

**Meeting Notes**  
**Off-Reserve Members Meeting**  
**Feb 18, 2026**

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## **Purpose**

Chief and Council met with **off-reserve members** to:

- Listen to concerns, needs, and ideas.
  - Improve communication and engagement.
  - Begin building ongoing relationships.
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- Emphasis on **equity, inclusion, and connection** for members living away from the reserve.

## **Key Themes & Takeaways**

### **1. Strong Desire for Inclusion & Equity**

Many participants expressed that:

- Off-reserve members often feel **forgotten or excluded**.
- Programs and funding available on-reserve should be **more equitably extended off-reserve**, including:
  - Youth supports
  - Christmas hampers / gift cards
  - Clothing allowances
  - Education funding
  - Cultural programming
- Trust fund money should benefit **all members**, not just those living on reserve.

### **2. Improved Communication Needed**

Frequent concerns:

- Members don't always know:
  - What programs exist

- How to apply
- When meetings or events are happening
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- Suggestions included:
  - Clearer newsletters
  - Centralized list of available programs
  - More consistent communication
  - Earlier notice for meetings
  - Better outreach to seniors and families

### 3. Youth Support & Cultural Connection

Strong emphasis on:

- Supporting **off-reserve youth** with:
  - Education funding
  - Trades training
  - Career development
  - Cultural learning
- Desire for:
  - Cultural education programs
  - Opportunities to learn history, language, and traditions
  - Travel or event funding to help youth attend community gatherings
- Many parents want their children to **feel connected to their identity and homeland.**

### 4. Elder & Senior Support

Concerns raised:

- Off-reserve elders sometimes **lack adequate support.**
- Requests for:
  - Better outreach
  - Emergency support
  - Health and wellness assistance
  - Help for low-income seniors living off-reserve

## 5. Housing & Financial Assistance

Positive feedback on:

- Renovation funding
- Mortgage assistance programs
- Emergency repair funding

Requests included:

- Continued renovation support
- More housing options
- Land access for members wishing to **return home in retirement**

## 6. Addictions & Mental Health Support

Council confirmed:

- **Addictions and mental health services ARE available to off-reserve members**, regardless of location.
- Members can contact the band's addictions and wellness department for:
  - Treatment placement
  - Counseling
  - Mental health supports
- Many participants were **unaware these services were available**, highlighting communication gaps.

## 7. Membership Processing Issues

Major concern:

- **Long delays in membership applications**, especially due to changes in the membership code.
- Council committed to:
  - Clearing the backlog
  - Processing all outstanding applications **by the end of March**

## 8. Desire to Contribute Back

Many members:

- Expressed gratitude for financial and program supports.
- Asked **how they could give back**, especially:
  - Professionals (engineers, educators, health workers, business leaders)
  - Those with grant writing, trades, environmental, and administrative skills

## 9. Support for Regular Meetings

Strong agreement that:

- These meetings should happen **monthly or regularly**.
- They build:
  - Trust
  - Connection
  - Shared problem-solving
  - Community identity

## Meeting Tone

- Very positive, respectful, and collaborative.
- Members expressed:
  - Gratitude
  - Emotional connection
  - Hope for stronger inclusion
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- Council demonstrated:
  - Openness
  - Willingness to listen
  - Commitment to change and improvement

## **Core Outcomes**

- Commitment to:
  - Improve communication
  - Expand off-reserve programming
  - Process membership delays
  - Build long-term engagement strategies
  
- Strong foundation laid for:
  - Monthly engagement
  - Community networking
  - Better equity for off-reserve members