



***** PUBLIC NOTICE *****

Special Meeting of the General Council

December 12, 2020 at 9 a.m.
Taholah School Gymnasium/Cafeteria

Greetings Quinault Indian Nation General Councilmembers,

The Quinault Indian Nation faces an unprecedented constitutional dilemma. The Nation's Constitution requires that the General Council meet in-person, within the boundaries of the reservation. Due to the large gathering restrictions now imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the Nation cannot safely convene the General Council as it has in the past.

General Council meetings typically bring together more than 500 QIN citizens. During the pandemic, gathering in such large numbers poses too grave a risk everyone's health and safety, especially our elders and other vulnerable populations. At the same time, we cannot afford to remain in our current state of constitutional paralysis. We need the General Council's voice and decision making to move the Nation forward.

To address this dilemma, the Quinault Business Committee (BC) is convening a special meeting of the Council at 9 a.m. on December 12 to discuss and vote on a constitutional amendment (see full text below). The amendment would allow secure, private, virtual General Council meetings and alternative ways for the Council to vote, including but not limited to absentee, mail-in, drop-off and online ballots, during declared emergencies.

Whether it is the current COVID-19 emergency confronting our people, or an earthquake, tsunami, or some other crisis, the Nation needs a way for the General Council to fulfill its essential functions during emergencies. By considering this constitutional amendment, we can come out of this crisis stronger as a community and better prepared for the next declared emergency.

What the General Council Special Meeting will look like:

The Quinault Business Committee (QBC) is considering a meeting format which would convene a quorum of General Council, in-person, on the reservation to meet the requirements of our constitution as currently written. The QBC is confident we can safeguard the health and safety of those attending the in-person quorum meeting by providing facemasks, facilitating social distancing and following other best practices.

General Council members who are not part of the in-person quorum will be able to participate in the meeting virtually. The QBC is also considering the option of providing additional places on the reservation where members can safely gather to participate via a live camera feed.

In the coming days and weeks leading up to the December 12 meeting, QIN staff and leadership will be following up with more detail by mail, email, text, social media and the next edition of the Nugguam.

We understand the concerns and apprehensions created by these unprecedented circumstances we find ourselves in and appreciate your understanding and patience.

Constitutional Amendment:

Blue = Added

ARTICLE III - GENERAL COUNCIL

NEW SECTION:

SECTION 5 – MEETINGS DURING NATIONAL EMERGENCIES: Effective immediately upon adoption of this Section 5, in the event the Business Committee has declared by resolution a national emergency due to natural or man-made disaster which prevents the General Council from meeting in person at a place within the boundaries of the Quinault Reservation and threatens the health, safety, and welfare of the community: (a) Meetings of the General Council, whether annual or special, shall be held through a secure, private, virtual platform originating within the boundaries of the Quinault Reservation. (b) Such meetings of the General Council shall be announced by the Business Committee by posting notices at Taholah, Queets, Amanda Park and any other place determined by the Business Committee at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting and by publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the vicinity of the Reservation. Notice shall include instructions for participation on the virtual platform. (c) The purpose of a virtual General Council meeting shall continue to be to elect or recall the members of the Business Committee and to declare the will of the General Council on issues placed before the General Council by the agenda and by persons raising issues at any meeting. (d) A quorum for conducting business at a virtual meeting shall be fifty (50) voting members. A person shall be deemed to be present when he or she is properly participating in the virtual platform. (e) Voting on any issue during a virtual meeting will be by any acceptable method of secure voting, including but not limited to absentee, mail-in, drop-off, and/or online ballot. (f) Nominations for Business Committee positions shall be made during the meeting through the virtual platform, and a nominee must be present at the virtual meeting in order to be elected. (g) Persons who have been approved by the Enrollment Committee for adoption must be present at the virtual meeting with one enrolled member to speak on his or her behalf, and failure to attend the virtual meeting shall nullify the current application/petition. (h) All other requirements for General Council meetings shall remain the same when the meeting is held on a virtual platform. Virtual meetings shall be deemed “in-person” provided a national emergency has been properly declared.

ARTICLE IV - BUSINESS COMMITTEE

SECTION 8 - MEETINGS: Regular open meetings of the Business Committee shall be held at least once in each month on a regular schedule set by the Business Committee. Special meetings may be called on a reasonable notice to all officers. Executive sessions of the Business Committee may be held on majority vote of the Committee. All regular meetings shall be held

within the boundaries of the Quinault Reservation, [except when a virtual meeting is necessary because of a national emergency as provided herein.](#)

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENT

SECTION 1: This Constitution may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) vote of a quorum of the General Council at an annual or special meeting provided, however, that the notice of the meeting at which an amendment is proposed shall be given at least thirty (30) days before the meeting, and shall set forth the proposed amendment and an explanation thereof; and provided further that after discussion of the amendment at the meeting there shall be a recess of at least 30 minutes to enable the members to further discuss the amendment among themselves.

SECTION 2: The Business Committee shall call a meeting to consider a proposed amendment upon its own motion, or upon receipt of a petition signed by fifty (50) voting members or upon resolution of the General Council.

SECTION 3: [Constitutional amendments may be considered and adopted during a virtual meeting as provided herein.](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Latosha Underwood, at (360) 276-8211 ext. 2555 or LUNDERWOOD@quinault.org.