

TAWICH

MAGAZINE

ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



TAWICH DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOUNDING MEMBERS

TAWICH MAGAZINE

ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



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DUTY EDITOR
DESIGN AND LAYOUT Jeremy Diamond

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Cassandra Danyluk
Micheal Georgekish

PHOTOS AND ADVERTISING DESIGN
Cassandra Danyluk
Rezdude Technologies

Cover: Starting from top picture clockwise: John Mark, Frederick Georgekish, Reggie Mark, David Natawapineskum, Clarence Tomatuk, John Matches
Centre Picture: Walter Hughboy

President's Message



Tony Gull, President

Wachiya!

We are proud to present our new and first edition of Tawich Business Magazine, as you are reading our inaugural issue. This magazine will inform you on the developments of our business and economic activities as well as present our readership to our team, stakeholders and our partners. We will utilize this magazine as a tool and a way to communicate Tawich and its entities' activities and, more importantly, its plans and successes.

By Tawich's success, we must pay tribute to all past leaders, who have made our organization a successful forward thinking company and whom paved the path to true economic solvency. We say thank you to leaders, such as late Walter Hughboy, late Fred Georgekish, late Billy Atsynia, Reggie Mark, Rodney Mark, John Mark, Fred Blackned, Dennis Georgekish, and our female leaders, such as Nancy Danyluk, Deborah Hawken, Carmen Faries, Christina Gilpin, and to all others who have shown dedication to Tawich's successes over the years.

We know our staff, board, partners, and stakeholders are committed and dedicated to ensuring Tawich's success with hopes to inspire our youth to continue the success of a better, more prosperous economic, self-sufficient corporation and community.

Ultimately, we strive to ensure we generate wealth within the community as your Corporation, and we ask that you be part of it with us for the benefit of generations to come. We dedicate this magazine to all past and present board members, presidents, staff, partners, and all other stakeholders, including our Chiefs and Councils, respectively.

We trust that you will enjoy reading the 1st Edition of our new Business Magazine, as I am proud of the work done to present this issue to our readers. Wishing you all the best in health, prosperity, and in building wealth for our Corporation and our community.

Regards,

Tony Gull
President
Tawich Development Corporation





Top Row: Tracey Gunner-Shanush, Christina Gilpin, David Bull
Bottom Row: Sam Gilpin, John Mark, Tony Gull, Danny Tomatuk, Joseph Georgekish

Continuing A Legacy

Reflecting on the history of Tawich Development Corporation and remembering leaders that adapted to the effects of changes in Eeyou Istchee.

Along the eastern shore of James Bay, there is a community that exhibits a beautiful balance of Cree tradition and modern day civilization. Upon visiting the Cree Nation of Wemindji, it is impossible to ignore the beauty that is displayed in its environment. From its stunning views of the bay and painted rocky hill surroundings, to the large modern buildings and community landscaping, it is no wonder Wemindji is considered one of the most beautiful communities in Eeyou Istchee.

The emphasis and care that has gone into the community's beautification and development can be attributed to Wemindji's healthy local economy and good leadership, both past and present. But for the community to reach its present day successes was not an easy road. The opportunity for social and economic

development came for Wemindji when the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) was signed between the Grand Council of the Crees and the Federal and Provincial Governments in 1975. The historic agreement allowed the Crees of James Bay to be governed by this agreement in place of the Indian Act, which was what governed the 9 Cree communities prior to the signing. The agreement allowed for the provincial government to proceed completing a large-scale hydroelectric project on traditional Cree territory, and in return, the Grand Council of the Crees received from the federal government governing rights over education, health and autonomy on land development within Cree territory, which encompasses over 400,000 square kilometers. Since the signing, the agreement has allowed Wemindji, and the Cree

communities to flourish in community and economic development, which is determined by local band councils. As for Wemindji today, Tawich Development Corporation (TDC), is considered to be the economic engine for the community. Owing 6 local businesses, including a hotel, restaurant and a grocery store, TDC is also a shareholder and partner in many local and regional companies such as Wemindji Paving, Wolf Camp Corporation, VCC General Contractor, and KEPA Transport along with many others.

