

Little River Band of Ottawa Indians/Election Board

Open Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2022

I. Call to order

Kathy Gibson called to order the Open Meeting of the Election Board at 5:15pm

II. Roll call

Laura Echelbarger-Yes, Karen Love-Yes, Kathy Gibson -Yes

III. Members in attendance

Chelsea Densmore

IV. Open Discussion

Chelsea Densmore: What has the board done differently in this special election to make sure that you don't have the same issues as you had in the previous special election?

Laura Echelbarger: Well, we have a new vendor and we had 4 or 5 responses to our RFP. We looked through each one, one we couldn't use because it was AES and the other ones, we determined which ones were able to come closest to give us what we needed, like the secret envelope and some other things.

Kathy Gibson: Plus, we were able to have them send us their secrecy envelope so we could view it prior to signing them.

Karen Love: Plus, they are a Michigan company.

Laura: Yes, they are a Michigan company, and we really liked the fact that we could use someone more local. We asked them about the paper they used because that was a complaint with True Ballot. We also verified how long they needed to print the ballots once they were given the ballot information, if there were any changes. We made sure our timelines would work with their timelines.

Chelsea: I noticed that your timeline was longer this time, did you guys change that or is that due to the holiday?

Laura: That's part of our regulations. We added more time in our regulations to extend the time for the vendor to mail the ballots out. So, there is more time for the membership to get their ballots back in. We changed the 30 days in regulations from 30 days to 30 business days to gain more time for the membership to get their ballots returned. We also shortened the 5 days that a candidate has to withdraw to 2 days so we could use those additional days to benefit the membership by giving more time to get ballots back.

Chelsea: Are all of these dates going to be reflected in the regular election also?

Laura: Yes, these are in our regulations so it will follow all elections until the current regulations are changed.

Chelsea: I noticed in this special election there were significantly more candidates that were running in the Election Board than we have seen in the past. Do you guys have any idea why there might have been this increase and have you see a similar increase in the regular election? Do you think that it is potentially positive that the election board is possibly being seen in a more positive light and that might be why people are being inspired to run?

Kathy: The other thing the election board did this time is that we tried to go through everything with a fine tooth comb and looked at our regulations to try to make sure that we were adhering to the regs as much as

possible so we tried to make sure we weren't making mistakes and we went over it several times so we are hoping that we didn't make any mistakes.

Laura: And also too, this time that is different, even though it has just been the three of us, and we are two people short, every step we have taken from the announcement of the special election, which was just a couple of days after the resignations, we have taken every step and every decision has been made amongst the three of us. We have truly worked as a team in all of these things that we have had to do and it's been an enormous amount of work but we have made very decision together the whole way. That hasn't been done before.

Kathy: I agree with Laura. We really worked as a team, and it didn't matter if we had to do a conference call at 7 or 9 at night because something came up and we were questioning it. We wanted to make sure we were doing things right. This is my opinion only, but before when there were more members it was like we had a meeting at 5 because that's the way it was and there was no deviating from that of things that would come up. When it was the three of us, we would make sure to have everyone updated and we would make sure to meet up and discuss and sometimes those discussions ran long and often. We weren't on a time frame, and we had to adjourn because it was later than our scheduled time, if it took us 2 or 3 hours then that's what it took. We had a meeting at the office that ran for 5 hours when we were setting the special election.

Laura: Going through this RFP process for this vendor, we have had long and many conversations about 'how do we even do it', 'what are our steps'? Every decision along the way, we reached out to each other, and we all leaned on each other, and we made the decisions together and we have looked at everything together. I think that the commitment to getting the best that we can for the membership but also the commitment to each other that we are going to do this together and do it really well, has made a huge difference. We have only had two people reach out to get a replacement ballot resent. One person stated that they didn't get their ballot in the mail. And what was the other one? *Kathy:* It was someone who said their ballot was ruined in the rain, so she needed a new one. *Laura:* It was only just those two, which from the last election, there were more people who didn't get them, there hasn't been any complaining on Facebook either. We haven't seen any complaints in the Facebook pages that we are on, although there are a couple that none of us are allowed on.

Kathy: The interesting thing is that when we did get the announcements back so far from the special election and we got a lot back, they came back because their addresses were not correct. We sent those addresses to enrollment, but people are not updating their addresses. To me that's a big deal too because we are having people not getting stuff from the election board because they are not updating their address.

Chelsea: I just want to say as a citizen and as a candidate that you can really see the difference this time that you can see all of the extra stuff you are doing, and the ballots came out really good. I even saw that Sara stated something on one of the websites how great the ballots look compared to the last one. You can see that you're working great as a team too and you are doing a great job.

Laura: We feel it too, I mean, I feel like this group of three...at first when the resignations were given, we were at first taken aback because there are now only three of us. How are we going to get all of this stuff done and get a new vendor and do all of the things that we want to do? But I cannot applaud enough how well we have come together and all of the great things we have done together as a team, it has been a different feeling and I am so proud of being with these other two women and working on all of these things. I could not be prouder or have had a better experience within the last few months.

Kathy: I agree with you, Laura and in my opinion, we were all open minded and we valued what each one brought to the table, and it wasn't like you need to do that and you need to do this, and I am doing this. It was like 'what can WE do and how can WE make this work'? It made a big difference.

Laura: Is that it?

Kathy: That's it unless there is something else?

Chelsea: No, I think I'm good.

V. Adjournment

Kathy Gibson adjourned the meeting at 5:47pm

Motion made by Laura Echelbarger, 2nd by Karen Love.

Laura Echelbarger-Yes, Kathy Gibson-Absent, Karen Love-Yes,