

COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS
KAHNAWÀ:KE MEMBERSHIP LAW
8th COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
 Karonhianonhnha School Gym
 9 Onerahtokó:wa/May 2013
 6:00 – 8:30 PM

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

FACILITATORS:

Kahente Horn-Miller (Lead - CDMP)

Joe Delaronde

Leslie Beauvais

Ron Skye

RESOURCE PEOPLE:

Rose-Ann Morris (Lead – Resource Person)

Shari Lahache

Arlene Beauvais

Rose-Ann Morris

RECORDERS:

Jennifer McComber (Main Screen)

Trina Diabo (Group 1)

Brandie Meloche (Group 2)

Sophia Dupont (Group 3)

6:00 P.M. **OPENING** – Ka’nahsohon Deer

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?

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

8:30 P.M. **CLOSING** – Ka’nahsohon Deer

Question:

Continuation of: What needs to be amended in the Membership Law?

Group 1

Facilitator: Leslie Beauvais
Resource Person: Arlene Beauvais
Group Speaker: Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer
Recorder: Trina Diabo-Jacobs

Discussion:

Group 3 reached consensus on including the criteria of 4 Great Grandparents but asked Group 1 & 2 to consider the following:

Suggestion to consider:

- 3 great grandparents + clan
- 1 parent who is a Mohawk

4 Great Grandparents

- Agreement - all 3 groups agree with the 4 great grandparents.

3 Great Grandparents + Clan

- All groups now need to decide/agree on the importance to have a clan. The group all agreed to put "the clan issue" for discussion with the other groups.
- Something seems missing, it was never clarified in the law to use this criteria.
- What happens to the person that has 3 great grandparents and no clan? This is more on the matrimonial line.
- Group 1 is okay with the 3 great grandparents, but not the clan issue. Clan is the issue.
- 3 great grandparents with a clan, follows the same criteria as 4 great grandparents.
- This is being looked at as being born to a native mother.
- On the clan issue, if the father is Mohawk and the mother is not, then you do not have a clan. The father is Mohawk and comes back to the community, the children apply for membership, are they still considered with 1 Mohawk parent?
- How do we apply the clan system today? Need to look at a whole other way to clarify. Have to look at ways to use the membership list as the way to organize ourselves.
- The group is not comfortable with the 3 great grandparents with a clan. It is not fair to say 3 great grandparents with a clan are equal with 4 great grandparents. Is the problem with the 3 great grandparents or is it with the clan issue? Stricter with the 3 great grandparents plus clan, people could fall through the cracks. The group is more comfortable with the 4 great grandparents.

Diagram drawn out by a community member illustrating how 3 great grandparents and a clan works.

- **3 great grandparents with a clan?** The clan is the issue. This will re-open the door to discussion – we will be going backwards, because 4 great grandparents have already been agreed to.
- If it is 3 great grandparents with clan at birth. This will be more inclusionary on the matrimonial line. The proposed 3 great grandparent's with clan that is traced passed onto the child. The clan is only on mother's side.
- The clan is important because the mother is to carry on the clan and the values are passed on to the child by the mother.
- The clan excludes the male aspect. If clan is used as a factor then men will eventually be the minority.
- The mother is to carry on the clan and the values are passed on to the child by the mother.
- The clan excludes the male aspect.

1 parent who is a Mohawk? No: group 1 doesn't agree.

- There needs to be a definition of member.
- Suggestion is to discuss the diagram provided in the minutes of the May 9 2013. Other criteria to be considered with the 1 parent suggestion are if there are ties to the community, along with customs/traditions/language.
- 1 parent – extreme
Relates to membership vs. citizenship
Looking at a strong ancestral inclusionary
- Combination of knowing the language, living in community, or coming from lineage, or because you have a band card? Does that make you Indian?
- Inclusiveness has limits.
- Membership – benefits
Citizenship – living here with no benefits
- A community member asked why this was put forth. It was meant to make the membership process more inclusionary. Inclusion is a large part of the discussion. People feel that the current law is exclusionary.
- The whole discussion on membership relates to membership vs. citizenship. Membership is about what benefits you receive. Citizenship is about the responsibilities to community.
- Discussion was on what ~~does~~ it means to be a Kanien'kehaka of Kahnawà:ke. Is it a combination of knowing the language, living in community, or coming from lineage, or because you have a band card? Does that make you Indian?
- The 1 parent suggestion sounds like it would weaken the lineage (watered down).
Used the diagram drawn to illustrate this.
- A community member asked about the benefits members receive and the differences between what you get as a member and what you get as a citizen.
- Someone proposed:
Membership – you get benefits
Citizenship – you live here with no benefits

- It was then suggested that people refer to Section 15.1 for entitlements for members.

