

KAHNAWÀ:KE MEMBERSHIP LAW  
**16th COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**  
Karonhianonhnha School Gym  
3, Tsothóhrha/December 2013  
6:00 – 8:30 PM

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

**FACILITATORS:**

Kahente Horn-Miller (Lead - CDMP)

Joe Delaronde

Ronald Skye

**RESOURCE PEOPLE:**

Rose-Ann Morris (Lead – Resource Person)

Shari Lahache

Arlene Beauvais

Alexis Shackleton

**RECORDERS:**

Brandi Meloche (Group 2)

Sophia Dupont (Group 3)

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6:00 P.M. **OPENING** – Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer

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

6:10 P.M. **KAHNAWÀ:KE MEMBERSHIP LAW**

**Recap of proposed Options for Great-Grandparent  
With commentary on the options – Chief Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer**

8:15 P.M. **NEXT STEPS** – Kahente Horn-Miller

8:30 P.M. **CLOSING** – Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer

## QUESTION: DEFINITION OF GREAT GRAND PARENT

### GROUP 2

**Facilitator:** Joe Delaronde  
**Resource Person:** Shari Lahache/Arlene Beauvais  
**Group Speaker:** Arlene Jacobs  
**Recorder:** Brandi Meloche

### DISCUSSION ON OPTIONS

#### **Point 1: Great-grandparent must be a direct descendant of Indigenous parents.**

- The group wanted further explanation for the word Indigenous.
- It was explained in previous hearings that it was Canada & Continental U.S.A & Inuit.
- There were questions about blood quantum inconsistencies within families. It was noted that it is now corrected with computerization of records.
- One person in the group prefers option #1.
- **Outcome** → Group is done with option #1 and agrees to move onto option #2 for discussion.

#### **Point 2: Great-grandparent must have at least 50% Indigenous blood quantum.**

- Option # 2 is the better option; it should be 4 great-grandparents.
- Option #2 is “measurable” unlike Options #1, 3, 4 or 5.
- Keep in mind that there are people in our community from other bands who do not have the same documents as we do because their band does not follow blood quantum. Are we going to be harder on our members because we have more information?
- “Captives” noted in history that were brought back to Kahnawà:ke didn’t have any blood quantum. If you start to go down the line of names, then no one will be able to meet the 50%.
- Do all 4 great-grandparents have to have 50% blood quantum?
- Individual can’t believe that there is no one 100% blood quantum in this community.
- There are people who are considered to have 100% blood quantum, due to marrying back in for generations.
- Individual stated they can’t support blood quantum when one family has different percentages of blood quantum.
- At one time, before things were computerized there were family members with different blood quantum but everything has been corrected. Everyone in the same family has the same blood quantum percentage.
- Some in the group prefer option #2 because it is “measurable”.

- Acquired Status not acceptable as criteria.
- Option #2 is good if people have lineage that you can trace. It was said that not all Bands use blood quantum. Not all communities keep the same records as we do. It would be difficult to give blood quantum to a member of another band.

**Point 3: Great-grandparent who was considered a community member of Kahnawà:ke with Onkwehonwe lineage.**

- Does “Onkwehonwe” exclude other nations? Indigenous includes Canada & Continental U.S.A & Inuit.
- “Community Member” may exclude people if members do not live here but Option # 5 includes those who moved away but has lineage.
- Who “considers” who is a community member of Kahnawà:ke with Onkwehonwe lineage? The Registrar.
- Acquired Status not acceptable as criteria.
- Change the word “Considered” to “Recognized as”.
- There was a suggestion to make a list of what people do **NOT** want:

**LIST**

- Cannot have Acquired Status
- Remove “ Considered” in option #3 & #5 – replace with recognize
- Do not want blood quantum at all (Comment that blood quantum is not “liked” but there is no alternative.)
- “Raised in the community” should not be in criterion.
- **Suggestion:** The mothers of all 4 great grand-parents should have “Onkwehonwe” lineage. Children are raised by their mother with their mother’s values/beliefs. You are what your mother is. This may eliminate the Non-Native mother.

**Point 4: Great-grandparent who was considered a community member of Kahnawà:ke.**

- Outcome → **Group all agrees that option #4 is unacceptable.**

**Point 5: Great-grandparent who was considered a Kahnawa’kehró:non with Onkwehonwe lineage.**

- The law is there – “It’s not our mistake”
- Many are in support of 50% blood quantum but not all are comfortable with that and a couple are undecided.
- Acquired Status not acceptable as criteria.

- Change word to “Considered” to “Recognized as”.
- **Suggestion:** The mothers of all 4 great grand-parents should have “Onkwehonwe” lineage. Children are raised by their mother with their mother’s values/beliefs. You are what your mother is. This may eliminate the Non-Native mother.
  
- **Parking Lot → Definition required for “maintain ties”**

**OUTCOME:** →

- **The majority of Group 2 agrees with option #2.**
- One person wanted 3 great-grandparents to have 100% blood quantum and one to have 75% blood quantum.
- 2 people don’t want blood quantum but could not offer any other option at this time.
  
