

# Review process for proposed constitution complete



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In 2008, the Constitutional Convention Committee presented to the tribal government a draft constitution with a request to accept no further changes. No

action was taken regarding the draft until the board of directors meeting held on Sugar Island in September of 2012. At this meeting, the Elders Advisory Committee requested that the board of directors adopt the drafted document “as written” and send it to the Department of Interior for a Secretarial Election.

Instead, the board passed a motion to formally review the draft document via an “Ad Hoc Implementation Review Committee” comprised of individuals from the original Constitutional Convention, Elder Advisory Committee delegates and the tribal gov-

erning board. The committee was tasked with reviewing the proposed draft constitution, to make remarks and recommendations for revision. The review process concluded on Saturday, March 6, and a report was immediately submitted to the board of directors noting all recommendations.

To be very clear, no changes to the original draft constitution were agreed upon. In fact, proposed changes were all over the map and revealed profound disagreement and conflicting recommendations in some critical areas. There were no votes of consensus on proposed recommendations. We simply

voted by a “division of assembly” to “move forward” from one section to the next, once all recommendations, concerns and remarks were notated.

The “review” that just concluded, and the “report” that it produced is a valuable tool that highlights areas of concern. I urge all tribal voters to read the “report” on the front page of our website. But the question before us now is what to do with the draft constitution “as written.”

Please let’s honor and show respect for all the heart, soul, time and resource invested in this effort and vote this document “as written” up or down. I don’t want to see it be used as a

political football any longer. It’s time for us to act as the legislators we were elected to be.

A special thank you to all constitutional participants: the original Constitution Convention delegates, the Ad Hoc Review members and to our tribal staff who were so instrumental in our ability to stay the course. And I want to especially thank Marilyn McCarthy (Naubinway), Phil Payment (Hessel) and George Tassier (Newberry). I am so very proud of your representation at the table.

Miigwech, miigwech, miigwech.