't have a say on how education is delivered to us. We have a high drop out rate, our youth don't receive tutoring, and we have limited access to programs for them. We need to focus on education and languages for our kids he said. The Vice Chief identified some openings on national boards where Yukon Chiefs were needed. He asked that interested people come forward to him. Filling some of the seats had been difficult, and he would bring the issue forward again at the upcoming Leadership meeting.

CHIEF HAMMOND DICK thanked Rick O'Brien for his report. He asked about language, saying he understood there was a national budget announced over the last year. ALS is being discussed and some First Nations are thinking about taking down their portion. The Kaska feel that language is very important, and we want to find out how budgets are viewed at the national level, and especially for the Yukon region. The Yukon Native Language Centre and Aboriginal Language Services needed to be better coordinated. Programs were needed for non self governing First Nations, we feel more emphasis needs to be placed on language he said.

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN said AFN gets \$2.69 million for Aboriginal language. The task force has \$172 million on a national level. Problems are that Heritage Canada says some of the money was not spent according to line items and they want money back. We are debating with them on having the money deducted from the regional areas. We say the money should be taken back

from the region responsible, not from the Yukon. I represent 14 Chiefs. He reminded everyone to join his email list.

CHIEF HAMMOND DICK said as you know representation is very important to us as well. We are asking the government for equal representation on boards and committees, as you see here, I'm the only representative at this forum. I will encourage the other Chiefs to become involved. We lack financial resources. We face many limitations. We set our own priorities. I appreciate your efforts he said.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE asked about the AFN regional office and programming. She asked about budgets and how much was promised to the Yukon region.

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN said he gets \$85,000 to operate his office, but the last fiscal he received an additional \$60,000 for which he hired a youth. This year he hoped to again get the additional \$60,000. Money received is earmarked he said.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE said over the last years she'd been involved with HRDC and AFN issues. She spoke about the lack of support for the Yukon regional office, let alone the staffing problems. How important was the AFN really, to the Yukon she asked. TKC spends large amounts of money to participate at the AFN, and she felt that maybe that money could be better spent elsewhere.

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN said money is earmarked elsewhere. I agree Yukon is not getting enough money. He outlined the processes that the AFN uses in their internal structure, and he wished he could be more efficient and effective in his position, but the funding was minimal.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said the AFN has policies and programs that deal mostly with Indian Act bands, and on-reserve issues, that's why many of their policies don't work for us. The AFN is undertaking a review process as well, and he referred delegates to the AFN Renewal Commission Information Kit which had been handed out. Our regional Chief (Chief Rick O'Brien) is doing an exceptional job, but it is frustrating when he deals with the large AFN bureaucracy, as he tries to gain a voice for Yukon First Nations. We want direct access to the Prime Ministers office he said.

CHIEF LUCY MCGINTY said the health portfolio is large. She expressed her frustration in regards to health issues. The health representative for CYFN has limited time and we need a better plan as to how we work together.

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN responded saying \$100,000,000 was set aside for aboriginal people. We have limited say as to where it is spent.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN asked for clarification on the issue of a representative for residential school issues. Does it need to be a Chief he questioned. He had received no information regarding the issue.

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN said yes, the Yukon needs a representative to this board, and he referred delegates to the AFN booklet for further clarification. He introduced his new assistant, Michelle Tochacek. She had a vast amount of experience in the health field he said.

CHIEF STEVEN BUYCK thanked Rick O'Brien for his hard work and dedication. He asked about a Northern secretariat to deal with Northern issues.

CHIEF RICK O'BRIEN said that issue would be dealt with through the Renewal Commission.

Break.

13. Constitutional Summit Process - Commissioners Appointed

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ referred everyone to the last years' GA Resolution regarding the Constitutional Summits, which was included with other reading materials in a booklet titled, Constitutional Summit Process. He read aloud the GA Resolution numbered GA 407/03, from the 2003 GA retyped here as follows,

GA Resolution 407/03 - Constitutional Summits

WHEREAS:

- (A) *The Yukon First Nations recognize the strength and value of their unity to deal collectively with political, economic and social matters; and*
- (B) *The Yukon First Nations acknowledge that the current structures and mandates of their central and regional organizations must be renewed and revitalized in order to meet their current needs.*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly directs the Grand Chief to host a series of constitutional summits to discuss the development of a renewed and revitalized regional entity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Grand Chief invite representatives of all fourteen Yukon First Nations and their Elders, youth, and technicians to attend and participate in this forum.

