

Setting record straight on constitution meetings



**DARCY MORROW, DIRECTOR,
UNIT IV**

During the month of November, I spent 184 hours combined on the road and attending meetings, this time does not include constituent phone calls, emails or reading material.

On Nov. 1, myself and directors Chase and Sorenson drove to Lansing to see the chairperson sign for our Lansing purchase of a parcel adjacent to the Lansing Center at Michigan Avenue and Larch. The agreement between the city and tribe is for the tribe to close on the other two parcels of land over time, assuming all approvals for the project are secured.

This is a great accomplishment for our tribe with the revenue of this facility we will be able to bring back services that have been either decreased or eliminated all together. Such as

the funeral fund that went from \$3,000 and no income guideline to \$1,000 with income guidelines, community/health centers eliminated in Escanaba and Marquette areas; elders' checks decreased significantly and sports sponsorships for children eliminated. These are some at the top of my priority list as a board member!

Constitution ad hoc committee:

I would like to let you know what has happened so far during the Constitution meetings but, before I do, I need to set the record straight on an attendance record some are taking. The issue of having these sessions taped was discussed it was decided taping would be done by the tribe's entertainment department.

The day of the first meeting they had individuals taping the session and also a live feed being broadcasted. Some elders and staff had issues with themselves being taped. They made a request to the mediator and chairman that they not be taped by outside individuals or broadcasted. One elder who had an issue was the chairman of the original Constitution Committee. He left that day and has not returned, how terrible to lose such knowledge. Staff felt intimidated that if they spoke for or against it may reflect in their jobs. So, after a vote was done and the live feed and individual taping was able to continue, me

along with a few others stepped outside the room. I was able to talk to the elders and staff, they informed me that the tribe paid to have a study done by Anderson Tackman on the financial impact of this document, which I have still not seen to this day.

Directors Chase, Anderson, Sorenson and I were back into the room just as they were starting the document review. I have no problem with myself being taped as a seated official, but out of RESPECT for our elders and staff that made requests, things could have been handled differently. I know how staff can be intimidated by politics. I was an employee for 20 years and I have seen first hand how team members are treated when they aren't on the right side of politics. I have always supported Chairman Payment and I lost my job in November of 2008 after the election.

The review is being done by this committee. Unfortunately, we are under represented from the western end. Currently, we have five members from the original committee, which started with 29 members. With people having to work, gas prices, etc., we understand everyone can't attend, but the tribe should be willing to bring this document out to other areas for membership's input. After the ad hoc committee and board's review it should be

brought out to the membership so we are all comfortable with this document and it is right for our next generations.

Resolutions:

At the Escanaba board meeting, Director Chase, myself, and Chairman Payment presented an efficiency resolution to have an efficiency expert come in and go through our whole organization. This was approved by the board. This is long overdue with the size of our tribal operations. I am sure we will get some good advice from these experts and we will start to see the tribe become more efficient. With the economy seeing the impact, we also see the impact, and if there are areas we can make more efficient, then why wouldn't we do it for the betterment of the tribe?

Director Chase, myself and Chairman Payment also presented a resolution at the Marquette meeting to start the health staff to work on establishing and renewing services that were taken in 2008 from Escanaba and Marquette for no reason. This resolution also has the health staff looking at renewing services in other areas that were removed as well as looking at after hour care services in Manistique, Marquette, Escanaba and St. Ignace. This was approved by the board.

Director Chase has continued since 2008 to work on putting

these much needed services back into Escanaba and Marquette. Director Chase and I both know what a detriment this was to our tribal communities when these centers were closed down and we will continue to work on providing the members with much needed services.

Special meeting:

The chairman called a special meeting for Nov. 26 and on the agenda was a resolution to "Rescind Resolution 2012-146 Limited Delegation of Authority to the Chairperson." The chairman ended up canceling the meeting. I did not support this resolution, nor did I think we needed to have a special meeting about it.

I used to hear people complaining that most board members were automatic "yes men." I hope people are seeing that the days of bobble head board members are gone. Unfortunately now, if you don't vote a certain way, then you are against someone. The days of dictators are over, we have a democratic board and I for one use that vote for the good of the membership. They are my agenda.

Wishing everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Thank you,
Darcy Morrow
Cell: (906) 203-6699
Email: DMorrow@saulttribe.net; P.O. Box 441
Manistique, MI 49854