



SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, July 07, 2025	TIME PLACE	6pm CT Tribal HQ + Zoom	FACILITATOR	Curt Lawrence, then Carrie Kneeland
------	-----------------------	------------	----------------------------	-------------	-------------------------------------

MEMBERS			
Roberta Smith	Present - Zoom	Yvonne Perryman	Present
Carrie Kneeland	Present- Zoom	Jo Lynn Gentry	Present - Zoom
Natalie Dixon	Present	Others Present:	Curt Lawrence - Zoom

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
6:02pm	Called to Order - Quorum established at the Seneca-Cayuga Nation's initial 2025 Constitution Committee (CAC) meeting. Curt Lawrence as interim Chairperson and Business Committee liaison.	
	Approval of Previous Minutes – No prior minutes for approval	Natalie
--	Planned Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housekeeping• Initial Establishment• Roadmap to Work• Any Other Business• Next Constitution meeting 07/21/2025 @ 6pm	
Minutes Begin		
6:05pm	Constitution Committee unanimously agrees to keep prior elected officers. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chairperson – Carrie Kneeland• 2nd Chair – Roberta White Smith	

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretary – Natalie Dixon 	
6:08pm	<p>Motion #1 (Natalie/Yvonne) - to use simplified version of Robert's Rules during meeting - unanimous committee vote – motion carries</p> <p>Simplified Robert's Rules document as provided by the Nation:</p> <p>https://assembly.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/roberts_rules_simplified.pdf</p> <p>Slight technical difficulties for one member pausing motion vote; access restored and vote taken with all 5 members participating.</p>	
	<p>Discussion on meeting times and dates. Committee agrees to meet every other week regularly, from today's meeting.</p> <p>Some member availability conflicts are present due to upcoming personal and community events. All dates are Mondays in 2025, all meeting times are 6pm Central.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement to cancel Regular Meetings on August 4th and 18th due to ceremonies and member availability. Special Meeting scheduled for August 25th. Following Regular Meeting will be September 1st. 	
	<p>Discussion on tribal administrative procedures including pay periods and budgets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously submitted budget included 7 members, budget needs to be redone to reflect 5 members. Natalie to contact Finance for budget and to provide emails for W9s. 	
	<p>Discussion on tribal member outreach, past and future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Town Halls not well attended, efforts should be expended other ways Facebook page for Constitution Committee still exists, has tribal members interested in change, needs to be updated Issues logging into constitution@sctribe.com email and access to internet on Constitution Committee laptop in Admin meeting room; to be fixed, Secretary will continue use personal device for office meetings for time being Facebook Live 6 months in 	
	<p>Discussion on Constitution Committee member office rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 people in building at all times 	

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't leave each other alone in building after meeting concludes • Leave together only through side door 	
	<p>Discussion on General Council members presence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings are open, General Council members have right to attend and to feel heard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Also important to balance this with the Constitution Committee being able to deliberate as a Committee • To avoid Constitution Committee being responsible for any General Council members being in the offices after-hours; Zoom link/digital participation only is appropriate • Constitution Committee agrees to allow tribal members to put their opinions in the chat if there is a comment or perceived problem with discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tribal members will stay on mute for the meeting to listen as the Constitution Committee works through the agenda then there will be an opportunity for tribal members to speak 	
	<p>Discussion on Constitution Committee's future work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution Article III – Membership of the Nation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrollment issues reported with skipping generations, adoptions are included with current article ○ Article amended in 2023 notice of potential future enrollment issues was given at the time • Tribe is facing issues like nepotism, lack of job descriptions, lack of Constitutional ethical standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can be addressed in By-Laws Article I – Duties of Office by also including an Oath of Office Section that provides basic ethical standards • Ordinances are being passed by both the General Council and the Business Committee, Election Ordinances in particular; seems many Ordinances have to be reworked each year, there are few to no standardized procedures for several Standing Committees or membership on non-Business Committees; issues in tribal government Committees always stem from the Constitution; no factchecking processes are in place for electoral candidates or elected officials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution Article VII – Standing Committees is relevant article 	

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIA has ability to do informal review under CFR codes governing amendments, this is an option to ensure any submitted amendments will be accepted for Secretarial Election. 	
	<p>Constitution Committee begins to review and unanimously agrees to review the following Constitution and By-Laws Articles for amendment; debate is noted underneath the relevant article</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitution Article VII – Standing Committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separation of Power is the primary concern with Standing and subcommittees Tribal government structure is also out of date and this is modernization By-Laws Article I – Duties of Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of job descriptions is serious issue Oath of Office is possible Section applicable to all Committees Constitution Article III – Membership of the Nation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of at least 7 individuals are adopted and citizens, this number grows exponentially with time It is important to carefully consider the role of the Enrollment Committee when altering this article Any amendments to this article should not trigger an enrollment audit or otherwise cause disruption to the community By-Laws Article II – Qualifications of Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics Committee formed by the General Council was requested to add background checks to tribal employees including elected officials for hiring purposes Constitution Article V – Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretary-Treasurer split is appropriate to address while amending By-Laws Article I – Duties of Officers Simple language, literally just splitting “Secretary” and “Treasurer” - no other provisions necessary at this time 	
	<p>Constitution Committee discusses the target completion date for this amendment work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior Committee parameters included an early copy to the Business Committee on April 15, the Initial Advisory Report released via Town Hall on May 04, and then released to the General Council on June 01 	

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to continue outreach via monthly newsletters, Natalie to talk with Joanna • 6 month update via Facebook Live is agreed to be a good method to reach people and give updates, definitely affordable • Target Completion Date: March 31, 2026 which is a Tuesday, following public Business Committee meeting for the next month is April 7, 2026 @ 5pm 	
	<p>Request for Constitution Committee to use roll call voting; is already in place but is now reaffirmed to be the method of voting.</p> <p>Roll Call voting includes tracking who votes for, against or abstains from a motion vote.</p>	
	Confirmation of next meeting on July 21, 2025 @ 6pm Central	
8:07pm	Meeting Adjourned by Group Consensus	