Resolution was moved by: Robert Lee Jackson, Teslin Tlingit Council
Seconded by: Kathy Van Bibber, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
Passed by: consensus on July 10, 2003

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ continued in saying what we have before us today, is the process. We want an acceptable process that provides opportunity for our citizens to be engaged and allow all our people to be involved if they so choose. There is an office in place headed by Denise Beattie, with Daryn Leas and Dave Joe as legal counsel. Dave Joe is also involved in the AFN Renewal on our behalf. Technical staff are also involved. A commission to go to the communities is needed. The commission would be accountable to the General Assembly. We encourage full participation of our people. We want to involve all our Yukon First Nations. We have heard delegates say we are not well designed. We are talking about setting up a process, not the content. The commission's job is to find that content for you. He reminded everyone not

to get bogged down with issues of money. There was slightly over \$1 million to fund this said the Grand Chief. It should be a sufficient amount for us to get through this process. Canada has agreed to stay out of things, and this money has very few strings attached to it. He commended the administration and negotiators for their part in securing the funding. The mandate is clear. We can take the time necessary to get this done properly, there are no time restraints. However you choose to represent yourself, we want to be there to support you and help you achieve those ends. The commission is established to be at arms length, so every individual can speak their true thoughts. I will be just like everyone else. At the end of the day it's this assembly that makes the choice.

DAVE JOE provided a review out loud of the overhead Power Point presentation titled Constitution Summit Process 2004. Hard copies were provided in the as well, and delegates followed along.

DARYN LEAS read aloud the Draft Terms of Reference for Constitutional Summit Commissioners and the Constitutional Technical Working Group Terms of Reference. He then brought forward GA Resolution #3 – Terms of Reference, as had been handed out. It passed and is included in its entirety at the conclusion of these minutes.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM asked if there were any translators available so as to gain additional input from the Elders. It was noted there were.

RODDY BLACKJACK spoke about the gun laws and the restrictions placed on First Nations who want to hunt on their land. Traditionally, First Nations hand their firearms down from generation to generation he said, and the Elder wanted to ensure that tradition would remain.

GEORGE HENRY said within the reports it was very clear that input from the Elders is a priority.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS said the technical working group's directions are clear and we should make every effort to support them as much as possible.

Lunch break.

DARYN LEAS read GA Resolution #2 – Constitutional Summit Commissioners out loud as delegates followed along. The final resolution is included in its entirety at the conclusion of these minutes.

DAVE JOE said appointments to the commission could be held by secret ballot and every Tribal Council or language group could also appoint a representative if they so desired. These choices are up to the GA to make.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER asked how the Elders would be included in the process.

DARYN LEAS said the Elders would be consulted through the Elders Council.

CHIEF BOB DICKSON said he wanted to go by secret ballot and not by Tribal Council.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE asked for a wording change to the resolution which was completed.

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER said VGFN nominated Norma Kassi.

PETER JOHNSTON nominated CJ Marion Sheldon.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN suggested to go by secret ballot. He nominated Paul Birckel as Elder, Bob Charlie, and Tiffany Smith as the youth representative.

GEORGE HENRY asked if the GA wanted to go with secret ballot. Delegates indicated yes, they did. General discussion continued regarding the process that would be undertaken to determine the appointments.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ recommended that the GA determine the number, seven or eight candidates. The Elders Council would convene and make their own choice as to their representatives to this commission. The youth representative could be identified by the youth. Today, what we need is a cap on the number, with some candidates identified. The Grand Chief said he hoped the Kaska and KDFN would also have representation on the commission.

GEORGE HENRY asked for discussion on the number of commissioners. He would also have to ask the nominees if they accept he said.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM said 7 was a good number. Paul Birckel and Clyde Blackjack both have a great amount of experience between them.

