



SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, Sep 15, 2025	TIME PLACE	6pm CT Tribal HQ + Zoom	FACILITATOR	Carrie Kneeland
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MEMBERS			
Roberta Smith	Present	Yvonne Perryman	Present - Zoom
Carrie Kneeland	Present - Zoom	Jo Lynn Gentry	Present - Zoom
Natalie Dixon	Present	Others Present:	Curt Lawrence - 1 General Council Member

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
6:00pm	Called to Order - Quorum established at the Seneca-Cayuga Nation's (SCN) regular Constitution Committee (CC) meeting.	
	Approval of Previous Minutes – September 01, 2025 minutes spoken to, minor amendments to the record including 1. clarification of current # of of Grievance and Election Committees members (5 each), 2. change to FY25 and FY26 budget to reflect timing of Constitution Committee meetings with other Committees – minutes APPROVED via Motion #3 (Jo Lynn/Roberta) - to adopt minutes as corrected - unanimous committee vote – motion carries	Natalie

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
	<u>CERTIFICATION</u> On <u>09/15/2025</u> the minutes of <u>09/01/2025</u> were approved by unanimous committee consent. Copy emailed to BC Secretary on <u>09/22/2025</u>. Attest: <u> /s/Natalie Dixon</u> Natalie Dixon, Secretary	
	Housekeeping i. Roll Call ii. Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes – SEP 01, 2025 iii. Confirmation of next meeting – SEP 29, 2025	Natalie
--	Planned Agenda • Housekeeping • Reaching the Nation • Follow-Up List • Parking Lot • Open Forum • Next Constitution meeting 09/29/2025 @ 6pm	
Minutes Begin		
	Discussion on social media outreach and upcoming meetings • No comments made recently on Constitution Committee Facebook page or email • One comment on social media did mention streaming of meetings and vetting of attendees • Text messages about meetings not currently in place, possible cost associated with regular text outreach • Request from Committee member for other Committee members to post on Facebook about meetings to get further outreach • Vetting process for tribal members entering meeting includes Zoom waiting room that requires a display name, interaction with attendees to confirm community membership	

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	Discussion regarding meeting with Grievance Committees • Grievance Committee proposed meeting on Sunday October 12 @ 2pm - 2 Constitution Committee members will be traveling and unable to fully participate at that time • Constitution Committee identifies best availability for a Grievance Committee meeting ◦ Monday October 13 @ 6pm (regular) ◦ Sunday October 19 @ 2pm ◦ Monday October 27 @ 6pm (regular) ◦ Sunday November 9 @ 2pm ◦ Monday November 10 @ 6pm (regular) ◦ Sunday November 23 @ 2pm ◦ Monday November 24 @ 6pm (regular)	
	Discussion on codification of laws process and contractors • Joe Halloran proposal provided to Committee member was distributed during the meeting • Carrie Mott scheduled to come in upcoming Thursday, Friday, and Saturday with workers to finish scanning Resolutions • Concerns noted with the phrase "assessing relevance and necessity" as opposed to the simple compilation of Resolutions ◦ Consultations with community members included in proposal but possibly not until Stage 3 ◦ Business Committee members present at meeting state that no vote has taken place yet on proposal, proposal has been sent through procurement • Proposal hourly rate averages attorney and paralegal hours, total sum is \$105,500 ◦ A clerk has the ability to scan in Resolutions at a much cheaper rate, a hired secretary would be able to organize them, this work can be done in-house	

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	- The Nation does have a contracting attorney and this would limit the hiring of a staff attorney for a rate cheaper than the Halloran proposal (\$105,000 vs a salary of \$75,000-80,000/yr for a staff attorney) - Halloran is also currently a contract attorney for the Nation	
	Discussion on nepotism clauses - No nepotism references written into Constitution and By-Laws or Robert's Rules - Common sense interpretations have no authority if there is nothing written	
	Discussion on Constitution Article III - Membership "Indian" vs. "Native American" terminology not a high priority for change at the moment - Changing to "Native American" makes it different from the rest of the document and may create issues - More input needed from General Council to consider change in terminology, topic parked - Addition of "biological" wording to clarify adoptive situations - Changes in wording such as "birth name," "birth mother," and "birth father" on enrollment paperwork would alleviate any current confusion for potential enrollees especially those adopted in Seneca-Cayuga families - Constitution Committee walks through multiple possible enrollment scenarios that would come up under drafted wording including the following: - SCN member on 1937 roll has descendants who do not enroll until a great-grandchild chooses to enroll, eligible for citizenship based on being "lineal biological descendants" of member on 1937 roll - Child born to SCN parent and adopted by non-SCN parent and have birth certificate changed -	

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	"biological" wording allows for enrollment ○ Child who is adopted by SCN parent but the child does not have SCN birth parents - ineligible for enrollment on basis that said child is not a "lineal biological descendant" of 1937 roll member ● Enrollment application has consequences for falsified or misrepresented records, considered grounds for disenrollment per the application ○ Should there be additional consequences for false or misrepresented records? ○ Possible jurisdictional issues identified with the prosecution of enrollment fraud ● Federal courts encourage self-determination in tribal citizenship issues ○ Santa Clara Pueblo v. Martinez, 436 U.S. 49 (1978) Supreme Court case on enrollment discrimination set precedent ● Disenrolled and relinquished member names are ratified by the General Council at Annual Meetings ○ Are benefits suspended during a fraud investigation? ○ Investigations of enrollment fraud are first addressed with Enrollment Committee, then brought to Business Committee, then General Council	
	Question drafting for future Enrollment Committee meeting ● Are there consequences for someone who commits fraud in an enrollment application? ● What is the procedure when finding out there's fraud? ● What do you think about adding the terms "birth name" and "birth father" and "birth mother" to the enrollment application? ● Should adoption with regards to enrollment be clarified? ● Should we recognize adoption into our community?	

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	Questions on the paperwork for adopted children formerly in SCN custody • Children in SCN custody meaning state custody cases where the Nation has intervened and biological parental rights are terminated • Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) requires the Business Committee to sign off on adoptions where the child is in Seneca-Cayuga Nation custody, does not matter if adoptive family is tribal or not • Tribal child adoptions are not shared with Enrollment Committee at present, typically child is already enrolled but ICWA does cover children who are eligible for enrollment • At present all information goes through Indian Child Welfare department, 2 workers, 6 children in SCN custody and 10 in Oklahoma state custody as of August 2025	
	Parked Items (deferred to another amendment round) • By-Laws Article III Regular and Special Meetings	
	Open Forum • No matters for discussion	
	Confirmation of next meeting on September 29 @ 6pm	
08:26 PM	Meeting Adjourned by Motion Motion #4 (Roberta/Jo Lynn) - to adjourn - unanimous committee vote – motion carries	