

PEORIA TRIBE OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA

TOWN HALL MEETING

SATURDAY, JULY 15, 2017 – 1:00 P.M.

MEETING NOTES

- A. Chief John Froman, opened the Town Hall Meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 15, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed all of the Peoria Tribal members present, and introduced members of the Peoria Tribal Enrollment Committee. This Town Hall Meeting is intended to be informative, no voting or action will be taken.

Peoria Tribal Enrollment Committee Members:

Jenny Rampey, Chairman
Jeane Wynn
Kay Harper

- B. Enrollment Committee Chairman, Jenny Rampey, addressed the tribal members and gave a brief explanation as to why the Enrollment Committee is working with a consulting firm, Creating Stronger Nations, to revise the current Enrollment Ordinance, which was approved in 2002. Jenny introduced James Mills, of Creating Stronger Nations (CSN).
- C. James Mills gave a brief background of his experience with working with many Native American tribes and enrollment ordinance revisions over the last 27 years. The Enrollment Committee provided a power point presentation to highlight the proposed changes to the Enrollment Ordinance and encouraged members to ask questions of Mr. Mills as he outlined the proposed draft (see links to Proposed Enrollment Ordinance Draft, and power point slides on tribal website: www.peoriatribes.com)

1. DNA testing to determine parentage of new applicants.

Q: What type of DNA testing is used, and where do applicants go to receive a test? (tribal member)

A: Saliva swab; LabCorp \$30/person (James Mills, CSN)

Q: How many tribes in the United States are currently using DNA testing to assist in tribal enrollment?

A: Approximately 200 federally recognized tribes are using DNA testing (James Mills, CSN)

- D. The proposed Peoria Tribal Enrollment Ordinance was displayed on the projector for members to refer to, and ask questions of.

2. Families have changed; gender issues and birth certificate issues.
(Transgender, gender reassignment)

Q: Why is gender relevant to tribal enrollment?

A: In the case of gender reassignment, the proposed Enrollment Ordinance would require medical records to confirm gender reassignment surgery.

Q: All applicants must have a DNA test? What if no parents or relatives, or a family member does not want to cooperate with DNA testing requirement?
(tribal member)

A: The burden of proof is on the applicant, not the Tribe. We do that currently by providing a birth certificate. However, birth certificates are often amended, and there are many cases where the biological parent is not listed on the birth certificate. (James Mills, CSN)

General statements received from tribal members present at the meeting (not verbatim):

- Gender is irrelevant to tribal enrollment
- A name change to a current tribal members enrollment card, should be sufficient in regards to gender reassignment
- Gender should not be on current tribal enrollment cards
- Medical records should not be required to change gender with the Enrollment Office
- All references to gender should be stricken from proposed Enrollment Ordinance
- Membership is based on blood lineage, not gender; membership process should be the same regardless of gender
- Confidentiality could be a potential issue; HIPA training might be necessary for all staff members
- Selective DNA testing could be an option if birth certificate is in question
- A state issued birth certificate should be sufficient for tribal enrollment

General statements from the Enrollment Committee and James Mills, CSN (not verbatim):

- The Enrollment Committee does not desire to isolate a person or applicant according to their gender, we are simply trying to address enrollment issues we are currently facing and might potentially face in the future, in regards to transgender and gender reassignment
- Confidentiality is top priority with the Enrollment Committee and the Peoria Tribal Office staff members, and are all subject to the Privacy Act
- The Enrollment Committee is doing their due diligence to foresee potential issues that could have a negative impact on tribal enrollment
- Birth certificates are different for every state; it is becoming increasingly more difficult to distinguish between accurate or inaccurate birth certificates. The birth certificate is just the first step to determine identification, the DNA test confirms

- Many tribes today are requiring DNA testing to ensure tribal lineage and to prove parentage; thus resolving the issue of inaccurate birth certificates
- Selective DNA testing could feel discriminatory, or could potentially place too much of the burden on the Enrollment Committee to determine which applicants are selected for DNA testing
- DNA can be destroyed per contract/agreement with LabCorp
- There is an appeal process outlined in both the current and proposed Enrollment Ordinance
- Some applicants may be interested solely in tribal programs and benefits they receive if their Peoria Tribal Enrollment Application is approved; DNA would eliminate non-native blood applicants from
- Base rolls are not 100% accurate, which can make tribal enrollment challenging