AGNES MILLS said she had attended the Elders meeting in June where they spoke about how they wanted to be represented on the Constitutional Summit. Names had come forward at that time. Representatives had to be strong advocates, and women Elders needed representation on the commission as well she said. She spoke about the sharing accord saying it had to go further for the First Nations people. She also expressed concern over the issue of child welfare.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR said 4 to 7 members was suitable. Perhaps in respect to the Elders and youth, nominate five individuals here at this table and then leave it to the Elders and youth councils to nominate their representatives.

CHIEF BOB DICKSON said he agreed to 5 commissioners, 1 elder and 1 youth to be determined by their councils. Nominations could be secret ballot and a timeline should be implemented.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS said he was comfortable with 7 commissioners plus whoever the Elders would be. It would be in recognition of their input.

DAVE JOE said the Elders had met on June 25, 2004 and they recognized that because the work is so demanding there was no way that one Elder could do the entire workload. It was our view that a number of Elders could participate. A number of names came forward, but it was not a

formally sanctioned Elders Council meeting, not all First Nations were there. Our list is incomplete, but some names submitted were, Agnes Mills, Doris McLean and Richard Dickson.

GENERAL DISCUSSION continued regarding the number of nominees. It was agreed by the GA that there would be 7 commissioners appointed this day, during the GA. The Elders Council and Youth Council were invited to submit nominations at a later date. Confirmation was needed that those people nominated would indeed accept their positions. A secret ballot system was incorporated. All 14 Yukon First Nations as well as the newly joined Gwich'in would have a right to vote.

Nominations that came forward:

Tiffany Smith	Agnes Mills	Jean Gleason
Norma Kassi	Carl Sidney	John Burdek
Marion Sheldon	Richard Sidney	Robert Lee Jackson
Gwen Wally	Clyde Blackjack	Richard Dickson
Paul Birckel	Robert Wally	Doris McLean
Bob Charlie	Ann Marie Miller	Ken Kane
Judy Gingell	Robin Bradasch	

Motion 5.	To close nominations for Constitutional Summit Commissioners.
Moved by:	Chief James Allen
Seconded by:	Chief Eric Morris
Passed by:	consensus

It was noted Elders and youth could be nominated to the Commission through their Councils.

GEORGE HENRY said most of the nominees were well known to everyone at the GA. Due to time constraints it was not possible to allow nominees to speak.

Vote:

Voting took place by secret ballot in boardroom 1 with Denise Beattie acting as returning officer. Each community voted.

Constitutional Summit Commissioners that were appointed:

Norma Kassi	Ken Kane
Judy Gingell	Bob Charlie
Richard Sidney	CJ Marion Sheldon
John Burdek	

Sixty-seven ballots were counted, none were spoiled. There was a tie for the seventh position between CJ Marion Sheldon and Carl Sidney. A show of hands indicated the majority count to CJ Marion Sheldon. All ballots were destroyed.

14. Minutes of GA 2003 - Resolution

GEORGE HENRY read out loud GA Resolution #5. It passed and is included at the conclusion of these minutes.

15. First Nation Forestry Program - Resolution

GEORGE HENRY read out loud GA Resolution #8. It passed and is included at the conclusion of these minutes.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said he had met with the Federal Minister of Natural Resources.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS said the Resolution #8 speaks to some of the projects initiated by the First Nation Forestry Program.

16. Tulsequah Chief Mine – Resolution

GEORGE HENRY read aloud GA Resolution #6. It passed and is included at the conclusion of these minutes.

CHIEF MIKE SMITH said the resolution had originated with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. He asked the GA to provide the support necessary.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM said it was a critical area for wildlife and pollution was a major concern. He too supported the resolution.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said industry thinks they are dealing with a small and insignificant First Nation, we should reach out and help one of our own.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR said he also supported the resolution.

17. Transboundary Negotiations - Resolution

GEORGE HENRY read aloud GA Resolution #7. It passed and is included at the conclusion of these minutes. This resolution originated with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS said discussions had taken place with the British Columbia Government as well as with Canada, and to date process had been very slow. Many different ways had been tried to move the process along. First Nations are suffering a stalemate. This may be another avenue where we can gain the full support of this GA, so we can hold BC and Canada accountable to the seriousness of this issue. He hoped the resolution would make them rethink the process.

CHIEF MARK WEDGE said there is no process, and that's the major problem.

