



SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, April 27, 2026	TIME PLACE	6pm CT Zoom	FACILITATOR	Carrie Kneeland
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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 6 General Council Members

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
6:03pm	Called to Order - Quorum established at the Seneca-Cayuga Nation's regular Constitution Committee (CC) meeting.	Carrie
	<p>Approval of Previous Minutes – March 30, 2026 minutes spoken to, amendments made via email regarding minutes being unavailable, simple word changes such as “filled in” to “informed,” clarification on the Ethics Committee and the results of that Committee’s work, no additional changes made on the record – minutes APPROVED 4 consent 1 abstention (Yvonne)</p> <p>See minutes of 04/13/2026 for the certification of service for the 03/30/2026 minutes.</p>	Natalie

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	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CERTIFICATION</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">On <u>05/11/2026</u> the minutes of <u>04/13/2026</u> & <u>04/27/2026</u> were approved by unanimous committee consent. Copy emailed to BC Secretary on <u>05/31/2026</u>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Attest: <u> /s/Natalie Dixon </u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Natalie Dixon, Secretary</p>	
	<p>Housekeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Roll Call ii. Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes – MAR 30, 2026 iii. Confirmation of next meeting 	Natalie
--	<p>Planned Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housekeeping • Tribal Member Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business Committee Request ○ Cover Letter Drafting • Finalization of Articles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other Bodies of Government (Constitution Article VII) ○ Secretary-Treasurer split (Constitution Article V and By-Laws Article I) ○ Duties of Office (By-Laws Article I) • Open Forum 	
Minutes Begin		
	<p>Request to the Business Committee for use of meeting room on Tuesday June 02, 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full text of letter read aloud, sent by Chairperson to Business Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On behalf of the Constitution Committee, I am writing to respectfully request the use of the monthly meeting room at the Nation’s headquarters on June 2, should the Business Committee not have a meeting scheduled for that day. ○ The Constitution Committee would like to host 	

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	<p>an open forum for our tribal members prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Council, to discuss the proposed constitutional work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please let us know if this request can be accommodated, or if there are any procedures we should follow to reserve the space. ○ We appreciate your support in helping us create opportunities for open communication with our community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No response has been received ● Two Business Committee members present confirm that this was discussed and approved ● Chair to send a letter confirming approval 	
	<p>Review of Constitution Article VII Standing Committees/Additional Bodies of Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drafting of language for Section 1 all additional bodies of Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All Standing Committees. The Standing Committees shall be the Grievance Committee, the Election Committee, and the Benefits Committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electing Committees. The Grievance, Election, and Benefits Committees shall each have five (5) members elected from the General Council for staggered 4-year terms following the election terms established in Article VIII of the Constitution. Each position will be assigned a number, with terms staggered by odd and even numbered positions that will coincide with the already established Business Committee election cycle. Following an election, internal elections for officers will be held. The Election Committee shall be responsible for the oversight of all elections of the Nation including but not limited to their administration, certification, dispute and adjudication thereof. They shall also verify all 	

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	<p>candidacy qualifications, the collection and distribution of the Voter List and other electoral materials, and serve as the General Council vote tally counters at every regular or special meeting of the General Council. The Election Committee may request the Business Committee to call a special meeting of the General Council to fill a vacancy. The election of Business Committee or Standing Committee members may coincide with any Regular or special meeting of the General Council and such election does not require a physical quorum provided there is a minimum notice of the election to the General Council at least 60 calendar days before.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting this section included consideration of the following in rough chronological order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traditional custom is to nominate members from the floor of the meeting for certain positions, this must be considered when drafting any electoral language ○ The General Council has the right to decide on absentee voting ○ There may be a General Council Resolution calling for a physical body present to represent the General Council government, but we currently do not have a copy ○ Electoral terms must be established beyond the Grievance Committee's which are currently outlined in the Election Ordinance – initial terms of 4 and 2 years or 4 and 3 years or 2 and 6 years are discussed ○ The naming of positions (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) needs to be established, it can follow Constitution Article VIII and what's established for the Business Committee – even numbers together and odd numbers together ○ Numerical order does not create a hierarchy – that is why internal elections for Chair, 2nd Chair, and Secretary shall be had after every 	

