



Approved 03/12/2025

**LITTLE RIVER BAND OF OTTAWA INDIANS
TRIBAL COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2024
LITTLE RIVER BAND
VIA ZOOM
GOVERNMENT CENTER**

**PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES**

The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians held a Public Hearing at the Little River Band Government Center on December 16, 2024. Following are the minutes of that Public Hearing.

Speaker Burmeister: Good morning, everyone. We are here this morning for our Public Hearing. It is Monday, December 16, 2024. We will start with an opening prayer. I have asked Councilor Metzger to say the prayer, so if you're able to stand, please stand.

I. Opening Prayer

Councilor Metzger: *Anishinaabemowin*. I ask the Creator to have pity on me as I speak this foreign language. I also ask the Creator to have pity on us, to watch over us, that our ancestors and our youth, our babies, watch us. I ask that love is eminent today. That Miigwech. Chi- Miigwech

Speaker Burmeister:

II. General Business

I will be

A. Call to Order

at 10:03. Next, I just have a few housekeeping that I would just like to remind everybody. If you have your cell phone, please put your cell phone on mute. Secondly, is please be respectful of anybody that is speaking and during public comment period you will be given five minutes to speak, um no sidebar conversations. And when you are speaking, you will need to, if you are a Tribal Citizen, you will need to also not only identify yourself, but your Tribal ID. And next, um I'm going down to Zoom. And I'm requesting that if there's any media on Zoom, that you please identify yourself by raising your hand. Okay, we have no media online. If there's any media in the audience, if you could please also raise your hand. We have our press secretary that's here and she'll be the only person allowed regarding media. So, moving down,

B. Statement of purpose of meeting

I will read the resolution that brought us to today. It is resolution 4-1204-235. Resolution authorizing written notice to Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. Tribal Councils intend to consider removal, adopting the alleged grounds for removal, and establishing the date of the public meeting. It's a lengthy resolution, so please be patient as I read it. WHEREAS the status of the Gaa Ching Ziibi Daawaa sorry if I Anishinaabek (Little River Band of Ottawa Indians) as a sovereign with

Treaty-making power is confirmed in numerous treaties, from agreements with the initial colonial powers on this land, to various treaties with the United States; and WHEREAS the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians (Tribe) is descended from, and is the political successor to, the Grand River Ottawa Bands, signatories of the 1836 Treaty of Washington (7 Stat. 491) with the United States, as reaffirmed by federal law in P.L. 103-324, enacted in 1994; an WHEREAS as an exercise of sovereign powers, in order to organize for a common good, to govern under its own laws, to maintain and foster Tribal culture, to provide for the welfare and prosperity of its people, and to protect its homeland, the Tribe adopted a new Constitution pursuant to a vote of the membership on May 27, 1998, which Constitution became effective upon its approval by the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs on July 10, 1998; and WHEREAS the Tribe adopted amendments to the Constitution on April 26, 2024 or excuse me 20...2004, which became effective upon approval by the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs on May 13, 2024; or excuse me 2004 and WHEREAS pursuant to Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution, the Tribe's territory shall encompass all lands which are now or hereinafter owned by or reserved for the Tribe, and all lands which are now, or at a later date owned by the Tribe or held in trust for the Tribe or any member of the Tribe by the United States of America; and WHEREAS pursuant to Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution, the Tribe's jurisdiction over its members and territory shall be exercised to the fullest extent; and WHEREAS the Tribal Council is authorized under Article IV, Section 7(a) of the Constitution to promote, protect and provide for the public health, peace, morals, education and general welfare of the Little River Band and its members; and WHEREAS the Tribe.. The Tribal Council is empowered, under Article IV, Section 7(a) of the Constitution to exercise the inherent powers of the Little River Band by establishing laws through the enactment of ordinances and adoption of resolutions not inconsistent with this Constitution, to govern the conduct of members of the Little River Band and other persons within its jurisdiction; and WHEREAS in accordance with Article X, Section 3, of the Little River Band Constitution, the Tribal Council is empowered to remove elected officials and Article X, Section 10.02 of the Tribal Council Procedures Ordinance #06-100-02 defines the constitutional grounds for Removal from Office. The constitutional grounds for removal are identified as: Gross Misconduct or Malfeasance in Office. Gross misconduct or malfeasance in office is defined to be that generally understood by the community as a failure to carry out the actions and responsibilities, or to act in a way that is contrary to the community expectations of the office. 1. Gross misconduct in office means the complete and/or blatant dereliction of duty, unlawful or improper behavior. Misconduct, to be considered "gross" under this section, must rise to an absolute, easily seen, extreme, and manifest action. The behavior must be seen as offensive, reprehensible, and unmitigated. 2. Malfeasance in office means an action that is plainly bad, doing an action badly. Malfeasance, to be considered under this section, includes, but is not limited to, corruption, illegal action, misgovernment, mismanagement, unjust performance, or abuse of office. B. Conviction, while in office of a felony, or a crime involving dishonesty or moral turpitude. Conviction by a court of competent jurisdiction while in office may include actions that were done prior to taking office, where the conviction itself occurs after taking office. A crime involving dishonesty or moral turpitude is further defined as follows but is defined as generally understood by the community as an action in violation of the public trust, or personal trust, by the elected

official under the purported authority of the office, or in personal actions. 1. Dishonesty means bad faith, cheating, corruption, deception and/or deceitfulness, falsification. 2. Moral turpitude means conduct that is contrary to justice, honesty or morality. In general, it refers to action that is an extreme departure from the community's standards of honesty, justice or ethics as to be shocking to the community. B. Inability to fulfill the duties of office due to mental or physical disability. Inability to fulfill the duties of office refers to the ability to exercise judgment about the responsibilities of the office or to attend to the business of the office and does not include simply being absent from the physical offices. Inability to fulfill the duties of office means that decisions, or the absence of decisions, are not in the best interests of the Tribe, members, employees, and finances of the Tribe. WHEREAS the Tribal Council received a copy of a Notice of Change in Payment Method from Sharee M. Freeman, Director, Office of Self Governance, Office of the Secretary of the United States Department of Interior issued because of the Ogema's failure to timely submit a Single Audit Report on behalf of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians for fiscal year 2023 by September 30, 2024, describing sanctions to be imposed; and WHEREAS being fully aware of the consequences of his failure to timely file the audit report based on prior warnings received from the Office of Self Governance (OSG), the Ogema mismanaged the duties and responsibilities of his office and improperly failed to see that the audit was filed on time thereby committing gross misconduct and malfeasance in office as a result of his blatant um dereliction of duty, unlawful and improper behavior; and WHEREAS the Ogema has also continually failed and refused to provide the Tribal Council with monthly financial reports by which the Tribal Council can properly oversee and protect the assets of the LRBOI and intentionally withheld the fact of his failure to timely file the audit for fiscal year 2023 from the Tribal Council; and WHEREAS the Tribal Council adopted the Tribal Council Procedures Ordinance, Ordinance #06-100-02, and approved and adopted revisions to that Ordinance on June 25, 2008, February 22, 2012, and June 26, 2019; and WHEREAS Article X, Section 10.02 of the Tribal Council Procedures Ordinance governs the procedure for removal of an Elected Official; and WHEREAS the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Oath of Office obligates an elected official to uphold and protect the Constitution, all laws and regulations of the Band, and to place the concerns of the Tribe before personal consideration in all matters; and WHEREAS after consideration of the evidence provided in support of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema removal resolution the Tribal Council adopts the alleged Grounds for Removal, namely, Gross Misconduct and Malfeasance in Office by the failure to timely submit the LRBOI Single Audit Report for fiscal year 2023 by September 30, 2024, thereby endangering the status of the LRBOI with federal program eligibility and WHEREAS the Tribal Council...did I say that? Okay. Stepping back um in the prior WHEREAS eligibility and funding and; WHEREAS the Tribal Council desires to inform the Tribal Membership of the actions that led to the resolution and to provide an opportunity for tribal Ogema Larry B Romanelli to defend or refute these charges. NOW THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT the tribal council in accordance with Article X, Section 3 of the Constitution and Article X, Section 10.02 of the Tribal Council procedures ordinance schedules a public meeting of the tribal council on December 16th 2024 at 10:00 AM to be held in the tribal council lodge at the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians government center at which time the evidence supporting the removal of the Tribal Ogema or refuting

such charges will be considered and a vote taken. IT IS ADDITIONALLY RESOLVED THAT the agenda for this Public Meeting shall be set forth as follows. I. Opening Prayer, II. Call to Order, statement of Purpose of Meeting, and Roll call. III. Recusal of a Tribal Council Member. IV. Consideration of the removal of Larry B Romanelli tribal Ogema. A. presentation of allegations and supporting documentation B. Response of Larry B Romanelli tribal Ogema to allegations. C. Public Comment (Follows response to Each Charge). V. Recess A. Deliberation and Review of information. VI. Open Session A. Motion to Adopt Resolution for Removal. B. Roll Call Vote. VII. Adjourn. IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the specific grounds for removal set forth herein above, and as identified an attachment A, which includes the supporting documentation, including all exhibits to substantiate the alleged grounds for removal, and incorporated as cause for removal the allegations are listed as follows: Charge 1. Gross Misconduct and Malfeasance in office by the failure to timely submit the LRBOI single audit to the United States Department interior as required. Article V, Section um 5(a)(2). To oversee the administration and management of the tribal government in accordance with the laws, resolutions, and motions adopted by the Tribal Council. Article V, Section 5(a)(8) to manage the economic Affairs, enterprises, (property both real and personal) and other interests of the Tribe, consistent with ordinances and resolutions enacted by the Tribal Council. Charge 2. Failure to Abide by the Oath of Office and to Perform the responsibilities and duties that go with the position. The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Oath of Office requires an individual elected to office to swear to: a)"uphold and protect the Constitution of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians ... ", b)"uphold all laws and regulations of the little River Band of Ottawa Indians ... " c)"maintain the respect and honor of the Tribal Council of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians", d)"place the concerns of the Tribe before personal considerations in matters". e "to perform the responsibilities and duties that go with the position and affirm by all that they hold dear and sacred " Charge 3. Failure to Provide monthly financial reports for the Council. LRBOI Constitution, Article V, Section 5(a)(5) States that timely prepare and present the annual Tribal budget to the Tribal Council for approval or other action and to keep the Tribal Council fully advised as to the financial condition and needs of the Tribe, preparing monthly reports for the Council, and making quarterly reports available to the membership. IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Tribal Council determines that the allegations have sufficient documentation to support their truth in accordance with Article X, Section 3 of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Constitution and Article 10, Section 10.02 of the Tribal Council Procedures Ordinance which prohibit Gross Misconduct and Malfeasance in Office; and IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT in addition to adopting the Alleged Ground for Removal, the Tribal Council also adopts the supporting documentation for the Alleged Grounds for Removal of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema. The supporting documentation is as follows: Attachment A-Summary of Exhibits: 1. Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Constitution 2. Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Oath of Office 3. Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Council Procedures Ordinance 4. Is the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Office of the Secretary notice of change in payment method for the 2023 Single Audit report which was due September 30, 2024, describing sanctions. 5. Is witnesses: Angela Rabb, CFO; Tammy Burmeister, Tribal Council Speaker and Pam Johnson, Tribal Council Recorder. IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this Resolution, the Tribal

Council directs the Recorder to provide Notice of the date, time, and place of a Public Meeting of the Tribal Council for Consideration of the Removal of Larry B. Romanelli, as Tribal Ogema. In addition, the Notice shall also include the list of charges that are the basis of the Public Meeting to consider removal. Certificate of Adoption I do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly presented and adopted by the Tribal Council with 6 FOR, 1 AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINING, and 1 ABSENT, at a Regular Session of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Council held on December 4, 2024, at the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Government Center and via ZOOM, with a quorum being present for such vote. Recorder Johnson signed this resolution, and I also signed it. And it was distributed to the Tribal Council, Tribal Ogema, and Election Board. Thank you. Wow, I need a drink for that. Okay, we will move down on the agenda. We are under General Business

C. Roll Call

Recorder Johnson, can you please do roll call

Recorder Johnson:

T. Burmeister - Present	G. DiPiazza - Present	M. Silvis - Present
R. Wittenberg - Present	J. Wolfe - Present	A. Metzger - Present
S. Crampton- Present	P. Johnson - Present	S. Wever- Present

We do have quorum.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Moving down on the agenda to

III. Recusal of a Tribal Council Member

Will there be any Tribal Council Members that are going to abstain from this agenda? Are there any Councilors that have a um conflict with the item being brought forward today? Okay, with no conflict, we are moving down to

IV. Consideration of the Removal of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema

A. Presentation of Allegations and Supporting Documentation

Um, charge number one is gross misconduct and malfeasance in office by the failure to timely submit the LRBOI single audit to the United States or to the United States Department of Interior as required according to the Constitution, Article V, Section 5A2, um to oversee the administration and management of the Tribal government in accordance with the laws, resolutions, and motions adopted by Tribal Council. Article V, Section 5A8 of the Constitution to manage the economic affairs, enterprises, property, both real and personal, and other interests of the tribe consistent with ordinances and resolutions enacted by Tribal Council. I will begin by reading my as to how this how we were informed and so I will just read it for the record. I was approached by an individual that had concerns about the 2023 audit not being submitted on time that the Tribe would be facing sanctions, and they thought a letter was mailed to the tribe. I listened to that person's expressed their concern and I told them I would have to check into this. I wasn't sure if this was true or a rumor. I knew that I needed to confirm this if it was true or not. It was at that point that I reached out to Sharee Freeman, Director of the Office of Self-Governance, Office of the Secretary of the United States Department of Interior. She confirmed that a letter had gone out to Larry Romanelli, Tribal Ogema, Angela Rabb, CFO, and Jay Sam, Self-Governance Coordinator. I asked her if she could send me a copy of that letter and she did. Once I received a copy of that letter dated October 30,

2024, I informed the Tribal Council. So, kind of just to give an overview of what that letter um stated is it started out with the notice of change in payment method from the Department of Interior under the requirements of Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 2, Part 200 to CFR 200. The tribe is required to file that their single audit report with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse within nine months of the end of its fiscal year. According to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse and the Division of Internal Evaluation Assessment, the tribe hasn't submitted its single audit report for fiscal year 2023, which was due September 30, 2024. The severity of not filing the 2023 single audit report by the due date is the effect and the effect this could have on current and future federal funding of grants. Some examples of what could happen is temporary withholding of cash payments, pending correction of the deficiencies, disallow all or part of the cost of activity or action not in compliance, wholly or partly suspend or terminate the federal awards, withhold further federal awards for the projection or program, or excuse me, for the project or program, initiate suspension or debarment proceedings. At this time, the Tribe hasn't been informed by OSG of what imposed sanctions will be during fiscal year 2025. So, the evidence I am submitting is the letter from the Department of Interior um and that is being submitted into evidence. So next, I would like to present a witness, um Angela Rabb, if you could come to the podium and I will swear you in. Thought I saw her. Okay. *Swearing Angela Rabb in.* I'll just go down the questions that we have identified. So, question number one, when does the audit begin and who sets the schedule of timelines for the audit?

Angela Rabb: For the 2023 audit?

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, please

Angela Rabb: Began on April 29th. Uh, and ran for two weeks. Uh, the auditors were on site here for two weeks. And I set that schedule with the auditors.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Okay um. Next, could you explain the audit process in detail so that everybody here kind of knows what was acted with that audit? Thank you.