RODDY BLACKJACK spoke about the way government had carved up the land with borders which hindered the cultural and traditional way of sharing the land.

18. Community Concerns

PETER JOHNSTON brought forward the following motion;

Motion 6. To table Community Concerns to the next Leadership meeting.
Moved by: Peter Johnston
Seconded by: Chief Bob Dickson
Passed by: consensus

19. Closing Remarks

CHIEF JOE LINKLATER expressed his happiness at having the Gwich'in at the table, and spoke a heartfelt thank you to the General Assembly. He thanked all the delegates and staff for their hard work.

TAMMY JOSIE addressed the GA as a youth representative, and relayed some positive stories concerning education, and how First Nations had succeeded in some areas.

CHIEF DARREN TAYLOR thanked the GA and welcomed the Gwich'in to CYFN. Overall we had a very good session, we moved forward collectively. I was honoured to be here, and we got a lot accomplished he said. He thanked TKC and KDFN for allowing the GA to take place on their traditional land. This is a table where we can speak our minds, and that took place he said.

CHIEF HAMMOND DICK thanked the GA saying he had enjoyed the discussions and the acceptance of the Gwich'in was a positive step forward. We've entered into another process and we can add more to this organization. He thanked the Council and the administration for the wonderful work they had done. He especially enjoyed the feasts.

CHIEF ANGELA DEMIT thanked the GA saying she was thankful that the Elders and youth had participated. White River is slowly moving forward, but we still have a lot to do before we become self governing. She thanked the Chairs, Grand Chief and all those involved in the production of the GA.

CHIEF STEVEN BUYCK thanked everyone for coming out and voicing their thoughts, and adding to the process. It's been a long, productive three days. I see our organization becoming strong so that Ottawa notices when we speak with one voice. He thanked the Chairs, Grand Chief and all those involved in the GA.

CHIEF LUCY MCGINTY extended her congratulations to everyone for the good job and accomplishments during the GA. She thanked the Elders and delegates who sat through the three long days with diligence. She thanked the Chairs and Grand Chief and all those involved with the GA.

CHIEF EDDIE SKOOKUM thanked everyone saying without our traditional culture and language we have nothing. We are all at different levels, and we must help those First Nations

who need it. Money is still a critical factor. He was happy to see the Gwich'in join the Council. He thanked the Chairs, Grand Chief and all those involved in the GA.

CHIEF RUTH MASSIE said on behalf of TKC, thank you to all the Leadership around the table. She thanked CYFN's staff for all their hard work throughout the entire year as well as during the GA. She thanked the Elders for their support. She was happy to see so much interest expressed by citizens to serve on the constitutional review commission. I see so much progress for the betterment of our people, and I'm happy to have been a part of this GA. She thanked the Chairs, Grand Chief and all those involved in the GA.

CHIEF JAMES ALLEN thanked the KDFN and TKC for allowing the GA on their land. He looked forward to the next year GA in Pelly. He thanked the Elders for their encouragement and their promotion of unity. He thanked the Gwich'in for their attendance at the GA and wished them a safe journey home. You bring a lot of wisdom and experience with you and we thank you for that he said. He thanked the delegates saying it was good to hear frank discussions undertaken with respect. He thanked the Chairs, Grand Chief and all those involved in the production of the GA.

CHIEF BOB DICKSON thanked all the staff and delegates, and those involved in the GA. It had taken a lot of energy to sit at the table, but participation was important because it was for the future generations. He thanked CYFN for the GA and also looked forward to next year's GA in Pelly. He welcomed the new Gwich'in members to the table. He thanked KDFN and TKC for the use of their traditional territory.

KLUANE MARTIN said as an Elder, she had very much appreciated the respect extended her during the GA, and she was sure other Elders felt the same way.

JESSIE DAWSON spoke on behalf of KDFN thanking everyone at the table for their input. She welcomed the Gwich'in. She thanked the Elders for their wisdom. She had enjoyed the festivities and feasts, and hoped to see everyone again next year she said.

MATT THOM thanked all the people at the table, saying it had been long days, but productive things had taken place. He thanked the Gwich'in for their attendance. I have lots to tell my people back home, and I'm looking forward to the next gathering he said.

