

# GAMING EXPANSION PROJECTS TO CONSOLIDATE OR ENHANCE: A TRIBAL REFERENDUM ON A REVENUE ALLOCATION PLAN WOULD GUARENTEE



With President Obama at the 2014 Tribal Whitehouse Conference

**Aaron A. Payment, MPA**  
Tribal Chairperson  
*Representing All Members Everywhere*

**Ahneen, Boozo, Negee:**

In this edition of our Tribal paper, we highlight a few of the top achievements of my administration in 2014. Of course, I would first like to acknowledge our team approach in our accomplishments. As the lead administrator, I take great pride in the work we do. Of course, I say "we" as we are a team. I have

some great executives, directors, managers, coordinators and front line team members who assist me in all that we do. Their competence and expert assistance helps us to operate efficiently and to shine our Tribe beacon at the national level. Please read in this edition of the paper, our top accomplishments in our Tribal governmental operations and services delivery. Also, note the recognition we received by President Obama as a Climate Change Action Champion. I am so grateful for our Natural Resources, Housing, Efficiency, Grants, and Traditional Medicine Team Members for pulling together such an great example of what Indian Country can do to protect our Aki (Earth Mother).

I try to work very hard as your elected Chairperson. I strive to strike the right bal-

ance of directly serving you, representing you at the highest levels, and fighting to protect our sovereignty while acquiring additional resources for our continued delivery of services. As I mature (I turn 50 this year; arrgh!) I become less interested in the scuttlebutt and petty bickering (by some of our own elected leaders) and more on having something to show for my efforts. Anyone can complain about what they don't like. True leaders take this into account and lead the way in making change. That is the kind of leader I aspire to be.

Since returning to office, I have lead the way in turning half of our pending trust land applications into our Indian lands which are exempt from taxes saving about \$200,000 to date. This just didn't happen. Additionally, we have secured millions

more in federal funding in grants and legal settlements (Blue Cross Blue Shield of about \$1 million and another \$1.2 million from Contract Support Costs from IHS, a new \$445,000 for our treaty rights implementations).

We handle our inter-governmental relations with federal agencies with finesse. Working as the VP for the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, United Tribes of Michigan, Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes, and the National Congress of American Indians, grants us access we otherwise would not have. We don't even have a federal lobbyist. Cathy Abramson and I serve on the HHS Secretary's Tribal Advisory Council and I serve on the IHS Contract Support Cost Workgroup. These successes don't just happen. They require us to be seen in DC and to represent our Tribe. Cathy was the lone wolf on these issues for the time I was out of office. I credit her for inspiring me to get involved at this level. While she and I had our differences in the past, our working relationship and cooperative work ethic is the example of what we can do when we share a vision and work toward the same goal ~ serving our people.

Michigan (not the failed race track project). This project is at the juncture to purchase land. The Board has authorized me to do so but I am reticent until we solidify a long term plan for how the Members down state will benefit, as well as, the expansion of services for our Members in the UP. I am not comfortable with a "Trust Me" approach. In the coming weeks I will offer to work with the Board to develop a long term revenue allocation plan to earmark our future net revenues of our proposed downstate casinos so no future Tribal Chair or Board can renege on the promise. I am reluctant to executive a land purchase without a commitment from the Tribal Board to let you vote on this long term spending and strategic plan.

The core legal principal in our petition is to consolidate or enhance our existing lands for the benefit of our Members. My ethics require that we truly mean this rather than just use our Members in the lower peninsula. As you can see, the Lansing and New Boston areas are heavily populated with our Members. This is our greatest strength. I hope our Board will support a long term plan. If not, this is likely to become our greatest weakness. How do we consolidate and enhance if it is not for the benefit of all Members; especially those who live in the vicinity of the proposed project sites?

Finally, here are a few pieces of Tribal legislation I plan to introduce in the coming months:

- Tribal Referendum to include a Tribal Promise to Raise Elder Dividend to 10% of Net Revenue of all Gaming Expansion Projects;
- Negotiate to extend the State Tax Agreement to all Members in Michigan;
- Establish a Mackinac Island Elder Subcommittee;
- Re-Open Enrollment;
- Immediately commit a level of services expansion for the Western End of our Service Area.

**Constitutional Amendments to:**

- Establish a Unit 6 "At Large" Election Unit ~ necessary to Consolidate and Enhance;
- Add the Mackinac Band to our Historical Bands;
- Establish a Separation Powers into an Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches;
- Set Term Limits for the Chairperson and Board of Directors

Thank you for your continued support of our Tribe.

