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GRAND RIVER BANDS OF OTTAWA INDIANS
PETITION FOR FEDERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Michigan Indian Legal Services
December 7, 2000

134 W. State Street
Traverse City, MI 49684

231-947-0122

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INTRODUCTION

This Petition was written on behalf of the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, by attorneys at Michigan Indian Legal Services, with the assistance of the GRBOI Tribal Council, numerous Tribal members. Dr. James McClurken provided invaluable assistance in documentation and editing.

To avoid duplication of exhibits, those footnotes citing to "EHR" refer to documents which can be found in the exhibits of Dr. McClurken's ethnohistorical report, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," which accompanies the Petition. These are found in boxes 1 through 5. Those footnotes labeled "PET," and each folder is identified as "PET." They can be found in boxes 6 and 7. Footnotes are in chronological order. If an exact date was not available, those listing only a month can be found at the end of the specific dates for that month. Those listing only a year, can be found at the end of the rest of the exhibits for that year. Undated documents have been filed in alphabetical order at the beginning of the exhibit box.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians (hereinafter Tribe) are the descendants of and political successors to the signatories of the 1821 Treaty of Chicago, the 1836 Treaty of Washington, and the 1855 Treaty of Detroit. We have had continuous political dealings with the United States from treaty-times to the present. Our Tribe is currently organized as a nonprofit corporation to access funding to serve our members and advocate for our treaty-based rights.

In the early 18th century, Ottawas settled a L'Arbre Croche in present Emmet County, Michigan. Some spread down the East side of Lake Michigan to the St. Joseph River; others drifted into Wisconsin and Illinois; still others were scattered along the southern shore of Lake Erie from Detroit into Pennsylvania.

Those who remained at L'Arbre Croche hunted during the winter months far to the South, and some of them began to summer in the Grand River Valley, along the Kalamazoo, Muskegon, and Grand Rivers.¹ They lived in several close knit villages along these Rivers and functioned as an autonomous group, independent of the Ottawa to the North at L'Arbre Croche and other Michigan Ottawa settlements. These Bands became known as the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians.

The Grand River Bands eventually spread out to other area rivers. In the early 1800's the permanent villages of the Grand River Ottawa were located on the Thornapple, Grand, White, Pere Marquette, and the Big and Little Manistee Rivers.

¹ Ibid.,

The Treaty of 1836 Reserved land in Manistee County,² but few Grand River Bands members initially moved from their historic lands. After the Treaty of 1855, however, our ancestors were compelled to move from their traditional village sites to reservations in Mason,³ Muskegon and Oceana Counties, though we never completely abandoned the resources and sites of our traditional villages. The majority of our people continue to live in our traditional homeland today.⁴

We are also part of a larger whole, the "Annishnabek" people, which includes all Ottawa Tribes. Historically, the Annishnabek have always come together for political and religious reasons. For centuries the Ottawa Tribes have been meeting at the ancient Ottawa council grounds at "Greensky Hill" for political and religious "Camp Meetings."⁵ Even after Treaty times, the Annishnabek banded together to negotiate with the federal government. . This

² PET: Map of Reservations, 5 November, 2000.

³ PET: Ibid.