Founded in 1987, Tawich Development Corporation was created with the intention of generating economic opportunity for the community. Twelve years after the signing of the JBNQA, the Cree Nation of Wemindji had created its first development company with the hopes of reaching economic self-

sufficiency. Founded by the band council at the time, founding members included late Chief Walter Hughboy, late Frederick Georgekish, late John Matches, David Natawapineskum, Reggie Mark, John Mark, and Clarence Tomatuk.

Chief Walter Hughboy was an influential leader whose leadership went beyond the community of Wemindji and resonated at the regional level with the Grand Council of the Crees. Hughboy pioneered projects and companies such as the Sakami Eeyou Corporation, Air Wemindji, and KEPA Transport and was also an instrumental negotiator for other regional initiatives. His vision was for Wemindji to become economically self-sufficient by investing and seizing opportunity. He believed that through a strong economy, the Cree Nation of Wemindji could lay a foundation to support a healthy social and economically developed community for future generations.

In 1990, TDC created its first company. Tawich Construction Inc. (TCI), a residential construction company was created with the purpose of providing local employment and hands on training, all the while constructing residential homes for community members. Today, TCI is in its 26th year of existence and is the largest company under the Tawich Holdings Corporation.

Tawich Development Corporation has created a dynasty for the community of Wemindji since its time of creation. The company currently generates millions in yearly revenue, and profits of the corporation are either distributed for community projects through the band council or are reinvested into the company for potential business endeavors.

The Cree Nation of Wemindji and Tawich Development Corporation share the same mission and responsibility to develop, foster, and nurture the social and economic health of the community. From its early beginnings in 1987, TDC's mission to help Wemindji become an economically self-sufficient community have been successfully realized year after year through the development and creation of corporations, local businesses, and jobs. The vision of the founding leaders continues to be the vision that is shared by today's Board of Directors and employees who lead the company in its present day success. As the company moves forward, it is clear that the visions of past leaders have been realized and will continue to be realized for generations to come.

"One day, we had gone goose hunting



Danny Tomatuk, Vice-President



out in the bay. The weather can be unpredictable out there. When we were making our way home, the north wind picked up. We ended up stranded for the night on Solomons Temple Islands. The next morning, I woke up early, and looked to the east where the sun was coming up. And what I saw was a beautiful sunrise. The sky filled with beautiful colors as a new day had begun. When I designed the TDC logo, I tried to capture that sunrise

that I witnessed that morning. Today, that vision of the logo symbolizes the journey of the company to where it is today. There were many obstacles that TDC was faced with, but we overcame, and continue to overcome those obstacles with success. The rising sun symbolizes the growth and rise of TDC and how far it has come."

Stanley Shashaweskum



Tawich Construction Inc. Aiming Higher

“Early years & a lending hand”



Founded in 1990, Tawich Construction Inc. (TCI) had humble beginnings when it entered the field as a residential construction company. Having been the first company that was created by the recently formed Tawich Development Corporation (TDC), the principal focus of the business was to provide employment and build residential homes for the community of Wemindji, two needs that were crucial to the healthy development and growth of the community.

Earle Danyluk, Operations Manager at the local level of the company, said that in its early years of existence, TCI gained valuable experience and support from Cree Construction Development Company (CCDC). Owned by the Grand Council of the Crees, CCDC's purpose was to empower and train Cree construction companies such as TCI. They fulfilled their regional role by lending equipment, providing training, and embarking on joint ventures. Because TCI was limited in resources and experience in the field during its early days, Danyluk said CCDC's support and involvement was crucial

to the growth and development of the company.

Over a quarter of a century later, TCI now specializes in civil construction, which primarily focuses on building core infrastructure such as roads, sewers, pipelines, etc. In recent years, Tawich Construction established itself as one of the largest and most successful construction companies on the east coast of James Bay. According to TDC, the company is Tawich Holding's most revenue-generating enterprise bringing in over \$80,000,000 in revenue and employing over 350 employees in its peak year.

