



SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, July 21, 2025	TIME PLACE	6pm CT Tribal HQ + Zoom	FACILITATOR	Carrie Kneeland
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MEMBERS			
Roberta Smith	Not Present	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 regular Constitution Committee (CC) meeting.	Carrie
	<p>Approval of Previous Minutes – July 07, 2025 minutes reviewed in entirety, minor amendments made to the record on 1. Ethics Committee purposes and 2. clarification in methods of General Council participation in Constitution Committee meetings – minutes APPROVED</p> <p><u>CERTIFICATION</u></p> <p>On <u>07/21/2025</u> the minutes of <u>07/07/2025</u> were approved by unanimous committee consent. Copy emailed to BC Secretary on <u>08/18/2025</u>.</p> <p>/s/Natalie Dixon</p> <p>Attest: _____</p> <p>Natalie Dixon, Secretary</p>	Natalie

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	Housekeeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll Call • Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes – JUL 07, 2025 • Confirmation of next meeting – AUG 25, 2025 	Natalie
	Planned Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housekeeping • General Outreach • Brainstorming • Open Forum • Next Constitution meeting 08/25/2025 @ 6pm 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes Begin 		
	Reaffirmation of date of completion for Constitution Committee work on first identified issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 31, 2026 release date means 1 week before public BC meeting on April 7, 2026 @ 5pm CT 	
	Discussion on General Council outreach and invitation to meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media messaging draft reviewed and amended <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Outlets include newsletter, text messaging, prior Constitution Committee Facebook page ◦ Further drafting messaging done for text outreach ◦ Necessary to include QR codes for easy access to materials in newsletter • Constitution Committee present agrees to send out Facebook post on August 25th and also put on tribal website • Follow-up with newsletter dates for upcoming quarters 	
	Discussion on Constitution Article III – Membership of the Nation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short review of a Constitution Committee member's input on amendment • Enrollment Committee member not present, their input is needed on any possible amendments • Adoption in relation to enrollment and tribal membership needs clarification 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter tabled 	
	<p>Discussion on contemporary government challenges and timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Committee recently made contact with Constitution Committee member regarding elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitution Committee member requested Election Ordinances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004 provided here (unsigned) 2023 provided here Relevant sections of tribal governing documents and topics at hand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By-Laws Articles include I and II or Duties and Qualifications respectively Election topics include Standing Committees, Qualifications of Officers, and Duties of Officers including open records, Secretary-Treasurer split Amendments will not be ready and passed by time of 2026 tribal government elections; amendments may have to be passed via federal Secretarial Elections after 2026 Annual Meeting Ordinances will take major guidelines from the Constitution and By-Laws and include further policies All future outside correspondence will be brought to Constitution Committee table for deliberation before further requests are made 	
	<p>Constitution Committee brainstorms tribal government subjects that are important to clarify or otherwise acknowledge. All record subject matter is discussion and not a decision. Topics are in order of discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caution is necessary if considering making incredibly specific amendments eg. Writing in a “3rd party administrator” cements a 3rd party administrator in government – there needs to be guidelines but not so much rigidity that further discretion is limited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee discusses possibility of Election Committee deciding whether a 3rd Party Administrator is necessary each election year Would be both separation of powers and a check and balance on functional powers 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant to Constitution Article VIII – Annual Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Possibility of including provision where Election Ordinance cannot be changed 1. within X months before election, or 2. within election year, or 3. by declaration of candidates etc. ◦ Possibility of background checks, verification of information provided, reasonable notices, and the publishing of bios can be included in Elections related Articles • All Ordinances should be written by their relevant Committees • Oath of Office should include words surrounding ethics and ethical behaviors, prohibition of nepotism • Electoral procedure possibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Conflicts of Interests should potentially be disclosed by newly elected officials to an Election Committee ◦ Possible subsection for Election Committee section of Standing Committees article to include similar to following sentiment - “The Election Ordinance will include provisions and sanctions against behaviors such as electioneering, interfering with an election, etc.” ◦ Potential financial disclosures of elected officials, including campaign contributions ◦ Roll Call Voting implementation in all Committees possible ◦ Possible candidate forums for elections ◦ Oath of Office possibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All newly elected officials ought be inaugurated after election certification, taking an Oath of Office at that time ◦ Chief, Second Chief, and possibly a member of Enrollment Committee and/or a Faithkeeper could be the ones to swear in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any Constitutional mention of a Faithkeeper needs to have a clause that makes it so the Seneca-Cayuga Nation may not determine who is and who is not a Faithkeeper ◦ ~Election Committee duties can include to hear and decide electoral challenge 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhetorical Questions that consider the General Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ How do we protect absentee voters who have the right to participate? ◦ Do General Council Resolutions need to go to absentee voters? How do we include absentee voters? • More policy and structure would be needed in order to enable absentee voting on referendum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Incl but not limited to deadlines, registrations, etc • Possibility of Regular Elections including absentee voting, but local-only Special Elections due to removal, resignation, and/or other vacancies • Concerns related to absentee voting procedures include cost prohibitions and possibility of new procedures creating barriers to local General Council members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Filing fees and fines discussed as a mechanism for Election Committee funding ◦ Any raising of filing fees can't become a barrier to General Council members wanting to run for office • Electioneering and improper actions resulting in re-done elections should include appropriate fines and penalties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Something that can possibly originate from the Grievance Committee for checks and balances ◦ Due process looks like an evidentiary hearing with an established burden of proof before imposing fines or penalties ◦ Clarification that electoral disputes should be heard by the Election Committee and issues with the conduct of Election Committee members might be heard by Grievance Committee\ Possibility of electoral challenges that are successful due to Election Committee member misbehavior can include discipline or fine as consequence • Benefits/Welfare/Education Committee should be subject to confidentiality agreements and Grievances • Enrollment Committee currently nominates potential future members who are then voted on by the General Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Enrollment Committee reviews confidential tribal 	

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	<p>member information and should be subject to confidentiality agreements and Grievances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of all Tax Commission transfers requiring Business Committee Resolution • Any fines provided for in amendment (if at all) should be tied to inflation so it does not become out of date • Better guidelines for Grievance Committee are needed based on recent experiences • Is it necessary to meet with these Committees? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Standing Committees incl Election Committee would be able to speak to procedure that worked and procedure that didn't work ◦ Election Committee currently working on Ordinance, Grievance Committee also went thru their relevant procedures within past year ◦ Meeting with Committees will require budgeted stipends, must go to payroll for that and working form, budget matter tabled ◦ Natalie will contact two aforementioned Committee Chairs for September meetings 	
	Confirmation of next meeting on August 25, 2025 @ 6pm CT	
8:14pm	Meeting Adjourned by Group Consensus	