Angela Rabb: Uh, as I just said, first we set the uh schedule with the auditors. Um so, we try and do that in December of the year that's being audited. Um for this government, we do take, or we do make payments on invoices that were for the year of audit until February 28th of next year. And we charge those back to the year of the audit's budget. Uh, after February 28th, we cut those invoices off. So, any invoices received after that date for the prior year are charged to the current year's budget. Uh, we go through our general ledger and reconcile the balance sheet accounts, go through the expenses and revenues, make sure that everything posted correctly throughout the year. Um, obviously, we do that throughout the year as we go, but we also double check that at the end of the year. Uh, the auditors want a lot of schedules um for different accounts. So, we use Excel spreadsheets, run reports off the general ledger and um provide them with the schedules that they request in the way that they requested so that they can do their audit testing. Excuse me. We send the auditors a preliminary trial balance so they can look that over and decide what they're going to test during their audit. Uh, the auditors pull

samples from the accounts payable, cash receipts, payroll um and other transactions, uh manual journal entries that we have throughout the year being audited. So, we have to pull those samples and give those to the auditors so they can look at those, make sure that we have uh followed our own purchasing policy and that we have obtained the um appropriate approvals, etc....etc... Um that's about it. Uh, they do our financial statements. We get a draft of those. We um we go through the financial statements, compare them against our trial balance, make sure everything is correct and send those, send any uh changes we need back to them. They make them. Um, they prepare final financial statements, and we present, or the auditors present those to tribal council and those are accepted at the Tribal Council meeting.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Um Angela, as a part of that, what kind of time frame do we usually go by in doing all that?

Angela Rabb: Uh, the field work is two weeks usually. Uh, after that we do have additional items that the auditors might request that we have to provide. They have questions. Um, they prepare financial statements and those need to be submitted to the federal clearinghouse by September 30th of the following year. Is that what you were looking for?

Speaker Burmeister: Yes.

Angela Rabb: Okay

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Um, next question. What Accounting positions play a role in the completion of the audit?

Angela Rabb: Uh, every single one we have. Um.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay

Angela Rabb: Purchasing, they're asked questions about Pos, contracts. Uh, putting things out to bid. Need be getting quotes if need be. Um, purchasing policy in general. Uh, the AP Clerks pull samples. Um, we can get requests from anywhere from, well since I've been here, 25 to 80 samples of accounts payable. Uh, Payroll, again, they're pulling samples. Uh, they're pulling PAFs, which are the forms that we do changes for personnel on. Um, Staff Accountants pull cash receipts. Again, we've had anywhere between 25 and 80 samples requested. Uh, Staff Accountants pull ja... ja... hello journal entries for sampling. Uh, the Staff Accountants make changes to the general ledger. They do schedules for audit. Uh, the Controller does journal entries, does schedules for audit, make sure that the staff are working on the audit tasks that they need to be working on. Uh, the Controller deals with the auditors usually with questions or providing more information. Um... did I miss anybody. The Grant Administrator um provides grant information for the single audit and the CFO oversees all of that.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay. Thank you. When did you realize that the audit wasn't going to be completed and submitted by the deadline of September 30th, 2024? And who did you notify, um inform of that this wasn't going to be completed on time?

Angela Rabb: Uh, that was around the beginning of September. Um, the auditor notified me that there was not going to be time for their firm to um prepare financial statements for us to check them and get them back to them for them to perform their quality controls within their firm and to provide financial statements in order to file those with the Federal Clearinghouse.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. And could you explain why the audit wasn't completed in a timely manner?

Angela Rabb: Uh, January, the end of January, beginning of February of this year, uh, two AP Clerks and the Controller uh resigned. One of those persons retired. The other two found other positions. In May of 2024, the two Staff Accountants left employment. One retired. The other found another position. Uh, that left me as the only accountant and the only person available to do accounts payable. Um, accounts payable has to be done. Our vendors have to be paid. So, I took on that role. Um, that is a very time-consuming uh activity in the Accounting department. There are a lot of invoices that need to be processed, a lot of POs and receiving documents that need to be matched to those invoices. Um, so also, I took on all of the general ledger activities. And that involves a lot of journal entries, a lot of um review of bank req or not bank req, bank statements so that I can find uh the different deposits from federal wording agencies. Um, when the Staff Accountants left, one of those people also did cash receipting. And we have a lot of cash receipts for rent, water, um fines, and child support through the court. The police has cash receipts for fingerprinting. Uh, there's a lot of cash receipts here, so that is also a time-consuming task. So, um, I am one person, and I attempted to prioritize and made the general ledger the priority um because we have a lot of grants. We have a lot of staff people here um that rely on information in order to adequately um administer those grants and we need to close those grants out. Um, a lot of them expire September 30th, December 31st, March 31st. So given that, I had to uh make that a priority, as well as um renewing the tribe's various insurance policies. Uh, we need to fill out commissions every year, provide information regarding properties we own, um for workers comp, how much we pay in payroll. Um, all of those items take time to compile, and so that needed to be a priority as well. Um the audit obviously is a priority, and I also worked on that, um but as I said, I'm only one person trying to do the job of five people so.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Um, did you notify within your supervisor of like the status? Did you keep um anyone abreast of what was happening and what the type of outcome could happen because of this?

Angela Rabb: Yes, I did. Um, I did notify uh the tribal manager, the Ogema. We did uh converse about this several times. Um, I didn't know that the auditors were not going to be able to get their part of it done until what I feel is a little later in the game, but um

throughout this... this uh time period, I did keep them notified about what was going on in the department, where we were.

Interruption on the zoom not sure by who.

Speaker Burmeister: Sorry about that. No.

Angela Rabb: Not my other voices. Um, I did keep them notified, yes.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay

Angela Rabb: Um, they're short-staffed, and uh I had some concerns about where things were, the status of different things so, and they also did so.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you. Um, what items are left to complete for the audit?

Angela Rabb: Um, you know I... I have a couple documents I need to provide, and I think that's it, but unfortunately, lately, I've been finding out that that's not it. You know they come at me with different things, and for example, the water and sewer receivable and revenues, which during my 30 plus years of experience, that's a pretty basic audit um area. They're still working on that, and as of last week, I was still sending them documents regarding the water and sewer. Um, I feel like that's it. The SEFA is done. Um, we're reviewing that downstairs right now, and I should be able to get that to them today, and that has reconciled, and I feel like that should be it, but I'm not... I'm not going to say that with any certainty because they've been throwing surprises at me lately so.

Speaker Burmeister: Alright, thank you. Could you explain the federal funding that we receive, um that the Tribe receives, and what kind of impact this could have on the audit not being submitted and on time?

Angela Rabb: Uh, specifically, which federal funding the BIA or?

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah, like just give an overview of the federal funding that the Tribe receives.

Angela Rabb: Okay, uh the federal funding we receive is from a myriad of different federal awarding agencies. We receive funding through the uh EPA for Clean Air. Um we receive funding from USDA for the Food Distribution Center, uh the Department of Justice for different um victim assistance grants, domestic violence or violence against women victims, uh, the Bureau of Indian Affairs. That's the self-governance money that the Tribe receives for public safety, education, family services, um, natural resources. Uh, we also receive money to bolster our efforts for the Great Lakes Enforcement and uh research the NRD does. We receive money from um Health and Human Services for the health clinic and um behavior health. Uh, we receive money to assist Tribal Members with their utilities, um various assistance programs like that. Uh, with the audit being

filed in uh with the Clearinghouse late, um the BIA has sent us a letter saying we may have reduced payments, or they may defer payments. Um, they have said that we can appeal that, and the last I heard we wanted to wait to appeal until we had our financial statements filed with the Clearinghouse. I don't have an update on that decision, um but the federal the other federal agencies may um decide that they want us to do more reporting, or they may decide to defer payments or somewhere along the similar lines of what the BIA is saying.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Are you referencing when you said the letter, is that the letter that. The original letter that was received by the tribe on October 30th?

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you. Okay, um that is all the questions that I have. Ogema Romanelli, do you wish to ask Angela questions?

Ogema Romanelli: Yes, I do. Good morning, Angela. How are you?

Angela Rabb: I'm fine, thank you.

Ogema Romanelli: Good, thank you. I do have a few questions. Has there ever been a time when we've attempted to hide the information and what was going on within the audit this year uh from the Tribal Council?

Angela Rabb: Not that I know of.

Ogema Romanelli: Have we been in constant contact with the auditors and you with Ogema, Ogema with you and the Tribal Manager, and emails going back and forth to the Tribal Council?

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Thanks. You mentioned the uh loss of five, I believe it was, five employees out of your department. How many department employees do you normally have approximately?

Angela Rabb: 13.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, so a good 30-35 percent of your staff was gone. Are we now in a deeper audit, a high-risk audit?

Angela Rabb: Yes, from what I understand.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure. That didn't just happen within the last few months, did it?

Angela Rabb: I don't believe so.

Ogema Romanelli: No. Okay. Also, uh it is common to have, are you the first one, the first CFO to get behind on your financial reports that you're aware of? I'm sorry, I'm asking in that fashion.

Angela Rabb: I'm not the first CFO.

Ogema Romanelli: Right, because it's been stated that, uh and we all know that I've been in office for about 18 years, 15 years of those 18 years we've had a clean audit with no findings, and then several years ago things started to change. Uh, what we had was uh minutes were being late, and I believe there are still uh at least going back three years, minutes missing from each year. Is that correct?

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, and that started about 2021. We've had changes with the uh officials of the Tribal Council over those years, and I think the last time when all the minutes uh were put in properly was back when I think Ron Pete was the Speaker, which was back in 2021, something like that. So, I'm going to read something here uh because I know that on Facebook and other uh discussions it's been stated that the problem started when you got here as a CFO and that we've never been uh behind in our filings or our even our uh monthly financials to the Tribal Council. So, this goes back to uh 6-23-2021. It's from the CFO at the time, Steve Wheeler, to Larry Romanelli, and actually at the bottom here it's from me to Steve. I said, Steve, what is the status of the monthly financial reports? We are getting hammered from the Tribal Council meeting again. Thank you. Steve wrote, Larry, the monthly financial, sorry, reports are behind due to the following. One, typically we do get behind early in the first half of the year due to annual audit preparation, audit field work. This is true again this year as the 2020 audit is higher priority to prepare for and takes precedence over the production of monthly interim financial statements. The annual audit is higher priority because there are multiple funding sources tied to the timely and accurate completion and filing of this report. Preparation of the annual insurance renewal also takes place during this month of April through June along with the annual audit. This is a labor-intensive task and there are multiple forms and schedules to complete. This was completed by me. Number three, we had no Controller as of March 31st, 2021. Our former Controller was integral in the completion of the audit preparation, audit field work, insurance renewal, and the production of monthly financial reports. As you are aware, an employment contract to retain our former Controller was voted down by Tribal Council. Number four, MIP Accounting software cloud conversation from the internal servers took place on the first quarter of 2021. This also took considerable time, and we are still working through a couple issues that the conversation caused in our general ledger. Number five, CARES Act reporting. Due to the Tribe receiving this funding, there are important reporting timelines to meet and remain in compliance. We have met those reporting timelines and reporting was completed by me. Number six, ARPA funds request submission was completed by me. It took considerable time in setting up secure access to the Department of Treasury system and completing the request. The Accounting Department is working

on preparing and submitting the monthly financial reports at this time. I don't like being behind on those, but we have to prioritize our work products based on the overall big picture impacting the tribe. In there, you understand that he was behind on his financial monthly reports. You also understand that he lost his Comptroller. He lost one person. You lost your Comptroller, you lost two AP Clerks, and a couple others, grants, and one other position. So, while I prefer to talk today, by the way, I apologize. I don't think that I want to turn my back on the membership because it's you who vote us in. So, if you'll please pardon my direction. So, he was behind with one person gone, and I think it was a matter of two, three months. You've been months and months without staff. Now you and I know some of the background on the staff and why they left. Again, a couple retired, but it put us in a bind. On did anything else major happen that put you even more behind. And I'll just, I won't ask you, I will kind of explain it. In June 26, on June 26, I think the Tribal Council held a meeting where they were going to put out a general welfare check to everyone. Did that have a significant impact on you and other departments?

Angela Rabb: Yes, it had an impact on my department, Members Assistance, and the Enrollment department. Those are the three departments um that work on those type of payments.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure. And primarily, from my understanding, it was the Accounting department that got hit the hardest because you were understaffed, and you're in charge of putting out the checks. In putting out the checks, you have to make sure that the information is correct, that the amounts are correct, and goes through the whole process. On that June 26 meeting, uh, I informed the Tribal Council, do you have, I've asked for the either the meeting minutes and the video of that meeting. Does Tribal Council have that available? I'm asking of the Speaker.

Speaker Burmeister: Councilor, or excuse me, Ogema Romanelli, questions are directed at Angela.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay.

Speaker Burmeister: At this point.

Ogema Romanelli: From my understanding, and I thank you, is that if anyone looks on the website, you will not find the minutes nor the video of that very important meeting. We were giving away \$14 million at that time. It was also put out differently than per cap and some of the payroll, which we also had at the time was we had payroll going out that week. We also had per cap because that was due on July 1st. We had an audit going on, and I informed the Tribal Council, unfortunately we don't have minutes or video recording. I informed, and there were approximately 100 people on the call. I informed the Tribal Council that I understood that they were going to be putting a check forward, and I cautioned them very much so that it could be very much delayed because of things that were going on. And I cautioned them, please be careful because once you put that out, that money is going out, the membership just overwhelms our staff because

they want to know when it is, where it is, how they're going to get there, etc. Did that not happen to the departments?

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Yeah, and almost immediately of the day, once it was passed, we started getting a lot of phone calls, okay, which further slowed things down. I also mentioned that there are meeting minutes missing. I have something here that says the meeting minutes are the official record of the Tribe. For purposes of official tribal action, only formally approved Tribal Council minutes shall be reused to prove the truth of the matter asserted and, or to resolve the evidentiary issue in question. The reason that the minutes are important is because our auditors ask for the minutes. They've been asking for the minutes.

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli, can you direct questions just to Angela for right now, and then you can make the statement after you have done questioned her.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay.

Speaker Burmeister: Please.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure. Okay, so have the auditors been asking for the minutes to be updated?

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, for this year or for past years as well?

Angela Rabb: Uh, since 20, the audit for 2021.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, thank you.

Angela Rabb: Audit for 2022 and this audit, yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, and to your knowledge, are all the, well, I think you've answered it, that the minutes are not up to date for 2024 for sure, and for 2023, and for 2021.

Angela Rabb: And 2022.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, thank you.

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: And those are important to the auditors. They've been requesting them multiple times. Uh, have...Did they give an exception to try and get the audit done, and

did you work with them where they gave, they were able to give a summary in without giving the minutes because they needed them to complete the audit, and while the minutes weren't forthcoming, they asked if you could help get, and the Council could help get a summary. Is that correct?

Angela Rabb: uh yes, that happened for the 2022 audit, so those summaries were provided, and that has happened for the 2023 audit as well.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure, and we know that the minutes are the official record, so they said, well, they could provide the summary to help get the audit done. They still need the minutes. Is that correct?

Angela Rabb: That's correct.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay.

Angela Rabb: Because if the Tribe has a policy, or a law, or regulation, or whatever you want to call it, the auditors, part of the auditor's job is to make sure that we're following our own policies, laws, regulations, etc.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, I think that's it for now. Uh that isn't the end of my response to the first charge, is just to respond to her.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you, Angela.

