



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

Chief Barbara A. Lazore
Chief James W. Ransom
Chief Monica M. Jacobs
Sub-Chief Stacy A. Adams
Sub-Chief Ronald LaFrance Jr.

PRESS RELEASE

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TRIBAL COUNCIL RESPONDS TO THREATENING BEHAVIOR

Council will not allow office to be opened for Disaffected Group

Akwesasne Territory. Over the past few weeks, the “community spokespersons” have stepped up attacks on the Tribal Council and the three chief system of government. The Tribal Council believes it is time to respond to this increasingly threatening behavior.

“We want to reassure tribal members that the Tribal Council remains in control,” said Tribal Chief Barbara A. Lazore. “The spokespersons group will not be permitted to set up an office in the tribal community building.”

Chief Lazore was responding to a press release issued on Monday by spokesperson Cindy Smoke alleging that an office had been granted to her. On Tuesday morning, Chief Lazore and Chief Ransom issued a letter to Ms. Smoke indicating that no office was granted to her and she was directed to vacate the Tribal Council’s boardroom which she did.

“We will not tolerate intimidation and harassment of visitors and others,” said Tribal Chief James W. Ransom. Chief Ransom was responding to spokesperson’s Smoke’s harassment of a delivery person making a delivery to the Tribe on Tuesday. She yanked the invoice out of the hand of the delivery person and resisted efforts to retrieve it.

“We have many hard-working employees who work to provide important services to tribal members, said Tribal Chief Lazore. “We will not allow these employees to be harassed or have their work disrupted.”

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Helping Build A Better Tomorrow

On Monday morning an incident occurred, wherein a community spokesperson who confronted Tribal staff demanding confidential information from them. The Tribal Council had previously made it clear that employee salaries were confidential information and would not be released to the community spokespersons.

“We continue to be the legal and lawful representatives of the Tribal membership and we will continue to work to provide essential governmental services,” said Chief Jacobs. She was responding to earlier press releases from the disaffected group alleging that the Tribal Council was “defunct.”

“We are growing concerned that their actions will jeopardize the delivery of programs and services to the community,” said Chief Ransom. “No one benefits from such tactics.” Chief Ransom was responding to allegations made by the disaffected group that they had sent a letter to the Tribe’s banks trying to change authorization to tribal accounts. Such an action could result in bank accounts being frozen and community services threatened.

“We have shown the community spokespersons we are willing to meet and discuss legitimate concerns,” said Chief Jacobs. She was referring to the meeting held Monday and the frank and open discussion of issues that took place.

The Tribal Council continues to work with its governance committee to make improvements to the Tribal government to better meet the needs of the tribal membership. A community survey is being planned to guide the development of a new governance document to replace the 1994 Tribal Procedures Act. That legislation is one of the disaffected group’s major bones of contention.

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