CHIEF ERIC MORRIS thanked the staff, Grand Chief and Chairs for the great GA. He thanked TKC and KDFN for allowing the GA on their traditional territory. He thanked Richard Sidney for his leadership as Tribal Chief of Dakh-Ka over the last years, and introduced the new Khà Shâde hêni, Andy Carvill. I can't say enough about our Grand Chief and his excellent support staff for the hard work in the production of the GA. He thanked the Creator for bringing all the First Nations together. He also thanked Tammy Josie for donating her hair to the Cancer Society, it was a commendable thing to do he said.

CHIEF MARK WEDGE related through a story some history of the First Nations. He thanked the Leadership and their staff, and the entire GA. He appreciated the two anchors, the Elders for how they guide us, and the youth for where they are taking us he said.

CHIEF PETER ROSS thanked the GA for the deliberations and said he too agreed, we speak with one voice. It was an honour to sit at the table and witness the activities of the GA. He thanked everyone for accepting them into CYFN.

CHIEF JOHNNY KAY thanked the GA for their support and allowing the Gwich'in to the table. He had enjoyed participating at the GA, the feasting and dancing, and making new friends. As a newly elected Chief, he extended an invitation to everyone to visit in Ft. McPherson.

CHIEF RICHARD NERYSOO thanked the GA for allowing the Gwich'in to become a part of CYFN. He spoke about the past leaders and how important their contributions were to the whole organization. On behalf of all the Gwich'in he thanked the Grand Chief and all the Yukon First Nations around the table. A beautiful garment was given the Grand Chief as a token of appreciation. He respectfully asked the GA if the closing prayer could be said in Gwich'in by Elizabeth Hansen, and in English by Tom Wright.

LOUISE GORDON spoke on behalf of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation saying the GA had been a great success. She thanked the Council for accepting the Gwich'in into their fold. The TRTFN would be requesting a mandate from their citizens at their next Joint Clan Meeting to discuss joining CYFN. The resolutions allow CYFN to support the Taku River Tlingits on common political issues that would advance national and global Aboriginal political issues she said.

GRAND CHIEF ED SCHULTZ said the GA had been emotional for many delegates. The GA has reaffirmed to me that what we do here on a daily basis, year in and year out, is the right thing. It's been a historical General Assembly. He thanked all the people involved in production of the GA and said he looked forward to being in Selkirk First Nation territory next year. We've demonstrated that despite our differences we can still sit down together and talk. The Grand Chief made four presentations to the new Gwich'in members of beautiful framed copper poundings done by Ivan Sawrenko, as well as one larger copper pounding to be hung in the Gwich'in Tribal Council office. He thanked Brian MacDonald and George Henry for their efforts in chairing the GA, and gifts were presented them.

Closing prayer said by Elizabeth Hansen and Tom Wright. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

GA Resolution 1 – Gwich’in Membership

WHEREAS:

- (A) The Council of Yukon Indians (the “CYI”) was established by Yukon Indian People in 1973 as a central organization to represent their rights, titles and interests in the negotiation of a land claim agreement with the Government of Canada;
- (B) The CYI, Canada and Yukon Government concluded the negotiation process and signed the Umbrella Final Agreement in 1993;
- (C) Certain Yukon First Nations adapted a new constitution for the CYI in 1995 that changed the name to the Council of Yukon First Nations (the “CYFN”) and facilitated the evolution of the central organization from a negotiation entity to a central government that represented the interests of its members in regional, national and international forums;
- (D) The interests of the CYFN members extend beyond the boundaries of the Yukon Territory and, likewise the interests, rights and titles of other First Nations extend into the boundaries of the Yukon Territory;
- (E) Certain First Nations that are located in the Northwest Territories have expressed a desire to become members of the CYFN;
- (F) The Umbrella Final Agreement and Gwich’in Land Claim Agreement provide that a person can only be enrolled under one Aboriginal land claim settlement in Canada;
- (G) The CYFN has been directed to re-establish its political relationship with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Kaska Nation;
- (H) The CYFN will be facilitating a constitutional summit process with the First Nation communities and citizens to review the structure, responsibilities and members of the central organization.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following First Nations will be members of the CYFN forthwith and have the right to fully participate in the discussions and processes of the CYFN in matters related to their rights, titles and interests in the Yukon Territory:

1. Tetlit Gwich’in Council – Fort McPherson;
2. Nihtat Gwich’in Council;
3. Ehdiiat Gwich’in Council – Aklavik; and
4. Gwichya Gwich’in Council – Arctic Red River.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership rights and benefits of the CYFN members, including the Gwich’in, will be subject to the outcome of the constitutional summit process.

