



SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, March 16, 2026	TIME PLACE	6pm CT Zoom only	FACILITATOR	Roberta Smith
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MEMBERS			
Roberta Smith	Present – Zoom	Yvonne Perryman	Present – Zoom
Carrie Kneeland	Present – Zoom	Jo Lynn Gentry	Present - Zoom
Natalie Dixon	Present - Zoom	Others Present:	Curt Lawrence – Present via Zoom 2 General Council Members

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 – 1/19/2026, 02/02/2026, 02/16/2026, and 03/02/2026 minutes not sent to prior to meeting for member review due to not being finished by Secretary of Constitution Committee.</p> <p>See 03/30/2026 minutes for approval of 01/19/2026 and 02/02/2026 minutes.</p> <p>See 4/13/2026 for changes and approval of 02/16/2026, 03/02/2026, and 03/16/2026 minutes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CERTIFICATION</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">On <u>04/13/2026</u> the minutes of <u>02/16/2026 & 03/02/2026 & 03/16/2026</u> were approved by unanimous committee</p>	Natalie

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	<p>Treasurer for the 2026 Meeting of the General Council and it is not known for sure whether the meeting minutes and the related General Council Resolutions were ever prepared and completed as these have not been produced despite requests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No documents received despite multiple requests made to current Secretary-Treasurer, including past Ordinances and a 2026 General Council Resolution ▪ Once elected it is the Secretary-Treasurer's duty to ensure minutes and Resolutions are kept, a pro tem secretary or secretaries should turn over any documents made while powers are delegated to them ▪ The Business Committee does need to be able to delegate duties in the event of an office vacancy ▪ Prior Grievances have been defended against by the accused Business Committee officer's attorney essentially stating "that's not their job, it's not their [the accused's] duty to make others do their job, that's not what they were elected for, not written in the Constitution" ▪ Following the most recent resignation of the Secretary-Treasurer, there was no known delegation of those Secretary-Treasurer duties via Business Committee Resolution, just volunteers and/or delegates to perform duties ▪ The Business Committee minutes and Resolutions were prepared and provided until August 2025 but the approved 2024 Annual Meeting minutes, the 2025 Annual Meeting minutes rough draft, and 2025 General Council Resolutions have not been provided at the monthly meetings ▪ The Grievance process, when seen 	

