



# COWLITZ TRIBE GENERAL COUNCIL

## Election Guidelines for Candidates and Audience, June 2018

*To improve the conduct of the election, the following guidelines have been adopted. The election will be overseen by the presiding officer or his or her designee whose responsibility will include enforcement of these guidelines.*

### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR CANDIDACY FOR ELECTED POSITIONS**

A prospective candidate for a General Council office or the Tribal Council must be at least eighteen (18) years of age and meet all of the criteria described in Article V, Section 5 of the Cowlitz Constitution below.

SECTION 1. All full status\* members of the Tribe who are at least eighteen (18) years of age and who hold a membership card have the right to vote in general council elections.

SECTION 2. All elective officials and tribal council members shall be chosen by secret ballot.

SECTION 3. General elections for elective tribal officials and tribal council members shall be held annually for terms expiring that year.

SECTION 4. General elections shall be held annually at the General Council meeting in June.

SECTION 5. The following members shall not be eligible for election to tribal office: those convicted of a felony crime or members who have been removed for cause from tribal office or employment.

(a) As used in Section 5 "removed for cause" of a tribal officer or employee means removal from tribal office or employment as the result of conviction in a court having jurisdiction or before the Elders Tribunal for serious actions including but not limited to:

- (1) Commission of a felony or other infamous conduct involving fraud or moral turpitude, including, but not limited to, embezzlement, bribery, or perjury,
- (2) For deliberate injury, conspiracy to cause injury, or attempted injury to the Tribe,
- (3) For failure of the tribal officer to substantially perform the duties of their office when such failure continues for sixty (60) days or more following the officer's receipt of written notice of such failure to perform such notice to include the specific nature of the failure and the means by which it can be remedied,
- (4) By reason of the officer willfully engaging in gross misconduct which is materially and demonstrably injurious to the Tribe, or
- (5) By reason of the officer's willful breach of duty to the Tribe in any material respect. A tribal officer or employee who has been suspended from their office or duties after formal charges being filed for any of the above activities shall be eligible for election to tribal office pending a formal decision of the charges by a court having jurisdiction or by the Elders Tribunal

\* "Full status" members enjoy all the rights and privileges of membership in the Cowlitz Indian Tribe as defined in the Cowlitz Policy of Membership.

### ***CAMPAIGNING AND NOMINATIONS***

- The General Council Secretary will read the name(s) of the incumbent(s) at the opening of nominations for the position.
- Nominations will be made from the floor. You may nominate yourself or a tribal member of voting age may nominate you.
- Names of candidates for a position will be listed on a screen visible to all as they are made and in the order they are made, and there will be no special indication of incumbent candidates on the screen listing or the ballot.
- Non-tribal members may not campaign for candidates.
- There is to be no campaigning in advance at tribal facilities or on tribal resources and no distribution of campaign materials on election day.
- Negative campaigning is strongly discouraged. This includes but is not limited to email, social media, and other internet sites. Negative campaigning is defined as name-calling, maligning the reputation of an opponent or the opponent's family, outright lies or distortion of facts about the opponent, or false claims on one's own behalf.
- Positive campaigning is strongly encouraged. Positive campaigning means speaking truthfully about your own accomplishments, your position on tribal issues, and your vision for the future of the Tribe.

### ***CANDIDATE SPEECHES***

- Each candidate will be allowed three (3) minutes for a campaign speech, with a time indicator alerting the speaker 30 seconds before the end of the time limit.
- If a candidate is also an employee of the Tribe, they are encouraged to delineate or separate between the two positions when making their speech.
- Candidates may not name-drop or use someone's name to bolster their credentials without the permission of the party whose name is to be used. If the person is deceased, permission may be granted in advance by their immediate family.
- The audience will hold applause, drumming, whooping, hollering, etc. until the end of all speeches for that office.

### ***VOTING AND COUNTING OF BALLOTS***

To increase efficiency and ease in the counting of ballots for the June 2018 tribal elections, Tribal Council has retained a third party company to help produce and count the ballots.

- Ballots listing nominees' names will be printed after speeches are concluded. Voting members will line up to receive a ballot for one office at a time using their barcoded wrist band as ID so that each person receives and turns in only one ballot. There will be no provision for write-in candidates. Individuals for whom it is difficult to stand in line will be assisted by designated volunteers.
- After obtaining a ballot, voting will be done by each voting member in a private, secured area.
- As ballots are turned in for counting, they will be electronically scanned. Any questionable ballots will be reviewed and adjudicated by the Sergeant At Arms and two other tribal members of his or her choosing who are neither nominees themselves, nor a member of the nominee's household. If the number of questionable ballots is not great enough to change the outcome of the election, they will not be adjudicated.

- Ballots will be retained in the tribal administrative office.

### ***ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS***

- The winner of each election for a single office (Tribal chair or Tribal secretary at this 2018 election) will be the individual receiving the highest number of clear ballots following any needed adjudication by the Sergeant At Arms and two other tribal members of his or her choosing as described above. If there is a tie for the highest number of clear ballots, the winner will be determined by an immediate re-vote between the two candidates who tied.
- The six winners of the Tribal Council seats will be the six individuals receiving the greatest number of clear ballots following any adjudication as described above. If there is a tie, the winner or winners will be determined by an immediate drawing of lots.
- The vote counts for all nominees will be posted at the conclusion of each election and the winners declared by the officer conducting the election.