Project Eleonore, a gold mine located 151 kilometers east of Wemindji, has brought plenty of business opportunity for TCI in recent years. Owned by Les Mines Opinaca, a subsidiary of Goldcorp, the mine began construction in 2011 after Wemindji signed a collaboration agreement with the mining company. With the agreement, Wemindji obtained preferential employment and business



Earle Danyluk, Operations Manager



Wayne Morrison, Director General

opportunity from the mine, one that TCI has benefitted from. With joint ventures and contracts, TCI has gained valuable experience and created a healthy revenue stream in recent years from the mining project.

The success and work that is achieved by the company comes full circle with profits going directly back into community programming every year.

What factors attribute to Tawich Construction's success?

As if having over 25 years of experience in civil and residential construction isn't enough to prove the company's great track record, Danyluk believes that continually aiming higher and doing better is what allows the company to be successful.

In order to aim higher, standards need to be continually raised, because with

anything in life, there is always room for improvement. For TCI, that pertains to the newly developed strategic plan. "The purpose of the plan is to improve on the company's services and attract more business opportunities in the mining and construction industry. The plan also targets improving employees in their respective work areas as well as aim to attract skilled professionals to be a part of the TCI team" said Holly Danyluk, who is responsible for developing the plan as the company's Strategic Corporate Manager.

Through this initiative, the company hopes to improve internal operations to be more effective and efficient, as well as develop a competitive advantage in order to increase business opportunities within Eeyou Istchee and beyond.

What are the aims for the future?

As part of their strategic plan, the

company aims to employ more qualified and certified local Crees professionals in the construction and finance/administration fields. A common issue that is seen not only within the company, but in the community as well is the lack of Crees occupying specific trades and professional positions. According to Wayne Morrison, Director General of TCI, finding qualified Cree is currently one of the company's biggest challenges.

Morrison explained that the majority of Crees that are hired by TCI work as seasonal laborers or heavy equipment operators, and a lot of the time, there is a surplus of those workers. As a result, not everyone can be hired because the pool of laborers and operators is so large with limited positions available. One of the company's goals, as part of the strategic plan is to help develop and train local people to become certified surveyors and engineers, two positions that are predominantly occupied by nonnatives within TCI. As an initial step towards this goal, the company has recently begun training local members to become certified surveyors.

Morrison hopes that more youth will consider pursuing a career in construction. He also mentioned that he would like to see more people furthering their education so they can return to Wemindji to fill important positions not only in the field of construction, but in the administrative and finance sectors as well. Continually evolving and improving is a reality of running a business and Morrison hopes that by always aiming higher, the company can inspire others to do the same.



Ecomet Visitor, David John Matches, David Natawapineskum Jr.

Tawich Distribution Inc. Lead and Innovate

A new innovative company, Tawich Distribution Inc. obtains exclusive rights from CCM/Reebok to distribute hockey and broomball equipment & apparel within Eeyou Istchee.



Photo by: Tawich Distribution Inc. - Jeremy Brown

In today's fast-paced world of business, you have to be innovative, forward thinking and persistent. Smartphones make it so that a user can order thousands of merchandise from a manufacturer in minutes on sites like Alibaba. The merchandise then lands in the hands of different distribution carriers along the way before reaching the customer. Brand new company Tawich Distribution Inc. (TDI) has become one of those distribution carriers.

Organizations and business within Eeyou Istchee are frequent customers of marketing and distribution companies in Abitibi-Temiscamingue such as Trimline in Val-d'Or or Lettrage Waldi in Chibougamau. Unprecedented in the history of Cree business, TDI has entered

the market and has become the first and only Cree owned company to go into direct competition with other distribution companies in Abitibi who have dominated the market since business development began in Eeyou Istchee.