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	<p>Nationwide election</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There have been 3 different Voter Lists in the most recent election, a candidate/CC member in the meeting states not all candidates were provided all Voter Lists when they became available and this has been a mess and a solution should include the creation and distribution of the Voter List being outlined somewhere in the Article ○ The third Voter List contained the names alongside the addresses and this is a privacy concern especially if a right to privacy is enshrined for tribal members; the third Voter List also contains the names of tribal members who are deceased and should not be listed as voters ○ Solution proposed of Enrollment Committee doing the list and verifying that names are from living members, then they will redact names and change to “Tribal Member” and then provide the list of addresses ○ Information is not being shared amongst Committees and departments and this is why there are deceased tribal members on the Voter List ○ In the past, a member of the Enrollment Committee has been present with the Election Committee to confirm membership during the declaration of candidacy period, this was membership only as the Election Committee is responsible for the verification of all other qualifications ○ Usage of membership vs citizenship discussed – membership is chosen ● Drafting of language for Enrollment Committee purposes, still Section 1 but different area, arranged in order of review during this meeting and not as they are arranged in the document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other Purposes. To aid the Election Committee in the verification of membership in the Nation as necessary for the declaration of candidacy. The Enrollment Committee shall work with all 	

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	<p>other Standing Committees to create and verify the Voter List of all General Council members prior to its redaction and distribution to the Election Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional Enrollment Purposes. To direct the Secretary or other administrative staff to notify an applicant of their rejection or approval, to aid the designated tribal agent for Indian child welfare with the verification of eligibility and/or application for potential enrollment of a Seneca-Cayuga child in state custody, to maintain the right to privacy and confidentiality of all tribal citizens and their enrollment files, to verify the identity of and sign-in of General Council members at all regular or special meetings of the General Council, to close the rolls for less than 30 days as requested by the Business Committee or suspend enrollment for a longer duration subject to approval by the General Council, to present to the General Council individual cases of rejected applicants who have exhausted the appellate process as outlined in the Enrollment Ordinance, and/or to request a special meeting of the General Council be called for any specific or general Enrollment matter including proactive action. ○ Enrollment Committee. The Enrollment Committee shall be considered a Standing Committee in name but have a separate membership pool and selection process. The duties of the Enrollment Committee include to examine and verify all enrollment applications and documents, determine accuracy and sufficiency of family history and research as presented, to request additional information as necessary for enrollment applications, and to approve or reject applications for membership in the Nation. ○ Appointment of Members. If there is a need to appoint one or more tribal members with particularized knowledge of family lines to the Enrollment Committee, then said Committee 	

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	<p>shall present candidates at the Annual Meeting of the General Council, who will then consider their appointment by majority vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting this section included consideration of the following in rough chronological order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rolls have previously been temporarily closed by the Business Committee to disburse COVID-era disbursements for tribal members ○ Separation of powers between the Business Committee could be that the Business Committee must ask the Enrollment Committee to temporarily close the rolls for any given reason ○ The appellate process for any enrollment issues is first appealing the Enrollment Committee decision to the Enrollment Committee and then it can be taken to the General Council ○ There is a 2025 General Council Resolution on the books that is relevant to the membership of Enrollment Committee members on other Committees – the Constitution Committee asks General Council members present if they remember any wording or have access to the wording as the Constitution Committee has not had any previously-requested 2025 General Council Resolutions provided to them by the Secretary-Treasurer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Later on General Council states they were the one who made the motion and they will provide the Constitution Committee with a copy of the passed Resolution when they get home – also states that the original Resolution was that the Enrollment Committee members are the only tribal government officials that can serve on multiple Committee due to the nature of how they are appointed to the Enrollment Committee – states that in December 2025 they did request this Resolution from the Secretary-Treasurer but the Secretary-Treasurer has not 	