Benefits of having a band card:

Medical, education, dental, tax exemption

Kahnawà:ke Benefits:

Lands, housing, voting, burial, water, running for office

Questions:

- 1 single Mohawk parent without 4 great grandparents?
- Is this for a member at birth? Yes.
- Need a definition of member? Have to clarify the meaning of this.
- Do you absolutely need a clan or will I be objected. Having a clan did not discuss how you got the clan? Born with a clan?
- What is the necessity of having the clan? How do you follow up with anyone that says they went to longhouse in order to get a clan?
- What happens to a child that has 3 great grandparents and no clan?
- Some are putting more importance on the clan. We are talking about 7 generations,
- Different factors that created where we are today. How do we include people into the community? Clan is something to be addressed? What we are dealing with is the Indian Act, clashing.
- Do we have the right to do that? Community process, law that we are dealing with, we are going to include clan, great idea. More important to be part of community other than having a clan.
- Disagree that including clans is being more inclusive; it's being exclusive.
- Is inclusion more important than clan?

Outcome: Decision

- 4 great grandparents – Decision: **All agreed**
- 1 parent – Decision: **No**
- Would still like to discuss the 3 great grandparents + clan. Decision: **Passed over to group 2, for their comments and will bring back to next meeting.**

Parking Lot Items:

- How do you prove a clan? Requirement to get a clan?
- How far can you go back for a clan?
- What do you do when someone doesn't want a clan? (Not born to a clan).
- What is the definition of ties to the community?
- Problem with the law, no definitions.
- Would still like to discuss the 3 great grandparents + clan.

Question:

Continuation of: What needs to be amended in the Membership Law?

Group 2

Facilitator: Joe Delaronde
Resource Person: Shari Lahache
Group Speaker: Maureen Meloche
Recorder: Brandi Meloche

Discussion:

Group 3 reached consensus for the 4 Great Grandparents but asked Group 1 & 2 to consider the following:

Suggestion to consider:

- 3 great grandparents + clan
 - 1 parent who is a Mohawk
- 4 Great Grandparents → Group agrees but requires further definition.
 - Biology requirement for membership?
 - Punishing the children for what their grandparents or parents did.
 - How do you really determine if someone has a clan?
 - What if someone doesn't have a clan but is adopted into one?
 - Does a clan belong in Membership or only exist within the Longhouse?
 - Can't track a clan, we can't have 3 Great Grandparents and a Clan. How do prove if someone has a clan?
 - Consider possibly 3 Great Grandparents under certain circumstances.
 - Group 2 will discuss this further in the future. **This is in no way an agreement to 3 Great Grandparents with a clan.** This needs to be discussed again. Uncomfortable to make a decision at this time.
 - Group is not in agreement to 1 Single Mohawk Parent.

Parking Lot Items:

- Consider possibly 3 Great Grandparents under certain circumstances.
- Group 2 will discuss this further in the future.
- This is in no way an agreement to 3 Great Grandparents with a clan. This needs to be discussed again.
- Uncomfortable to make a decision at this time.

QUESTION:

Continuation of: What needs to be amended in the Kahnawà:ke Membership Law?

GROUP 3

Facilitator: Ron Skye
Resource Person: Rose-Ann Morris
Group Speaker: Darlene Alfred
Recorder: Sophia Dupont

Discussion:

Group 3 started discussion with points facilitator put on flip chart.

1. Consensus on the 3 great-grandparents & clan
 2. Consensus that we cannot agree that 1 Mohawk parent per generation would be sufficient to be considered Mohawk. Ask group 1 & 2 if they would consider this.
 3. Chose a spokesperson
- Consensus reached; agreed with four (4) great-grandparent rule.
 - Discussion about whether the 4 great-grandparents should be all on one side or 2 from each parent or 3 from one parent and 1 from the other (to put in parking lot).
 - Group 3 no consensus, did not agree but decided to send back to Groups 1 & 2 whether a person with 3 great-grandparents and a clan can be considered for membership.
 - For clan aspect must look at both sides, if the matriarchal system is followed strictly, then a lot of people would not be considered Mohawk. Suggestion for this exercise, to consider all the great-grandparents as 100% (clean slate) as long as it can be traced back that they were Mohawk.
 - Group 3 no consensus, one parent rule, group 3 is split, but agree to send back to Groups 1 & 2

Parking Lot Items:

- Discussion about whether the 4 great-grandparents, should be all on one side or 2 from each parent or 3 from one parent and 1 from the other.