Angela Rabb: Am I all done?

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, you're, you are done. Thanks. Yep, and Angela, we will have you for future, but that's all for charge one. Thank you. Alright, we are moving down to um public comment on this charge. Oh, I thought it was, okay, Ogema Romanelli sorry about that. If you can, I've just, yes, where are you in?

Ogema Romanelli: I wanted to answer, I was just asking your witness.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay

Ogema Romanelli: But I wanted to answer the charges.

Speaker Burmeister: Go right, go right ahead. The floor is yours.

B. Response of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema to Allegations

Ogema Romanelli: Uh, the charges are gross misconduct malfeasance. I don't have a lot of notes. I have notes, not all in order. I don't believe that, and the Constitution calls for malfeasance. Malfeasance involves, uh to my understanding, gross uh misconduct of sorts, and the intent to not do your job. I believe that it's very clear there was no intention not to do our job, that we were in a position whereas we were understaffed, overworked, and other people play a part of the audit not being done. So, I don't think it rises at all to malfeasance. There's also what's called misfeasance. It doesn't rise to misfeasance, and it doesn't rise to nonfeasance. There each one is lesser. The nonfeasance basically says that something wrong happened, but there was no intent, and it's a mistake within your job. Uh, that happened, but it doesn't even rise to misfeasance because we know the reasoning why this why we are in this position, and I also believe that what I just explained and what Angela just explained, this doesn't fall just on the Accounting department. As you know, I uh came forward. Now, the uh letter that came from the uh the Department of Interior uh came to the Ogema. There was no attempt to hide that letter. It came out on Facebook, and the speaker didn't identify who she heard it from. It was addressed to the Ogema properly. The Ogema had to look at it, and we also are given the option to appeal. So, we met very clearly with the CFO, with the Tribal Manager, and we decided what we needed to do. In the process, it was leaked out to the Tribal Members through Facebook. We were trying to figure out what our next step is if we have the option of appealing, which we do through January, I believe, 28th. So, there was no attempt to hide. There was no... no malfeasance at all. Uh there was no misfeasance. There was no nonfeasance. There was a problem that was begun through those different acts that we just heard about. We talk about malfeasance, and I won't go through the whole list, uh but what was read was that the Ogema takes an oath of office. We all take that oath of office to protect the tribe, to protect the Constitution, to swear to uphold the laws and regulations of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, and to main respect in honor of the tribal office of the Ogema in my case and place the concerns of the tribe before personal considerations. We all sign that. If we take a look a violation of the Constitution, which is what was stated here that I violated the Constitution, the Tribal Council has violated the Constitution on numerous occasions. I can take one long court record that shows that the Tribal Council violated most of it.

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli, your kind of getting off track here, um because the charge is to...

Ogema Romanelli: Right.

Speaker Burmeister: So...

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. I'm just.

Speaker Burmeister: We're not in trial here.

Ogema Romanelli: Well, you might have to be, because I'm not so sure that I'm...

Speaker Burmeister: Not today.

Ogema Romanelli: Pardon me?

Speaker Burmeister: Not today, we're not on trial.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. Well, I have a right to defend myself, and if you're charging me with a problem in removal because I didn't follow the Constitution and I violated the Constitution, I'm here to say that Tribal Council has multiple times violated the Constitution. In court records, I'm a record violation of the... Well, let's just go through here a bit. Violation...

Speaker Burmeister: There's a procedure.

Ogema Romanelli: Of the Unified Legal Department uh actions, you violated the Administrative Procedures Act, and you violated the Constitution...

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli.

Ogema Romanelli: Yes.

Speaker Burmeister: excuse me.

Ogema Romanelli: That has a reason to do this, because if you violated the Administrative Procedures Act, that has everything to do with this.

Speaker Burmeister: But that's a process that has to go through the courts.

Ogema Romanelli: It already went through the court, that's how they found that you were in violation. Okay. Well, again, I don't think malfeasance happened. I don't think gross misconduct happened, and I'm not sure where you want to let me go or not go. I look at the Constitution, and again, we talk about the minutes of all Tribal Council meetings make such reports available to the membership of the Tribe. Now, that's under the recorder, okay? And we know that minutes are missing. I'm here to tell you that you are upset because we are six months... six months behind on our financial reports. And I believe that you have 69 sets of minutes that are missing going back to 2021. I won't read every one of them. 69 minutes. Now, we look at the Recorder and the Speaker here, and do they have some ability to not bring those forward? Yes. But I'm here to also tell you that that started back in 21, when we had different Recorders and Speakers. And I talked about uh Ron Pete being there, and then after that, the minutes started uh coming up missing. We had a Speaker, Shannon Crampton, and a Recorder, Julie Wolfe, going back to 2021. Throughout that time, we also had Speaker, Ryan Champagne, and Recorder, Julie Wolfe. That's going in 2021. Then in February of 2022, Julie Wolfe and Pam Johnson. And then we had...

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli? Yeah, just-

Ogema Romanelli: What is the point of order?

Speaker Burmeister: Well, um you're talking about the minutes, but actually the charge has to do- um the failure to submit the LRBOI single audit to the US Department of Interior. So, we're kind of getting off on um accusations regarding the minutes, when it needs to stick to what that audit letter stated.

Ogema Romanelli: Yes, and the audit letter stated that we are behind on our audit. So then if we go to 2024 uh and 2023, which we're doing in 20- In 2024, we do the audit for the 2023. You have to go through a full year, and that's what happens. So, then I'll jump forward to 2023. And my understanding is there are very few minutes done. And again, we're talking about Tammy Burmeister as a Speaker during this whole year and Pam Johnson. So, I'll leave it at that for now. I think that very clearly, I don't think- I don't see malfeasance. I don't see the attempt to hide anything as stated by our CFO. And I don't believe there's just a want on disregard for the Constitution. I take my Constitution very seriously. I take my job very seriously. I think that we are elected by the people, and I don't mind speaking in front of the people. I can also tell you that during this process, I attempted to contact the Tribal Council and sent emails, and I never received an email back from- on this situation from our Speaker. I sent the email to our Speaker, and I never got a response. And I think that's highly concerning. I also called for a meeting to explain to the membership a couple of weeks ago to say, why are we here? I presented documents. I invited the Tribal Council. Three Councilors showed up. Six did not. The three Councilors that showed up was Misty Silvis, Gary DiPiazza, and Shirley Wever. Yeah, sorry. You're right there.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay. Ogema Romanelli, what does that have to do with the audit?

Ogema Romanelli: That has to do with-

Speaker Burmeister: With the meeting.

Ogema Romanelli: The fact that you said that I was not producing information and that I'm grossly mis uh grossly misconduct. I am not grossly misconduct. I'm trying to speak with the membership. I'm trying to give them the information. I also held emergency meetings, and the council could not even get a quorum to do the emergency meetings. Emergency meetings are called on behalf of the tribe to protect its assets, and it's in the Constitution that the Ogema can call an emergency meeting, and there have been multiple emergency meetings that we couldn't get a quorum from the Council, so I'll leave it with that. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. So, we are moving down to public comment. I just want to remind everybody that you'll be given five minutes, and um we have to stick to the topic, so if anybody would like to comment, or they may. Um, go ahead. If you want to line up, it'd be easier, and if you are a Tribal Citizen, if you could state your name and your Tribal ID. If you are not a Tribal Citizen, just list your name. Thank you. Yeah,

we're going to go in person first and then Zoom, so just so everybody knows. Go ahead, please.

C. Public Comment (Followers Response to Each Charge) charge 1

Ken Metzger: My name is Ken Metzger. Um, number's 889. Um, there should be no questions on the meetings. This day and age, we got cameras, videos. Uh, and it's been going on since 2021. There should be no, uh should have been resolved a long time ago. We shouldn't have went this far. That's all I got to say, and I've known for the last four years, there's a lot of stuff that's been going on, and got to resolve it, but Aho Miigwech

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, just a reminder, everybody, you have to respond to charge one. You can't just give your public comment. You have to stick to the topic, so go ahead, Sam.

Samantha Holley: Uh, Samantha Holley, 3989. Um so, when you talk about maleficence of office, so saying that he hasn't submitted a re uh an audit report, but yet if he needs all information to submit this audit, how many times has he been locked out of Tribal Council meetings because he has not been allowed to be at the meeting? That is my comment. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Are there any?

Israel Stone: Israel Stone, 1735. These times are difficult times for the tribe to go through. Uh, I went through two of these processes while I was in office as Tribal Council Member. You guys are experiencing your first uh time at this. One of the things I want to say is that this is an opportunity to do fact-finding and provide facts to not only yourselves as the Council Members that are responsible for ultimately holding uh this hearing, but also to inform the membership. But when I say it's a fact-finding process, it truly is that. It's to find out what the facts are, black and white. It's not opinions. It's not personal feelings. It's what does it come down to? What's at the heart of the issue here? And as you guys weigh these facts and measure these things, I can assure you it's going to be one of the most difficult decisions you ever have to make in your time in office. Because you have two parts of the same eagle, right? Two wings on the same bird. And ultimately, one is deciding the fate of the other. It's challenging to be on the outside and listen to the way uh this process works because without truly knowing all the details, and I don't think citizens do know all the details, it's hard to form opinion uh that's fact-based. That being said, one of the things I want to say to you in this process is reserve dignity. Reserve dignity for yourselves and the man that's sitting over there that served in this office for 16 years. That's not me supporting one side or the other. What I'm saying is this can be done in a respectful manner where we get to the heart of the issue and find out what the facts are. Regardless of where you line up on this issue, there are families on both sides of this or on all sides of this. There are supporters on all sides of this. This can be an opportunity for our tribe to heal and find some unity and help us find a path forward. This can also be a hurdle for us that causes dissension, disruption, and divisiveness. What I would encourage you to do, no matter what, above all things, is

search your heart going through this process. Weigh the facts and make your decision based upon facts, not opinions or not personal feelings. That's all I have for you guys today. I don't envy you. This is a difficult time for all of you, Ogema, Council, it's a difficult time for the Tribe. I think I've seen our Tribal Citizens um at this point uh levying their opinions on one another, and it's a ripple effect. This is rippling all across our nation, all across our tribe, and our people are divided. And that's been happening for quite a while, but that division is what's holding us back. At one time, this tribe was looked to as the leader in Indian country in Michigan. Everybody followed our lead. Remember the Universal Conservation Code and all those things that we did that were incredible, unheard-of things. Um now, I think people are looking at us in a different light, and it's not a very positive one. It's time to restore this Tribe to its former glory. It's time to restore this tribe to who we are as the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. It's time for us to move forward. Whatever fashion you guys decide as the elected body to do that in, that's your decision to make. But I would ask, do it in a dignified way so that we can get through the process and understand the facts of the circumstances. Miigwech, Aho.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Okay, go ahead, Michelle.

Michelle Gibbs: Michelle Gibbs, 1252. Uh, my first question. Um so, are we in sanctions or are we not? Let's get that cleared up because I'm hearing that maybe this could happen, maybe this could happen, and it's not a definite answer. So, what is the answer?

Speaker Burmeister: We are. We did receive a letter from the Department of Interior.

Michelle Gibbs: Meaning? So, what does the letter say? I heard maybe this is gonna happen. Maybe that's going to happen

Speaker Burmeister: I can read the letter. That way it's on record and everybody can hear who hasn't. Go ahead, Councilor Crampton. Oh.

Michelle Gibbs: Yeah, I mean, we're not even at that full process. We have till, what, January 29th? So, you don't even know.

Speaker Burmeister: No, no. Actually, um you can stay, but we're not actually answering questions because just state your facts.

Michelle Gibbs: So, my feeling, my fact, I don't have all the information based on this. I don't. So, to make a decision, I don't know what to tell you guys. I think that us as members need the facts and if you're not gonna answer any questions, I think that's terrible. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, just for the record, I will read the letter that we that was received by the honorable, actually went to the... Yeah, but not everybody heard it either though. I just wanna also state that we did receive a letter stating that we um we are going to be, or that we are in sanctions. We just don't know at this point the severity of those

sanctions. Um, they won't happen till 2025. And since we received a letter stating that, I'm sure there's gonna be follow-up letters that will come regarding that. So, we just don't know what those sanctions are. But I will read the letter. I had already read this one time at a Council meeting, um but I know a lot of you um weren't here for that. So, I will reread that letter and just so that it's for the record and so everybody can hear today what it says. Okay. Um, The Honorable Larry Romanelli, Tribal Ogema, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. 2608 Government Center Drive Manistee, Michigan 49660. Dear Tribal Ogema Romanelli: By a letter dated June 24, 2024, and signed by the Director, Office of Self Governance (OSG), you were notified that OSG intended to impose sanctions during fiscal year 2025 on Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations, which have failed to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements for annual submission of Single Audit Reports. Under the requirements of Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter II, Part 200 (2 CFR 200), recipients are required to file their Single Audit Reports with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse within 9 months of the end of its fiscal year. According to the records of the Federal Audit Clearinghouse and the Division of Internal Evaluation and Assessment, your Tribe has not submitted its Single Audit Report for fiscal year 2023, which was due September 30, 2024. The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act contains the following requirement: For each fiscal year during which an Indian tribal organization receives or expends funds pursuant to a contract entered into, or grant made, under this subchapter, the tribal organization that requested such contract or grant shall submit to the appropriate Secretary a single-agency [sic] audit report required by chapter 75 of Title 31. [Title 25 U.S.C. 5305) This action is taken pursuant to the authority contained in the Single Audit Act and the implementing guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget through 2 CFR 200.505 which provides: In cases of continued inability or unwillingness to have an audit conducted in accordance with this part, Federal agencies and pass-through entities shall take appropriate action using sanctions such as: a) Temporarily withhold cash payments pending correction of the deficiency by the non-Federal entity or more severe enforcement action by the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity. 2 CFR 200.505 provides: In cases of continued inability or unwillingness to have an audit conducted in accordance with this part, Federal agencies and pass-Through entities must take appropriate action as provided in section 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance. 2 CFR 200.339 provides: a) Temporarily withhold cash payments pending correction of the deficiency by the non-Federal entity or more severe enforcement action by the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity. b) Disallow (that is, deny both use of funds and any applicable matching credit for) all or part of the cost of the activity or action not in compliance. c) Wholly or partly suspend or terminate the Federal award. d) Initiate suspension or debarment proceedings as authorized under 2 CFR part I 80 and Federal awarding agency regulations (or in the case of a pass-through entity, recommend such a proceeding be initiated by a federal awarding agency). e) Withhold further Federal awards for the project or program. f) Take other remedies that may be legally available. Single audit reports are to be sent by email to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse and Division of Internal Evaluation and Assessment, which can be contacted at the following addresses: And then they list the addresses. And then there's an appeal notice. And then there's an appeal notice. This is a final decision of the awarding official. You may appeal this decision to the Civilian Board of Contract Appeals, 1800 M Street, Northwest, 6th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20036, the Civilian

Board of Contract Appeals, CBCA is the authorized representative of the Secretary of Interior with jurisdiction to hear and determine appeals relating to contracts or grants made by any Bureau of Office of the Department of the Interior. If you decide to appeal, you must mail or otherwise furnish a written notice of appeal to the CBCA within 90 days of receipt of this decision and provide a copy to the awarding official from whose decision the appeal is taken. The notice of appeal must indicate that an appeal is intended, reference this decision, and identify the contract number. If you appeal to the CBCA, you may solely at your election proceed under the board's small claims procedure for claims of \$50,000 or less or its accelerated procedure for claims of \$100,000 or less. Instead of appealing to the CBCA, you may bring in action directly in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims within 12 months of the date you received this decision pursuant to Section 110 of the ISDEAA 25 U.S.C. 5331 and Contract Disputes Act 41 U.S.C. 601. Questions may be directed to the OSG Financial Specialist, Cheryl Barnaby, and it gives her phone number and email address. And this letter was signed by Sharee M. Freeman, Director, Office of Self-Governance. Okay, so we have three people on Zoom. First, Dawn Moneyham. Go ahead, please.

