

**General Meeting**  
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C. The Board of Directors shall vote their four Executive Officers from among themselves.

**TENURE**

A. The Akwesasne Elders Organization Board of Directors shall serve a term of one year.

B. Members are eligible for re-election for a period not exceeding three years.

**MEMBERS**

A. Membership in this organization shall be open to all Elders in Akwesasne.

B. The acceptable age for full membership shall be fifty-five years of age or over.

C. A member of good standing will be by the payment of an annual membership fee. The amount shall be set by resolution of the Board of Directors and be reviewed at the end of each year.

D. The membership fee set by the Board of Directors does not restrict the District groups from assessing additional fees agreed by its members.

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

A. Any individual of Akwesasne between the ages of fifty and fifty-five years of age may join the organization as an Associate Member.

B. Associate members will be entitled to share in all the activities of this organization, but will not be entitled to hold office until full membership is attained.

**MEETINGS**

A. Meetings of the Board of Directors of this organization shall be held at least once a month and as required.

B. Minutes of all meeting shall be recorded in a bound book.

**QUORUM**

Two Board representatives from each member district shall constitute a quorum.

**DECISION RENDERED**

Decision of the Board of Directors are rendered by a simple majority vote.

**FINANCE**

A. The revenue of the organization shall be derived from membership dues, community fundraising activities, grants and donations.

B. All bills and accounts shall be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval and the Board shall then approve accounts for payment.

C. Signing officers of the organization shall be the President or Vice-President and the Treasurer. All documents shall have two of the above signatures, one of which "must" be that of the Treasurer.

**AMENDMENTS**

The Charter of this organization shall be amended as follows:

A. By a proposal submitted at a general meeting of the organization members from any of its three member districts which shows unanimous approval from the members of that district.

B. It shall require a majority vote of the organization members at a regular scheduled meeting.

C. The approved amendment shall be signed by the Board of Directors and presented to Mohawk Council for ratification.

A question of how an outstanding citizen is defined was raised from a community member from St. Regis. It was clarified that what was stated was "a member of good standing will be by the payment of an annual membership fee".

**HOPKINS POINT AREA UPDATE:** Salli Benedict, Land Claims Researcher was present to provide an update on the Hopkins Point area.

When speaking about Hopkins Point it is referring to approximately 1,300 acres of land that is just beyond Sugarbush. It includes the point of land across from Stanely Island called Hopkins Point, and the road, riverfront, marshland streams and streambeds up to the Salmon River.

The Hopkins Point area is part of Akwesasne territory and is a small portion about 1/20th of the land claims area called the Dundee lands. The Hopkins Point area allegedly left our possession with an invalid surrender of the Dundee lands in 1888. The surrender is not considered to be valid and it has been unclear since that time as to what portion of the Hopkins Point area was included in the alleged surrender.

Today there are approximately 30 cottages using the Hopkins Point area. The major land holders of the Hopkins Point area are the Bildfell family. The hold 1,145 acres including the old homestead and the road to the point. The Bildfells offered to sell the land to the Mohawk Council. The Mohawk Council did not believe they should buy its own land back. The Mohawk Council in March of 1992 directed Indian Affairs to acquire the land from the Bildfells.

Indian Affairs through Jack Donegani have said that they are negotiating to re-purchase the land on Mohawk Council's behalf.

It was questioned on what does the Mohawk Council propose to do with this land. Grand Chief Mitchell stated first of all the Council will make the necessary arrangements to secure it.

Christine Deom, Staff Lawyer, reported that there was a meeting with Jack Donegani on March 27, 1992. There is a request from Council to grant their cooperation and assurance that the people coming in to conduct the appraisals would be assured unimpeded access to that property. Before anyone can get an estimate there has to be independent appraisers. This phase will have to take place before anyone can agree

to what exactly can be paid. Indian Affairs wants to buy the land but not at the price that was quoted which was \$750,000. Both sides agree that they have to have independent appraisers and surveyors. One of the concerns of the Council is that they didn't want to give a real long time in order for this to be done.