The idea for Tawich Distribution came after the completion of the Wemindji Laundromat. Bruno Pereira, President of TDI, said that after observing the types of material that Goldcorp was purchasing, they believed that Tawich Development could get into manufacturing. The idea was to produce clothing & equipment to sell to the mine. "The idea was brilliant!" said Pereira about the potential venture. An experienced businessman having owned a high-end shoe store in Montreal, Pereira is familiar with the process

required to start a company like Tawich Distribution. Knowing how to define a target market and finding a good supplier was key to the success of the company's initial months. From the company's first inception a few years back, it took some time to get the right business model, but when they finally got it, they got straight to work and TDI made its first sale in September of 2015.

The company has overcome many obstacles and challenges since it was created. According to Pereira, one of those challenges was the issue of finding employees with the specific skills sets that complemented the goals and operations of the business. "There are people that have come and gone, and people that have seen it through." Jeremy



Brown, Director of Operations is one of those people who have seen it through. When asked about potential growth of the company, Pereira expressed that they expect to triple the size of its current staff within the next 5 years.

Employing a variety of level of positions, TDI has shipping and handling personnel, delivery agents, technical sales representatives and administrative staff. These types of jobs create a very unique employee, providing skill sets that are not usually demonstrated by Cree in Eeyou Istchee. Acknowledging the employees as being the driving force of the company, Pereira said “they have represented and continue to represent the company very well and we wouldn’t be where we are today without their persistence in the field.”

In a short amount of time, TDI’s ball continues to roll. The company have been signing and negotiating deals that have been unprecedented in Eeyou Istchee. Negotiating with suppliers, acquiring membership and obtaining licenses for exclusive distribution rights have



When asked about potential growth of the company, Pereira expressed that they expect to triple the size of its current staff within the next 5 years.



been key activities for the company. The future looks bright for a company that has exclusive rights to distribute designs from Realtree and exclusive distribution rights from companies like Reebok, CCM and Adidas.

This is where the future of TDI is heading. With plans to release different lines of clothing, the company recently released their Tawich Golf collection at the Wemindji Minor Sports Golf Benefit in June of this year. And In the fall of 2016 they will be releasing their line of hunting clothing with Realtree designs. The company had astonishingly acquired the last exclusive license provided by Realtree in the region and in the country.

Being an innovative new company that has stepped away from the status quo, the company continues to surprise. “TDI’s dynamic and new approach is very refreshing. The Cree Nation of Wemindji and Tawich Development Corporation are such big, strong, and stable organizations that their reputations open doors that even established companies down in Val-d’Or can’t even open” said Pereira when asked about his favourite aspect of the company was. As the company continues to hit homeruns as a rookie player in the industry, it is sure that TDI will inspire other Cree businesses and entrepreneurs alike to join in the game.



Photos by: Tawich Distribution Inc. - Jeremy Brown

Promoting an Entrepreneurial Culture

Wemindji Entrepreneurial Fund looks to support emerging and existing local Entrepreneurs.



If you're a resident of, or a visitor to the Cree Nation of Wemindji, you will likely notice a variety of businesses that cater to the community's needs. When you look carefully, you will notice that Tawich Development Corporation (TDC) runs the majority of businesses from the Sibi Gas station to the local community grocery store.

But one initiative aims to change that current trend. The Wemindji Entrepreneur Fund is a local funding source that aims to help local entrepreneurs get their business ideas off the ground. This fund is available as a combined grant/loan of up to \$50,000.00 for both startup businesses and existing businesses for Wemindji band members. "The purpose

of the loan is to make it easier for local entrepreneurs to access startup funds that would otherwise be harder to get through a financial institute such as Bank of Montreal," says David Bull, Director of Operations of Tawich Development Corporation. The fund will provide the entrepreneur with a loan/grant of up to \$50,000.00, fifty percent of it being a grant and the other fifty percent being a loan that will need to be repaid to TDC. For example, if there was a request of \$20,000.00, \$10,000.00 would be a grant, and \$10,000.00 would be a loan.