⁴ PET: Current Census Map

⁵ PET: "Indians Worship;" 19 August 1910, Grand Traverse Herald Reel - 24, page 1, Column 6, PET: "Meeting is Over;" 26 August 1910, Grand Traverse Herald - Reel 24, page 1, Column 2, PET: "The Indian Camp Meeting;" 3 August 1911, Elk Rapids Progress- Reel 8, Page 4, Column 3, PET: "Indian Camp Meeting;" 3 August 1911, Grand Traverse Herald and Traverse Bay Eagle, Reel 25, Page 1, Column 4, PET: "The Indian Camp Meeting;" 27 July 1911, Charlevoix Sentinel - Reel 15, Page 1, Column 3, PET: "Indian Camp Meeting;" 9 August 1911, Charlevoix Courier - Reel 2, Page 1, Column 5, PET: "Camp Meeting at Susan Lake;" 21 August 1912, Charlevoix Courier - Reel 2, Page 6, Column 3, PET: "Indian Camp Meeting at Northport to be Revived." 16 August 1917, Charlevoix Sentinel - Reel 17, Page 5, Column 3, PET: "Indian Camp Meeting;" 15 August 1918, Charlevoix Sentinel - Reel 17, page 1, Column 5, PET: Sault Ste Marie, "Indians Hold A Camp Meeting", Sept 9, 1920, The Evening News " PET: Elk Rapids Progress- 11 August 1921, Reel 11, Page 1, Column 2, "The Indian Camp Meeting; PET: "Indian Camp Meeting;" 12 August 1926, Leelanau Enterprise - Reel 6, Page 1, Column 3, PET: "Indians Will Have Fair;" 12 August 1926, Leelanau Enterprise - Reel 6, Page 1, Column 3, PET: "Making Plans for Indian Camp Meet;" 27 July 1927, Charlevoix Courier, PET: "Indian Meeting Held Next Week;" 25 August 1927, Leelanau Enterprise, PET: Program and Information Regard to Indian Camp Meeting, Thursday, August 23, 1928, PET: "Greensky Hill;" September 5, 1928, Charlevoix Courier - Reel 8, Page 4, Column 3, PET: "Indian Camp Meeting and Greensky Hill." 14 August 1929, Charlevoix Courier - Reel 8, Page 10, Column 3, PET: Indian Camp Meeting, 9 August 1946, GRBOI Files.

practice continued throughout the first half of the Twentieth Century, and in certain respects, continues today at our Pow Wows and religious celebrations.

In 1918, we joined with other Ottawa Tribes, and empowered Jacob Walker Cobmoosa to petition the federal government to redress Treaty violations. Cobmoosa lobbied on behalf of the Grand River Bands for more than three decades.

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians began efforts to restore a formal government-to-government relationship with the United States immediately upon passage of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). We petitioned to reorganize under the BIA in 1935. Commissioner John Collier himself visited with our leaders at Grand Rapids, Michigan and assured them that the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians were eligible for reorganization. The BIA argued that, even though we were eligible for acknowledgment, it lacked funds to purchase land for our Tribe and to provide social services for us during the Great Depression. The BIA believed that restoration of the federal relationship with our Tribe would reduce the social service funds available from the State of Michigan. Washington officials dragged out the process of restoring our government-to-government relationship with the United States until 1940, when World War II drew all of American's resources into the military effort. Hundreds of our people, including our most able leaders, enlisted in the armed services and efforts to restore our government stalled.

From the 1940s until the early 1980s, the Ottawa Tribes again joined with our Ottawa brothers to form the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association (NMOA). The NMOA represented a confederation of unacknowledged Ottawa bands from all the regional divisions listed in the treaties of 1836 and 1855. Descendants of Chiefs and Headmen from Treaty times continued

ditional kin-based political system within the structure of NMOA. Meeting Minutes of Units 4, 5, 6, and 7, in the areas where our members were concentrated, reflect an autonomous political leadership, which also comprised a distinct community.

The NMOA filed several land claims suits against the U.S. Government in the latter 1940s. These were successfully litigated under the Indian Claims Commission. The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians received an award from undervaluation of lands ceded by the 1821 treaty of Chicago. To facilitate payment of the "Docket-40K" Claim, the U.S. Congress and the BIA received and approved a list of our modern membership in 1976.⁶

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians is the last major tribe to petition for federal recognition. Since all other major confederations of historical tribes who signed the 1836 and 1855 treaties have been acknowledged, we believe that we have a strong case for restoring our tribal government.

THE GRAND RIVER BANDS OF OTTAWA INDIANS TODAY

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians continue to be a kin-based society, comprised of several major extended families, who live in both urban and rural populations in western Michigan. Grand Rapids, Michigan, was built on our traditional village called Bowting, and a significant number of members reside in the Grand Rapids area of Kent County. A significant number of our members also continue to live on our rural reservation areas in Muskegon-Oceana

⁶ Bob Van Alstine to Mrs. Waunetta Dominic, 9 September 1980, GRBOI Files

Counties.⁷ Kinship ties extend beyond geographic regions, and provide the basis for GRBOI's "distinct community."

