



# SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

## CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, August 25, 2025	TIME PLACE	6pm CT Tribal HQ + Zoom	FACILITATOR	Carrie Kneeland
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MEMBERS			
Roberta Smith	Present	Yvonne Perryman	Present
Carrie Kneeland	Present	Jo Lynn Gentry	Present - Zoom
Natalie Dixon	Present	Others Present:	<b>Curt Lawrence –Zoom</b> <b>2 General Council members</b>

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
06:01 PM	<b>Called to Order</b> - Quorum established at the Seneca-Cayuga Nation's (SCN) Special Constitution Committee (CC) meeting.	
	<p><b>Approval of Previous Minutes</b> – July 21, 2025 minutes spoken to, several changes made including to font size, bullet points, individual word choices, and rewording awkward grammar – minutes <b>APPROVED</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>CERTIFICATION</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>On <u>08/25/2025</u> the minutes of <u>07/21/2025</u> were approved by unanimous committee consent. Copy emailed to BC Secretary on <u>08/30/2025</u>.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attest: _____ /s/Natalie Dixon</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Natalie Dixon, Secretary</b></p>	Natalie

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	<b>Housekeeping</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Roll Call</li> <li>ii. Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes – JUL 21, 2025</li> <li>iii. Confirmation of next meeting – SEP 01, 2025</li> </ol>	Natalie
	<b>Planned Agenda</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housekeeping</li> <li>• Committee member request for documents</li> <li>• Budget Review</li> <li>• Create questions for Election and Grievance + update</li> <li>• Update on tribal member outreach</li> <li>• Open Forum</li> <li>• Next Constitution meeting 09/01/2025 @ 6pm</li> </ul>	
<b>Minutes Begin</b>		
	<b>Constitution Committee gives reminder to those present that our meeting minutes are available on the tribal website</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://sctribe.com/government/constitution-bylaws">https://sctribe.com/government/constitution-bylaws</a></li> </ul>	
	<b>Chairperson confers with Committee member on requested documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2004 Election Ordinance (unsigned copy sent)</li> <li>• 1990 Constitution and By-Laws (has been requested)</li> <li>• Clarification that 2023/2024 Election Ordinance was passed in 2023 but used for 2024 Elections, hence the naming confusion</li> </ul>	
	<b>Budget Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natalie to contact April as Excel workbook is not auto-calculating when basic figures are input</li> <li>• Constitution Committee to gather figures and send to accounting for budget creation</li> <li>• Number of sub and Standing Committees and member numbers reviewed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Claims/Benefits/Welfare - 3 members</li> <li>○ Grievance - 4 members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Election - 4 members</li> <li>○ Enrollment - 7 members</li> <li>○ Tax Commission - 5 members</li> <li>○ Gaming Commission discussed but found unnecessary to meet with at this time due to lack of elected official, current Gaming Commissioner not being Seneca-Cayuga</li> <li>○ Housing Committee meeting discussed, no plans made to meet with them at this time, issues with payment due to federal regulations</li> <li>○ Ethics Committee currently has 2 members, not necessary to meet with at this time</li> <li>○ A meeting with the Business Committee will be necessary to discuss Standing Committee and subcommittee structures</li> <li>● Natalie to get final invoice from April on prior Constitution Advisory Committee expenditures</li> <li>● FY25 Budget is closing soon, and we will have to create second budget for FY26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FY25 Additional Committee Stipends budget incl 5 Grievance Committee members and 4 Election Committee members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Constitution Committee begins drafting questions for all Committees including Election and Grievance Committee-specific questions. All questions discussed are provided below as a whole - off-question discussions summarized later on.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>All Committees</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What's worked in your Ordinance?</li> <li>○ What doesn't work in your Ordinance?</li> <li>○ What parts of your Ordinance should be in the Constitution?</li> <li>○ Has your Committee been unable to carry out Committee business due to the structure of our</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<p>tribal government? If so, how?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ If any, what specific issues is the current Constitution unable to resolve?</li> <li>◦ If anything, what works in our Constitution?</li> <li>◦ What do you think the function of your Committee is?</li> <li>◦ How does the Constitution help you achieve that function?</li> <li>◦ What would a perfect version of this Committee look like?