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	<p>responded to multiple emails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee agrees to return to this subject after General Council member is home and able to provide Resolution ▪ !!!11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution Committee member states that today they renewed a request for documents sent to the Secretary-Treasurer from October that has still not been responded to ○ Different Constitution Committee member states that at the April 7, 2026 Business Committee regular meeting the Secretary-Treasurer publicly told the Secretary of the Constitution Committee she would contact her to fulfill the Constitution Committee’s previous records request, as of the date of this meeting the Secretary-Treasurer has not made any contact with any Constitution Committee member regarding any of their requests ○ Due process is discussed, specifically where the appropriate place for it is to be included in any amendments – the appropriate place for it is decided to be in conjunction with the paragraph on sanctions and sanctioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Return to drafting of language for Section 1 all for all Standing Committees in chronological but not the final draft order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exclusive Memberships. No employee or contractor may hold an elected or appointed office of the Nation during the term of their employment or contract. Members of the Business Committee shall not serve on any Standing Committee unless it is their specific or delegated duty. With the exception of Enrollment Committee members, Standing Committee members shall only serve on one Standing Committee per term but may serve simultaneously on a subcommittee, except the Enrollment Committee who may serve on the Enrollment Committee and one other Standing Committee. ○ Committee Ordinances. Each Standing 	

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	<p>Committee including Enrollment and the Tax Commission will be responsible for writing and adopting their own Ordinances. The Business Committee may prescribe operations as required and requested, but all the aforementioned shall have the authority to draft and finalize the written Ordinance to present for ratification by the General Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subject to Grievances. All Committee, General Council subcommittee, and Commission members shall be subject to individual Grievances filed with a member of the Grievance Committee who will cause the Grievance Committee to meet and open the complaint within 7 business days. If the Secretary of the Nation is under Grievance, then the Grievance Committee shall hold minutes until there is an appropriate designee to receive them. If the Grievance Committee determines there is probable cause to sustain the allegations in the Grievance petition, an initial Evidentiary Hearing for a filed Grievance shall be held. The evidentiary burden of proof for a proper showing of misconduct shall be the preponderance of evidence presented by all parties as determined by the Grievance Committee. The Grievance Committee shall publish findings for all such Grievances within 45 calendar days of the date of the Evidentiary Hearing. If the Grievance Committee’s findings recommend the removal or other sanctioning of an accused official, resignation by the accused official shall not stop the Grievance Committee from calling and presiding over a Special Meeting of the General Council. ○ Subcommittees. Either the Business Committee or the General Council may establish subcommittees under their respective authorities. Each subcommittee shall be created via Resolution and have a designated purpose, a given timeframe, a budget, and include the membership criteria, selection, 	

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	<p>removal, & replacement process. All subcommittees have the right to receive information relevant to their work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No Tribal Aid. No tribal assets or funds will be used or expended by an accused official to defend against a Grievance. The accused has a right to self-funded legal advice or representation. ○ Grounds for Grievances. Potential grounds for Grievances may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violation of tribal governing documents, oath of office, administration policies, and/or legislation ▪ Nepotism - including but not limited to failure to recuse ▪ Abuse of Power or Position ▪ Political Collusion - secretive agreements to gain political advantage or manipulate the outcome of an election ▪ Neglect of Duty - negligence, failure of due diligence, habitual drunkenness or other immoral misconduct in office amounting to neglect ▪ Conviction of a felony while in office ▪ Additional grounds may be further outlined in the Grievance Ordinance ○ Subpoena Powers. The Grievance Committee shall issue subpoenas on behalf of interested members of the General Council in order to investigate and/or file complaints conditional on discovery materials thereafter. ● Drafting this section included consideration of the following in rough chronological order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current Business Committee member duties on Standing Committees are not elaborated in the Constitution but are present in the 1985 Tax Ordinance and unwritten custom ○ Future duties can be delegated by Business Committee Resolution if necessary ○ Concurrent membership in Committees and subcommittees should be limited 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whenever a Grievance is filed, there needs to be an airtight provision about when and how it is brought to the Grievance Committee if it can be filed with any individual member ○ What is an appropriate amount of time in-between a Grievance’s Evidentiary Hearing and the findings of fact being published? ○ The most recent set of Grievances resulted in one findings letter published in a matter and one not being published ○ An Evidentiary Hearing is heard before a Grievance Committee and a meeting for removal or sanctions must be done at a meeting of the General Council ○ Should Grievances be able to be filed on Business Committee (BC) subcommittees or should any issues with BC subcommittees be taken to the Business Committee? ○ A member removal and replacement process is included as a requirement for Business Committee subcommittees to be created ○ The current Constitution Article X Removal of Officers states that the Grievance Committee may call a meeting of the General Council but there is no written standard for them to preside over it; By-Laws Article I Section 1 currently has the Chief required “to preside at all meetings” including Grievance Committee meetings that they could be the hypothetical subject of ○ Bribery and coercion are similar crimes and can be combined under Abuse of Power or Position for Grounds for Grievance ○ The prior Ethics Committee was trying to have the Business Committee be held to the same ethical standards as employees are in the personnel policy but could not do so since the standards for hiring (background check, drug test, etc.) were not written in the By-Laws’ Qualification of Officers in By-Laws Article II ○ Political collusion can be applied to political or economic advantages including trading votes for an official’s hidden agenda 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The current Grievance Ordinance includes conviction of a felony while in office, including suspended sentences but not deferred sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A suspended sentence is a felony conviction with a sentence that shall be served only if the person violates their probation ▪ A deferred sentence is a felony case filed that requires the person to complete specific actions upon which their completion will dismiss a felony case and mean that the person does not become a convicted felon ▪ The way the current Grievance Ordinance is written, an official can remain in office if they are only indicted and not convicted of a felony ▪ Deferred sentences are admissible under “verifiable proof” of misconduct as outlined in By-Laws Article II Qualifications of Officers 	
8:30pm	<p>Call for Open Forum from Constitution Committee (CC) members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Council member question about the June 2, 2026 meeting and what will be happening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CC members respond that it will be a presentation for General Council members that attend on all amendments, a Q&A session for the community ○ A Zoom option will be available ○ In the meantime, CC meetings will also continue every other Monday • General Council member asks if CC members are adding Standing Committees to the Constitution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, Election Committee was created in the 1980s by the General Council as was Enrollment Committee ○ The majority of CC amendments have been putting in writing procedure that is currently happening but is not written into our 	