Resolution was moved by: Chief James Allen, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
Seconded by: Chief Eric Morris, Teslin Tlingit Council
Passed by: consensus on September 15, 2004

GA Resolution 2 – Constitutional Summit Commissioners

WHEREAS:

- (A) The General Assembly instructed the Grand Chief to establish a process to facilitate the development of a constitution for a new regional body;
- (B) The Grand Chief has proposed that a constitutional commission be established to operate at ‘arms length’ from any First Nation or the CYFN and to:
 - travel to communities, hear and record input of First Nations, Elders, youth and citizens;
 - prepare a report and recommendations prior to February 2005; and
 - present findings to a special meeting of the General Assembly that has been tentatively scheduled for February 2005;
- (C) The Grand Chief has further proposed that the General Assembly appoint persons to the constitutional commission;
- (D) The Grand Chief has established a constitutional renewal office and technical working group to provide administrative, technical and legal assistance to the constitutional commission as it carries out its work.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly appoints the following individuals to be members of the constitutional committee until September 2005, or sooner if the Constitutional Summit process is concluded earlier.

1. Norma Kassi
2. Bob Charlie
3. Judy Gingell
4. Richard Sidney
5. John Burdek
6. Ken Kane
7. CJ Marion Sheldon

Resolution was moved by:

Seconded by:

Passed by:

Harold Chambers, Ta’an Kwäch’än Council

Peter Johnston, Teslin Tlingit Council

consensus on September 16, 2004

GA Resolution 3 – Terms of Reference

WHEREAS:

- (A) The General Assembly appointed the Constitutional Summit Commissioners to operate at ‘arms-length’ from any First Nation or the Council of Yukon First Nations (the “CYFN”) and to:
 - travel to communities, hear and record input of First Nations, Elders, youth and citizens; and
 - present findings to a special meeting of the General Assembly that has been scheduled for February 2005;
- (B) The Grand Chief has established a Constitutional Technical Working Group to provide administrative, technical and legal assistance to the Constitutional Summit Commissioners as they carry out their work;
- (C) Draft terms of reference have been developed for the Constitutional Summit Commissioners and Constitutional Technical Working Group in order to provide direction and accountability to them.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly endorses the attached terms of reference for the:

- 1. Constitutional Summit Commissioners; and
- 2. Constitutional Technical Working Group.

Resolution was moved by: Chief Eric Morris, Teslin Tlingit Council
Seconded by: Kathy Van Bibber, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
Passed by: consensus on September 16, 2004

GA Resolution 4 - CYFN Audited Financial Statements

WHEREAS:

- (A) The Council of Yukon First Nations Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing the annual audited financial statements and providing recommendations to the General Assembly for approval or disapproval; and
- (B) The Finance Committee reviewed the audited financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2004 on June 22, 2004 and approved the financial statements as presented.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the audited financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2004 be approved by the General Assembly.

Resolution was moved by: Kathy Van Bibber, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
Seconded by: Peter Johnston, Teslin Tlingit Council
Passed by: consensus on September 16, 2004

GA Resolution 5 – Approval 2003 General Assembly Minutes

WHEREAS the minutes of the meeting of the CYFN 23rd Annual General Assembly, July 7-10, 2003 have been tabled to the members of the Council of Yukon First Nations for their review and acceptance.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly accepts the minutes of the 2003 General Assembly as tabled.