- **Consensus of Group 2 is Option #2**
- Group 2 presented consensus to Group 3.

## QUESTION: DEFINITION OF GREAT GRAND PARENT

### GROUP 3

**Facilitator:** Ronald Skye  
**Resource Person:** Rose-Ann Morris/Alexis Shackleton  
**Group Speaker:** Darlene Alfred  
**Recorder:** Sophia Dupont

**Note: (Group 3 spent most of their time discussing Option 2)**

### Discussion:

- In 2002 or 2003, there was a definition of a great-grandparent by the previous elders and it was that there had to be 4 great-grandparents and they had to be 50%. That was passed by the community. Who changed this?
- There is no definition of great-grandparent in the current law.
- The current law was approved by the community in 2003 and then put into force. In the event that there was a dispute that it would be the Council of Elders to decide.
- Will the definition for great-grandparent be brought back to the community and is it written in stone?
- Yes it will be brought to the community.
- It is mandatory to have laws reviewed every 5 years.
- Some of the Elders before 2003 did not understand the questions until translated into Kanien'kéha and then their answers would be translated back to English, so the meaning could have been lost in the translation.
- This will be for future applicants and not to remove members that are already on the Kahnawake Registry.
- Records of lineage are kept by Membership.
- The Election law could have different criteria.
- The Membership law sets out who is on the Kahnawake Registry.
- What percentage was given to those who acquired membership in 1962 to 1900's?
- It was already decided at a previous meeting that acquired status would not count.
- We are working on a law from this point on; we are not going into the past as we cannot change anything that was decided before.
- If we don't look at it as being strict, the younger ones coming up will not listen.
- To go with 50-50 is the low side, the minimum.
- For membership rules, half of the communities throughout Canada have made their own membership rules and some went with more strict rules and some went with more lenient.
- The great-grandparent must be 50% + at minimum.

- It is important to remember that this is different from services received through Indian Affairs. We are deciding who can be on Kahnawà:ke's Registry and receive services through Kahnawà:ke.
- We don't want to have to go back to blood quantum but for the definition of great-grandparent, we need to.
- Membership needs to know what the intention is because it cannot pick and choose who gets on the membership list; there has to be a clear definition.
- To make mention because it has happened and can continue to happen for scenario 2 "Great grandparents must have at least 50% Indigenous blood quantum" will protect us to keep this in. We have to look at people who were adopted and had not a drop of Indian blood.
- You have to prove that you have lineage to get on Kahnawà:ke's registry.
- I think this is important to keep people who have no lineage from getting membership.
- Maybe residency and enforcement should be dealt with in a separate law from the membership law.
- The younger generation has to marry in and if they don't find someone here, they can go to another reserve to find a spouse.
- The line has to be drawn in the sand and you cannot bend the rules for certain cases.

### **DISCUSSION OPTIONS:**

#### **Point 1: Great-grandparent must be a direct descendant of Indigenous parents.**

- Option 1: Too harsh.

#### **Point 2: Great-grandparent must have at least 50% Indigenous blood quantum.**

- Option 2: With minimum of 50-50 is fair and really gives some leeway. We will not settle for 75-25, 60-40, 80-20, it has to be 50-50. This will still preserve our lineage.
- Option 2: Because there are many children with only one Native parent and we have to take this into consideration and not penalize this child.

#### **Point 3: Great-grandparent who was considered a community member of Kahnawà:ke with Onkwehonwe lineage.**

- Option 3: those people who are accepted with 4 of 8 Great grandparents but may have less than 50% themselves, off the table.

**Point 4: Great-grandparent who was considered a community member of Kahnawà:ke.**

- Option 4: off the table (We're not in the 1600's)

**Point 5: Great-grandparent who was considered a Kahnawa'kehró:non with Onkwehonwe lineage.**

- Option 5: off the table

**Group 2 Consensus: Definition # 2 with at least 50% but any combination.**

**Group 3 comments to Group 2 consensus:**

- Examples on board show that any combination will still give 50% great-grandparent in the end.
- My opinion is that it should be 50-50 to stop the dilution.
- Put Indian back into Mohawk.
- Ensure stronger blood line.

**OUTCOME: (Consensus for each point or summary of consensus)**

**Consensus of Group 3 presented to Group 2:**

- **Definition of great-grandparent should be Option # 2 with modification to great-grandparent's parents equal to 100% total to change to a minimum of 50% blood quantum for both great great-grandparents, so 50-50 (on both sides).**

**FINAL OUTCOME:**

Although consensus was not reached between Groups 2 & 3, both groups supported option #2 - **Great-grandparent must have at least 50% Indigenous blood quantum.**

The Membership Department will bring forward the next amendment at the next Membership Hearing.

**Final Minutes**

**16<sup>th</sup> Membership Community Consultation**

**Approved by:**

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**Rose-Ann Morris, Membership Registrar**

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**Date**

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**Chief Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer**

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**Date**