



## **First Nation and Town councils seek accountability for Strawberry family**

### **Joint task force established to tackle racism in Rocky Mountain House**

Thursday, July 8, 2021

Rocky Mountain House, Alta. – Councils from the Town of Rocky Mountain House, O’Chiese First Nation and Sunchild First Nation met yesterday to discuss ongoing systemic racism faced by Indigenous people in our community.

The meeting was prompted by O’Chiese First Nation member Sonny Strawberry’s experience earlier this week in accessing emergency medical care for his mother.

The Town of Rocky Mountain House Council commits to speaking out against systemic and incidental racism wherever it appears.

“We understand we will not be able to move our community forward as long as our Indigenous residents and neighbours are discriminated against,” said Mayor Tammy Burke.

The councils are jointly seeking accountability for the treatment of Mr. Strawberry. O’Chiese First Nation, Sunchild First Nation and the Town of Rocky Mountain House, will immediately call for a meeting with Minister of Health Tyler Shandro and Alberta Health Services to respond to this matter.

Additionally, the councils agree to work together to address racism among residents.

“It’s time we open our eyes and deal with racism in Rocky,” said O’Chiese First Nation Chief Douglas Beaverbones. “The three Nations and Town of Rocky leadership are teaming up to deal with the issues the nations are facing.”

Together with the Big Horn First Nation, elected council members from Town, Sunchild and O’Chiese First Nations have established an anti-racism task force. The Treaty represents peace and harmony between all nations; it is this spirit of cooperation and harmony that will drive the Task Force to focus on racism education and cultural awareness.

On June 21, the Town of Rocky Mountain House permanently raised the Treaty 6 territory and Métis flags at the Town Office as a symbolic first step towards reconciliation.



“We recognize our important role as allies in working with and for our First Nation partners in eradicating racism at all levels,” said Burke.

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*O’Chiese First Nation Chief Douglas Beaverbones, Rocky Mountain House Mayor Tammy Burke and Sunchild First Nation Chief Jonathan Frencheater and councillors outside the Rocky Mountain House Town Office on July 7, 2021.*

*Photo by Marina Kulich | Town of Rocky Mountain House*