SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, February 26, 2024	**TIME** **PLACE**	6pm CT Zoom only	**FACILITATOR**	Carrie Kneeland

MEMBERS			
Roberta Smith	Present later - Zoom	**Scott B Goode**	Present – Zoom
Carrie Kneeland	Present – Zoom	**Angela Anglen Kelley**	Present – Zoom
Natalie Dixon	Present – Zoom	**Earlyne Gentry**	Present – Zoom
Kristi Birdsong Blansett	Present later - Zoom	**Jo Lynn Gentry**	Present later - Zoom
Yvonne Perryman-Matthews	Present later - Zoom	Others Present	**Dennis Sisco, for a moment**

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
6:00pm	**Called to Order** - Quorum established at the Seneca-Cayuga Nation's regular Constitution Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting.	Carrie
	Approval of Previous Minutes – February 19, 2024 minutes reviewed as a group, minor corrections for ease of understanding and spelling made together, all CAC members present by approval of minutes – **minutes APPROVED** **CERTIFICATION** **On _02/26/2023_ the minutes of __02/19/2024__ were approved by unanimous committee consent. Copy emailed to BC Secretary on _03/02/2024_.** **Attest:** Natalie Dixon **Natalie Dixon, Secretary**	Natalie

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	Housekeeping i. Roll Call ii. Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes – FEB 19, 2024 iii. Confirmation of next meeting – MAR 04, 2024	Natalie
--	**Planned Agenda** • Housekeeping • Vote on meetings until Initial Advisory Report due date • Contact with Business Committee regarding speaking at the Annual Meeting of the General Council • Next Town Hall meeting • Work plan until April 15, 2024 • Any Other Business • Next Constitution meeting 03/04/2024 @ 6pm	
	Minutes Begin	
	CAC begins reviewing minutes of February 19, 2024 as a group with those initially present	
6:14pm	**Yvonne, Kristi, Roberta, Jo Lynn enter meeting within a few minutes of each other** **Discussion listing multiple requests from tribal members to be present at CAC meetings**	
	Correction found for February 12, 2024 meeting minutes, text reprinted below with correction – "Motion #14" to "Motion #16" • **Original:** Discussion with the QNCC made confidential by unanimously passed Motion #14, passed when reviewing these minutes for approval at the special CAC meeting called February 19, 2024. • **Corrected:** Discussion with the QNCC made confidential by unanimously passed Motion #16, passed when reviewing these minutes for approval at the special CAC meeting called February 19, 2024.	
6:32pm	**CAC approved the corrected February 12, 2024 minutes and February 19, 2024 with unanimous vote, see Approval of Minutes section for certificate of service and approval for February 19, 2024.**	
6:40pm	**Discussion regarding Initial Advisory Report and communication with the Business Committee (BC) and General Council**	

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	• CAC members OK with continuing to meet every Monday up to Initial Advisory Report publication date
	• Major obstacle is regarding the expiration of CAC on May 31, 2024, with the Annual Meeting of the General Council on June 1, 2024
	  o Need to request BC for us to continue this work via Resolution, being created by letter gives uncertainty
	• Request from Kim Guyett, Secretary-Treasurer, for CAC presence at the private Business Committee meeting on Tuesday, April 16, 2024
	• Town Hall on May 5, 2024, first opportunity to speak to the General Council
	  o CAC wants to speak at Annual Meeting of the General Council where more than 150+ tribal members will be in attendance; Scott to ask BC to ensure that the CAC will be able to present	

6:58pm	**Discussion regarding the Initial Advisory Report work to do before April 15, 2024 begins**
	• Preamble work – Earlyne to send a drafted preamble for CAC members to review, begin review on March 4, 2024
	  o Roberta to provide help with finalizing, work with drafted preamble, Kristi will help type
	• Constitution Article I – Name – some discussion on naming conventions and the 2014 amendments that changed the name from Seneca-Cayuga Tribe to Seneca-Cayuga Nation
	  o Subject is too complex to address before Initial Advisory Report completion date
	• Constitution Article II – Object – CAC agrees that the wording "and its members." should be added to the present end of the Object of the Nation in Article II
	  o This was proposed by a non-Committee tribal member at a Town Hall meeting
	  o Future recommendations may be further addressed
	• Constitution Article III – Membership of the Nation – discussion over the wording in present article as amended April 2023
	  o Full text: "The membership of the Seneca-Cayuga Nation shall consist of all persons of Indian blood whose names appear on the official census roll of the Nation as of January 1, 1937, and their lineal descendants."
	  o Discussion regarding the word Indian, should it be more specific or be changed in any way?	

