



## EWT Launch

The Eagle Woman Tribunal (EWT) Launch on March 22, 2021 will be a Historic Day for the proud community of the Cowessess First Nation. This day will mark the first Quasi-Judicial Tribunal to be formally established in Canada. The tribunal will serve as an oversight judicial system within the community to review and make decisions regarding child welfare and over matters on appeal pertaining to Cowessess citizens.



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## Tribunal Members



**Denise Pelletier – Chairperson**, She has worked for the Nation for 25+ years in the areas of Housing, Treaty Land Entitlement, Lands and Resources and Governance. She obtained her certification as a Lands Manager during employment with Treaty Land Entitlement. Denise was also a past Board member and Chairperson of the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Land Technicians (SALT) and gained a wealth of knowledge networking with First Nation Land Managers in Saskatchewan. Denise was also a Board Member of National Aboriginal Land Managers Association (NALMA) and gained more knowledge at a National level.



**Anthony Meier – Off-Reserve Board Member**, Tony is a retired Canadian Forces Officer with 33 years of service and a certified Project Management Professional and has experience in both the private and public sector in leadership and project management. As a military officer he led soldiers during domestic operations in Canada and abroad including Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Afghanistan. In the private sector he has held various positions at Expocrete, G4S Secure Solutions, and Debeers diamond mine. He is currently employed with Paladin Security.



**Carol Lavallee – On-Reserve Board Member**, Carol has served on Cowessess First Nation in many capacities, from bus driver, serving on the leadership council along with several other hosts of opportunities. Carol is very much involved in serving the community, helping with many community events to assisting with the development of numerous governance documents which enhanced Cowessess abilities to govern. Carol currently participates actively on committees, having the Cowessess best interest at heart.



**Ralph A. Beattie – Non-Citizen Board Member**, Ralph is a Reserve Creation Specialist previously employed as Executive Director with the responsibility for the coordination and the overall management and administration of Cowessess First Nation Treaty Land Entitlement and currently under contract with Pheasant Rump Nakota First Nation Specific Claims. Currently volunteer and appointed as the Chief Administrative Officer for St. Peter's Hospital Foundation Inc. of Melville, Saskatchewan.



**Nola Mahingen – Off-Reserve Board Member**, Nola has years of experience in both Justice and Wellness areas with a B.A. Degree in Psychology from SIFC. Nola is presently the Director of the Safe Haven for the Yorkton Tribal Council with 18 Employee's. Nola started working with Yorkton Tribal Council in 2002 as an Aboriginal Court worker, and within 7 months was promoted to the Southern Justice Coordinator allowing her to explore all aspects of the Justice system. Nola is devoted to empowering women in a safe environment. Facilitating Healthy Relationships Sessions, as well as Teaching that all forms of violence are unhealthy, and there are better ways to live.



**Regan Delorme – Off-Reserve Board Member**, Regan is an Indigenous Community Liaison Officer with the Correctional Service Canada. Throughout his 20 years with Correctional Service Canada he's worked as a Correctional Officer, Parole Officer, Security Intelligence Officer and Indigenous Community Development Officer. Regan believes that culture, spirituality and ceremony are important aspects of a successful reintegration plan back into the community for Indigenous people. Regan believes in giving back to his community as the community helped raise him in becoming the individual he is today. He has a passion for his community and continuously looks for ways to support and build up his Nation.

Missing Bios: Ira Aisaican - On Reserve Board Member & Mike Dubios - Non-Citizen Board

# EAGLE WOMAN TRIBUNAL



## Eagle Woman Tribunal Role

As the Quasi-judicial body for Cowessess, the Tribunal members shall review, adjudicate and make decisions on Child Welfare cases pertaining to Cowessess Citizens on a case by case basis.

As the Quasi-judicial body, Tribunal members shall review, adjudicate and make decisions on the appeals of its citizens regarding disputes that arise from Cowessess First Nation laws and policies.

The tribunal shall at all times adhere to principles of peaceful reconciliation, respect, honesty, truth and integrity.



Artwork Eagle Woman  
by Jubilee



### The Path Forward

The Appeals' Tribunal jurisdiction stems from the Miyo-Pimatisiwin Act, the Cowessess First Nation Constitution, the Child Welfare Coordination Agreement and conducts itself in accordance with the Eagle Woman Tribunal Terms of Reference and Procedures Manual supported by Cowessess Band Council Resolution.

The Eagle Woman Tribunal Board Members have varied experiences and relevant knowledge in serving on this board. The board is a combination of off-reserve and on-reserve members to ensure relevant and unbiased decision making. The capacity and team building is important and EWT Board members are currently receiving training in various integral areas such as mediation, understanding evidence, decision making, board governance and a thorough knowledge and understanding of legislation.

The Eagle Woman Terms of Reference and Procedures Manual will guide the processes and procedures for handling each case to be reviewed by the Tribunal. The Tribunal Officer will prepare each case and all necessary evidence once it has been determined that the case can be heard by the Tribunal.

The Red Bear Childrens' Lodge to be launched on April 1, 2021 on the Cowessess First Nation will provide the Tribunal with Child Welfare cases to be reviewed. It is anticipated that together the Red Bear Childrens' Lodge and the Eagle Womans Tribunal shall be ready to commence operations within the next three months.

### Miyo-Pimatisiwin Act & Child Welfare

For the past few years, Cowessess leadership has devoted significant efforts in consulting with Elders and citizens regarding child welfare. Child welfare in our Indigenous communities in Canada has been a contentious subject for many years. A review of relevant unilateral legislation by the Federal and Provincial Governments has clearly shown that jurisdiction over Indigenous Child Welfare was not contemplated upon enactment of the various legislation. However, most provinces continue to claim jurisdiction despite reports of abysmal performance and horrendous cases of neglect and abuse.

This has motivated Cowessess citizens, Elders and leadership alike to assert its inherent role over its own Child welfare. Cowessess recognized that the first step along this path was to draft, discuss and enact its own Child Welfare legislation. In June of 2019, the Miyo-Pimatisiwin Act was presented to citizens for discussions and review. After considerable consultation within the community, the Miyo-Pimatisiwin Act was formally ratified by the Cowessess First Nation in January of 2020.

The passing of Bill C-92 by the Federal Government in January of 2020, An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis, Children, Youth and Families provides Indigenous Communities with the opportunity to assert their respective inherent right to their own Child Welfare systems. Further, the Act recognizes the importance of preserving cultural, familial and territorial connections. The signing of the Tri-partite Collaboration Agreement on March 15, 2021 between Cowessess First Nation, Canada and Saskatchewan is a significant step to recognizing the inherent jurisdiction of Indigenous communities over Child Welfare.