A 1910 Census Map⁸ created with Data from a 1910 Roll of our membership compared with a Current Census Map,⁹ reveals that our membership is still concentrated in our historic Reservation areas, along the western shore of Lake Michigan, and in the cities that non-Indians built at the sites of our historical villages.¹⁰

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians have maintained informal support networks for housing, education, economic development, and other services programs. In order to be more effective, and to petition for federal recognition, the Tribe established a modern centralized government in 1994, forming the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Inc.

The Tribal Council is a representative body, which keeps the membership informed, and encourages member involvement. Some examples follow:

- Information has been gathered and provided at local cultural gatherings such as the Three Fires Pow Wow (Grand Rapids), Grand Valley American Indian Lodge Pow Wow (Grand Rapids), Hart Pow Wow (Hart), Spring Celebration (Cannonsburg Twp.); Ghost Supper (Elbridge Twp.); cemetery cleaning (Elbridge Twp.); memorial services (Muskegon

⁷ Most of the Grand River Ottawa from our Reservation lands in Mason/Manistee County incorporated as the "Little River Band" in 1983, and were recognized by Congress in 1994.

⁸ 1910 Census Map, date?

⁹ Current Census Map, December 2000.

¹⁰ Many of the GRBOI members in the northern Reservation area of Mason County formed the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians in 1983, and were recognized by Congressional Act in 1994.

cemetery); and others. Meetings of the Tribal Council with the members concerning federal acknowledgment were conducted at various locations.

- Monthly Constitutional Committee meets were held to draft a proposed Tribal Constitution.
- Federal Acknowledgment and enrollment verification meetings were held in Elbridge, Hart, Muskegon, and Grand Rapids
- Community members from the geographic areas which includes Mason, Oceana, Muskegon, and Kent counties are represented at quarterly meetings with the Tribal Council. These representatives report back to their community, as well as voice their community's opinions during the meetings. The meetings have included such topics as federal recognition, tribal enrollment, proceeds for undervalued land that was sold by the Federal government, family preservation, cultural preservation, and issues regarding burials.
- Bi-annual community hearings throughout the Tribe's geographic area are held to gain input from individual members concerning tribal matters.
- Tribal Council members attended enrollment training that was conducted by the BIA Michigan Agency in Sault Ste. Marie.
- Seminars for the membership are provided by Michigan Indian Legal Services concerning Federal Acknowledgment.
- Presentations by Dr. McClurken concerning our ethnohistorical report have been provided to community.

unding was obtained from ANA to implement A Strategic Action Plan, and a Survey was conducted of the membership to assist the Tribe to address social and economic development according to community defined standards.

In recent years, we have strengthened our social and political solidarity by providing cultural programs and seminars in the following areas:

- Tribal members access information in a centralized location;
- Social service workers from Indian Family Resources have used the office for parenting education classes and counseling one time a week;
- A tribal member who is a substance abuse counselor from Project Rehab facilitates a women's support group at the office;
- The largest pow wow in the area is organized by our Tribe;
- We also sponsor The Native American Veterans' annual pow wow.
- Annual traditional celebrations are held for our members and hosted at various locations;
- A holiday meal is being provided targeting our homeless or those in need; and
- Meals for our seniors were provided twice a week to give our elders a time to socialize and hear of upcoming events;
- Ottawa language classes are held.

The most difficult issue facing the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians today is the gradual dissolution of our historic community structure due to the lack of federally funded economic and community development programs which could provide the means for us to

... viable economic base, provide employment and housing opportunities, and improve
... conditions of our people.

PREVIOUS FEDERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The GRBOI submit this Petition pursuant to 25 CFR 83.8, as a Tribe having
unambiguous previous Federal acknowledgment

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians are the descendants of and political successors
to the signatories of the 1821 Treaty of Chicago, the 1836 Treaty of Washington, and the 1855
Treaty of Detroit.

Our enrollment criteria is as follows:

- (a) . . . Is at least one-fourth (1/4) documented Indian blood; and,
- (b) Traces to members of the Grand River Bands whose members are included on
the Durant Roll of 1908 as approved by the Secretary of the Interior on February
18, 1910; or,
- (c) Traces to individuals on the 1870 Annuity Payrolls of Chippewas and Ottawas of
Michigan listed under the following chiefs: Ne-be-nay-ke-zhick, Pay-shaw-se-ga, Maw-beece,
Kaw-gay-gaw-bo-we, Me-tay-wis, Naw-gaw-ne-quo-ung, Aish-ke-baw-gosh, Maish-ke-aw-she
Shaw-be-quo-ung, Ching-gwa-she, Pay-baw-me, Aw-ke-aw-she, Maish-key,¹¹ Me-tay-o-mig,
Aish-quay-o-say, A-ken-bell, Pe-Nay-Se, Waw-be-gay-kake, or Pay-Quo-Tush.