Resolution was moved by: Chief Angela Demit, White River First Nation
Seconded by: CJ Marion Sheldon, Teslin Tlingit Council
Passed by: consensus on September 16, 2004

GA Resolution 6 – Tulsequah Chief Mine

WHEREAS:

- (A) the Council of Yukon First Nations (the “CYFN”) recognizes that the outcome of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation’s (the “TRTFN”) court case before the Supreme Court of Canada has great significance for rights and titles for all First Nations in Canada;
- (B) The TRTFN have gone to extraordinary measures and cost to protect their rights and titles on its traditional territory with the support of First Nations in the Yukon Territory and British Columbia;
- (C) Redfern Resources and Government of British Columbia are attempting to force through the Tulsequah Chief mine development without the approval of the TRTFN or accommodation of its rights and titles;
- (D) The scientific and traditional evidence confirms that there will be significant negative impacts to transboundary wildlife populations and in particular, to the Southern Lakes caribou herd;
- (E) The Government of Canada appears to be fast-tracking the review process under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act as a result of political pressure from Redfern Resources and Government of British Columbia, and is moving towards a decision on the Tulsequah Chief mine without the benefit of the Supreme Court of Canada decision on this matter.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls on the Prime Minister of Canada to:

1. intercede to prevent any further work on the Tulsequah Chief mine proposal by his government until the Supreme Court of Canada renders its decision on the Taku River Tlingit First Nation’s challenge to the authorization issued by the Government of British Columbia for the development of the Tulsequah Chief mine in the traditional territory of the TRTFN;
2. ensure that the TRTFN is substantively involved in the decision-making with respect to the Tulsequah Chief mine and that his government allows ample opportunity for other First Nations to provide input; and
3. ensure that the Tulsequah Chief mine not be allowed to proceed until joint land use planning is undertaken amongst the Federal and Provincial Governments and the TRTFN and other affected First Nations to address, among other matters, the future viability of the East Atlin population of the Southern Lakes caribou herd and moose populations is addressed through joint land use planning with the TRTFN and other affected First Nations.

Resolution was moved by:

Seconded by:

Passed by:

Chief Mark Wedge, Carcross Tagish First Nation

Chief Eddie Skookum, Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation

consensus on September 16, 2004

GA Resolution 7 – Transboundary Negotiations

WHEREAS:

- (A) The traditional territories of certain Yukon First Nations extend into British Columbia and as a result, they have rights, titles and interests in British Columbia;
- (B) The Umbrella Final Agreement directs the Government of Canada, Yukon Government and Council of Yukon First Nations to make best efforts to settle the transboundary land claims of Yukon Indian people in the Northwest Territories and British Columbia;
- (C) The transboundary negotiations of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Teslin Tlingit Council, and Carcross Tagish First Nation have entered into transboundary land claim negotiations with the Government of Canada and Government of British Columbia and those negotiations have not been productive due to limited federal and territorial negotiation mandates.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls on the Prime Minister of Canada to:

1. fulfill its obligations under section 25.2.2 of the Umbrella Final Agreement and settle the transboundary land claim negotiations of the Yukon First Nations; and
2. work with the Government of British Columbia to ensure that the federal and provincial mandates are able to facilitate a settlement of the transboundary land claims.

Resolution was moved by: Chief Eric Morris, Teslin Tlingit Council
Seconded by: Chief James Allen, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
Passed by: consensus on September 16, 2004

GA Resolution 8 – First Nation Forestry Program

WHEREAS:

- (A) The First Nation Forestry Program (Yukon) is administrated under the Council of Yukon First Nations (the “CYFN”) addressed forestry issues and projects through the Yukon Territory related to all fourteen Yukon First Nations;
- (B) The First Nation Forestry Program (Yukon) receives annual funding from the Government of Canada to assist with forestry projects in the Yukon Territory;
- (C) The funding provided by the Government of Canada for the First Nation Forestry Program (Yukon) is inadequate to meet the current program needs set by the management committee for the fiscal year of 2004/2005.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly directs the Grand Chief and Yukon Vice Chief of the Assembly of First Nations to:

- 1. support the First Nation Forestry Program (Yukon) and its program proposals; and
- 2. assist the efforts of the First Nation Forestry Program (Yukon) to lobby for adequate funding for its program proposals.

Resolution moved by: Chief Eric Morris, Teslin Tlingit Council
Seconded by: Harold Chambers, Ta’an Kwäch’än Council
Passed by: consensus on September 16, 2004

“Just Minutes” – September 23, 2004.