The fund has contributions from the Cree Nation of Wemindji and Goldcorp Inc. as part of the Collaboration Agreement from the Project Eleonore Mine. Every year, there is a total of \$100,000.00 available for disbursement, although Bull mentioned that some years there is often more that is given. "For example, this year, we have paid out more than \$100,000.00". The mandate from the Cree Nation of Wemindji is to help promote local entrepreneurs, and Bull says that they did that in more ways than offering funding. For instance, if there were an entrepreneur who wanted to open a hardware store, TDC would deliberately remove hardware products from the community store in order to help that person succeed. Bull also mentioned that basic accounting and bookkeeping services are available to local entrepreneurs on behalf of TDC if they wished to use them during the first year of operations. When the mini mall was being renovated; the late Samuel Georgekish had the opportunity to customize a space for the infamous Coffee Shop, which has been a popular hangout for local residents for many years. Many other services are available to entrepreneurs from TDC that aim at helping entrepreneurs succeed through ongoing support once business is running. Bull invites all aspiring entrepreneurs to visit his office to familiarize and research the process required to start their ventures.

In order to be eligible to receive funds under the Entrepreneur Fund, the business owner must be a Wemindji beneficiary who is 18 years of age or older and must be residing full-time within the community.

Although, right now, local businesses are predominately owned by TDC, Bull believes that in time, that reality will change and hopes that we will start to see more and more entrepreneurs pursue their dreams. Bull says he is already starting to see that trend happening as a locally owned garage along with other businesses are in the process of starting up. When asked what types of businesses he believes Wemindji needs, a hardware

“
The fund will provide the entrepreneur with a loan/grant of up to \$50,000.00...
”

store, a repair shop, a depanneur, are a few things he believes would be successful in Wemindji although he encourages anyone with a creative idea to go ahead and take the risk to make their business dreams a reality.

Interested in starting your own business? Here are some key steps you need to take:

1. Visit Charlotte Ottereyes Ratt, the Economic Development Officer (EDO) of the Cree Nation of Wemindji to discuss your idea
2. Develop Business Plan (EDO will often help find funds to pay for business plans)
3. Obtain Resolution of Support from local Band Council (you will need this for funding)
4. Make sure you have 5% equity in order to access funding.
5. Request for funding:
Examples include:
 - Wemindji Entrepreneur Fund (TDC)
 - Aboriginal Business Canada
 - Cree Nation Government
 - Cree Human Resources Development (For salaries & training)
6. Start Your Business!

For more information on the Entrepreneur Fund you can visit David Bull, Chief Operating Officer at Tawich Development Corporation.



Lee Visitor - Entrepreneur & Owner of Lee's Garage

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David Bull, Director of Operations

Featured Employee David Bull

Having started out as a gas bar attendant, David Bull, now Director of Operations for Tawich Development Corporation shares his journey with the company along some of the challenges they face today.

What is your job title with Tawich Development Corporation and the duties that come along with it?

"I am the Director of Operations, and in my position, I oversee all the local businesses in Wemindji to ensure that our businesses are profitable. On top of that, I handle many of the administrative duties that are required for day to day operations within the company."

How has TDC helped you in your career development?

"I was given a lot of opportunities to grow with the company. Starting out as a gas bar attendant, I was promoted to manager of the gas station, a position I held for many years

and from there, was offered the position of Director of Operations for the company which lead me to my current positions as the Director of Operations. I find it has been very challenging, but I have been given a lot of training to fulfill the positions that I was given. I believe that there are a lot of professional positions within TDC available to local people but these positions often require the proper qualifications. There is opportunity to grow and we want to encourage local people to pursue their education and fill those positions."

What are the biggest challenges that Tawich Development Corporation faces?

"It might be the fact that we do not have a lot of qualified or educated people to fill top

“

I find it has been very challenging, but I have been given a lot of training to fulfill the positions that I was given. ”

managerial positions within our company. It might be the fear of the high level of responsibility that comes with a specific job such as positions such as a manager, or accountant, etc. But if we had those qualified local people available, we would be aggressive and open to hiring them to be a part of our team. It is tough to find those people. There are a lot of people who are shy to hold high positions, so we hope to have more local people break that barrier and step up to take that torch."