Grand Chief Mitchell further added the Council is looking at securing this land for future generations. The Council has agreed that they would work on securing that land to become part of the reservation and added to the District of Snye.

MCR 803: Moved by Wallace Mitchell, seconded by Brian David

WHEREAS, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has directed the Department of Indian Affairs to Repatriate Akwesasne lands at Hopkins Point currently held by the Bildfell family (MCR of March 12, 1991 - 1990/91-633); and

WHEREAS, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne accentuated its concern to Indian Affairs in a further resolution (MCR of December 21, 1991); and

WHEREAS, Indian Affairs has initiated a process intent on the repatriation of the Akwesasne lands at Hopkins Point, also known as the Bildfell estate; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne will allow access to surveyors, and real estate appraisers chosen by the Government and the Bildfell family, to the Hopkins Point area, for the purpose of appraisal, cost analysis and survey of the said property; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the access shall only be allowed from April 1, 1992, up to and including June 15, 1992.  
CARRIED

There was a question raised on why does there have to be an appraisal done when Indian Affairs knows that this land belongs to the Indian.

Salli explained that the Mohawk Council wants the land back but does not want to buy it back. Because it was the fault of Indian Affairs then they should correct their mistake.

Christine stated generally whenever an Indian band loses land it is generally through the fault of somebody else which in this case is Indian Affairs. It is the responsibility of Indian Affairs to negotiate how they are going to get the land back. The ones who made the mistake will have to pay for it.

Chief Benedict added when the meeting took place between Indian Affairs and the Council it was made clear that the Mohawk Council wasn't going to let them off the hook.

**UPDATE ON INTERIM CHIEF OF POLICE:** Chief Brian David reported as time went by the agenda changed to the issue of resignation of the Chief of Police who resigned on January 16. It was requested that the Police Commission re-visit the file. The Police Commission met with the Chief of Police and his wife. Subsequent to this there was a letter submitted requesting that his resignation be rescinded. At the last General Meeting it was reported that this letter would be reviewed. The Police Commission met on two occasions with the decision that the original decision holds in the sense that the request will not be entertained, the resignation holds.

He then suggested as for any continuing concerns regarding this resignation that individual members of the Police Commission be contacted. Then if there is further concerns it can be brought to Council.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** It was questioned on when is the other lane going to begin at the Canada Customs or is it even going to happen. Chief Benedict reported that the Rosemount Design Group Ltd. has been hired. They have begun working on six designs for this particular area. The Council will take a look at it and pick the best one. During this time until construction is completed if an additional lane is needed they will put this in. Over the next two weeks the Council will know where everything is at.

It was the feeling that there has to be an Indian lane open at all times. This will be taken into consideration.

It was then questioned why there isn't an Indian lane at the U.S. Customs. Grand Chief Mitchell stated he met with Bob Johnston of U.S. Customs to discuss this. He suggested to put in a request. He said to try and get the Mohawk Nation and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council to submit a request in this manner. The Council has to begin talking to the Tribal Council on this issue.

Grand Chief Mitchell stated the Council will call a Special Meeting for the residents of Cornwall Island. At this meeting representatives from Canada Customs and Rosemount Design Group will also be present. This will allow for Canada Customs to answer any questions that Cornwall Island residents may have.

The main concern is to have something done with this situation now.

Grand Chief Mitchell then asked if there was any other business from the floor.

A resident of Snye then asked when the Akwesasne Mohawk School Board elections will be held. It was previously stated that it would take place in March.

Chief Barnes stated this is at Draft 2 of the Election Regulations. What is being proposed is to have the elections take place at the end of May or the early part of April. Also an orientation period will be included in this. It was further questioned why there has been the same Board members for the past five to six years. Chief Barnes stated this is due to the fact that when nominations were held the community wasn't participating. The Board would then ask the School Committees to forward names.

There will be an update provided at the next General Meeting.

**JUDICIAL INQUIRY UPDATE:** Christine stated when she made the presentation at the last General Meeting it was to inform the community and the Council what her priorities are with regard to the inquiry for Akwesasne. Also, during this time, it was requested that community people contact her with their concerns. To date, there has only been about four people who have contacted Christine. Each of these individuals required about two hours. Christine agreed that since a lot of the incidents took place in the U.S. and also Canada, it then would require an international judicial inquiry.

