



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF | ýlmix^{wm}

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June 16, 2022

way' Members, Partners, and Friends,

After consultation with my family, elders, advisors, lawyer, and doctor, I have made the decision to resign as Chief of Westbank First Nation (WFN), effective end of day, Friday, June 17, 2022.

I was elected as Chief on a platform of good governance.

The definition of good governance has been hotly debated at Membership meetings, around the Council table, and at dinner tables across our Nation. To me, good governance has three main ingredients: competence, fairness, and equity. It means that when government officials make decisions and apply laws and policies that they do so appropriately, impartially, and consistently; not influenced by personal interest, relationships, likes and dislikes. Good governance should also empower the people through transparency and participation.

Following the unauthorized and undervalued sale of 147 acres of land owned by the WFN in Peachland in March 2021, I worked to hold this government to account. In June 2021, at my request, the CAO launched an independent third-party investigation into the transaction. Council shut down this investigation. In the ensuing months, I worked with a principled few within the Government Administration and the Nation to design and establish a review of the purported land sale by The Hon. Marion Buller, former BC Provincial Court Judge and Federal Chief Commissioner and Chancellor of the University of Victoria.

The Buller Report highlighted numerous gaps in the Nation's governance and made sixteen recommendations for positive change. Beginning to implement these recommendations has brought further evidence of corruption to light. Independent appraisals obtained by WFN estimate that the unauthorized sale (\$1.5M) undervalued the land by at least \$2M. The report raises issues of honesty and integrity of certain former senior employees and of deception of the WFN Council and lack of Council fulfilling its duties of oversight and continuing accountability to members.

Fighting corruption and promoting accountability, integrity, and transparency was the right thing to do. But, it has taken a toll on my family and my mental and physical health.

The lack of competency, integrity, and moral courage within the WFN Council and the departure of our principled CAO, Simon Melanson, leave me with no other choice but to resign. It is not an easy decision but one I have been forced to make.

I want to thank all those who have supported, advised, and encouraged me during my terms in office.

A special thanks to the Okanagan Nation Alliance Chiefs, our regional, municipal, provincial and federal government partners, and our many other partner organizations in academia, the private sector, and beyond for their support during my tenure in office. It was a pleasure and honour to work with each of you to better the lives of our people.

I request that my privacy be respected as I take steps to recover.

Limlemt,

ýlmix^{wm} Christopher Derickson

Community. Leadership. Pride.