



**For Immediate Release - March 5, 2019**

On October 18, 2017, a group of five off-reserve Abegweit Band members filed an Application in the Federal Court of Canada challenging the constitutionality of certain sections of the Abegweit Band Election Code.

Specifically, the Applicants have asserted that the sections of the Abegweit Band Election Code requiring a Band member to be a resident on the Reserve to either vote in Band elections or run for the office of Chief or Councillor are contrary to the Charter.

In an attempt to save the Band the considerable expense and aggravation of going to court, the parties agreed to conduct a plebiscite of all Band members under the provisions of the current Election Code.

75% of the votes cast by Band members must approve of the changes to the Election Code in order for it to be changed.

If the proposed changes are accepted by the Band, then the court case will be discontinued. If the proposed changes are not accepted, then the court case may go ahead. If the Band is unsuccessful in Court, then the Election Code may change as a result of the judge's decision, and the Band will have to pay substantial additional costs.

**The proposed questions for the plebiscite are as follows:**

1. Do you agree that all Band members regardless of residence should be able to vote in Band elections? Yes  No
- \*2. Do you agree that all adult Band members residing anywhere in P.E.I. may run for the position of Band Councillor? Yes  No
3. Do you agree with the following changes in voting procedure:
  - a. To extend polling hours so that polls are open from 8am until 8pm?
  - b. To allow the Electoral Officer to make rules about online voting, travelling polls, off-reserve polls, advanced polls, or other types of polls, if such polls are used in an election?
  - c. To post notice of a candidate nomination meeting online, including on the Members' website?
  - d. To provide notice of an election poll that includes the names of the candidates; the time, place and hour of the poll; and a copy of the Election Code?

Yes  No

**The plebiscite to amend the current Abegweit Band Election Code will be held on Monday, March 25, 2019, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Abegweit First Nation Office (Community Room) 31 Kitpu Street, Scotchfort PEI.**  
**Storm date is Wednesday, March 27, 2019.**

A copy of the current Election Code, as well as the proposed Election Code are available on the Band website and at the Band office.

\* To be eligible to run for Chief, a Band member must be resident on reserve.