



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Chief Randy Hart
Chief Ron LaFrance Jr.
Chief Paul O. Thompson
Sub-Chief Shelley Jacobs
Sub-Chief Michael L. Connors
Sub-Chief Eric Thompson

NEWS RELEASE

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Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and New York State Reach a Resolution of Revenue Sharing Dispute

Akwesasne Territory -- The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe announced today that they reached a Memorandum of Understanding with Governor Andrew M. Cuomo of the State of New York that is the first step to addressing longstanding land claims with Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties, outstanding issues with the New York Power Authority and resolve the Revenue Sharing Dispute with New York State.

“We’ve waited many years for a governor who was willing to sit down with all the parties to the land claim to come to a negotiated settlement. Governor Cuomo has accomplished much in the short time we’ve been meeting directly with him. He has given us assurances that our outstanding issues will be dealt with fairly,” said Chief Ron LaFrance, Jr. Part of the Memorandum of Understanding requires that the tribe release a portion of the amount that it has held in a restricted account since they began withholding payments to the state in 2010, in response to an unauthorized gaming operation located near Plattsburgh, NY, within the tribe’s zone of exclusivity, which includes Franklin, St. Lawrence, Clinton, Essex, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis and Warren Counties. The Memorandum of Understanding will guarantee that the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe will retain their exclusive authorization to operate slot machines within this zone, and the legislation proposed by the governor to authorize casino gaming in the remainder of the state will exclude the tribe’s zone.

Chief Randy Hart, who was not in Albany today for the signing of the historic agreement, stated, “Last week, when Governor Cuomo reached out to the Mohawk leadership to discuss revenue sharing, we saw this as an opportunity to reopen discussions on settlement of our claims. To our surprise, the governor accepted the challenge. Our claims have been in the courts of the United States for over thirty years. This is the first time since 2007, that New York State has been willing to sit down and talk settlement. We are optimistic that, with his commitment and with all of the parties at the table, we can make real progress.”

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“Governor Cuomo has shown the Mohawk leadership that he is sincere in his commitment to bringing all of the parties, including St. Lawrence and Franklin County, and the New York Power Authority together, to resolve our outstanding claims, in a manner that is beneficial and fair to all. For the counties and the Power Authority, a negotiated settlement will bring finality and the beginning of a new relationship with the tribe. We look forward to working together on these, and other matters of significance to the tribe and to our neighbors,” said Chief Paul Thompson. Chief Thompson, who signed an agreement with Governor Pataki in 2003 that was to resolve many of these same issues feels, “This governor has the ability to make things happen. We believe it is about time that the state follows through on the promises made to the Mohawks in 2003, and later with the signing of the Land Claim Settlement Agreement. We thank Governor Cuomo for agreeing to help make that happen.”

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.