Because there has only been a certain faction contacting Christine, she started trying to speak to everyone. At this point she is still not finished.

An update will be provided at the next General Meeting.

Discussion was then directed to problems that a resident of St. Regis is encountering with taxes. It was reported that he has paid close to \$1,700.00 when the judge was questioned on if this was the only case, the Judge's reply was that it affects the whole reserve.

Grand Chief Mitchell stated there has been quite a few people coming forward with the same concerns. The Mohawk Council took out an ad in the newspaper requesting that whoever has been assessed to forward their papers to the Council, namely Christine. Christine found out there was different levels.

Christine then stated all the tax assessments that were brought to the Band Council Office were compiled together. The problem is that when people receive correspondence it was in french and because of it being in french, they threw it away. Because of not replying to the correspondence it comes down to the point where a Warrant of Committal is issued.

It was reported that for this particular case, three lawyers have dropped the case with the instruction that there should be a claim while working for the Mohawk Council. For the letter from Mohawk Council it was also instructed that this would not be honored. It was then questioned if this was all interfering with Self-Government.

Grand Chief Mitchell referred to incidences that occurred about four years ago when Akwesasne residents went to Lancaster for their tax returns. These people were caught in a rent rebate and now have to repay. The Council is presently working on this and will be providing periodical updates. This issue will also be made public to the Community to find out if there are other cases.

The Ministry of Revenue is going after individuals because of the signature on the line.

Chief Marshall Oakes then referred to the tax office at the N.A.I.T.C. He reported he trusted this group who was to help the ironworkers, but in the end he also had to repay.

On the area of paying taxes with regard to residents taking courses through Canada Employment Centre. There is one case where a resident of Akwesasne is being taxed \$1,800.00. Rosemary Bonaparte of Canada Employment Centre was contacted who then forwarded a letter. It ended up that fees were taken out for Federal and Provincial.

The Council needs to get all the cases straightened out. A meeting with Revenue Canada will be coordinated. But before this meeting takes place everyone should be allowed the opportunity to bring their individual cases forward.

It was then instructed to refer any letters pertaining to taxes to Christine. She can be contacted at the Administration I Building at 575-2250.

Further questions were then asked with regard to Income Tax and the Tax Office on Cornwall Island.

Martha Montour is handling this now. There will be an update provided at the next General Meeting.

Chief Lawrence Francis arrived at the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

**BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:** Christine did a review on this Intoxicants Law Vote. After reviewing there appeared to be quite a number of problems with the vote that took place on March 14, 1992. She spoke to a resident of Cornwall Island who had the concern that many people didn't have the chance to participate in the vote. Bottom line was that there wasn't proper notification of the vote. At this point, Council will need to decide if another vote will take place.

For those people not fully satisfied with the procedures of the vote, it was instructed that the documentation listing their concerns be forwarded to the Staff Lawyer. The Council can then table for discussion.

Questions on whether or not a justice system should be put in place before taking on laws was raised. Chief Benedict stated in order to put a justice system in place, then laws are needed. It has to be proven to Indian Affairs that there are a number of laws in place. If the Council waits for the one big justice law then waiting will be for a long time.

Chief Marshall Oakes stated there is something more serious than drinking, which is drugs. The Council should start with drugs.

It was then questioned by a resident of Snye if there would be a vote for the Special Events Hall on Cornwall Island.

Chief Barnes reported there has been previous discussion on this. The law would have to apply throughout the whole territory.

Christine added the fact that there are people who said no, it cannot be dismissed.

This will also be tabled at the next General Meeting. Since this is such a delicate area all the different groups will have to be contacted.

Chief Francis stated the Council should show good faith and request that all Band Employees take a test to show they are drug free. This will also include the Chiefs.

This will be put forward at the next General Meeting, which is scheduled to take place on April 25, 1992, the last Saturday of the month, at the Kawehnoke Community Centre.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