¹¹ Maish-key also appears spelled Maish-caw in certain documents.

Both the 1870 Annuity Payroll and the 1910 Durant Roll are membership Rolls created by the U.S. Government to represent the full membership of the Grand River Bands.

In order to enroll with the Petitioner, one must be able to trace to a name on one of those documents. Thus, the Petitioner represents the descendants of the Grand River Bands as recognized by the Government in 1870 and again in 1910.

The last date of unambiguous federal acknowledgment is no earlier than 1870, when annuity payments from the 1855 Treaty were finally dispersed.

83.7(a)

THE GRAND RIVER BANDS OF OTTAWA INDIANS
HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS AN AMERICAN INDIAN ENTITY ON A
SUBSTANTIALLY CONTINUOUS BASIS SINCE 1900

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians has been identified as an American Indian entity since 1900. The following definitions apply:

§83.7(a) The petitioner has been identified as an American Indian entity on a substantially continuous basis since 1900. Evidence that the group's character as an Indian entity has from time to time been denied shall not be considered to be conclusive evidence that this criterion has not been met. Evidence to be relied upon in determining a group's

Indian identity may include one or a combination of the following, as well as other evidence of identification by other than the petitioner itself or its members.

83.8(d) To be acknowledged a petitioner that can demonstrate previous Federal acknowledgment must show that:

(1) The group meets the requirements of the criterion in Section 83.7(a), except that such identification shall be demonstrated since the point of last Federal acknowledgment. The group must further have been identified by such sources as the same tribal entity that was previously acknowledged or as a portion that has evolved from that entity.

(1) Identification as an Indian entity by Federal authorities.

Throughout the 20th century, the Grand River Bands continually faced the challenge of overcoming the often misinterpreted language of Article 5 of the 1855 Treaty of Detroit which reads:

The tribal organization of said Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, except so far as may be necessary for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of the agreement, is hereby dissolved; and if at any time hereafter, further negotiations with the United States, in reference to any matters contained herein, should become necessary, no general convention of the Indians shall be called; but such as reside in the vicinity of any usual place for payment, or those only who are immediately interested in the questions involved, may arrange all matters between themselves and the United States, without the concurrence of other portions of their

people, and as fully and conclusively, and with the same effect in every respect, as if all were represented.¹²

This single clause of the 1855 Treaty colored the United States' relationship with Grand River Bands throughout the 20th century, as Federal authorities would often claim that the Grand River Bands' tribal status had been disintegrated; the tribal leadership would counter this argument by saying the clause had been entered at the request of the Michigan tribes, so that they could each negotiate their own relationships with the Federal government separately. This conflict was finally resolved in 1979 by Judge Noel Fox, Chief Judge of the Federal District Court for the Western District of Michigan, in his opinion in United States v. State of Michigan.¹³ After extensive research and expert testimony, Judge Fox made the following findings regarding Article 5 of the Treaty of 1855:

Article 5 of the Treaty of 1855 was inserted for the convenience of the United States in its future dealings with the Indian Bands.

This clause was intended to accomplish two goals: to relieve the United States of the burden of convening general councils in the event local matters required attention in the future, and to satisfy the Ottawa and Chippewa's desire to be treated separately. Article 5 had no impact on the government-to-government structure of the bands. There was no change in the way in which the Indian agents dealt with them after the treaty, except they were never convened again as a group....But the meaning of Article 5 can be easily discerned from the four corners of the treaty. There are no ambiguities to be resolved in favor of the Indians. The United States wanted to handle disputes arising as a result of the 1855 treaty on a localized basis and sought to avoid the need for calling a general convention of the Indians to resolve future problems, and the Indians of the treaty area wished to be treated

¹² Kappler, Charles J., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 1904, vol. 2, pp. 725-772.

¹³ 471 F. Supp 192 (1979).

with locally, and not as an artificial “Ottawa and Chippewa nation.” This--and only this--is what Article 5 accomplishes.