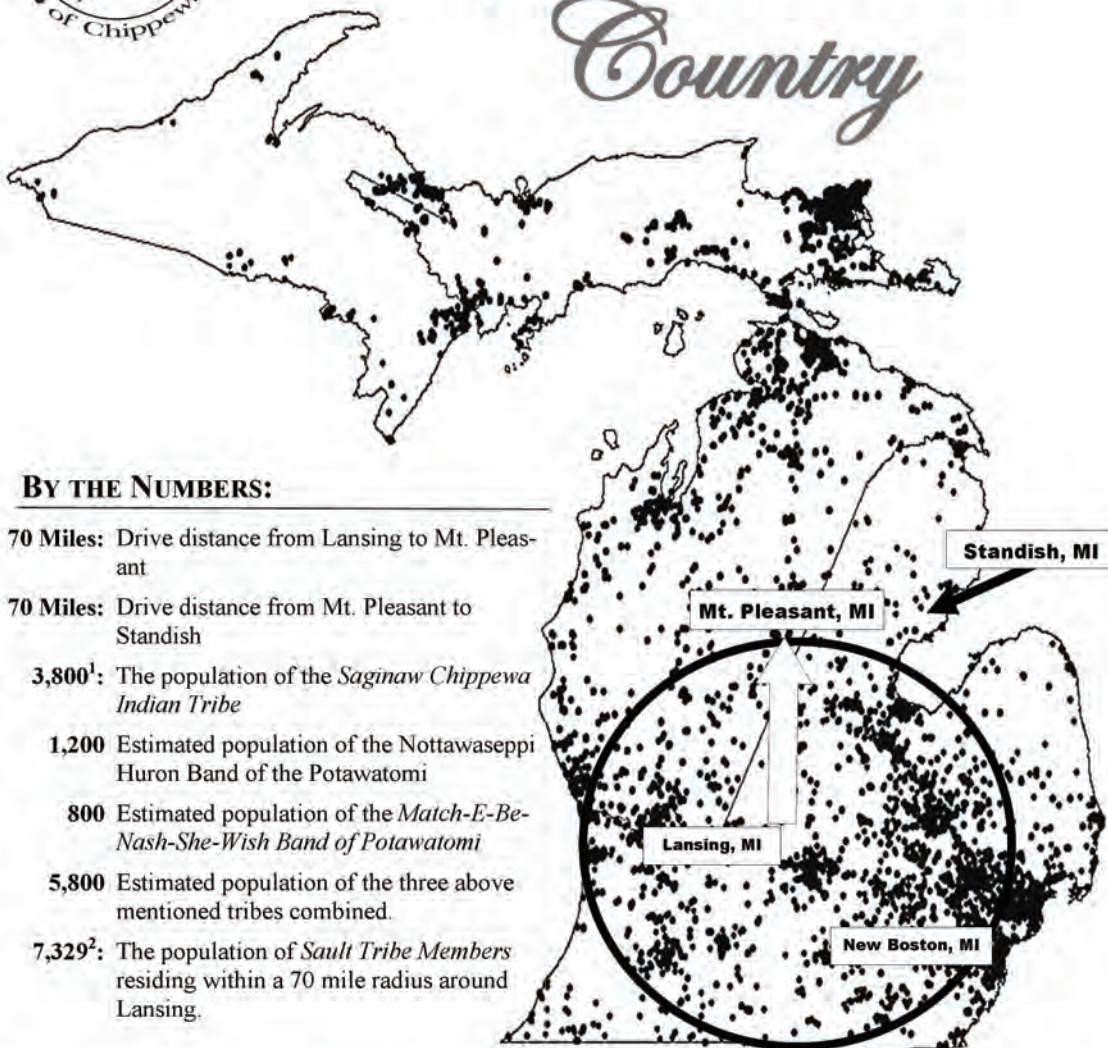
**DOWNSTATE SAULT TRIBE MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**7 - 9pm, TUESDAY ~ February 10, 2015**  
**Lansing Center, Lansing Michigan**

## Lansing & New Boston

are

*Sault Tribe Country*



**BY THE NUMBERS:**

- 70 Miles:** Drive distance from Lansing to Mt. Pleasant
- 70 Miles:** Drive distance from Mt. Pleasant to Standish
- 3,800<sup>1</sup>:** The population of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- 1,200** Estimated population of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi
- 800** Estimated population of the Match-E-Bee-Nash-She-Wish Band of Potawatomi
- 5,800** Estimated population of the three above mentioned tribes combined.
- 7,329<sup>2</sup>:** The population of Sault Tribe Members residing within a 70 mile radius around Lansing.

1. February, 2007, MDOT State Long-Range Transportation Plan (2.1.11) reported the population at 3,296. The number reported above represents an estimated increase due to enrollment since 2007.  
2. December, 2013, Sault Tribe Enrollment, MIS Data, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

**GAMING EXPANSION:  
Enhance and Consolidate?**

As you may recall, in 2011, as a private Tribal citizen, I circulated a petition to grant us the right as voters to decide whether or not to move forward on our Lansing Casino. The result of the referendum compelled us to improve the proposal that the Members ultimately approved. After returning to office, I teamed with Director Denny McKelvie to make the project even better. Since this time, we have cleared a major hurdle with the dismissal of the lawsuit brought on by the State to try to top us. This suit was dropped after the MI Attorney General lost his case against the Bay Mills Indian Community in the United States Supreme Court. Our petition to recognize our right to acquire land with our Land Claims Fund and for the land to be held as Indian lands are held, is at the federal level. We have a good chance of being successful. The Board has since expanded the scope to include a proposed development in New Boston,

*Chi-MeGwitch, Negee!*

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WATCH SAULT TRIBE BOARD MEETINGS ON LIVESTREAM: <http://new.livestream.com/TOSSABCS2>