

MCT CONSTITUTION REFORM CONVENTION
OCTOBER 25, 2019
CEDAR LAKES CASINO, STAR ISLAND ROOM
CASS LAKE, MN
10:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Bonnie Fairbanks Stangel conducted an opening prayer.

Lenny Fineday gave a welcome on behalf of Chairman Jackson.

Bonnie Fairbanks presented on expanding citizenship; how she feared expanding citizenship would mean our natural resources would be depleted, and less and less citizens are using the resources for health and healing versus selling products for money. She now sees the value in reforming the constitution to include rights of nature and values that are inherent in Ojibwe life.

Thomas Cain, Jr. presented his perspective of the Red Lake Constitution Reform and provided a video where Leech Lake had won a suit giving them their rights over the management of their forests.

Dr. Ginew Giizhig presented on traditional Ojibwe Civil Chief leadership; the clans and their importance to the leadership; the means of governing bodies, from family to local to regional; and stated there were no national laws.

Lunch took place at 12:00 p.m.

Sally Fineday presented an exercise to develop a draft Preamble:

1. Questions of past meetings were revisited - "Do we want to remain together? And do we want home rule?" Both questions were asked in prior meetings and Delegates had agreed yes on each.
2. Take in words that citizens find valuable when writing about who we are and what we do.
3. Use the words to draft a Preamble.
4. Delegates then take the drafted Preamble back to their citizens.
5. At the end of the quarter (December); review the Preamble and determine if it may be a final document.

Carrie Day Aspinwall assisted with the exercise and wrote the words of the Delegates on white board paper. Sally Fineday documented the words and with the Delegation's input drafted a Preamble/Introduction.

Introduction (in place of Preamble) Words of Importance:

Not Preamble – Introduction

Opening

Introduction

Centering

Traditional Self Governance

Aligning

Identity

We ye shkad – in the beginning – slang – Aanishinaabe bimosewin (the people's journey)

Cention beings
Origination
Intention
Aanishinaae
Minobimaadiziiwin (way of life)
The beginning – we aashkwad
Aanishinabe minobimaadiziiwin (first people of the land) (way of life)
Sovereignty
Collective
Inherent rights of people
7 generations
Algonquin
Indinawemag all my relatives
Nimamaakiin – mother earth
Plants and Animals – aasema, cedar, sage, maanomin, sweet grass, waa waa scezhii
Honor Creator
Aanishinaabe akin – region
Home rule laws & justice & sacred teachings & spirituality
Natural laws – earth, water, air, fire
Natural resources
First language
Creation
Universal law
Freedom – self-determination
Agreement
Treaty adherence
Common property
Traditions
History
Voice
Clans
Citizenship – People
Ancestors
Elders (grandmothers and grandfathers)
Values
Future
Values
Aabinoojii (children)
Equity
Council
Sacred teachings
Eszhaayang (where we are going)
Elitism
Inalienable – can't be taken away from

Four directions
Spirituality
Circle
In-common
Grandfather teachings
Aasemaa
Mission statement
Self-determination
Self-governance

Below is the drafted language:

Introduction

Aanishinaabe of the Aanishinaabe Akiin – White Earth, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage. We honor the creator and follow the laws of nature. We are all of one mind with each other. We are coming together for the shared love for our people and our children. We speak for people and those who cannot speak for themselves (animals, maanoomin, water, air)

We are Aanishinabe who throughout history have powerful alliances with other nations and we may continue to align ourselves.

We are the first people of this land, we have survived, and we will remain here forever. Rights that are honored by the People are inherent, our creator given rights, freedom rights, and natural rights.

This draft will go with the Delegates to their communities for community input and will come back to the Delegates at the December or January Convention for review and updates.

Jason Decker presented on Structure:

The process:

- 1) set ground rules
- 2) identifying and prioritizing issues (what are we going to change);
- 3) working through possible solutions to those issues and gaining community input;
- 4) drafting the document;
- 5) holding community meetings to hear input on that draft;
- 6) making revisions (if warranted) and;
- 7) finalizing and presenting the final draft.

GP motioned to accept the process; 2nd by LL. Vote to accept the process:

LL=yes WE=yes
ML=yes GP=yes

FDL-yes BF-yes

The first prioritized topic/issue is structure. That is, how the MCT should be organized/structured and how that organization/structure relates to the individual bands. The second priority is enrollment/citizenship (if it is home rule then the Band shall have decision process).

Vote to accept the first priority:

LL-yes WE-yes
ML-yes GP-yes
FDL-yes BF-yes

The next meeting is hosted by Bois Forte. However, only available on Thursday, November 14, 2019.

Vote to accept the new day of the week.

LL-yes WE-yes
ML-yes GP-yes
FDL-yes BF-yes

Grand Portage will host the two day Convention in December with the location being Duluth, MN.

Discussion took place and items for presentation to the TEC from this Delegation are:

1. Representative Delegates going to TEC meeting are Representatives
2. Delegates will do the work
3. Delegates will do the timeline
4. Delegates request general room rates at each location
5. Delegates will add process
6. Delegates will ask TEC to designate MCT as a fiscal agent for grants by the Delegates with no IDC.
7. Delegates will be the authority on the spend-down of the initial 60k.

Leroy Fairbanks, District III Representative thanked everyone for attending. Provided an update on the support of Leech Lake Delegation.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Representatives who will attend the TEC meeting will meet directly after the meeting.