</li> <li>◦ What outlines would you have liked to see?</li> <li>◦ Should your Committee write their own Ordinance?</li> <li>◦ Would clear/concise policy and procedure assist in doing your job better?</li> <li>◦ How important is it to you that there is a clear and consistent Ordinance in place?</li> <li>◦ Do you believe your Ordinance should be ratified by the General Council?</li> <li>◦ Have you been able to access Resolutions and other pertinent tribal government documents for your work</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Election-Specific</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Does your dispute process work?</li> <li>◦ What doesn't work in the dispute process?</li> <li>◦ Does your certification process work?</li> <li>◦ What doesn't work in the certification process?</li> <li>◦ How should ballots be dealt with after an election?</li> <li>◦ Should we do absentee balloting?</li> <li>◦ What do you think of background checks as a Qualification of Officers?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Grievance</b></li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ How can this process be made clearer?</li> <li>◦ What works in the Grievance process?</li> <li>◦ What doesn't work in the Grievance process?</li> <li>◦ How do you view the stages of a Grievance?</li> <li>◦ Should Grievance oversight extend to other elected officials of all Committees?</li> </ul>	
06:49 PM	<b>Curt Lawrence arrives</b>	
	<p><b>Further question drafting takes place. Other topics of discussion include the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues with using Tax Commission funding for Economic Development, Tax Commission needs to be considered carefully when being put into Constitution</li> <li>• Housing continues to grow, Housing Committee is a SCN-initiative and not required by federal regulation</li> <li>• As processes and enterprises grow it may be important to transition to say a Housing Authority or Election Board</li> <li>• Codifying laws is taking place and it is necessary</li> <li>• Politics runs business within our community and that hurts our businesses or lack thereof</li> <li>• Distinction between General Council and Business Committee oversight should be considered when drafting new articles</li> <li>• There are few Constitutional safeguards currently in place, a part of this work is looking at what is currently happening and recording that in amended articles, as well as strengthening processes already in place eg. Grievances, General Council Resolutions, etc.</li> <li>• Right to open records needs to be clarified in Duties of Officers, it has been weaponized against tribal members in the past</li> <li>• Clarification of location of safe places under tribal jurisdiction in event of paper ballot storage</li> </ul>	
07:37 PM	<p><b>Tribal Member Outreach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natalie and other officers now admins on Constitution</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Committee Facebook page (QR code to join below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text messages with tribal members possible/to be used</li> <li>• Newsletter report from Joanna - Winter edition deadline scheduled for Jan 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Constitution Committee agrees to put draft forward in December</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Meeting minutes are on tribal website and regularly being posted</li> <li>• Meetings are open to General Council members who are able to make their input via multiple methods</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Constitution Article III Membership of the Nation amendment tabled prior brought up again as well as subject of dual enrollment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee agrees to address this particular amendment with Enrollment Committee present</li> <li>• Dual Enrollment also brought up as a matter to address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Prior dual enrollment history includes attempt by a prior administration to pass Secretarial Election on dual enrollment referendum on June 6, 2015</li> <li>◦ No contemporary Secretarial Election documentation of results was provided in tribal records, only a letter stating that the measure passed written in August 2015 - Resolution #94-032015</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<b>Open Forum Begins</b>	
	<p><b>Investigation of prior tribal government by Crump mentioned as possible source of info on better Constitutional protections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison for Business Committee and Crump is Curt Lawrence, who will connect Crump and Constitution Committee via email to initiate contact</li> <li>• Investigative report should be read prior to meetings</li> <li>• Questions provided by the General Council at the 2025 General Council meeting had not been provided to Crump by Chief as of July 2025 monthly Business Committee meeting - Crumps written responses will go</li> </ul>	

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	on website per Chief at 2025 Annual Meeting	
	<b>Confirmation of next meeting on September 01, 2025 @ 6pm</b>	
07:59 PM	<b>Meeting Adjourned by Group Consensus</b>	