

COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS
KAHNAWÀ:KE MEMBERSHIP LAW
6th COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
MCK LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
24, Onerahtókha/April 2013
6:00 – 8:30 PM

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

FACILITATORS:

Kahente Horn-Miller (Lead - CDMP)
Joe Delaronde (Facilitator)

RESOURCE PEOPLE:

Rose-Ann Morris (Lead – Resource Person)

RECORDERS:

Chelsea Phillips (recorder)

6:00 P.M. **WELCOMING** – Kanento Patton

6:05 P.M. **INTRODUCTION/MEETING GUIDELINES** – Joe Delaronde & Kahente Horn-Miller

6:10 P.M. **KAHNAWÀ:KE MEMBERSHIP LAW** – Rose-Ann Morris

6:15 P.M. **QUESTION:**

1) What needs to be amended in the Kahnawà:ke Membership Law? Continued. See consensus from Group 1 and 2.

8:15 P.M. **NEXT STEPS** – Kahente Horn-Miller & Rose-Ann Morris

8:30 P.M. **CLOSING** – Joannie Montour

QUESTION:

**What needs to be amended in the Kahnawà:ke Membership Law?
Continued**

GROUP 3

Facilitator: Joe Delaronde
Resource Person: Rose-Ann Morris
Group Speaker: None
Recorder: Chelsea Phillips

CDMP Consensus from Group 1 and 2 from March 21, 2012

Question: Who can be a member? What is the criterion to become a member?

4 or more Kanien'keha:ka great-grandparents, or Iroquois or Indigenous great-grandparents?

- Group 1 & 2 agreed to 4 Indigenous great-grandparents.

Group 3 began discussions:

- Major issue is first criteria of 4 great grandparents; all other points no issue with. All people have ties to clans who sit at the table. First criteria because it denies people with clans. No clan not the end of the world, adoption. Clan is most important.
- Are we capable of using the clan system? Where is the proof of the clan?
- How do you prove you have a clan? What about people who have 3 great grandparents and no clan?
- Our people always adopted into clans.
- At last meeting impression 6 in favor of 4 great grandparents, people don't follow the clan system, they follow what raised with. Never agreed with 3 great

grandparents and a clan need other 2 groups to agree that it is something to look at.

- Last meeting consider 3 great grandparents and a clan thought about it and did not agree.
- Past is our present which becomes our future. Received clan from mother, grandmother. Mohawk name came from past lineage. Naming important in the clan. How would we work it for people without a clan, woman brought into family after 10 years she is part of the family. Families stick together. Example Eunice Williams was a clan mother.
- Clan is matrilineal right. Agrees with clan system. Repeal laws that were imposed upon us. It is about making sure that we bring those women in and keeping those kids. We need to be inclusive, need to bring the people back in. Anyone who has a clan needs to be brought back in.
- My siblings and I were not welcomed in the community due to the Indian act. We did not integrate ourselves into the community. Pain comes from the exclusion. I'm intimidated and bullied. Don't exclude. I have not worked at getting my kids integrated into this community because I do not want them to feel the pain of exclusion.
- I am young in this community I agree that we must be more inclusive adding clan system might complicate things further. Let's decide on definition so that we can become inclusive. Honor past and go to the future. Maybe incorporate clan system at a later time.
- This discussion will take the longest. The other criteria those 5 I'm in agreement with, so agree on those 5 first and come back to this one on great-grandparents. Clan on chimney to show where you belong. Comes down to family support for those who do not have clans. What importance does it have or doesn't. Adoption is in the Iroquois constitution.
- Feel bad for what the person went through in life. Understand it must have been difficult. We who grew up here also went through what you did. Not easy to be Indian. Feel bad for women who lost rights. Would never accept women from the outside who married in. Found out how clans work later in life. Answer first question, later bring in clan system.
- If you have one parent Mohawk, clan system later on. Concerns me a lot, need to get back our people, especially, second cousins are marrying.

- Facilitator's notes reviewed with group:
 - Clans are important but should be considered later.
 - Suggestion: one Mohawk parent should be the requirement.
 - Other five criteria: are these acceptable?
 - (From previous meeting)
 1. 4 great grandparents automatic
 2. Indian with clan – automatic.
 3. Consideration for 3 great grandparents but must have ties (must have grown up here)
 4. Spouses can't acquire rights/benefits
 5. Children of such unions (#4) require further discussion.
 6. Children of (#4) marrying out must leave.

