

## **PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE FORT PECK TRIBES' CONSITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

Developing and adopting a new tribal constitution is perhaps the most important process your tribal organization can undertake and all involved took their work and this enormous responsibility seriously.

It cannot be stressed enough that this is only the first draft. The final draft comes from you, the tribal members. There will be Community meetings to determine what it is that you want in your constitution. As the facilitator of these meetings, I will walk the participants through the proposed changes to the constitution and explain both the meaning and the impact of those changes. In addition, the tribal membership, that's you, will have the opportunity to make the changes and set the course of this constitution as you see fit. So all it takes is for you to come to the meetings, ask questions, offer suggestions and take ownership of the process. And for those who you who cannot attend the meetings, you will have the opportunity to submit written comments and suggestions.

There are not many substantial changes to the current constitution. Mostly, it is about clarity, simplification and changes to reflect today's standards of a modern tribal government. That said, those changes that are substantial are listed here for your review.

- The Preamble. The name of the tribe is changed from the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes to the Nakoda/Nakona and Dakota Tribes. Also, preambles are not an Article of the constitution as currently stated in your constitution; they are in effect an introduction.
- Section 3 of Article III eliminated the position of Secretary as a Board officer, since in practice the Secretary is an appointed position.
- Section 4 authorizes the appointment of a non-voting tribal secretary.
- Section 5-6 allows for the staggered terms of Board members so that eventually all Board members will serve four (4) year terms. Current terms are two (2) years.
- Section 7 requires that the Board adopt a Code of Ethics which requires that the Board be bound by ethical behavioral standards.
- Article IV, Section 5, letters d and e require that persons with certain felony convictions are barred for life from running from office, while those with lesser felony convictions must wait ten (10) years before running for a position on the Tribal Executive Board.
- Article X, Section 1 of the current constitution has been deleted.

Most importantly, every voting tribal member should read the proposed constitution and come prepared to ask questions and offer suggestions. After all, this is your constitution.

Facilitated by:

James Mills  
Creating Stronger Nations, Inc.