What are three words you would choose to describe TDC?

"Trust, Forward-Thinking, & Opportunity."



Front entrance of new TDC Administration Building

New Tawich Administration Building Building Forward

Tawich Development Corporation unveils a stunning new administration to meet the company's business demands and growth.

An exciting new project has been in the works for Tawich Development Corporation (TDC). A new administrative building was unveiled on August 11, 2016 in Wemindji Quebec to meet the ever-growing needs of the company.

Located at 12 Tawich Road, the new building is a state of the art structure that nicely accommodates the corporation, its businesses, subsidiaries as well as its partners. With the planning starting in 2014, David Bull, Directors of Operations said that the discussion for a new building had been in the works for a while, but only recently had those talks started to take motion. Tawich used to be located in the wing of the Cree Nation of Wemindji's administrative building where space became an issue due to the large number of employees within each organization.

In order to centralize operations and to provide space for the company's growing

needs, the building will accommodate Tawich Development Corporation, Tawich Construction Inc., Tawich Management Services, Tawich Distribution Inc., and office space will be made available to VCC General Contractor for their use. When asked about what the best feature of the building was, the IT system that was at the top of the list for Bull, describing it as "the best IT system in the community with the most recent technology."

With 31 offices and 2 large conference rooms, the size of the building has been designed to meet current and future needs of the corporation. The building is large and features two floors, enough to accommodate the company and its subsidiaries. If TDC were to plan on expanding in the future, the building has been specifically designed to have an extension expanded from the north side of the building. There is also potential office space and conference room space

that may be made available to the public, outside organizations, and businesses on a rental basis upon request according to Bull.

For those who plan on visiting the building, you will find TDC located on the top floor, while Tawich Construction Inc. is located on the ground floor of the building. With its beautiful and modern design, you will surely be astonished upon visiting Wemindji's newest structure.

Many community members were in attendance at the Grand Opening of the building. A special aspect of the event included recognition for the founding members of the company who cut the ribbon added a special touch to the historic moment.

Whether it is for business or community development, it is inevitable that the new building will be the birthplace for many innovative business ideas that will advance the corporation and the community.



Wachiya - Kwei - Welcome - Bienvenue

Découvrez la culture millénaire crie en Eeyou Istchee/Baie-James par avion ou par la route

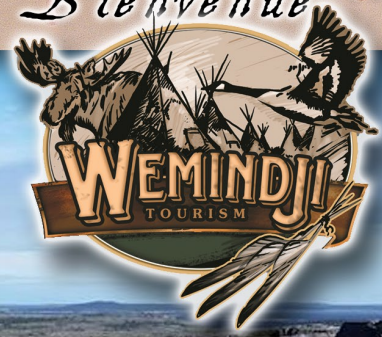
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Wemindji Laundry Inc. Outsourced Opportunity

Wemindji's Laundromat aims to provide employment, generate profit, and create opportunity for local entrepreneurs.



Sharon Atsynia, Karen Cheezo, Harmony Blackned, Suzanne Atsynia, Joyce Hughboy, Melissa Namagoose

When visiting Eeyou Istchee, it is a rare sight to see a Laundromat in full operation. Out of the nine Cree communities, only Mistissini and Wemindji have fully operational Laundromats. The Eleonore Mine project was faced with a situation when their usage of water was becoming too high, and as a result, the laundry service needed to be outsourced to a company outside the mine. Tawich Development Corporation (TDC) recognized an opportunity to obtain a contract from Goldcorp Inc. to provide the laundry service for the mine. Goldcorp Inc. owns Project Eleonore, which is located on Wemindji territory. As a result of the mine being located on Wemindji territory, the Cree Nation of Wemindji and Goldcorp Inc. have a Collaboration Agreement that gives priority to Wemindji for employment and business related opportunities from the mine. With the agreement in place, TDC knew there was

a high chance that they would obtain the contract if a Laundromat were built in the community.