It is important to keep this final resolution of the issue in mind when examining the Federal relationship to the Grand River Bands throughout the 20th century. Despite the Grand River Bands’ correct assertion that Article 5 had no effect on their government-to-government relationship with the United States, the Federal Government often misinterpreted Article 5 and acted as if it had dissolved that relationship. As a result, many Federal documents mistakenly assert that the Ottawa Tribes, including the Grand River Bands, have been “dissolved,” implying that they are not an “Indian entity.” However, scores of other documents confirm the opposite.

The Grand River Bands have been identified as an Indian entity continuously since 1900. Between 1900 and 1910, the Indian Agents that created the Durant Roll identified the Grand River Bands as an Indian entity.¹⁴ The letter of protest submitted to the BIA by the “chiefs and headmen” of “the Grand River Band” on July 29, 1909 is evidence of continuity as an Indian entity.¹⁵ The letter, prepared with the assistance of Horace Durant, states that “according to a long established law and custom of *our tribe* our half-breed or mixed-blood relatives do not share in payments made to the tribe without consent of the chiefs and headmen...”(emphasis added)¹⁶

In 1911, the Grand River Bands elected a new group of administrators to represent their interests, including enrollment of tribal members eligible to participate in any property

¹⁴ For a more complete discussion of the creation of the Durant Roll, see *infra*, p. 106.

¹⁵ PET: Rodney L. Negake et. al. To Commission of Indian Affairs, 29 July 1909, BIA - Durant 45533-1908, 053.

¹⁶ Ibid.

settlements, location of tribal property and defining their rights to it, and pursuit of land claims in court.¹⁷ In 1915 these leaders approached the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for funds to pay for legal representation.¹⁸ As discussed more fully infra,¹⁹ the Council was formed by Chiefs and Headmen, as identified in previous documents. This suggests a continuing Tribal entity.

In July 1918, the Grand River Band Members “assembled at Elbridge” and elected Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, grandson of Ogema Cobmoosa of Elbridge, to represent them.²⁰ Although other Ottawa Tribes also signed this document, the Grand River Bands signed as a Tribe, on the site of their Reservation lands. In addition, The Traverse City Record Eagle reported in 1918, that Cobmoosa “spoke to Indians at Elbridge, Monday, there addressing the Grand River Band”.²¹

Walker Cobmoosa lobbied actively on behalf of the Grand River Bands during 1920 and 1921.²² He was kept apprised by U.S. officials. of the status of a Bill to allow the 1836 Treaty signatories to bring Claims²³ A 1920 correspondence indicates that the COIA “advised” Cobmoosa, and other Ottawa leaders, that it would take no action until the a Claims bill was

¹⁷ EHR: S. Robinson to H. Bailey, Power of Attorney, 18 March 1911, Bailey Papers.

¹⁸ EHR: James McLaughlin to Henry Bailey, 18 December 1915, Bailey Papers.

¹⁹ See infra. discussion in 83.7(c), 1910-1948, p.

²⁰ PET: Power of Attorney for Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, 21 December 1918, Record Group 75, Entry 637, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

²¹ PET: Traverse City Record Eagle, 5 December 1918.

²² EHR: Jacob Cobmoosa to Woodrow Wilson, 31 May 1920, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013, J.W. Cobmoosa to Woodrow Wilson, 9 June 1921, CCF-Sault 96000-1919:013,

²³ PET: S.G. Hopkins to J.W. Cobmoosa, 9 June 1920, CCF-General Services 96000-1919:013, F.M. Godwin to Mr. Jacob Cobmoosa, 21 June 1921, CCF-General Services 96000-1919:013.

passed.²⁴ Walker Cobmoosa also took up the fight to regain land patents that had been swindled from Grand River Bands members. He lobbied the Commission of Indian Affairs throughout 1920, in an effort to clear title to the land allotment of Kaykaykoonse, a GRBOI Ottawa.²⁵

In 1928, evidence that a Tribal system remained among the Manistee Grand River Bands is a letter regarding hunting and fishing rights sent by the headmen in Manistee. While obviously less articulate than the educated Cobmoosa, the headmen of the Manistee community petitioned the COIA in 1928 to protect their hunting and fishing rights:

This Items refers in regarding (sic)Michigan Indian game and fish Rights reserved by various treaties when, we the Michigan Indians, Ottawas and Chippewas ceded this land to the government we did not include with the wild game we Reserved them for our own use.