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	<p style="text-align: center;">Constitution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Council member asks if the Grievance Committee terms are already staggered because we are voting for a 2nd and 4th Committeeperson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, however no one filed for 4th Committeeperson, the terms are already staggered but per Constitution Article VIII – Annual Meetings the Business Committee does not have written authority over Grievance Committee elections, only Business Committee elections ○ CC member asks what the situation with current Grievance Committee vacancies and members is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One Grievance Committee member is currently running for a Business Committee office so their seat may become vacant after the election ▪ Another other seat was interim-filled due to a vacancy, but this is not updated on the tribal website which still shows a vacancy ▪ No one is sure whether the 2nd or 4th Committeeperson seat is the originally vacant seat ▪ A third Grievance Committee member’s term was identified as possibly being up in June but this was not addressed during this round of elections ▪ After the elections this summer there may possibly be a 3-person Grievance Committee that will require another Special Meeting to fill at least 1 Grievance Committee vacancy 	
	<p>Continued review of Constitution Article VII Standing Committees/Additional Bodies of Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued drafting of language for Section 1 all additional bodies of Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Character in Office. Members of the Grievance Committee shall maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, fairness, and impartiality in 	

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	<p>their conduct as quasi-judicial adjudicators overseeing a tribunal on behalf of the General Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sanctions and Due Process. Proper showing of financial misconduct may result in the forfeiture of tribal member benefits including, but not limited to, monetary claims, tribal tags, and/or tribal administrative or enterprise employment, all subject to a vote of the General Council. Due process is required before any General Council sanction is imposed. Due process may include but shall not be limited to clear standards for violations, the right to a self-funded attorney, the ability to call witnesses, proper notice for all parties, transparency for all people, also the right to a fair trial and impartial finder of fact. ○ (under the Enrollment Committee) Automatic Membership. Former Secretary-Treasurers and former Secretaries of the Nation are the base members of the Enrollment Committee, and may serve simultaneously on a Standing Committee or Commission position. ● Drafting this section included consideration of the following in rough chronological order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is probably good to allow Enrollment Committee members serve on another Standing Committee if there are already not enough candidates registering for election ○ Should the Grievance Committee be excluded and exclusive from all extra membership provisions? ○ Aforementioned 2025 General Council Resolution on Enrollment Committee membership on other Committees is reviewed, full text reproduced below as it was passed by the General Council; Resolution Limiting Committee Membership to One Per Individual, Excluding the Enrollment Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WHEREAS, the Seneca-Cayuga Nation recognizes the importance of maintaining a balanced and effective 	