Dawn Moneyham: Aanii Miigwech, Dawn Moneyham, 5088. Um, Ogema Romanelli offered some arguments here that I'd like to uh point out. He actually lied, and the proof for this is in his own videos. He posted three videos in the Ogema section of our website after this um audit information came out, and the letter was released. In the third video, at the end of it, he put on screen a list of emails between himself and Angela Rabb. In one of those emails, she expressed a desire and a willingness to help the Council to get the meeting minutes and everything that they needed caught up for the audit. She expressed the ability to help them, which is important here because it has been claimed that um the meeting minutes were the cause of the audit and not the Ogema's malfeasance and um negligence here. He specifically responded to her, advising her not to help them. And I don't remember the exact words he offered her, but it amounted to let them stew in their own mess. Um, that stood out for me, especially because he mentions that he's not guilty of gross misconduct and intent. Those emails by themselves prove intent. Um, he also brought up that the payments that were issued to our membership held up the process and further complicated things. And I would just like to point out for the record that other departments and our membership don't stop functioning because his job is behind. The Accounting jobs that are all vacant are the Ogema's responsibility to fill. If there is nobody in those jobs, then it is his responsibility to hire temporary workers to fill the jobs that are needed, especially for Accounting and our tribe's finances. And he neglected to do that. So gross misconduct and intent, I would say, are there as well as malfeasance. Miigwech.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Moving on. Um, there's no rebuttal back and forth. Um, we're hearing statements from Citizens.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Um, Staci Chaney, go ahead, please.

Staci Cheney: Thank you. Um, I just wanted to make a comment regarding um and thank Ms. Rabb for speaking before us today. And I think she made some really good points because she mentioned exactly how many departments and services will be impacted based off of our sanctions. And that's essentially our whole government. And this is very serious. And for the Ogema who oversees the Accounting department to accept... to expect the Citizens and the Tribal Council to expect us to let this fly by... by saying we're short-staffed, it's just not acceptable. We have leads and we have four leads, I believe, who all could have stepped up and helped out in that department, which they did for the GWE payment. But another thing that he brought up is he read an email from Steve Wheeler. And he read the email and Steve Wheeler said, the financials may be behind, but the single audit report takes precedent. And Steve Wheeler was correct. That takes precedent. When Ms. Rabb was speaking today and before us, she told us everything else that she was doing that she was putting ahead of the single audit report. The Ogema knew this and so did the tribal manager. That is not okay because now our whole entire tribe will suffer. That's gross misconduct. That's malfeasance because he was aware of it and it's not okay. So, by him providing those emails from Mr. Wheeler, that's exactly what should have taken place by the CFO, prioritizing the single audit report. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue is Chelsea Densmore. Go ahead, please.

Chelsea Densmore: Thank you, Chelsea Densmore, 3225. Um, I am super sick. So, if you can't hear me, please interrupt and say that. Um, the big thing that I want to point out when you're talking about malfeasance with the audit is the intent. It's knowing that something should have been done and not doing it. And one thing that I want to point out, for example, is our budget. When we have an issue with our budget um not being passed, there are many, many different meetings, um public and private meetings between legislative and executive sides to figure out how to resolve it, right? My issue is that through the audit process, there was a clear timeframe where it started to get where they realized that the audit is not going to be complete in time and it's obviously going to cause these massive issues, issues that affect our grants, issues that affect our departments and our ability to be caring for the Tribal Citizens that are depending on those programs, right? And in those moments when there was an opportunity to say, we need to bring everyone on board to figure out how to resolve this, that didn't happen. So that's a huge issue for me. And that's something that I really want to point out is that there was a moment I think um the CFO had mentioned that they knew by the beginning of September that it wasn't going to happen. Um that surprises me that there was not something from the company that you were using that said prior to 30 days before it was due and causing a potential issue that it's not going to happen. That seems unlikely to me. But even if that were true, why then were there not emergency meetings held in September? Why were there not work sessions called? Why did legislative and executive not work together, right? And that's because there was a clear disconnect with communication, right? And I don't know um where that disconnect came. I don't know how much the Ogema versus the CFO versus the um manager was or what happened. But at the end of the day, part of the Ogema's job is being responsible for that stuff, right? And there is a precedent that when this had happened before, there was a removal

of that Ogema. So, I think that's something that you guys really need to factor in. Um I also want to acknowledge that I think she had said that they didn't start the audit until April, which seems surprising to me if they normally don't start it until April and then it's due by the end of September. Um I don't know if that's policy, but that seems like probably too short of a timeframe, especially if the Ogema, as he said before, this was so much this was a more intense audit and how it was more scrutinized than before. If it was getting to be a bigger and bigger audit, you should be taking time and starting it earlier to make sure you have an adequate amount of time to be completing the audit. Um I also want to acknowledge that during a previous Tribal Council meeting, I think it was the CFO who, when she was describing the issue, she said there was a point that you know we wanted to keep it in-house and we were trying to do it, but we realized that we weren't going to get it done in time or we're still not going to get it done in time. And that's why they had to hire the company that they recently, but I think it was a few weeks ago or something. Um, even with this company, it's still, the financial audit is not going to be, the financial component of the audit, minutes aside, it's still not going to be completed until the end of January, right? Still four months after the deadline. So, to me, that shows a giant lack of preparation, of completing it and a clear communication on the executive side that this is continuing to happen and there's continuing to be an issue, but that not being expressed strongly enough to the membership, to the legislative side and to try and resolve it, right? I think you have a responsibility in that position to be making sure that this is getting done because it affects so many services for tribal citizens and so many of our programs and frankly, just our tribe as a whole. It's very embarrassing that we're in this position, right? And removing the Ogema is... is very embarrassing that we're in this position, right? Nobody's enjoying this. This is a really difficult moment for our Tribes. So, I think that you guys, you definitely need to be looking at the facts um and you need to be looking at the dates. Um the last comment that I wanted to add, I know that there has been a lot of conversation about minutes from Council and how the minutes have been late since 2021 and how that caused the audit to be um more scrutinized and that should be um factored in. If there's been a continuing issue since 2021 and it has gradually increased-

Speaker Burmeister: Chelsea, your time has expired.

Chelsea Densmore: Okay. I

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Thank you. Carol, you are next in the queue. Go ahead, please.

Carol Patton: Okay, thank you. Carol Patton, 3189. This is in response to the letter that you read from the Department of Interior. I was looking at some words in there when they talk about the sanctions and it says down at the bottom, second paragraph from the bottom, in cases of continued inability or willingness to complete the audit. I don't think that's what we have here. Um, Angela said that the audit is just about done and ready to submit. Now that's not a uh unwillingness to complete the audit. And then the last line in there, it says appropriate actions using sanctions, such as, that doesn't say that they're going to do all those. They're just giving examples. And that's my comment.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you. Um, Ron, I have you next in the queue.

Ron Pete: My name is Ron Pete I'm 4158. Uh, I know you're not gonna answer many questions because you're not the ones on trial here today. But because it is the official government report, the meeting minutes, when I was on Tribal Council, we had meeting minutes done and they were done in a timely fashion. Which one of you, which one, including um, the Speaker and Recorder, has gone to your secretary and said, where are these minutes? Please put them up to date so that the Ogema can have the minute. Why hasn't that been done? And I know I can't answer any questions because you're not on trial here today. But you know what? This is just a personal thing for Larry. I left here and I never looked back. And then if that's what happened to you today, leave these people to themselves. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue is Linda Andre. Go ahead, Linda. Linda, I have you next in the queue. Go ahead, please. We can't hear you, Linda. You're muted. We... we still can't hear you. Video off. Linda, we still can't hear you. Okay, she lowered her hand. Um we did have a couple people that had their hands. Oh, go ahead, Linda. We can hear you now.

Linda Andre: Oh, can you? Okay, good. Um, I, well, I know that this has to do with um Larry. And I know it has to do with the audit. But um Angela also pointed out that the minutes were um something that the auditor is asking for. And I just wonder why the minutes are not done and who is responsible for that. And um I think that the Council needs to take responsibility for their part. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you, Linda. Do you want to address that, Pam? Oh okay. Can you come up to the podium, please? So, we can all hear you. Thank you.

Mark Huddleston: My name is Mark Huddleston, 3230. My question is to the Ogema. You keep mentioning that there's missing minutes. As in, are they in a filing cabinet? Or have they been deleted? I mean, that's it.

Ogema Romanelli: Thank you. May I answer?

Speaker Burmeister: Um, actually, Recorder Johnson can better answer that than anybody. So, Recorder Johnson.

Recorder Johnson: Um, so as far as the minutes go, we are working on them. We've had uh staff shortages as well. Um, and we brought another person on to help with those. And due to the lengths of the way some of our council meetings have been, they are very lengthy. They are very time consuming. We do have one trying out a different uh system to see if that makes things a little better. Um, and Angela and I did talk about doing uh minutes in the beginning. And ideally, there was a plan uh to work on getting minutes done and hopefully get those caught up. It failed. Um, and from there, that was the end of the conversation. On this um we were starting to get them turned in. We got a couple

in. And May 1 got finished. October got work done. Um, honestly, I've done minutes myself. Um, and nothing was said for a few months about doing minutes. And until recently, it was it was fine to do summaries. So, every night, whether I'm sitting here or whether I am at home, I'm working to get these summaries kicked out, so they have them, which just removes all the conversation. It is just what was passed, what was failed, what was removed, or so on. So, to get them out, context of discussions and stuff of that nature has been, isn't being included where the minutes actually has those. So, we have been kicking them out. 23 summaries have been finished and have been turned into the group. And we're actually turning in, um working on 24, which we have turned in two months of summaries into the um auditors. Plus, any minutes that um we can get done, we're also still turning those in and as well. Just as an update. So, it's not that they're hidden. It's not anything else of the sort. It's just they haven't been done because as the Ogema side has, uh the executive side has been short-staffed. So have we, as far as that goes.

Speaker Burmeister: Michelle, you've already had your five minutes. So, we're only allowing five minutes for per Citizen. Um, Councilor Crampton, are you speaking as a Citizen or because we're not? Okay. Um next, I have someone else in the queue. Kimberly McClellan, go ahead, please.

Kimberly McClellan: Yes. Um, my question is that uh before Tammy had, uh somebody had told her about the uh sanction letter, how long had the Ogema's office had received that letter and not have let any of the Council know so that they could have had an emergency meeting prior to Tammy finding out? Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: No, we are not.

Councilor Wolfe: We can speak as Citizens. This is public comment.

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah, but you'd have to

Ogema Romanelli: Point of order

Speaker Burmeister: Can you do it from here or over? Okay, go ahead Councilor Crampton. I got you, Gary.

Councilor Crampton: Shannon Crampton, uh Tribal Council, 1747. Um, the minutes that are being thrown out here today is kind of a retrial of something that's a red herring. I'd like all the membership to understand it. The uh Constitution places the minutes as a duty. Now, the Tribal Council has gone even further, further meeting procedures ordinance, and it says 12.41 12, the council recorder shall be responsible for the minutes. This is something that we pay extra for the um recorder and the speaker to do. It's not responsibility of the Council, it's a responsibility of the recorder. So, this red herring that keeps getting thrown out, it's a red herring. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Councilor DiPiazza.

Councilor DiPiazza: No, I'm good. I just wanted it clarified if we could actually speak or not, so.

Speaker Burmeister: During public comment, you can.

Councilor DiPiazza: See, that was identified as a Councilor, so it's not a Citizen, I guess. Miigwech

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue, I have Delia. Go ahead, please. And then I have Ogema Romanelli.

Delia Ross: Delia Ross, 2446. Um, as we talk about these minutes over and over and over again, nobody seems to mention that we have had no financial reports since May, or the May one just came through. Maybe I heard in one of our meetings. Um, I don't understand why we're putting this all on the minutes. I think we need financial reports to do the audit as well. Um, we need to look at that and ask, why are there no financial reports? How are we going to put together an audit when we have neither apparently? That is my statement. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Ogema Romanelli, you are next in the queue. Go ahead.

Ogema Romanelli: Thank you. Uh, in regard to uh Ms. Ross' statement uh early on, I said that in addition to we did mention, I did mention that we're six months behind on our financial reports. I've taken the accountability, uh numerous meetings to say of my part of this problem. I also wanted to state that there was more, there were more problems with this, which includes the minutes. And when we talk about the minutes being caught, we define the difference between the summary of minutes and the minutes. So, while summaries are being done, the minutes are still not being done. Councilor Crampton talks about, it's the Recorder's position to do that. I said earlier that there were several Recorders over the years. It wasn't just uh on the Recorder that we have now. While you were Speaker, you had a Recorder that the minutes are missing or deleted or something. I think that's what the member uh mark was trying to talk about. But the minutes are not up to date going back to 2021. And I don't know if that was when you or others, but this is not the only Recorder that has not completed the minutes. This goes back. I think Councilor Wittenberg was a Recorder at one time. Councilor uh Wolfe was a Recorder at one time. And I think there are minutes missing from both those. I been I know that we have a couple of witnesses, and I believe uh the Speaker is called as a witness and Councilor Crampton is called as a witness. So, while we're finishing up this, if we are finishing it up, I'd like to call them as witnesses as well.

Speaker Burmeister: Sure. We have a couple of people with their hands up.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay.

Speaker Burmeister: So, if we'll go through those and then.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Okay um let's see. Arlene Becton. Go ahead, please. Arlene. Go ahead, please. We see your mic is off, but we can't hear you. We still can't hear you, Arlene. Okay she dropped off Pam. Next in the queue is Lee McCaslin. Go ahead, please.

Lee McCaslin: *Anishinaabemowin* Lee McCaslin, 0748. And uh I just wanted to uh listen in uh and the part about the statue uh in a single act. And that's what I wanted to uh remember in the letter. Those uh two words, statue in a single act. Miigwech.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Okay um when the Ogema gave his um response to allegation, it was at that time that witnesses, he should have called witnesses. Uh, and we went down to public comment. So that time has passed for uh charge number one. So, we will be moving to charge number two. Failure to abide by the oath of office and to perform the responsibilities and duties that go with the position. Um okay, so we, no sidebars, please. Okay, so we are down to charge two. And that has to do with the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, oath of office of the Tribal Ogema, Larry Little Thunder Romanelli. Um I, Larry Little River, or excuse me, Little Thunder Romanelli, swear to uphold and protect the constitution of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians and the constitution of the United States of America. I swear to uphold all laws and regulations of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians and the United States of America. I will maintain the respect and honor of the tribal Ogema office of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians and place the concerns of the tribe before personal consideration in matters that come before me. To the best of my ability, I will perform the responsibilities and duties that go with the position I hold. So, I affirm by all that I hold dear and sacred. Um, this was signed on May 22nd, 2019. So according to the oath of office of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians requires an individual hmmm elected to office to swear to A, uphold and protect the constitution of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, B, uphold all laws and regulations of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, C, is maintain the respect and honor of the Tribal Council of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, D, is place the concerns of the tribe before personal considerations in matters, E, is to perform the responsibility and duties that go with it, the position and affirm by all they hold dear and sacred. So, the evidence that is being submitted is Ogema Romanelli's oath of office. Um so, we are moving down to Ogema if you would like to answer these allegations and at this time also if name any witnesses.