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	<p>through, provides for a pro tem position to be elected from the floor of the Special Meeting of the General Council with quorum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drafting of “Unclear Succession” language to address discussed problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the event of a vacancy in office, duties of office may be appropriately delegated by Business Committee Resolution. ○ For some lines of succession there is a difference in term when the line of succession is activated, examples below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Chief elected for a 4 year term vacates 1 year in and the 2nd Chief assumes their term – since there are 3 years left to a term then at the midterms (in 1 or so year) the Chief is re-elected to that term and serves the remaining term ▪ A Chief elected for a 4-year term vacates office 2.5 years in and the 2nd Chief assumes the remaining 1.5 years of the former Chief’s term ● How to best ensure both due process for the removal of an elected official and the continuation of business? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having a different quorum for meetings for Grievance removals meetings may violate due process due to being a different electoral standard ○ 2.5% of the voting population has been thrown around as a number for a possible standard quorum that can appropriately grow or shrink with the Nation’s population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rough math for 2.5% of a voting populace of 4700 – $4700 * 0.025 = 117.5$ ▪ Roughly 118 people for a quorum, current quorum is 150 so it is higher than 2.5% of the current voting population ▪ This percentage is used by counties and states local to our area ○ A recall petition may be a solution to the lack of attendance observed at General Council meetings 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Such a petition should only be available if there is a proper showing of misconduct and/or the Grievance Committee releases findings that include removal ▪ Still requires a signing quorum to be seen through ▪ Said petition can possibly be turned into the Election Committee to provide for a better separation of powers • Drafting of Constitution Article VII – Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To investigate complaints of misconduct or failures to act of all duly-elected and appointed officials of the Nation • 2026 Meeting of the General Council presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Possibly can be done with a series of concepts or questions with the final votes directing the Business Committee on what to send to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) ○ The screen will not be helpful for members who are on the far side of the Community Building ○ Even if it published early or published to all tribal citizens, there will still be citizens who haven't read any output from the Constitution Committee and will need background ○ Present all 5 articles with the reasoning as to why change it and what changes were made ○ Current deadline of March 31 is self-imposed ○ Current article can be placed either side-by-side or one section over the proposed article amendment • Current Enrollment Ordinance reviewed to determine the purposes of Enrollment Committee and process of application approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current Ordinance includes statement that either the Business Committee or the General Council may close the tribal membership roll <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Should this be a General Council power? ▪ The suspension of rolls is not defined and in other Native Nations it can be done temporarily or permanently and is often done for per capita payments to members 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Committee member present states this power was exercised by the Business Committee to process COVID-funding disbursements ○ Vast majority of applicants are enrolled; the few issues are typically with adoptions or similar fringe cases involving courts ○ Appellate venue for applicants denied membership is the General Council, this situation hasn't happened yet ○ Enrollment Committee member present states that the procedure for addressing enrollment fraud includes bringing it to the Business Committee who makes a Resolution for the General Council to deal with it • The Welfare Committee has check-signers and does not handle the verification of applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appellate venue for a rejected claim is not the Welfare Committee, it is currently the tribal administration/Business Committee ○ There is no other known function to the Welfare Committee other than check-signing duties ○ Business Committee Resolution #079-030723 marked the Benefits Policies and Procedures as "Confidential" and thus the full text is not reproduced here; this is not approved by the General Council ○ The Table of Contents contains a broken link to a "Revenue Allocation Plan" that was later deleted but not removed from the table of contents ○ Following quote from Ordinance linked above was incorporated into Constitution Committee amendment rough drafts "The Nation shall have a right of recovery regarding any excess or improper payments hereunder." • Review of Grievance Committee purposes and processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of Constitution Article X – Removal of Officers; "The Grievance Committee shall investigate complaints of misconduct or other acts of the members of the Business Committee ○ Drafted language ultimately agreed upon 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To investigate complaints of misconduct or failures to act of all duly-elected and appointed officials of the Nation ○ Proper showing is only defined in the Grievance Ordinance and is required to be found if the grounds for Grievances are verifiable ○ Discussion surrounding the findings as an information summary of the investigation results ○ Should officers who are removed via Grievance be disqualified from office? Should it be permanent or temporary with a set time limit? • Discussion on the possible disqualifications of office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If someone is removed via Grievance and wants to run again for office, what is an appropriate length of time ban before they can run again? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A lifetime? ▪ 10 years? 12 years? (12 years=3 terms) ○ The type of issues in a Grievance removal may have different levels of severity eg. financial misconduct versus neglect of duty ○ Crimes of moral turpitude discussed, Constitution Committee member present suggests these be a lifetime disqualification ○ The Ethics Committee was started to address the difference between there being a background check requirement for potential employees but not Business Committee members; Ethics Committee was told those would be qualifications of office and therefore could not be addressed by the Ethics Committee ○ Suggestions for the definition of crimes of moral turpitude – embezzlement, forgery, murder, sex crimes, crimes against children, ○ The biggest problem with including “criminal convictions” as a disqualification of office is that even when a crime is committed and even if it is on video, if that crime is not prosecuted in a court of law then there is no conviction and no real consequences for those who committed the act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is it sufficient to have verifiable evidence of wrongdoing against the Nation in 	

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	<p>addition to criminal convictions as disqualifications for office?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drafting of language for the Grievances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verifiable findings of financial misconduct made by the Grievance Committee and subsequent removal by the General Council shall result (not finished) ○ Drafting of language for All Business Committee member duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial Duties. To file reports with all proper civil and criminal authorities upon notice of verifiable evidence of employee, contractor, or elected or appointed official’s unauthorized distribution of tribal funds or assets. 	
	<p>Confirmation of next meeting on March 30, 2026 @ 6pm</p>	
<p>8:19pm</p>	<p>Motion #21 (Jo Lynn/Roberta) – to adjourn the meeting – unanimous committee vote – motion carries</p>	