

KAHNAWÀ:KE MEMBERSHIP LAW
15th COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
 Karonhianonhnha School Gym
 5, Kentenhkó:wa/November 2013
 6:00 – 8:30 PM

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

FACILITATORS:

Kahente Horn-Miller (Lead - CDMP)

Joe Delaronde

Ron Sky

RESOURCE PEOPLE:

Rose-Ann Morris (Lead – Resource Person)

Shari Lahache

Arlene Beauvais

Alexis Shackleton

RECORDERS:

Tracey Goodleaf (Group 2)

Sophia Dupont (Group 3)

6:00 P.M. **OPENING** – Leslie Skye

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

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

Recap of proposed role of Registrar – Alexis Shackleton

Review proposed agenda – Rose-Ann Morris

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

1) Role of the Registrar proposed October 22, 2013

Group 2 agreed that the Registrar do automatic membership and not post the decisions. They agreed that the Registrar should work with the Membership Review Board as oversight to decide on applications and suspensions.

Group 3 agreed that the Registrar deal with all membership issues, automatic, applications, suspensions and post all decisions for 60 days to inform the community and allow for objections. If no objections, decision is final. If objections, then further investigation needed.

2) Proposed definition of great-grandparent – Rose-Ann Morris

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

8:30 P.M. **CLOSING** – Leslie Skye

Role of the Registrar proposed Oct. 22

Group 2 agreed that the Registrar do automatic membership and not post the decisions. They agreed that the Registrar should work with the Membership Review Board as oversight to decide on applications and suspensions.

Group 3 agreed that the Registrar deal with all membership issues, automatic, applications, suspensions and post all decisions for 60 days to inform the community and allow for objections. If no objections, decision is final. If objections, then further investigation is needed.

GROUP 2

Facilitator: Joe Delaronde
Resource Person: Shari Lahache/Arlene Beauvais
Group Speaker: Heather Jacobs-Whyte
Recorder: Tracey Goodleaf

Discussion (Recap October 22, 2013):

- A review was done on Final Minutes from October 22nd with everyone in agreement of Question 1) to publish names of automatic Members
- Registrar would decide automatic registration for children → Group #2 agreed to do 30 – 60 day posting.
- More discussion revealed that the Group had previously agreed that it wasn't necessary to publish children names.
- The group wants to ensure accountability of the Registrar (i.e.: Oversight).
- Posting should be done for everyone. (i.e.: land allotment names are listed)
- 2003 Law the spirit and intent of an elder's role was one of fairness and compassion.
- Question: What happens when an application is not automatic?
Response: It's an administrative task like objections, then Oversight Review Committee reviews.
- There is a small number of children who meet the criteria that are registered each month on the KKR; the rest are registered under '070' federal list and who do not meet the criteria.
- Ad Hoc in nature
- Question: What happens when a child's name is posted, and the father is not known?
Response: Objections could be made.
- Question: What if a person refuses to have their child's name posted?
Response: The child could be denied membership.
- Discussions about waiting until children turn 18 to apply for membership.
- They do not receive any benefits before 18 anyway. (i.e.: land allotment, housing)

Review Board would consider:

- Objection
- Complicated cases
- Reviewing Registrar's work

Outcome: (Consensus for each point or summary of consensus)

- Group 2 can live with posting of everyone but prefer Oversight Review Committee for automatic registrations and those opposed still subject to 30 – 60 days review/posting
- Oversight preferred in all instances (equality is important and process needs to be fair)
- Details need to be worked out

QUESTION 2: DEFINITION OF GREAT-GRANDPARENT

Discussion:

Discussion after presentation of the 4 options for the definition of Great-Grandparent by Rose-Ann to both groups.

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

- Change parents to at least one parent.
- You have to go back 5 generations to determine great-grandparent as per the family tree charts
- How far back do records go? Max 9.

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

- If you're using blood quantum you have to go back all the way.
- We'd shoot ourselves in the foot.
- No denying we all have non-native blood; some more, some less.
- The definition is the hardest thing to determine.
- Blood quantum is such an Indian Act thing.

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

- Opposed to the word *considered*. Too open ended. #2 and #3

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

- Traditionally, non-natives may have been more accepted and became Chiefs.
- The influence of the colonists and the rum....acknowledge outside influences of the past.
- At what point does the government say: You are no longer Indians
- Why does anyone want to be an Indian?
- Vast majority = \$\$\$

Outcome: (Consensus for each point or summary of consensus)

Discussion only

Role of the Registrar proposed Oct. 22

Group 2 agreed that the Registrar do automatic membership and not post the decisions. They agreed that the Registrar should work with the Membership Review Board as oversight to decide on applications and suspensions.

Group 3 agreed that the Registrar deal with all membership issues, automatic, applications, suspensions and post all decisions for 60 days to inform the community and allow for objections.

If no objections, decision is final. If objections, then further investigation needed.

GROUP 3

Facilitator: Ron Skye
Resource Person: Rose-Ann Morris
Group Speaker: Timmy Norton
Recorder: Sophia Dupont

Discussion:

- There is frustration with the low attendance at the membership meetings.
- We are making a law for new births and people applying in the future. It is not to take people off the list.
- **Group 2 consensus to be discussed:**
- Agree to 60 day posting by Registrar;
- Verifications done prior;
- Registrar compiles list of approved and disallowed applications and submits to MRC (for accountability).
- Group 3 agrees to an Oversight body possibly Membership Review Committee (MRC);
- This Oversight body should meet more regular than on an ad-hoc basis such as bi-monthly.
- Registrar reports to MRC on approved application for accountability purposes.

Outcome: (Consensus for each point or summary of consensus)

Consensus reached by Group 3 agreed on all points with Group 2.

QUESTION 2: DEFINITION OF GREAT-GRANDPARENT**GROUP 3**

Facilitator: Ron Skye
Resource Person: Rose-Ann Morris
Group Speaker: Timmy Norton
Recorder: Sophia Dupont

Discussion:

After presentation of the 4 options for definition of Great Grandparent by Rose-Ann to both groups

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

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

- We should go with option 2 as the lowest acceptable great-grandparent because we are not increasing the lineage; this will only maintain the status as an Indian tribe. Not maintaining a standard of 'Mohawkness' or 'Indianness'.
- If we use lineage, there is too much leniency.
- It is discriminatory to use blood quantum because there were captives.
- The membership law is based on lineage and having four great-grandparents was the consensus reached.
- I agree with option 2 because this is what the Elders wanted.
- The question was raised of how many current applications would make the 50% blood quantum. Rose-Ann answered that a lot would have 100%. Some are their children but most already have 50% because they are applying with the knowledge that you must have 4 great-grandparents that are Native.

- Do we want to increase our numbers? We will not be removing anyone from the list that is already on it.
- We are moving towards self-government and developing our laws to include enforcement.
- In 1981, they had no teeth to enforce Mohawk Law.
- We've heard this story over and over. If you break our law, you're gone, you have to leave, they stayed and they're bringing in other people.
- They are building houses, they have water, etc.
- I want the same ones that are not supposed to be here out of here too. They don't belong here and should be gone today.
- Back when the Elders were active, they didn't say that if you don't meet the criteria that they were not welcome but just that they would not be members of Kahnawake.
- We were told in 1981 that these people would be gone but they are still here.
- The band council signed letters in the past attesting that certain individuals had more than 50% blood quantum to join the service when they did not.

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

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

Outcome: To be continued at next meeting.