B. Response of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema to Allegations

Ogema Romanelli: Sure, I'd like to ask uh you as a Speaker-

Speaker Burmeister: Mm hmmm

Ogema Romanelli: To be a witness and also Councilor Crampton to be a witness and uh I believe I may ask Bill Willis uh to be a witness as well. They were served by.

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli, who are you um going to do first? Okay

Ogema Romanelli: Could I ask you?

Speaker Burmeister: Sure.

Ogema Romanelli: Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Speaker. I appreciate you being a witness today. Oh okay.

Recorder Johnson: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, I do.

Ogema Romanelli: Thank you. I do appreciate this uh believe it or not, I do appreciate this hearing uh going forward again. It's been uh attempted several times, but I'm glad that the Council did vote to allow me to have the right to have my day in court. We've talked about several things today. I never insinuated that the uh financials weren't part of the problem. I've admitted to it. I know that it is prior part of the problem. As of Saturday, uh were you still submitting information that was needed for this audit from the Tribal Council?

Speaker Burmeister: Submitting information.

Ogema Romanelli: Right, needed for the to complete the audit that the Council uh actually it would be the Recorder submitted information, I believe on Saturday trying to catch up for information that's needed for this audit.

Speaker Burmeister: As far as audit goes with the minutes, yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Yes. Okay. So, it's not only the Ogema and the executive side that's behind causing this audit. It's also the Tribal Council. Is that correct?

Speaker Burmeister: Well, audit the minutes are required, but it's not the reason we received the sanction.

Ogema Romanelli: No. Well, it's part of it, I would say, because you have to have summaries, correct? I the auditors are asking for a summary of the minutes because you didn't have the minutes. They're asking for summaries, and you're still providing summaries for this year

Speaker Burmeister: Yes

Ogema Romanelli: For this audit.

Speaker Burmeister: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. So, then we both have a part of the audit being late, in my opinion, as you would understand. The other thing we have, sorry. Um, we talk about the minutes in the videos, and I think we've gone through that. We all understand that that is a problem. Along with the financial reports and audit being late. Uh, I've mentioned that I called an emergency, or excuse me, I have called emergency meetings that were unattended by the Tribal Council more than once. Are you you're aware of that, correct?

Speaker Burmeister: There were several times where we couldn't meet quorum.

Ogema Romanelli: Correct. And it's the Constitution calls for the Ogema to be able to call an emergency meeting, and normally it's to protect the Tribe. So, the fact that the Tribal Council couldn't even get it here is a problem that's not meeting the constitutional requirements. Is that correct? Is that how you would read it?

Speaker Burmeister: Um well, the I recall the last emergency meeting that you called, it was like an hour's notice.

Ogema Romanelli: Yes.

Speaker Burmeister: And Tribal Council had been here all day, and we have attended work sessions, and then we were done for the day with our work sessions. So, they had... They had left.

Ogema Romanelli: Is there a...

Speaker Burmeister: Not all of them, but some of them have left.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure. Is there a hourly requirement to call an emergency meeting? It was my understanding that no uh hourly requirement is required, that it's an emergency, there's no time required. Is that correct?

Speaker Burmeister: That is correct. Um, it takes time to prepare the paperwork and make sure the copies are all given to Council. And if they are not here, they have to be called, and um a message has to be left to them. So that is what took place. And...

Ogema Romanelli: Okay.

Speaker Burmeister: There were some that we couldn't get responses back from.

Ogema Romanelli: Right. And the last emergency meeting that I asked to be called was like two o'clock on a Thursday, if you remember correctly. I think it was like two o'clock on a Thursday, and you couldn't get a quorum during regular business hours. You couldn't get enough people on the Council to get a quorum. Is that correct?

Speaker Burmeister: That... that is correct.

Ogema Romanelli: Do you see that as a problem?

Speaker Burmeister: Well, we are all of us are elected officials. Um, we don't normally work eight to five. So, we might have started earlier that day or worked the weekend or whatever it may be. So, people do have appointments also. So sometimes people come and go. And work sessions are not uh regular meetings. Um, they're just work sessions. And so Tribal Council isn't required to attend all work sessions, but it is encouraged that we all attend.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, thank you. And, you know, uh again, I think I've repeated it many times. I've expressed my fault in my part of the uh sanction, possible sanctions that are forthcoming. Has Council done that on their part, knowing now that the minutes and the recordings and the summaries are part of that? Has the Council suggested to the membership that they have a part and admitted their responsibility?

Speaker Burmeister: We know that we have to do the minutes. So, in the minutes are being worked on. So...

Ogema Romanelli: So

Speaker Burmeister: I guess

Ogema Romanelli: The question is

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, they should be done

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. So, the Council is partially responsible for the audit?

Speaker Burmeister: No.

Ogema Romanelli: No. Okay.

Speaker Burmeister: Well, they're not, you know, it's not a requirement. Um, Recorder Johnson can speak better on this regarding the minutes, but they're not uh like officially part of the audit. They note that in the audit if they are not done, but it's not specifically like required.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. I've shared with you and others uh letters and emails from the auditors that state for us to complete the audit, we need the minutes of the meetings of the Tribal Council meetings, or at least what we're going to do is allow you to at least give the summaries. As of Saturday, you were still completing some for the audit. Does that not make sense that we all have a part of this?

Speaker Burmeister: Recorder Johnson and our two staff people have been working on the minutes for the audit for, I meant, they've been working on them for months.

Ogema Romanelli: I know you have. And I appreciate that. But our staff has also been working. And, you know, you mentioned that you're understaffed and behind, and yet we don't give accountability or that ability for our CFO or our Ogema. So, I'm just saying, I think we have a shared responsibility here in getting this done. A couple last questions is, you know, I mentioned earlier that I'd sent you emails regarding this very situation in this very subject. You didn't answer my emails. Can you explain why you wouldn't answer my emails?

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, I can.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay

Speaker Burmeister: For one thing, I wasn't going to um banter back and forth. And you had specifically asked me who the person was that um told me possibly that there were sanctions. And I would not divulge that confidence of who said or told me that.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure

Speaker Burmeister: I followed up with the BIA by asking, you know, the question, because I didn't know if it was a rumor, because a lot of rumors go around here. So, um I followed up and I got the letter from the Sharee from the BIA.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure. But there were more questions and more statements within that. Besides that, you could have not answered that but answered the other questions. I can bring you the emails if you'd like. I have.

Speaker Burmeister: No, I have. I have copies of those.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, so why would you not answer my emails? Why wouldn't you say I don't want to answer about this where I received it from, but on your concerns on the other concerns? Why wouldn't you answer an email for one thing or of one branch to the other?

Speaker Burmeister: Well, for one thing, I have answered a lot of your emails,

Ogema Romanelli: a lot, not all

Speaker Burmeister: But not all. And... and it goes both ways. Um, there are emails that you haven't answered of mine either regarding the status of this audit when I started asking way back in um July about it. And um you know,

Ogema Romanelli: You didn't receive an answer.

Speaker Burmeister: I received July. I meant; I sent emails. I've been I've been proactive. And I started in July because I knew what happened last year. So, I tried to be proactive by asking all along the status of the audit. And...

Ogema Romanelli: And you've not received answers?

Recorder Johnson: Hold on...hold on. Please let her finish

Ogema Romanelli: Okay

Recorder Johnson: Interrupting. Let's

Speaker Burmeister: Get a response. And some I did. So, it... it went both ways.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, so what you're saying is you didn't get a response to some of your emails that went to me.

Speaker Burmeister: That is correct.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, I'm not aware of that. So, okay, I think we'll leave it at that. Um Oh, yeah, I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you.

Ogema Romanelli: You're welcome. Can I now call the other witness, Shannon Crampton, Councilor Crampton. Did we not

Speaker Burmeister: Venus has them.

Councilors talking but not picked up in the mic

Speaker Burmeister: Yep, they're all three attached and they were sent. They were sent. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?

Councilor Crampton: I do.

Ogema Romanelli: Thank you, Councilor Crampton. I just have a couple of questions or a couple of concerns or a couple of statements from the auditors. Part of the hiccup and where we had to have a deeper dive with the audits had to do with some accusations that were made. Are you aware of those?

Councilor Crampton: No.

Ogema Romanelli: No. Accusations against the Ogema for fraud, embezzlement that were turned into the FBI and to the Department of Justice. Are you aware of that?

Councilor Crampton: Since you've been in office, it's been mentioned several times.

Ogema Romanelli: I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

Councilor Crampton: Since you've been in office, it's been mentioned several times. I don't think this is on.

Speaker Burmeister: No could

Ogema Romanelli: I think it's on.

Speaker Burmeister: Is it on?

Ogema Romanelli: Just have to get a little closer.

Councilor Crampton: I'm sorry. Oh, no. Since you've been in office, it's been mentioned several times.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure. Have you mentioned it?

Councilor Crampton: Yes.

Speaker Burmeister: Does this have to do with the Oath of Office on the charge number two that we're on?

Ogema Romanelli: Uh, I believe it does.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay.

Ogema Romanelli: I didn't know we were done with charge one. I asked to be able to do the witnesses on charge one.

Speaker Burmeister: Yes but.

Ogema Romanelli: This would

Speaker Burmeister: I read everything for charge two. So, this is on charge two.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. So, uh, I'm not sure where we're at because I asked for to be involved. Okay.

Councilor Crampton: Was charge one the minutes? Was charge one the minutes? Is that what you're talking about?

Ogema Romanelli: Which one? Could you read?

Speaker Burmeister: I can restate that.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay sure.

Speaker Burmeister: Charge two was the failure to abide by the Oath of Office and to perform the responsibilities and duties to go with the position.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. And what would charge three be?

Speaker Burmeister: Monthly financial reports.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. Then this does have to do with the charge number two indirectly at this point in time. So, within the work that I was trying to get done and why I'm here today is because there was extra work that was needed on the uh audit and there were extra findings, and it took extra money. I think we had to pay another \$9,000 because of some allegations and those allegations came from you that something that you signed that said that the... the Ogema needed to be investigated for embezzlement and fraud and a couple other things. Is that correct? You signed the letter?

Councilor Crampton: That's not correct.

Ogema Romanelli: You did not sign a letter that stated that?

Councilor Crampton: No, no, Mr. Romanelli. What you just stated was that if we didn't have those done that the auditors had mentioned those. Nobody brought those forwards. The auditors didn't mention any of that.

Ogema Romanelli: Yes, they did

Councilor Crampton: You did.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. Uh, I have a letter from the auditors that stated they had to look into it because I, as a, I have to do a background check and with audits what they do is your lead people they ask are there any pending possible fraud?

Councilor Crampton: Your supposed to be questioning.

Ogema Romanelli: Pardon me.

Councilor Crampton: You're supposed to be questioning me.

Ogema Romanelli: No, I'm looking at the membership. I'm talking to the membership right now.

Speaker Burmeister: But you're supposed to um, Councilor Crampton is up here as a witness, so you need to direct your questions to him.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay.

Speaker Burmeister: Please.

Ogema Romanelli: So, my apologies membership. But okay, so what happens, and you may be aware of this is that anybody if there are any allegations of fraud or mistrust of any sort they have to be reported. I had to self uh say that there were allegations against me. You signed something as I believe you were a Speaker at the time.

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli, um

Ogema Romanelli: That alleged fraud.

Speaker Burmeister: What does this have to do with Oath of Office? That's the charge.

Councilor Crampton: If that were true.

Ogema Romanelli: Because excuse me, the Oath of Office we all sign. I got to that earlier, right? We all sign an Oath of Office that says we will uphold the sanctity and the Tribal Council and not put things above our own interest. And this absolutely has to do with my Oath of Office and your Oath of Office that.

Councilor Crampton: I'm not on trial here.

Ogema Romanelli: You're not on trial.

Councilor Crampton: mm... hmm

Ogema Romanelli: I'm on trial

Councilor Crampton: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: And I'm asking you to be a witness and to bear a witness as to what's been going on.

Councilor Crampton: Well, then ask me a question.

Ogema Romanelli: Well, this is the first time you've been here in two years. So, it's really hard to remember that.

Speaker Burmeister: Let's stick to the topic.

Ogema Romanelli: That is the topic.

Speaker Burmeister: We are talking about Oath of Office.

Councilor Crampton: I've already beat you for your word.

Speaker Burmeister: Oath of Office, please... please direct the question to charge number two to Councilor Crampton.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, the ask is, are you aware or did you provide that information that is part of your Oath of Office? Did you accuse the Ogema of possible, male excuse me, theft, fraud, uh embezzlement?

Councilor Crampton: What you're trying to do is you're trying to uh.

Ogema Romanelli: No.

Councilor Crampton: Say there's some kind of um link between the audits and somebody making an allegation against you.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay.

Councilor Crampton: If that was true, we'd have an audit every year. We haven't had an audit every year.

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, we have.

Councilor Crampton: People have made allegations.

Ogema Romanelli: We do have an audit every year. I'll end my quick question.

Councilor Crampton: People have made allegations against Mr. Romanelli ever since he's been in office. If his allegations were...

Speaker Burmeister: Councilor Crampton, Councilor Crampton, please.

Councilor Crampton: You're welcome.

Ogema Romanelli: So, as long as he said that what allegations have been proven guilty or in 17 years?

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, we need to stop this. Please let's take it to the question at hand. Ask the question.

Councilor Crampton: I want to answer the question because those audits would have gone forth every year at the scenario that he's painting up was true because every year he's been in office, there's been allegations against him fraudulently. So, if those were true, we'd have an audit every year and we haven't had an audit every year.

Ogema Romanelli: We have had an audit every year.

Speaker Burmeister: Yes.

Councilor Crampton: Not audit findings. We're not in sanctions.

Ogema Romanelli: We've had an audit every year.

Councilor Crampton: You're trying to equate sanctions to somebody making an allegation against you?

Ogema Romanelli: No.

Councilor Crampton: You're not?

Ogema Romanelli: I'm trying to state the fact.

Councilor Crampton: Okay thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay.

Ogema Romanelli: We have had an audit every year.

Speaker Burmeister: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: We have an audit every year.

Councilor Crampton: Yes, we do.

Ogema Romanelli: And nothing has been found in 17 years to those allegations. I'm going to end it with this.

Councilor Crampton: Is this one of these 17 years? Because it has been found there's a sanction.

Ogema Romanelli: Has nothing to do with fraud against the Ogema.

Councilor Crampton: Okay has nothing to do with it.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, Ogema, do you have other witnesses you'd like to call upon?

Ogema Romanelli: No, I think I'm good. Thank you. I'll leave it at that.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, now. Hmm he already said. Mm hmm its... it's. Okay, Ogema Romanelli. Are you completely done, like, answering the allegations on number two? I want to make sure that you have your time.

