



## Pokégnek Bodéwadmik

POKAGON BAND OF POTAWATOMI

Bozho.

We hope everyone is safe and you have what you need to stay home per the protective guidelines being requested by various health agencies and government authorities. We encourage you to follow these guidelines as we believe they will help protect everyone's health and prevent the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

New information is coming out daily and there is a lot to keep up with. Our Task Force continues to meet daily to evaluate these updates and make recommendations to Tribal Council. There are numerous unknowns related to the Federal Stimulus package which the Senate voted to approve, and the House of Representatives will vote on, possibly by Friday. We will be doing our best to provide periodic updates on how this stimulus and other legislation could benefit Pokagon Citizens.

Unlike state and local governments which predominately use tax dollars to operate, Native Sovereign Nations rely on revenue from business ventures to fund critical services and programs for their citizens including healthcare, housing, education, family services, financial support, elder care, police, courts and more. We have a 10-county service area and also provide medical care to other Native Americans that seek our services. Including our Four Winds Casino locations and Tribal Government, we one of the largest employers in Michiana employing over 3,000 people and we support hundreds of area and local businesses. Without revenue, we lose our ability to serve the individuals that rely on us for these important services as well as employment. Unfortunately, with our casinos closed indefinitely, we are forced to make some difficult decisions.

In terms of government operations, we have transitioned to have only essential and mission-critical government employees continue to work. Some of these individuals will be onsite while others are working remotely. Unfortunately, Tribal Council had to make the difficult decision to temporarily layoff non-mission critical government employees effective, Monday March 30. Our goal is to maintain critical services to our citizens without interruption if possible. We hope to hire these employees back as soon as we are able to resume our normal operations.

Given the ongoing challenges with planning and securing resources for future events, Tribal Council has also decided to cancel the Veteran's Pow Wow, the

Veteran's Golf Outing and Vendors Dinner, and the Fasting Camp. The Michigan Indian Elders Association (MIEA) cancelled their conference and the Michigan Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum also cancelled their event, both of which were scheduled to take place at Four Winds New Buffalo. All of us were looking forward to these great events, but uncertainty with the calendar made it impossible to proceed. In an effort not to conflict with other future events on the calendar and because the timetable to resume normal activity is unknown, these events will not be rescheduled in 2020.

To help with the flow of information and to help answer questions, please be sure to login into our new Office of the Tribal Council section of the Pokagon website. Periodic updates will be posted here. We are also planning to include some video updates as time and resources allow.

There might not be some good news to report for a while, but we will get through this. We look forward to providing another update next week.

Migwëthh,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Wesaw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Matthew Wesaw  
Tribal Council Chairman