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	<p>structure for its governing committees to ensure fairness, transparency, and an effective division of responsibilities; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WHEREAS, it has been noted that multiple memberships on various committees by individual members may lead to conflicts of interest, inefficiency, and an undue concentration of influence on decision-making processes; and ▪ WHEREAS, the Seneca-Cayuga Nation seeks to ensure that all committees function in a manner that promotes diversity of perspective and equitable representation; and ▪ NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that effective immediately, any individual serving in an official capacity within the Seneca-Cayuga Nation government may only sit on one committee at a time, with the exception of the Enrollment Committee; and ▪ BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this policy applies to all elected and appointed officials, as well as any other individuals serving on advisory or governing committees, boards, or commissions, with the goal of maintaining a fair distribution of responsibilities and avoiding the undue concentration of power; and ▪ BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any exceptions to this policy (outside of the Enrollment Committee) must be approved by the General Counsel, and such exceptions shall be documented in writing with clear justification for the deviation from this resolution; and ▪ BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution shall be in full force and effect upon adoption. 	

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	<p>Committee determines next steps before Jo Lynn signs off</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 29th is a good date to meet, will be posted to the Facebook for immediate notice; 10am CT is later decided as a good time to meet • Review of what’s left to be finalized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution Article VII – Additional Bodies of Government including Enrollment Committee section, Tax Commission, small section of subcommittees, powers of the General Council and General Council Resolutions, BC Powers and Resolutions, Notice to the General Council ○ By-Laws Article I - Duties of Officers including Committee positions like Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk, All Business Committee duties, 2nd Chief, Secretary, and Treasurer duties 	
	<p>Continued review of Constitution Article VII Standing Committees/Additional Bodies of Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued drafting of language for Section 1 under the Tax Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Membership. The Chairperson of the Tax Commission shall be the 2nd Chief; the Clerk shall be the Treasurer; Three additional Commission members shall be nominated and confirmed, one by the Business Committee and two by the General Council. ○ Tax Commission Disbursements. All disbursements from Tax Commission account(s) will be authorized either one-time by Business Committee Resolution or at any time as directed by General Council Resolution. All relevant financial information including allocated purpose/line item, specific account information, the date of transfer, and any changes to the use of that funding, including but not limited to returning transfers or alterations to budget allocations must be noted on the Resolution. No disbursements from Tax Commission accounts shall be made without the relevant Resolution(s) first being provided to Tax Commission members. No recurring bills 	

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	<p>or accounts receivable shall be pulled directly from Tax Commission account(s). The Tax Commission shall report to the General Council annually on all tax account disbursements and allocations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting this section included consideration of the following in rough chronological order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tax Commission purposes will be addressed on the 28th ○ Recent issues spoken about at the most recent monthly Business Committee meeting include money being transferred out of the Tax Commission for a specific purpose, however additional funding was allocated to this purpose but the money from the Tax Commission was not transferred back after the change in allocations ○ Longer term issues include a former Tax Commission member and General Council member who was not being provided notice of any disbursements from the Tax Commission and could not tell the 2023-2024 Constitution Advisory Committee how Tax Commission monies were spent ○ The Tax Commission only requires a Business Committee Resolution to disburse money at the moment, but at the monthly Business Committee meeting it came out that Resolutions are not always being made by the Secretary-Treasurer for Tax Commission disbursement and they are not included by reference in the Business Committee minutes either • Continued drafting of language for Section 1 for subcommittees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subcommittees of the Business Committee must be renewed annually and must include at least one Business Committee member as a non-voting liaison. • Drafting this section included consideration of the following in rough chronological order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is it appropriate to have a Business Committee 	

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	<p>member be on every BC subcommittee? If so, is it appropriate to have them be the Chairperson, or a non-voting liaison?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General Council members are asked about how they feel with Business Committees members on BC subcommittees – all want to see the Business Committee more involved but not necessarily as Chairperson 	
	<p>Confirmation of next meeting on April 29, 2026 @ 10am CT</p>	
<p>9:59pm</p>	<p>Motion #23 (Roberta/Natalie) – to adjourn meeting - unanimous committee vote of 4 remaining members including Carrie, Roberta, Natalie, and Yvonne– motion carries</p>	