- Clan system at bottom, why? Did not want it to come out strong. It is part of the 4 criteria. All affected by the Indian Act. Thought about the reverse; men leave instead of women, and how it would have affected us. We lost all those people and clans who had Mohawk mothers. Strongly believe that the clan system is important. Not right those nonnative women live here. Lateral violence not right. Not going to work, great grandparents because it all comes down to blood. Bring back clans, what is rightfully ours. Start there. Can't comment on the number of great grandparents at this point. We have to look at clans and find a way to include the people who do not have clans. The government cannot challenge that, it is natural law.
- If we were to implement clan system, how do you make a law out of it?
- Mention 2 row wampum longhouse told me that once you go out of the canoe, it does not state that you cannot get back in. You can go back to the longhouse and ask to get back in. Who from here will go to the grand council and add a bead to connect it.
- 2 row wampum made between us and the Dutch, then as the chain of covenant. Wampum 42 clans, wampum 44 lineage decent, wampum 46 naming, reason why clans were important woman have ties to the land wampum 45, wampum 47 extinction of clan mothers appointed by chiefs of a nation, wampum 48 title ship/adoption. Natural law cannot be denied. Wampum 66 people form families who have no clan name hung about the neck, wampum 68 asking to be adopted into a clan. Wampum 69 adoption of member of a number of families.
- Intent to come one mind on consensus then we need to have flexibility. One parent idea simplifies things.

- Agree totally with going back to clanship, natural law. Covenant chain polished. Need work plan to return to clan system as first step.
- Clan system was proposed back in 1979. Why was it not implemented? Sat with elders who said we have to go back to clan system. Everything can be rectified if we go back.
- Doesn't matter what religious background you have, it is who we are as a people.
- Work with the law we have then in the future go back to the clan system, as I agree with our ways. Can't forget about the people in limbo and who are affected by the law we need to move forward.

- Observer Comment:
 - 1979 mandate to go back to traditional government.
 - The council decided to do this but when it came to the council table they had a different interpretation of traditional government.
 - They asked Tom Porter to come in and explain. This was someone from the outside of the community.
 - They also had a discussion on the 3 or 4 great grandparent issue and asked/begged people to participate.
 - Everyone tried to work together, the council and the longhouse.
 - Because they didn't complete it, they are irresponsible. We have to think of the next 7 generations, not the past. We have to draw the line somewhere.

- 1979 no strategic plan made, nothing set on paper. To get there is going to take time. Need to have a strategic plan. How many great grandparents? First step of many.
- In 2002 council signed a declaration to return to traditional government. Each year there has been something included to return to traditional government including this type of discussion following that process. Here to move forward, not leaving anyone behind. Membership is the most difficult topic to get through; everything else will fall into place.
- Alternative to clan implementation is to form a working group to work on the clan system. Staying in present taking traditional government and moving forward to look at clan implementation.

- - Group 3 agrees to meet with next week on Wednesday, May 1, 2013.

Note: Consensus reached by Group 1 and 2 on following criteria:

What is definition of great-grandparent? Group 2 noted the great-grandparent cannot be an acquired status member.

- Group 1 & 2 agreed to 4 Indigenous great-grandparents and definition is needed.

Automatic for person born of 2 members or 1 member parent and other of Iroquois confederacy with verifiable proof?

- Group 1 & 2 agreed to 4 Indigenous great-grandparents with proof includes Inuit.

Is married to or living with a common-law relationship with a member?

- Group 1 agreed, Group 2 said to remove common-law if a person wants to become a member, they should marry.

Maintains ties with the community?

- Group 1 agreed person should be committed to the community. Group 2 said ties are very important and must be expanded and kept as a criterion.

Honors customs and tradition, comply with codes, laws and regulations of Kahnawà:ke?

- Group 1 & 2 agreed to take from law and out into an oath.

Requirement for a clan or obtain a clan?

- Group 1 & 2 agreed this is important but clarification on the process needed. Group 2 felt there should be a process to facilitate, classes to learn the language, ceremonies and protocol to follow when you go to the Longhouse.

Committed to learning Kanien'keha?

- Group 1 & 2 agreed to take from law and out into an oath.

Respects mother earth?

- Group 1 & 2 agreed to take from law and out into an oath.

Concerns raised:

- Definition required for 4 great-grandparents
- Definition for citizenship
- Definition for membership
- To establish a working group to work on definitions