Ogema Romanelli: Thank you. I think I answered it earlier on. You know, we're talking about the Oath of Office, and I hold this Tribe dear to my heart. Again, I'm talking to the

membership. I've been here 18 years. There's been no there's been a lot of accusations. There's been nothing that I have committed fraud, theft, embezzlement ever in 17, 18 years. I hold this Tribe very dear to my heart. I'm here now more for the Tribe than I am for myself. I'm 73 years old. I put in a lot of work, hard time. And uh, I have a lot of respect for this because I have a lot of respect for our elders. We're all descendants. We descend from those people that went before us. I have a fear that if we don't change things, and that's why I'm happy to be here today, that maybe we could get some answers from both sides. That we could all speak, that we could all be at a meeting before you and protect those next seven generations coming forward. I know there are people that dislike me. I'm sure just about everybody up here. But I'm not going to change their mind. I'm not going to change people's mind that I did not embezzle, that I did not steal. It comes up on Facebook all the time. I'm here to tell you there has been no charges. Nothing, no, there's been allegations, no charges. And I love my Tribe and I'm here because of that. And I do, I honor that Oath of Office as much or more than some of the people sitting here. So, I'll leave it at that. Thank you very much.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you. Moving down to C, public comment. Will there be any public comments regarding this topic? And you'll be allowed five minutes. Okay um yeah. And this is on charge two. Yep.

C. Public Comment (Followers Response to Each Charge) Charge 2

Ken Metzger: Uh, Ken Metzger, 0889. Your Oath of Office. There's uh reasons seven accountants left here. Why'd they leave? And uh how come we don't have replacements? And your office should have had them people replaced. And why aren't they? That's the only question I got.

Ogema Romanelli: Can I hear that?

Ken Metzger: Speaker working?

Speaker Burmeister: There you go.

Ken Metzger: Why did seven accountants leave here? That's my question. And why haven't they been replaced? And why don't people want that job?

Ogema Romanelli: May I answer?

Speaker Burmeister: You can get in the public comment part. But yeah, not no, no back and forth with question answer.

Ogema Romanelli: I was going to answer your question. I'm sorry.

Speaker Burmeister: Mmhmm um yep.

Ken Metzger: Do you think it's fair when somebody asks you a question about finances and HUD programs that you tell them I don't have to answer them questions and walk into whatever that room is over here?

Ogema Romanelli: Sure. That would be my office space. And yes, at times there are times when we're being harassed. I could call if I could call a witness.

Ken Metzger: I'm talking.

Speaker Burmeister: We're not going back and forth with question answer. So.

Ogema Romanelli: Well, I wanted to answer his question.

Speaker Burmeister: You can get in the queue.

Ken Metzger: All I want to know is about the accountants. Why? Why did seven of them leave? And why haven't they been replaced? That's all I had to say.

Speaker Burmeister: A statement.

Ken Metzger: Chi Miigwech

Ogema Romanelli: Thank you. Could you put me in the queue then?

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, I will. Yes, I will. Okay, um let's see here. Dawn Moneyham. Go ahead, please.

Dawn Moneyham: Anii Miigwech, 5088. Um, there's a number of things I want to address here. Um, the first thing I want to point out is all of this back and forth about these Council meeting minutes. Those have been late for years repeatedly. And the Ogema himself pointed that out. Yet we have not been sanctioned repeatedly during each of those years. So, like uh Councilor Crampton called it a red herring. Those meeting minutes have nothing to do with these charges. So, I wanted to clarify that. He admits that he's late on his financial reports and says he takes responsibility. Yet he's not taking accountability. You can't take responsibility if you don't take accountability first. He's blaming everybody else. This is everybody else's fault. This is not him. We've heard this from him over and over. His Oath of Office, that includes being respectful to our membership. It means being respectful to our laws and our rules. And all throughout this entire hearing, he has had, you've had to tell him to stop. And he still disrespects you. He disrespects the rules of the process. And we are asking for you to recognize that there is malfeasance here. This is abuse of power. You can't do that with any job. That is part of that Oath of Office. He talks about the minutes, and he talks about all of these other topics. He's projecting. There's a psychological term for that in the medical field. It's called projection. And that needs to be acknowledged here. Um, let me see. I'm looking at my notes here. He's got a long history of misconduct in his seat as our Ogema. I distinctly remember an Ogema meeting he called. I was logged into it online. He sat on open mic

and cussed out our Tribal Members. Then he handed the microphone to his brother and let him do the same thing. Chest bumping a Council Member during a Council meeting instead of walking away. How is that not a violation of his Oath of Office? And I'm sure he's already aware a large group of us has gotten together five years ago. We tried to recall him for that May 5th email scandal that he knew about with a corrupted election. And he held it to himself until it was too late to do anything about it. But we discovered as outlying members that the rules and regulations didn't allow us to file for a recall of him. And he laughed at us over it. He's been taunting us ever since. There is your Oath of Office, people. Wake up. How is he treating all of us today? How is he speaking to everybody today? This is all part of his Oath of Office. So, is he abusing that? Most certainly. Right here in front of everybody today. You are all sitting as witness. Miigwech.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. I just want to remind everybody out in the audience, if you need to have a conversation, if you could just step out into the foyer out there, because it's hard to hear when anybody's online or at the podium. So just out of respect, I just want to remind everybody. Thank you. Next in the queue is Ogema Romanelli.

Ogema Romanelli: May I call a witness back?

Speaker Burmeister: Who would that be?

Ogema Romanelli: That would be the CFO.

Speaker Burmeister: On the on your Oath of Office?

Ogema Romanelli: On answering the question that was asked.

Speaker Burmeister: No, if you want to respond, you may respond.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. The question was asked why we haven't filled those positions and why people wouldn't want to work in the Accounting department, correct? Is that the question that you had for me? I'm sorry.

Speaker Burmeister: Oh

Ogema Romanelli: Pardon me.

Councilor Metzger: What?

Ogema Romanelli: No, I thought somebody said something over here. Okay, yeah. Well, I was going to answer the Tribal Member's question because he asked why people don't want to work in the in the Accounting department. I thought maybe I misunderstood.

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, but we are on the Oath of Office.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, then-

Speaker Burmeister: Charge two. So please stick to the topic.

Ogema Romanelli: But I thought you allowed public comment. I'm sorry. I'll let it go.

Speaker Burmeister: Michelle, you are next. Just a reminder, everybody, please stick to the topic at hand.

Michelle Gibbs: Michelle Gibbs, 1252. Um, Oath of Office. You just let Dawn Moneyham go on about the Ogema. So, I'm going to go on about um your Oath of Office. Preparation of minutes. The Tribal Council shall prepare the meeting minutes for adoption by the next scheduled meeting, provided that there shall be at least five business days between meetings, and minutes may be delayed up to the next meeting if less than five business days exist between regular meetings. Upon approval, the Tribal Council Recorder shall forward the minutes for posting on the Tribe's website and in the Tribal newsletter.

Speaker Burmeister: Michelle, I just want to remind you, it's Oath of Office of the Ogema, not Tribal Council.

Michelle Gibbs: You have an Oath in Office to uphold the laws of your own Council that you are not doing. That is my point.

Speaker Burmeister: But the Tribal Council is not on

Michelle Gibbs: Right.

Speaker Burmeister: Trial today. What that's charged two had to do with the Oath of Office of the Ogema. So please stick to the topic.

Michelle Gibbs: You're not on trial, but you're putting somebody else on trial for the same thing that you guys do, but you but you have no accountability. That's my point.

Speaker Burmeister: Go ahead, Chelsea. You're next in the queue.

Chelsea Densmore: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Chelsea Densmore, 3225. So, I just wanted to bring it back to what the resolution actually says. So, Article 5, Section 5A2, to oversee the administration and management of the Tribal government. Um, section 5A8, to manage economic affairs and other interests of the Tribe. I think it's clear that if the audit wasn't done in a timely manner, if we now have sanctions, then I just I guess I don't understand why we're having so many different conversations about other stuff. It's very clear where you guys should stand on this, in my opinion. Um, I think we need to get back to the facts a little bit and get back to the um topic at hand and kind of focus this a little more. So that's all I wanted to say.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you, Chelsea. Um, I have you down, Lee. Go ahead, Lee McCaslin. Go ahead, please.

Lee McCaslin: *Anishinaabemowin*, Lee McCaslin, 0748. And uh the topic is uh the Oath of Office. And I remember a time when uh... uh you know the freedom of press, and I wanted to um thank the Speaker for uh acknowledging all the freedom of press that we do have. And uh so that Oath of Office means to uphold that Constitution and give us all our freedoms. And so far, uh I know that there are several witnesses here that doesn't abide or listen to it at one time when that came across the desk. But I just wanted to say thank you again, Speaker, for the freedom of press. Miigwech.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue is Staci. Do you still have a question? You lowered your hand.

Staci Cheney: I just have a quick comment. Um, Staci Chaney, 992. And um I know that the Ogema just spoke um about how, you know, there's lots of people that think that he's stolen, or um committed fraud and all this stuff. And um I don't think that that's what it's about. I think that um regarding his Oath of Office, um I believe he's put our Tribe in jeopardy. And I think that's why we're here today. I think that it's a very difficult situation. But as Dawn said, he's willing to take some accountability. But when you take accountability, you also have to be willing to take the consequences. And a consequence is we have to hold him um responsible. And with that does lie in the consequence. And it's time that we move this Tribe forward. And um, I feel like he's put us in a very, very bad situation. So, I feel like we need to move on and move forward. And I'm trusting in Tribal Council today to make the right decisions and um hold him accountable, responsible, and give him the right consequence. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue is Lee Ivinson.

Lee Ivinson: Good afternoon. Lee Ivinson, Tribal ID 99. Listening to all these comments, uh concerns, um some of the rants taking us off queue, I want to stick to charge two. And I just have a comment with reference to maintain the respect and honor of the Tribal Council of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. In order for our Ogema to uphold that oath, he needs the cooperation and the respect of our legislative body. I've made many comments that it's on both sides of the aisle that we have a problem. Within the Constitution, there is no means for our Ogema to bring forward other than recommendation for a removal of a Tribal Council. There are areas that warrant that. I'm sorry, I'm going to try to stay on task for this oath. Also, within here, it talks about uphold all laws and regulations of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. I find it concerning that how our Tribal Council came across this information concerning potential sanction. And I say potential sanction because it is potential sanction. And I want everybody to refer to our Government Business and Accounting Act of 2010, in which our Tribal Council employs a Comptroller General who conducts audits of all of our government affairs, as well as a part of all external audits that come through. As well as our Tribal Council entertaining, having an external auditor come through, and those audit reports provided to the Ogema and the Comptroller General. Again, there's accountability

on both sides of the aisle. And if we had some working relations, cordial relations outside of our own personal feelings, I don't believe we would be here. Speaker, you did make a comment as it relates to an email that the Ogema had mentioned, and that Speaker, you had mentioned concerning Angela Rabb crossing the aisle to assist with those meeting minutes. It's too bad that that relationship did not flourish. But if I'm hearing right, it started. There was help from the executive side to assist. We have an individual, Michelle, that read from the Constitution concerning the responsibilities of the Recorder as it relates to the minutes and the timelines that those minutes should be done. We would not be here if that was followed. So, in looking at charge two, uphold and protect the Constitution of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, that speaks to both aisles of our government. Uphold all laws and regulations of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, that is on both sides of the aisle. We are not lawless. Place the concerns of the Tribe before personal considerations in matters. I believe I already stated putting our personal feelings aside for the best interests of this Tribe. Had that occurred, we would not be here. So, please, at the end of this, in making that decision, I believe we all share in some responsibility. I've had conversations with other Tribal Members where we say, we should demand, we should demand that our elected officials are doing something, that they are showing up, that they are in person, that the Ogema should be making sure that his team are accountable and doing what they need to do. I disagreed.

Someone on zoom: Madam Speaker

Speaker Burmeister: Time is up Lee. Thank you

Councilor Wever: No, no, I want to hear Lee.

Speaker Burmeister: No, no.

Councilor Wever: No, no this is

Speaker Burmeister: Shirely

Councilor Wever: No, her five minutes-

Speaker Burmeister: Her five minutes is up.

Councilor Wever: I want to hear.

Speaker Burmeister: Shirley

Councilor Wever: What she has to say.

Speaker Burmeister: Please her five minutes is up. up.

Councilor Wever: We don't have five minutes today.

Speaker Burmeister: Shirley, please. Israel, you are next in the queue.

Israel Stone: So, I've sat here for a couple hours now, two and a half hours listening to all this. And my first time up, I encourage you to keep the process dignified. This is not a court of public opinion. This is a public hearing held by elected officials to determine facts, not opinions, not listen to people smear his name, not listen to people smear your names. It's a fact-finding process. That's what everybody's here for, is to get the facts. And what's occurring through this process by allowing that to happen is undue influence on a decision one way or the other. No, you present the charge, he has the opportunity to respond. It says it in the Constitution. Right now, we're getting into the court of public opinion, a public lynch mob, whatever you want to call it. We need to stick to the facts. What is it that you're telling us as Citizens that was violated in the Constitution? That's what I want to know. Not...not who thinks he's a good person, who thinks he's a bad person, who thinks he did this, who thinks he did that. Council did this, and they didn't do their minutes, and listen, we're not here for all that. Where are the facts surrounding this thing? Now, I heard him stand up here earlier and say, yeah, I took accountability, didn't get it in on time. Okay. Then I heard an onslaught of public opinion about what kind of leader he is. That's not what we're here for. We're here to find out facts. This is not moving us forward as a Tribe. The questions you have to answer or answer for yourselves are simple, yes or no questions. Did A, B, C, D happen? Yes, or no? Not smear his name, run him down, because I don't care what anybody says. He served this nation for 16 years. He served the nation for 16 years. Okay. You guys have served for a lot of years too. Nobody in this room, in this process, should be taking personal hits over a fact-finding hearing. What are the questions you're asking? Because at the end of the day, it's a yes or no. You guys have to decide, not me, not anybody else in this room. You're going to walk away from... from this process with that on your hands, right? And so, can we please stick to the facts and stop having this smear campaign uh that continuously occurs? We don't need that. We need to know what happened and was it done in proper accordance with the constitution uh of this tribe. That's what we need to know. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. You want to get in the queue? Okay. Um, next to Sara Agosa, then I have Corey Wells, and I have Councilor Crampton.

Sara Agosa: Sara Agosa, 4478. My comment is that public comment is intended for tribal members to participate in our government. We also have the right constitutionally; it's called freedom of speech. And I've heard several facts from outlying members already. Um, and this is our opportunity during public comment to provide our input. Contextually, this is our tribal community. And what we've experienced, our experiences, what we're bringing forward is honest and truthful. And those are facts. Thank you. That is my comment.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue is Corey Wells.

