

Aaniin Members of Georgina Island First Nation,

Please allow me to introduce myself for anyone who does not know me, I am John Charles, the son of Howard (Lam) Charles and Sharon (Barfett) Charles and the grandson of past Chief John Charles. I am honored to accept this nomination for Councillor of the Chippewas of Georgina Island 2021 election.

Firstly, I am grateful and humbled to have been nominated alongside so many great nominees from Georgina Island. I am very thankful to accept my nomination as a Councillor for Chippewas of Georgina Island.

As a band member who has lived on reserve as long as I've lived off reserve, I feel that Economic Development should be a key factor concerning both on and off reserve members. Economic Development is a vital component to sustain equality, growth, and opportunities for all members.

It is important to develop growth on off reserve lands to create jobs for members who reside off reserve. These off reserve pursuits should include owning businesses and franchises such as Tim Hortons, Subway, Hotels and such. Expansion of Tobacco Trails and Daawegamig businesses to a secondary location would also provide employment opportunities. These endeavours would not only provide employment but would also earn capital for further growth on and off reserve and to provide assistance for the needs of all members; provide opportunity for equality; ensure future jobs; and create growth to sustain us for many generations.

I also believe our education system needs to be improved. We need to give our youth the incentive and opportunity to learn and continue their education in areas of study where they can manage this growth; hold positions of authority; be financially accountable in these new endeavours as well as the businesses already community owned, ie Island View, Tobacco Trails and Daawegamig. Proper education is vital to sustain and develop further the treaty monies we have received and help continue this development for generations to come.

As a community, we need to have more transparency regarding the use of our treaty monies and monies we allocate from current investments. We should be putting monies towards ensuring safe, proper housing for all who need in our community, as well as assisting members off reserve with their housing needs. Monies should also be used toward cultural events; needs of members who partake of these events; cultural ceremonies; hunting and fishing; cultural gatherings such as pow-wows etc. Our culture is vital to our continuation as a proud people and should be treated that way.

This transparency should mean bringing back public monthly council meetings in the form of in-person meetings at the community centre, or with today's technology, a virtual council meeting where both on and off reserve members can participate. This gives everyone a voice on how monies are invested, proposed expenditures, as well as all other issues. Also, minutes should be taken at all meetings and be available to all membership.

We should also be looking at helping the community members in numerous ways.

Firstly – the overall health of community members is a key factor in a healthy community. Many strides have been taken in this area and I commend those involved, but much

more needs to be done. We need to ensure proper resources are in place and proper support is being given for the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health of all.

Secondly – those who would like to start small businesses, and those members who have already started small businesses need to have access to all Economic Development resources in order to develop their own growth. This applies to on and off reserve members.

Thirdly – we need to provide more activities for our youth. We need to keep them active, with an active role in the community. Their input is imperative to their future growth and our future generations. Let's find out what they have to say.

And lastly – there should be proper care and support for our elders in their day to day lives, and especially when they are alone or unwell. The elders are the backbone of our community. They should be cared for and respected.

I believe my ideas could help unite all band members, young and old, near and far. Thank you for taking the time to read my platform letter. I realize everything cannot happen immediately and that one person cannot do it all. But we need to start now, work hard, and do as much as we can as quickly as we can. I am willing and able to do as much as I possibly can if you give me the chance. Thank you, again.

To all my fellow nominees, I wish you the best of luck.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me in any of the ways listed below.

Miigwetch, Thank you,

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