The Laundromat had its official Grand Opening on October 28, 2013. Melissa Namagoose, Manager explained that on top of the contract with the mine, the business also offers additional services such as sewing repairs and embroidery stitching. A beautifully designed building, the Laundromat is equipped with 2 large coin operated industrial washers and 2 large coin operated dryers that are available for public use and additional machines that is solely used for laundry services that the business provides to its clients. The business currently has 8 employees and according to David Bull who is the Director of Operations for TDC, turnover hasn't been as issue thus far, a rare occurrence in the community which often sees high turnover rates.

Bull says that he is proud of the business and how it has been running so far and is especially proud of Namagoose's growth and development as a manager.

Not only is the business doing well, but also with its creation, a spinoff business was created called Mark Transport. Kyle Mark, owner of the business, delivers the laundry a few times a week to and from the mine. On top of this, Bull said the staff has been well trained and they are meeting their client's needs, something he hopes will continue.

Delivering their service with quality and to operate effectively and efficiently has not been an issue for this recent business venture. Bull and Namagoose aspire to obtain new clientele for the Laundromat and say that they are ready and capable to deliver a high level of service and unmatched quality to potential clients.

TAWICH DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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PRESIDENT
Serving since June 2014 to present



JOHN MARK
BOARD MEMBER
Serving since 1996-2002, 2005-2009 & June 2014 to present



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VICE PRESIDENT
Serving since 1990-1996, 2002-2005, & 2009 to present



JOSEPH GEORGEKISH
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Serving since June 2014 to present



SAM GILPIN
BOARD MEMBER
Serving since 1987-1990 & June 2014 to present



Tawich Development Corporation
12 Tawich Road
Wemindji Qc
J0M 1L0

Tel: (819) 978-3030

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BUSINESSES, SUBSIDIARIES & PARTNERS

TAWICH DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

TONY GULL
PRESIDENT
(819)-978-3030 EXT. 1100

DANNY TOMATUK
VICE-PRESIDENT
(819)-978-3030 EXT. 1101

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DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
(819)-978-3030 EXT 1102

TAWICH MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC.
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DIRECTOR OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT
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JEREMY BROWN
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
(819)-978-3030 EXT. 1300

TAWICH CONSTRUCTION INC.
WAYNE MORRISON
DIRECTOR GENERAL
(819)-978-3030 EXT. 1200

WEMINDJI PAVING
GEORGES PELLETIER
PRESIDENT & CEO
(819)-732-3351 EXT. 323

QUEBEC INC. (CRUSHER)
(819)-252-7886

WOLF CAMP CORPORATION
SHAWN WAPACHEE
DIRECTOR
(819)-978-7556

VCC GENERAL CONTRACTOR INC.
PATRICE BEAUMELLE
VICE-PRESIDENT
(819)-824-9587

KEPA TRANSPORT LTD.
MARIE BOGELIC
DIRECTOR GENERAL
(819)-874-0262

PETRONOR INC.
RICHARD BROUILLARD
DIRECTOR GENERAL
(819)-874-0262

WEMINDJI LAUNDRY INC.
MELISSA NAMAGOOSE
MANAGER
(819)-978-3080

WEMINDJI EXPLORATION INC.
MARY CARMEN VERA
(514)-773-4631

LOCAL BUSINESSES

MAQUATUA INN HOTEL & RESTAURANT
SABRINA GEORGEKISH
MANAGER
(819)-978-3166

COMMUNITY STORE
RICHARD ROBITAILLE
MANAGER
(819)-978-3656

SIBI GAS STATION
ANN MARIE MARK
MANAGER
(819)-978-3508

CREENET INC.
GEORDIE GEORGEKISH
TECHNICIAN
(819)-978-7257

WEMINDJI TOURISM
CHARLENE WAWATIE
TOURISM OFFICER
(819)-978-3737