Corey Wells: Hello, Corey Wells, 4839. I really didn't want to have to speak today, but uh hearing Israel uh kind of reminded me that yeah, I probably should speak today. Uh I

agree with what he said. It shouldn't be a smear campaign on one side or the other. I don't know if the Ogema intentionally did anything to harm the Tribe. I don't believe that he would. Right? However, there's responsibility for things that happen. He said that he didn't submit the audit in time. At the end of the day, that's his responsibility, whether it was a failure on the accountants or the CEO or the tribal manager or the Ogema, it doesn't matter. At the end of the day, that's the Ogema's responsibility. It's your guy's job to determine whether or not that rises to the level of removal from office. However, on the flip side of that, who is not on trial today is Tribal Council. Do I think that some people on Tribal Council might need to be on trial? Well, maybe. Do I think that minutes not being done appears its own hearing? Probably. That's not what's at stake today. Alright. Let's keep it civil and keep it to the facts. I didn't want to have to come up here. In fact, I'm I really don't want to. But in order to honor those grandfather teachings, you show a little bravery, you show a little humility. We've all made mistakes. Yes. Right. Everyone here has made mistakes while doing their job. I've made mistakes doing my job. Right. It's your guys' and your responsibility, the nine of you alone, to determine whether or not that rises to the level of removal from office. Right. Did he intentionally do something? I don't think he did, but that's not I could tell you he didn't do it. It doesn't matter. It's what do you guys think he did? Right. Was there a failure in management? Maybe. Right. Was there a failure in tribal council not getting there? Maybe. It's not my place to make a decision. It's yours. You know, this constant badgering tribal council or badgering the Ogema by Citizens isn't helping. Right. All we can do is state what our opinion is. I don't know all the facts. You guys don't know all the facts. The only people that know the facts in this case are these nine sitting here and the one sitting over there. Right. Your guys' responsibility to make a decision. It's not a decision I envy you guys making. It's not a decision I'd want to be sitting in the Ogema shoes while you're making. Right. This is extremely serious, and we need to tone down this. It's Council's fault. It's the Ogema's fault. Present your facts and make a decision. I mean. The only comment I have on this is a question that should be asked that hasn't been asked. Are minutes required to submit the audit? Are our minutes a finding post audit? Right. Thank you for your time.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Councilor Crampton, you are next.

Councilor Crampton: Shannon Crampton, 1747. Uh no, the minutes are not required for your audit to go through because they would have been caught in 21 or 22 when they were behind, and they were not. So, I want to make this clear to the members because members keep getting up here and saying.

Speaker Burmeister: Councilor Crampton, can you stick to the Oath of Office?

Councilor Crampton: Yes, because it's

Speaker Burmeister: Charged two.

Councilor Crampton: But that's the charge that he didn't get those. Okay.

Speaker Burmeister: it's to the Ogema.

Councilor Crampton: Yes, the back and the fourth that needs to stop. I agree with members that it's just going nowhere. Um, when you do your Oath of Office, I think we all understand that there is a constitution and the constitution places the responsibility for the minutes on the Recorder, not on Council. Council went so far as to make a meeting procedures ordinance that says it shall be the responsibility of the Recorder. I don't know how many times I have to keep saying this because it's not written in Japanese. It's right here and the excuse that we keep getting is just an excuse. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah, that was yeah, that was pointed at the Recorder and it had nothing to do with the Oath of Office of the Ogema. So please, please stick to the topic. Councilor DiPiazza, did you have your hand up?

Councilor DiPiazza: I did. Yeah, I would ask you please to contain the commentary and stay on topic. I urge you to do that.

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah, I think we need to.

Councilor DiPiazza: That's off topic.

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah. Yeah.

Councilor Wolfe: Two.

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah. Is there any final comments from anybody present in the room or on zoom?

Ogema Romanelli: Google that and find out.

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah, we're not going to go back and forth with Tribal Council because that's unproductive. So, we are going to take a recess or a break, I should say. Um, what time lunch. So, an hour.

Councilor Weaver: Wow.

Speaker Burmeister: I mean, it's an hour to long? Okay, an hour.

Councilor Weaver: Right.

Speaker Burmeister: So, we'll come back at 12 or 1:30. That's okay.

Recess

Good afternoon, everyone. We are back um and I'm going to ask Recorder Johnson if she can do roll call to establish quorum. So, Recorder Johnson can you do roll call to establish quorum please.

Recorder Johnson:

T. Burmeister - Present	G. DiPiazza - Present	M. Silvis - Present
R. Wittenberg - Present	J. Wolfe - Present	A. Metzger - Present
S. Crampton- Present	P. Johnson - Present	S. Wever- Present

Quorum established.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. So, before we move on to charge number three, I just want to remind everybody if you have your phone on, please mute your phone. No sidebar conversations and also um if you have to take a call if you could just, please step out into the foyer and I think that's about it. Okay, so we are moving down to charge three. Failure to provide monthly financial reports for the Tribal Council. The Little River Band LRBOI Constitution article 5 section 5a5 states that timely prepare and present the annual Tribal budget to the Tribal Council for approval or other action and to keep the Tribal Council fully advised as to the financial condition and needs of the tribe. Preparing monthly reports for the Tribal Council and making quarterly reports available to the membership. The evidence that um I will be presenting and will go on the record is the Tribal Constitution. So, I would like to call um Angela Rabb as a witness. If you could please come up. Do you promise to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God.

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you.

Angela Rabb: Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: We are on the provide monthly financial reports for the Council. Um, can you tell us when the last financial was presented to the Tribal Council?

Angela Rabb: Presented?

Speaker Burmeister: Mm-hmm.

Angela Rabb: Um, that would be the April financial statements, and I don't, I'm sorry I don't remember off the top of my head what month we.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay

Angela Rabb: We did those in front of Council.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay and what is your plan moving forward in the submission of financials to Tribal Council?

Angela Rabb: Uh, May has been submitted. June through November. Um, we're working on June presently. I'm trying to get those done. I am still working on a few audit

matters. And as soon as I feel comfortable that those have been settled then I'm gonna get started or continue with June and get started on the others.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you. Um, were you ever directed by your supervisor not to um present financials um in person to Tribal Council?

Angela Rabb: I actually talked to him because uh every time I present financials pretty much, I get a lot of um uh being accused of things, taking two million dollars, mishandling money, misappropriating money, etc. etc. Um, it is its um it is not uh professional behavior that I encounter when I present these financial information I get attacked every time I do it. Um, so I did go to the Ogema, and I asked him or requested that I no longer have to go to work sessions to present this information. Um, nothing that's being said is true um about mishandling money or any of the other things they say about me. It's just you know I show up and... and things start getting said. So, um I've been dealing with that for a couple of years now and I got tired of it. So yes, I went to him and requested that I no longer have to do that.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. In your preparation of the financial reports, um which staff help you do that or are you doing that on your own?

Angela Rabb: Uh, since May I've been doing that on my own. Uh, normally an Accountant I we have to get all the transactions entered from as many as we can before we can start the financial statements. A Staff Accountant will uh make sure all the journal entries are entered or as many as she has knowledge of. Another Staff Accountant enters all the cash receipts. Um, AP tries to make sure they have all the invoices for that month entered. Um, sometimes we get invoices after the fact, but we need to have as many transactions entered as possible so that Tribal Council has as big of a picture of what happened in a month as they can possibly have. Um, Bank req's need to be done. Cash has to be balanced to the bank before we can do these financial statements because we do provide reports of cash balances. Um, going back to transactions being entered, um we have to run several revenue and expenditure reports for all of the funds we have. Um, that is mostly all the funds we have are grant funds and uh Tribal Council needs a picture of what happened in each grant for a month. Um, we also provide travel report information, budget variances and budget modifications, uh a balance sheet showing all our assets for the month. So, all of those reports need to be compiled um and usually it's the Controller who compiles most of those with the help of the Staff Accountants. But since those staff have been missing for quite a few months this year and we had audit and insurance renewal and the GWE payments and all of the other normal things we do in the Accounting department, um that has been me doing all of that work.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you, and what is the cutoff each month Angela um that you like that you have to get everything prepared to be able to do the financials?

Angela Rabb: We try to have the um bank req's done around the middle of the month. Um, again, we sometimes we have to wait for transactions to come in before we can uh reconcile cash um and then after that we do journal entries for adjusting grant

revenue expenses for that month. Um, we try to have so for example this month is December and then in January we get the bank statements for December, and we reconcile them and enter all our transactions and compile all those reports. So, we try our goal is to try and have that to Tribal Council at the beginning of February on its work session and then go to the regular agenda for acceptance. However, when there's when those key staff are not staffing positions are not filled, um we can't get that done in the time frame that we would like to.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you, and you talked about the staff, um lack of staff.

Angela Rabb: Yes.

Speaker Burmeister: Leaving and everything. Um so, the staff that had left that helped prepare like these reports and that type of thing was um when they either retired or gave their resignation did, they offer to stay for a longer period of service? Did they give like a date that they were gonna not um that they would be here before they actually were no longer here?

Angela Rabb: They gave two weeks' notice as is customary.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, um was...was that granted to them or were they asked just to their service was no longer needed?

Angela Rabb: Um, we did um have them leave that day and they were paid for their two weeks' notice and given their benefits for two weeks. Um, in Accounting customarily um where I have worked um Accounting is a sensitive department with sensitive information and I'm not saying that any of these people would have divulged sensitive information or done anything to um... to uh manipulate the damage the information. I'm just saying that it's I...I believe it's a best practice that you just accept the two weeks' notice and pay them for the two weeks and have them leave so they're not accessing the computer. That is that's my belief and that's um through 30-some-odd years of working in Accounting.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you and then one last question that I have um when was the last quarterly report uh reports done to the membership?

Angela Rabb: Um, I believe it was first quarter of this year and that would have been earlier this year and again I don't remember exactly when.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay. Thank you.

Angela Rabb: Alright.

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli did you want to ask Angela questions also?

Ogema Romanelli: A few questions as long as we have you here and this is regarding the reports I understand.

Angela Rabb: Okay.

Ogema Romanelli: Are there sanctions against the Tribe at this time?

Angela Rabb: There was a letter from BIA.

Ogema Romanelli: Correct.

Angela Rabb: Stating that there may be sanctions.

Ogema Romanelli: May be sanctions.

Angela Rabb: If we don't provide a good effort in getting our audit done etc. etc.

Ogema Romanelli: So, the sanctions aren't in place. They said we may get sanctions because of the way it's going. We also have the option to appeal if the sanctions are in place and that goes to if we don't get the information and by January 28th or whatever the date is. Okay, I just wanted to make that clear because there's some confusion whether we currently have sanctions or we don't. She didn't answer the question. Okay are there currently sanctions in place?

Angela Rabb: I don't believe so not the way that letter was worded. No.

Ogema Romanelli: Correct. Okay, thank you. Uh, what else do we have? We know that it was stated that the minutes are not part of the audit. Are the minutes part of the audit?

Angela Rabb: The minutes are part of the audit um and have been on every municipality or government that I've worked for. The auditors need those minutes. They want those minutes. Um, most of the decisions this body makes end up in the Accounting department. We need to pay for whatever is approved by Council. Um so, they want to see that Council approved.

Ogema Romanelli: Correct.

Angela Rabb: What we're paying. Um, they want to see that we're Accounting for that correctly the way Council has asked us to. So, they want to see those minutes. Um, in regard to minutes that they're looking at, those minutes have been reviewed by Council Members. They've come to the Council meeting. Council has voted to approve those minutes, and they're signed by the Speaker and the Recorder. So, they would rather have the official minutes. Um, at this point they're settling for the um summaries.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure.

Angela Rabb: Which are not reviewed by Council. They're not approved by Council.

Ogema Romanelli: Correct. Okay thank you. And the reason being is that those are the official record. The minutes are the official record. And when we, they for example, have something a half a million dollars that comes before them, the auditors want to see that they officially did accept the money or rejected the money rather than just hearsay or whatever. So that's... that's the tie-in to the minutes. Okay. Uh there was a couple other things that came up. Um we also, I'm not sure if you're aware of it, we asked the auditors if they would uh come and present today. I don't know if you're aware of it. And uh because we wanted the auditor's report as to what was going on. Unfortunately, we were told that uh they couldn't respond to me because they actually worked for the Tribal Council. Would have to have Tribal Council approval. Going further, uh we have a couple other things here. uh It was asked why people don't want to work for the uh Accounting department. And the, I believe the Speaker is aware of this as well. There are racial comments that are made in open session and in work sessions. And there are sexual gestures that are made in open session that the Speaker is aware of. And the rest of the Council should be aware as well. So, we have sexual gestures, racial comments that happen on a regular basis. I want to refresh your memory back to a time where there was some communication going on between you, me, a couple others, and Shannon Crampton. And there were enough racial comments made that you asked that you not be included in those communications. Is that correct?

Angela Rabb: I did, yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. I think that might be enough for right now. I don't know if there are anything else. The auditors, uh you, one thing, you're working very hard to complete the information as we stand here. We have about a month a little over a month. Do you believe you'll be able to get those uh documents prepared if you get the cooperation of the Council and the auditors? Do you believe you'll be able to get them done before the we need to appeal, if we need to appeal?

Angela Rabb: I can get my end of it done. I have two documents that I requested from purchasing and the Controller right now is reviewing the SEFA to make sure that everything is correct. And I believe those are the only documents I need to provide now. Uh, as soon as I provide documents, they come up with questions, but uh those should be easy enough to answer. Um, as far as minutes go, that's not under my uh supervision, so

Ogema Romanelli: Understood.

Angela Rabb: I have no control over that.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay. And I thank you for the hard work you've been doing, and you continue to do. Thank you.

Angela Rabb: Speaker, can I step away or do you need to ask more questions?

Speaker Burmeister: Um, just one final question um that I just thought of, but I didn't have written down. So, if uh the minutes are needed, how did we move forward from the audit from 21 and 22?

Angela Rabb: Those summaries were provided. Um, they were able to glean their information from the summaries. Um so, they were fine with that. Uh, they did tell me for 2022 that there would be a finding regarding the lack of minutes, but then they did not put that in their audit for 2022. I don't know what's going to happen for 2023.

Speaker Burmeister: Yeah, Recorder Johnson did you have. I have no further questions.

Angela Rabb: Okay, thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli, did you want to respond to the allegations on this one?

B. Response of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema to Allegations

Ogema Romanelli: Uh no, and if I'm clear, we're talking about charge three, which has to do with the financial reports. I fully admit that the reports are six, seven months behind. I believe as the Ogema, I oversee about 18 departments, one of them being the uh Accounting department. We've explained why we believe that the minutes or the financials are late. Uh no, I don't think I have anything more to say. I think we've uh talked about just about everything. Uh, I think that the charges that I violated the Constitution and uh my duties, I think that I've clearly shown that the Council multiple times has done the same. I'm not sure why we're here like this today, but I'm glad that we're here. I hopefully we can uh continue to uh to work on healing the Tribe. This isn't about the Ogema. This isn't about Tribal Council. This is about a Tribe and the people on the phone, the people in the audience can speak their uh what they believe or don't believe. But it ultimately falls on the nine of you to make your decision. And I'm, I abide by it, whatever that turns out to be. I think that uh I just pray that this Tribe heals and goes forward so. Chi Miigwech

Speaker Burmeister: Ogema Romanelli, I have a um couple questions.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, I just want to read the um Constitution article 5 section 5a 5. Timely prepare and present the annual Tribal budget to the Tribal Council for approval or other action and to keep the Tribal Council fully advised as to the financial conditions and needs of the Tribe. Preparing monthly reports for the Tribal Council and making quarterly reports available to the membership. So, my two questions kind of um they fall from that. Do you get a copy of the resolutions governing the financial determination of the Tribe?

Ogema Romanelli: Could you repeat that question?

Speaker Burmeister: Sure.

Ogema Romanelli: Sure.

Speaker Burmeister: Do you get a copy of all the resolutions governing the financial... financial determination of the Tribe?

Ogema Romanelli: Yes, I believe I do.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, thank you. Do you understand that those resolutions direct the financial activity of the Tribe's finances?

Ogema Romanelli: Yes, I do.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay.

Ogema Romanelli: May I have a question?

