

Internal Memorandum

TO: Oneida Business Committee

FROM: Brooke Doxtator, Boards, Committees and Commissions Supervisor on behalf of the Oneida Personnel Commission

DATE: February 5, 2024 

RE: Oneida Personnel Commission Update

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide you with an update on the status of the Personnel Commission, and to seek Oneida Business Committee (OBC) direction on proceeding with the outlined options or determining a different course of action.

Background

On April 11, 2018, the Oneida Business Committee adopted resolution BC-04-11-18-A entitled, Dissolution of Personnel Commission, Tolling all Timelines in Personnel Related Matters, and Directing the Development of Emergency Amendments to Existing Laws. They also adoption resolution BC-04-11-18-B Creation of the Personnel Selection Committee.

On September 12, 2018, the Oneida Business Committee adopted a motion to defer posting the Oneida Personnel Commission vacancies until the updated bylaws are presented and approved by the Oneida Business Committee.

On September 26, 2018, the Oneida Business Committee adopted resolution BC-09-26-18-F entitled, "Rescission of the Dissolution of the Oneida Personnel Commission and Related Emergency Amendments in accordance with General Tribal Council's August 27, 2018, Directive."

This resolution formally recognized General Tribal Council's directive to rescind the actions of the Oneida Business Committee related to the dissolution of the Oneida Personnel Commission, and to rescind the related emergency amendments. As a result, resolution BC-04-11-18-A, which dissolved the Oneida Personnel Commission, was formally repealed and the Oneida Personnel Commission was formally reinstated.

Resolution BC-09-26-18-F (attached) provides details on how the Oneida Personnel Commission's responsibilities will be addressed until such time that the Oneida Personnel Commission is prepared to exercise its authority once again.

Also, on September 26, 2018, a proposed draft of the bylaws was presented to the Oneida Business Committee for consideration. The Oneida Business Committee adopted a motion to defer the Oneida Personnel Commission bylaws to an Oneida Business Committee work meeting for further review and discussion.

On October 16, 2018, the Oneida Personnel Commission bylaws were discussed during the Oneida Business Committee work session, during this meeting the Oneida Business Committee made the decision to defer the Oneida Personnel Commission bylaws to a separate meeting between the Nation's Secretary, the Legislative Operating Committee Chairman, and the staff of the Legislative Reference Office for more in-depth discussion and consideration of ideas.

On November 28, 2018, the Legislative Operating Committee, provided an update to the Oneida Business Committee on the progress of the Oneida Personnel Commission.

On January 9, 2019, the Oneida Business Committee adopted the Oneida Personnel Commission bylaws.

On October 23, 2019, the Oneida Business Committee adopted further amendments to the Oneida Personnel Commission bylaws.

POSTING AND APPOINTMENTS – HISOTRY & CURRENT STATUS

On January 23, 2019, we posted the vacancies for the Oneida Personnel Commission and continued to do so throughout the year until the position were filled.

In the beginning of 2020, OPeC had five (5) members:

- Carole Liggins,
- Sandra Skenadore,
- Carol Smith,
- Daniel Thomas¹ and
- Renee Zakhar.

On March 11, 2020, the Oneida Business Committee appointed Twylite Moore to the Oneida Personnel Commission, however, Twylite was unable to take her oath of office due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Motion by Jennifer Webster to appoint Twylite Moore to the Oneida Personnel Commission with a term ending March 31, 2025, seconded by Brandon Stevens. Motion carried:

Ayes: Daniel Guzman King, David P. Jordan, Trish King, Brandon Stevens, Ernie Stevens III, Jennifer Webster

Opposed: Kirby Metoxen

Abstained: Lisa Summers”

¹ Daniel Thomas' term was expiring March 31, 2020, this vacancy was posted January 31, 2020

On March 19, 2020, a COVID-19 there was a Core Decision Making Team Declaration for the Suspension of all non-emergent expenses & stipends and activity by certain boards, committees, and commissions. This declaration included the Personnel Commission.

On April 8, 2020, the Oneida Personnel Commission was placed in temporary closure status by BC Resolution 04-08-20-B. This resolution also discontinued oaths of office.

While in temporary closure status Sandra Skenadore's term expired. This vacancy along with the five (5) Pro tem vacancies have been posted since May 2021. This action results in two (2) regular position vacancy, and continuation of the five (5) Pro tem vacancies. It is notable that all five (5) Pro tem positions were vacant prior to COVID as well.

In April of 2021, the Oneida Business Committee adopted BC Resolution 04-14-21-B, which authorized the boards, committee, and commissions to begin meeting virtually effective June 14, 2021, if needed.

On August 24, 2021, Twylite Moore was administered her oath of office. Ms. Moore is eligible to resume her term until March 31, 2025. At this point in time, all regular positions were filled; however, the five (5) Pro tem positions remained vacant.

On February 9, 2022, the Oneida Business Committee terminated the appointment of Carol Smith, this vacancy was posted immediately after her termination and has remained vacant due to no applicants. This action results in two (2) regular position vacancies, and continuation of the five (5) Pro tem vacancies.

On March 17, 2022, Carole Liggins submitted her resignation effective immediately. This action resulted in three (3) regular position vacancies, and continuation of the five (5) Pro tem vacancies.

On March 31, 2022, Renee Zakhar's term expired this vacancy was posted since February 2022, however, no applications were received. This action resulted in four (4) regular position vacancies, and continuation of the five (5) Pro tem vacancies.

On April 14, 2022, the GAO presented this memorandum at the OBC work session. It was determined that we should continue the status quo with suggestions to announce the vacancies on Facebook Live and an article in the Kalihwisaks.

Between April 2022 and September 2023, the GAO office continued to post the vacancies and provide quarterly updates to the Oneida Business Committee.

On September 27, 2023, the Oneida Business Committee reviewed one application and made the following motion:

“Jonas Hill motioned to request the Secretary to re-notice the four (4) vacancies, noting there were no qualified applicants per 105.7-1.(c)(2), and send the discussion regarding the ongoing Oneida Personnel Commission vacancies to the November 2, 2023, BC Work Session, seconded by Jennifer Webster. Motion carried:

Ayes: Lawrence Barton, Jonas Hill, Kirby Metoxen, Jennifer Webster, Jameson Wilson Not Present: Tehassi Hill, Lisa Liggins, Marlon Skenandore”

TRAINING

In accordance with their bylaws §1-7, the Commissioners must complete training prior to participating in any screenings, interviews and/or grievance hearings on behalf of the OPeC.

The Training and Development Department from the Human Resources Area identified training for the Oneida Personnel Commission.

The former Commissioners struggled to complete this training on their own. We haven’t had one commissioner complete all the training for full certification² to date. We are asking the Business Committee to consider adding language to their motions when appointing members to the OPeC that they need to receive full certification within 180 days of appointment.

NEXT STEPS

1. The GAO will continue to work on filling the vacant positions.
2. The OBC will review the OPeC bylaws to assess if changes are needed.

Requested Action

Accept this memorandum as an update on the progress of the Oneida Personnel Commission and determine next steps, if needed.

² Full certification allows members to participate in pre-screenings, interviews, and hearings.