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	▪ CAC agrees to change Indian to Native American ▪ CAC agrees that "biological" should be added, to read "and their biological lineal descendants." ○ CAC agrees that the protection of Dual Enrollment in other Native Nations should be protected Constitutionally ○ Seneca-Cayuga Nation has no blood quantum in place, only lineal descent for membership • Constitution Article IV – Membership of the Council ○ CAC agrees that no changes are needed to this Article	
7:15pm	**Discussion regarding naming conventions of Native Nation leaders** • Chief vs Chairperson title in use in Native Nations ○ Chief title in use across traditional and political positions in the Seneca-Cayuga Nation's community ○ Chairperson title in use for the Quapaw Nation, traditionally governed by hereditary chiefs • Does there need to be a change from Chief and 2nd Chief titles to Chair and Vice Chair? ○ Would take culture out of politics ○ CAC agrees to pose similar worded question to Facebook for tribal member input • Discussion regarding US government officials and understanding the change in use to Chairperson	
	Initial Advisory Report discussion continues • Constitution Article V – Officers – CAC still in agreement for splitting Secretary-Treasurer position and for one of those positions to take a current Councilperson seat, going from 4 to 3 Councilpeople, with a Chief, 2nd Chief, Secretary, and Treasurer • Constitution Article VI – Business Committees – Recommendations of CAC include delineated powers in accordance with parts of the Corporate Charter • Constitution Article VII – Standing Committees – CAC reviews current Initial Advisory Report recommendations ○ No Credit Committee, there has not been an implementation to our knowledge ○ CAC agrees to add Ethics Committee to Standing Committees	

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	Discussion regarding the wording of Committees versus Commissions • Independence of a Committee in this case would be established if placed in a revised Constitution Article VII – Standing Committees • Commissions may entail full-time employees • Committees often operate as an internal review and Commissions do external reviews	
	Initial Advisory Report discussion continues • Constitution Article VII – Standing Committees discussion continues o CAC agrees that all Committees, including Enrollment, be elected	

	Discussion regarding the implementation of subcommittee structure, separate from independent Standing Committees
	• CAC agrees on the following recommended provisions for subcommittee creation by the Business Committee, informed in part by the experiences of CAC members
	  o Business Committees should have the power to create subcommittees that have limited powers and are based on limited purposes
	  o Membership pool shall consist of General Council members who have expertise, knowledge, or other relevant experiences regarding the subject matter of a subcommittee
	  o A member of the Business Committee will act as a non-voting liaison for subcommittee work, and will further champion the subject matter during their time as an elected official
	  o All subcommittees shall be created by Business Committee Resolutions, these Resolutions shall state the purpose(s) of the subcommittee, the procedure by which subcommittee shall act, and the beginning and end dates for the subcommittee	

	Discussion regarding recent updates to Claims Committee as well as Claims paperwork • There is new language regarding the suspension of benefits on Claims paperwork o Suspension of benefits does require due process in accordance with the Indian Civil Rights Act • Discussion regarding Claims Committee process	

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	○ No minutes due to the confidential nature of paperwork ○ May be good idea for an anonymized coversheet for reviewing total paid out benefits for any given set of packets, totaled up for the knowledge of the General Council • Further Claims or Standing Committee work can be done at the next meeting after the preamble drafting	
	Initial Advisory Report discussion continues • Constitution Article VIII - Annual Meetings – CAC reviews the full text of the paragraph which includes staggered terms ○ CAC agree that there is a need for Semi-Annual Meetings of the General Council, a second meeting should be set in December ○ Clarification that the addition of the "sixty (60) days after the expiration of the officer's current four-year term" in April 2023 amendments was corrective in nature, when previous elections had been held off and postponed	
	Discussion regarding the electoral process of the Seneca-Cayuga Nation • Partial text of Constitution Article VIII – Annual Meetings ○ "Regular elections of the Business Committee shall be held pursuant to a Nation election ordinance prescribed by the Business Committee." • Need established for an Election Article in the Constitution ○ Can include voter registration, elected official terms, the Oath of Office, a set challenge period for elections for due process, and process for the swearing-in of elected officials ○ Said article can rename current Constitution Article IX – Vacancies to Article IX – Elections	
	Initial Advisory Report discussion continues • Constitution Article XI – Amendments – CAC agrees there is not time to address this Article • By-Laws Article I – Duties of Officers – CAC reviews duties and work division ○ Good topic for review at March 11, 2024 meeting ○ Still need to split duties between Secretary and Treasurer	

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8:38pm	**Angela's device drops from meeting**	

	Initial Advisory Report discussion continues
	• Schedule of work (chronologically arranged)
	  ○ March 4 – review preambles and Standing Committees, look at Elections if there's time
	  ○ March 11 – review Elections and the Duties of Officers
	  ○ March 18 – finish the Duties of Officers, review Qualifications of Officers
	  ○ March 25 – Regular and Special Meetings and meeting procedures
	  ○ April 1 – Ethics and sanctioning
	• Is there a need for By-Laws since they are not easily amendable, as by-laws are often situated?
	• Constitution Article XII – Bill of Rights – CAC agrees that the right to open records and the right to privacy belong in the Bill of Rights	

8:47pm	**Open Forum** • Tough schedule but is necessary	
	Confirmation of next meeting on March 4, 2024 @ 6pm	
8:48pm	**Meeting Adjourned by Group Consensus**	