Speaker Burmeister: Yes, go right ahead.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, and we know that there are certain deadlines for the Tribal budget and in past years the Tribal Council has been late in delivering those budgets and actually this year uh there was a budget that was supposed to be approved a few weeks ago and it's still pending. As a matter of fact, it's on the next week's agenda, meaning at the last very meeting of the year, correct?

Speaker Burmeister: Yes.

Ogema Romanelli: Okay, thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay, so we are moving down to C public. Ogema, did you want to call any witnesses? I didn't ask you that. Or are you completely done?

Ogema Romanelli: No, I... I don't think I do. You know these people have; uh our members have been here for hours now. I think what needed to be said has been said. Again, I leave it to the nine Councilors at this time. Uh, if you call a witness, I may want to cross examine, but otherwise, honestly, I think uh they have enough information, and I think we've uh explained both sides and I appreciate everybody taking the time today. So no, I have nothing more to say unless you want to call a witness. I may want to cross-examine but thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Okay.

Ogema Romanelli: Appreciate it.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. So now we are going to move down to public comment. I just want to remind everybody to stay on topic. You have five minutes and be respectful in how you ask your question. So, the first person that I, or I should say comment question, the first person is Sara Agosa. Go ahead, please.

C. Public Comment (Followers Response to Each Charge) Charge 3

Sara Agosa: Sara Agosa, 4478. My comment is, if Mr. Romanelli hasn't completed the financial reports, this has a direct impact on the completion of the quarterly reports. The financial reports are required to do a quarterly analysis as required in the Budget and Appropriations Act 602. It's extremely important Council has this information because it can prompt recommendations for changes to the budget in 603. Tribal Council needs a current financial picture in order to do forecasts and assess the current financial condition of our tribe. Time is crucial, especially in our current economic condition. If Mr. Romanelli excused the CFO Angela Rabb from presenting the financials in the monthly meetings, then Mr. Romanelli should have attended these meetings or another manager, but to simply just not provide these much-needed financial reports is an absolute dereliction of duty. Thank you. That's my comment.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Moving to the next person, which is Dawn Moneyham. Go ahead, please.

Dawn Moneyham: Miigwech. Dawn Moneyham, 5088. I would actually like to reiterate something that was mentioned in the last comment period by both Israel Stone and Corey Wells. This is a legal hearing. We are here to determine whether or not a crime was committed and whether or not that crime rises to the level of removal. That is what we're supposed to be focused on, not all of the personal stuff, not who likes who, who did who wrong. None of that matters. This is a legal hearing. And with that in mind, there is a precedent already set on our Little River Band books, legally, with the removal of Lee Sprague, who also caused sanctions to be held against our tribe. Ogema Romanelli has already admitted that he is guilty of these charges. The blaming back and forth of council did this and council did that. You cannot legally separate all of this and say, well, if one person did it, it's okay because somebody else did it. That's not how the legal system works. If two people did something, then two people are guilty and two people get charged for it. Today's hearing is about the charges against Ogema Romanelli. If there are charges to be held against council, then that's something we need to take up separately because that's a separate issue. Today's issue is about Ogema Romanelli and whether or not he did the things that he is being accused of doing and whether that rises to the level of removal and our laws and our legal precedent within our court system says yes, he has admitted to his guilt, and it has already been on the books as a precedent for removal. Miigwech.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue is Lee McCaslin. Go ahead, please.

Lee McCaslin: *Anishinaabemowin*. Lee McCaslin. Courage is not the opposite of fear, but it is the strength to face it. And the statute still is a single act, but I hear three acts

being committed. And fortunately, if you knew what I know, we all know that at this time, it will take the strength to do the right thing. Miigwech. Do the right thing.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Okay, next in the queue is Israel. I have you, Michelle.

Israel Stone: Israel Stone, 1735. I just want to clarify the record. I accuse nobody of making any criminal uh type of activity, anything else. Uh, I don't want that assigned to my words. My words were simply. And by the way, this isn't a legal process that's determined by the tribal courts and other uh processes. This is a legal process for council to hold. But my encouragement for all you were stick to the facts. That's all I was saying is this is a very fact-based situation. It's not opinions. And I'm not saying that man sitting over there committed any crime whatsoever. And I don't want that assigned uh to me. I'm just simply saying fact find fact based, come up with a decision. The uh the fact that we're here today uh says that there's been a lot of thought put into this process. We didn't arrive here just willy nilly. I mean, it took 16 years, um, to fire the shot. And here we are in the 16th year. And can one look at, uh, this and say that there's fault on one part, both parts, all parts. Certainly so. Um, I don't have your job today. Thank God. Uh, I get to sit in the back of the room and just listen to both sides and form my own opinion. But the reality of the situation is you're gonna leave this room and you're gonna make a boat that's ultimately going to impact uh 5000 citizens, uh tribal government, tribal enterprises. Um, I would suggest not to take that lightly. And I would also suggest to uh disregard everything I've said to you today from the standpoint that this is something you have to decide, not something I have to decide. And so, does it rise to the level? I don't know. I will say this. I appreciate you taking accountability, Ogema and standing up like a man and accepting that responsibility. That's commendable and that's respectable. And I want to thank you for that. Um, I also think that there are other people in this room that should take not necessarily for this, this situation, but for many other situations, some accountability in the process. Um, and so I'll just leave it at that. Thanks.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Okay, next in the queue is Michelle. Go ahead, please.

Michelle Gibbs: Michelle Gibbs 1252. Um, we were just talking about the financials and, um, Angela Rabb said she was talking about um summarized minutes that were not being approved by Council. And I just have a question. Why are they not being approved by Council? If they're summarized in their Council meeting minutes, isn't that your duty? That's my comment. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Did you? Okay. Okay. Okay. Um, next in the queue is Staci Cheney. Go ahead, please.

Staci Cheney: Miigwech Speaker. I... I actually am going to stick to the topic of the financials, and this has been an ongoing issue all year long and last year. And we've been told by Ms. Rabb and the Ogema how people quit this year. However, last year, we were behind a half year on financials as well. And I want to remind you of that. So, I don't know what the excuses for that because we had all of the people working and I do want to just help you recall that it was so bad that council had to make a stand and say that they

weren't going to pay the insurance until the financials were given to Council. That's how bad it got. I've never seen a summary of financials ever. So, I don't know where it's posted. And I don't believe it is posted for the Spring. And I don't believe that we've ever been the citizens have ever had access to a summary report of financials. We get the monthly financials, but not a quarterly report. And it's something that we've brought up to council several times as a concern. I just want to say that the financials is definitely something that you should have access to. And I don't know how you can do your job without them. And you're not asking too much to get them. And again, staffing may be an issue. But if I were the Ogema today, I would have come in and I would have said, here's what happened. But here's my plan on how we're going to move forward because here's what I have in mind to fix the problem. We don't know where we're going to go from here. And he hasn't told us how things would change. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Next in the queue is Lee Ivinson.

Lee Ivinson: Lee Ivinson, Tribal ID 99. Just want to read the charge again. Failure to provide monthly financial reports for the council. LRBOI constitution. Timely prepare and present the annual Tribal budget to the Tribal Council for approval or other action and to keep the Tribal Council fully advised as to the financial condition and needs of the Tribe, preparing monthly reports for the council and making quarterly reports available to the membership in referencing the Government Business and Accounting Act. There was a question concerning how the membership uh are informed. Um, again, it's on both sides of the aisle. Section 4.03 of this law. Responsibilities of the Government Business and Accounting Office serve as the Accounting, internal auditing and investigative arm of the Tribal Council and shall assist the Tribal Council in its constitutional responsibilities, including oversight of the allocated funds and assets of the Tribe. This is the Comptroller general duties for the Tribal Council. Evaluate the programs, expenditures and audits of the government and businesses of the tribe and shall advise the Tribal Council on methods to make government more efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of the membership of the Tribe to the membership of the Tribe and prescribe additional auditing standards and financial practices as necessary to presented for the approval by the tribal council. Again, I believe that the Ogema due to the workload has had an immense amount of work on his hands as well as the shorthanded staff. I do know that the job descriptions have been posted out there for many, many months to uh fill these positions. I don't believe just hiring a temp to come in and take a look at our financials or even have hands on with our financials is fair to the membership. But I do want you all to take this part of the Tribal Council's legislation into consideration. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Are there any other comments? Go ahead, Chuck.

Chuck Fisher: Chuck Fisher 1297. Uh, what I guess I'd like to say is that regardless of the outcome here, regardless of your decisions, one thing, there's one thing you need to keep in mind, and that is the end of January date where we have to have our everything together in order to address, you know, the audit. That's our last, you know, so whatever it takes to get there, you need to, you need to get there. So, if you need extra support in Accounting or uh with the minutes, just do it. That's it. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you, Chuck. Michael, you were next in the queue.

Someone stated Speaker

Michael Burmeister: Michael Burmeister 945. When I was a young man, I stood in front of a officer when I enlisted in the service. I swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America. All the elected officials in this room has sworn to do that as well. So, let's do our job. I'm not telling you how to vote, but you're sworn to uphold the Constitution of both the tribe and the United States. Do what you need to do.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Ogema Romanelli, you are next in the queue.

Ogema Romanelli: Yeah, I also wanted to say, because it was brought up a couple times now, uh those positions have been, and I believe it was stated, have been posted for a long time. There are reasons why we are not getting people to apply. Those positions aren't just off the street. They're not entry-level positions. Three of the positions are actually Accounting and need Accounting experience. So, they're higher-level positions that you just can't get off the street. We have a hard time since COVID uh getting employees, and in a specific field it even becomes harder. So, I just wanted to make that point as well. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Jessica, you are next in the queue.

Jessica Steinberg: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Um, I'm Jessica Steinberg. My Tribal Citizen enrollment number is 0148. I am here on approved time off to offer comments as a Citizen. We're talking about charge number three, so I'll refer to the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Constitution, and I say this because it takes great courage for me to say this based on the fact that many of you know I'm also employed here, so there could be retribution for whatever I say, but these are facts, and I wish to bring them to light. Article 5 of the Constitution, Tribal Ogema. The executive powers of LRBOI are invested, that means placed, conducted, and responsible in the office of the Ogema. Section 5A5. This authority places a responsibility for keeping the Council fully advised as to the financial condition of the Tribe. There's no other way around it. That's what it says. That responsibility, though, there are a few other statutes that go along with it, and I would like the council to pay extra attention to what I'm about to read. The Single Audit Act, which was formerly the A133 audit, Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 2, Part 200, referred to as 2 CFR Part 200. That is one of the main bodies of law that the tribes' finances have to be in compliance with Compliance with this act is required under Public Law 93-638 as amended. We call that the Tribal Self-Governance or the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act, and specific to the Bureau of Indian Affairs this year, the Progress Act. The report is required by Chapter 75 of Title 31, the Money and Finance Code of the United States. We are probably more familiar with it as the Banking Secrecy Act. Title 31 governs just about every financial transaction in our gaming facility. In fact, Title 31 compliance is absolutely tied to our gaming facility, which ties to the Single Audit Act. This also ties to the compact of self-

governance between the Little River Band and the United States of America. Notice I said that's a compact of self-governance, a different status within the eyes of the federal government than Title 1 tribes, where we have much more financial responsibility and reporting. Self-governance tribes have an absolute financial responsibility in managing their finances on their own. Excuse me, my mouth is dry. Because I'm very nervous about this. The Office of Tribal Self-Governance is our cognizant agency. The Director is Sharee Freeman, as stated in the letter. Article 2 of the compact states, Term, Provisions, and Conditions, Section 4 audits. Single audit states the Tribe shall provide to the Secretary an annual audit as prescribed in the Single Audit Act of 1984 U.S. Code Subsection 7501 in sequence and shall adhere to a generally accepted Accounting principles and of the Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR Part 200. Here we are, 2 CFR Part 200 again. The Uniform Guidance under 2 CFR Part 200 establishes standard administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for federal awards given to non-federal entities, non-federal tribes. These establish a single set of rules for managing federal grants and contracts across different agencies. This tells us how we can use our funds. A key component of the Uniform Guidance is that the entity follows its own finance laws and regulations, all applicable federal laws and regulations, and other laws governing these awards and use of funding, including funding we generate on our own. I just want to make this apparent as the tribe is bound to follow these laws. That is the primary responsibility of the administration, and that responsibility can be found in Article 5, Section 5A, 1 through 9. In contrast, councilors, your responsibility regarding 2 CFR Part 200, Article 4, rests in Tribal Council Article 4, Section 7, I, 1, 2, 3, and 4. I believe you all have a copy of the Constitution in front of you. You might want to review that. Thank you.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. Will there be any other comments from anybody on Zoom or in this room? Okay. With no further comments, we will take a recess which in um that time Council will deliberate and review the information presented. So, thank you everybody. I don't know how long that will take.

V. Recess

A. Deliberation and Review of Information

Speaker Burmeister: Hello everyone, we are back. It is 3:27. Recorder Johnson, can you do roll call to establish quorum, please?

Recorder Johnson:

T. Burmeister - Present	G. DiPiazza - Present	M. Silvis - Present
R. Wittenberg - Present	J. Wolfe - Present	A. Metzger - Present
S. Crampton- Present	P. Johnson - Present	S. Wever- Present

We do have quorum.

Speaker Burmeister: Thank you. We are on

VI. Open Session

A. Motion to Adopt Resolution for Removal

I would like to entertain a motion for the resolution to the removal of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema, for failure to manage the audit activities of the Tribe, jeopardizing the

Tribe's funds by mismanaging the audit activities of the Tribe. I'd like to entertain a motion, please. Oh, I'm sorry, Julie. Go ahead.

Councilor Wolfe: I'll make a **motion to approve resolution 24-1216-248, removal of Larry B. Romanelli, Tribal Ogema, for failure to manage the audit activities of the tribe, jeopardizing the Tribe's funds by mismanaging the audit activities of the Tribe.**

Councilor Wittenberg: Support

Speaker Burmeister: Will there be any Tribal Councilors that are going to abstain from this item? Okay, just wanted to make sure. Yeah. So, as we take the

B. Roll Call Vote

for this motion for the resolution, I ask that um everybody remain calm. Um, not jump up and down, scream, clap, whatever it may be, um or boo, or whatever it may be. So, Recorder Johnson, can you do roll call for this item, please?

Recorder Johnson:

Roll Call #1

R. Wittenberg- Yes	J. Wolfe - Yes	A. Metzger - Yes
S. Crampton - Yes	P. Johnson - Yes	S. Wever - No
G. DiPiazza - No	M. Silvis - No	T. Burmeister- Yes

Motion carried (6-3-0-0)

Six in favor, three against. He has not been removed.

Councilor Wever: I want a full Monty.

Dawn Moneyham: I'd like to remind our membership that we still have the power of recall.

Speaker Burmeister: Um, Recorder Johnson.

Councilor Wever: Well congratulations.

Speaker Burmeister: Recorder Johnson, can you do roll call for the motion, please?

VII. Adjourn

Recorder Johnson:

Roll Call #2

G. DiPiazza - Yes	M. Silvis - Yes	T. Burmeister- Yes
J. Wolfe - Yes	A. Metzger - Yes	R. Wittenberg- Yes
P. Johnson - Yes	S. Wever - Yes	S. Crampton- Yes

Motion carried (9-0-0-0)

We are adjourned at 3:31

Respectfully Submitted,

Chantel Gamelin

Chantel Gamelin,
Transcribing Assistant

Pam Johnson

Pam Johnson,
Tribal Council Recorder