And we the Indians are molested by the whites lease they see us traping (sic) muskrats for our own food they Rested us and fine us or go to the jail (sic).²⁶

The letter identifies, albeit crudely, the headmen of the Manistee community:

Here, in Manistee County, those whom it got pull are names as follows

1. John Waymegwans
2. James Theodore
3. Nelson Theodore
4. Louie Bailey

²⁴ PET: E.B. Merritt to Geo Allen, 260, 23 June 1920, CCF Mackinac 54767- 1919.

²⁵ PET: Jacob Walker Cobmoosa to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 5 July 1920, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350; PET: Jacob Walker Cobmoosa to the Hon. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 August 1920, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350; PET: E.B. Merritt to J.W. Cobmoosa, 8 September 1920, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350; PET: E.B. Merritt to Mr. Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, 30 October 1920, CCF-MACK 9495-1917:350.rec; PET: C.F. Hauke to Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, 8 December 1922, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350.

²⁶ EHR: John Waymegwans et al. to [Commissioner of Indian Affairs], 7 December 1928, CCF Mt. Pleasant 55390-1928. 115.

5. Wm. Sam²⁷

As discussed supra, these names indicate the continuance of a kin-based political system within the Grand River Bands. Furthermore, Federal documents identifying a well organized GRBOI political entity in the 1930s, which also follows the kin-based structure of previous generations, is itself evidence that the GRBOI existed as an Indian entity throughout the 1920's.²⁸

Between 1934 and 1939, the Grand River Bands pursued IRA Reorganization. Implicit in the correspondence between Grand River Bands Leaders and Federal Authorities is the identification of the Grand River Bands as an American Indian Entity.²⁹

On May 4, 1935, BIA Agent Mark L. Burns and Superintendent Christy filed a report on the conditions of the Michigan Indians under the Tomah jurisdiction. They had visited Grand River Bands communities and found distinct and functioning communities that they did not believe could all be helped the same way, due to differences in background.³⁰

In 1935, the Federal Government held a series of referendum votes among Ottawa and Chippewa tribes to determine whether the tribes wanted to be recognized under the IRA.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ For a full discussion of the GRBOI campaign for IRA Reorganization, see *infra*, p 113.

²⁹ EHR: J. Cobmoosa to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 February 1933, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013; F. Christy to J. Chingman, 1 August 1935 CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; E. Pego to Hon. Commissioner, 25 October 1935, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013. EHR: F. Christy to J. Chingman, 1 August 1935, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; J. Chingman to J. Collier, 9 August 1935, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; J. Collier to J. Chingman, 23 August 1935, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066. EHR: E. Pego to J. Collier, 27 May 1938, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066. EHR: E. Pego and P. Stone to Senator Wheeler, 29 March 1938, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; E. Pego and P. Stone to J. Collier, 31 March 1938, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066.

³⁰ EHR: M. L. Burns and Frank Christy to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 4 May 1935, CCF-Tomah 34687-1934, 310.

Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes authorized the BIA to hold votes at certain locations, ignoring the requests of several southern Ottawa bands, including the Grand River Bands.³¹ Federal Congressman Frank Hook, along with the requests of concerned people like him, got the referendum process extended in 1936 to include bands like the Grand River Bands.³² These letters, too, identify the GRBOI as a sustaining American Indian Entity.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier identified the Grand River Bands as an American Indian Entity by meeting the Ottawas at Grand Rapids on October 24, 1935 and promising there to investigate issues of money owed the Grand River Bands under the 1855 Treaty.³³ Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, impatient after hearing nothing on the subject for three months, wrote to the BIA in January and February 1936; the responses he received led him to believe that the Bureau had decided to allow the Grand River Bands to pursue IRA acknowledgment.³⁴

In 1936, Indian Agent Mark Burns openly acknowledged the Grand River Bands' as an "Indian entity" when he wrote, referring to the Grand River Bands, "I feel that they are entitled to come under the Reorganization Act."³⁵

³¹ EHR: F. Langdon to R. Woodruff, 4 June 1935, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066.

³² EHR: J. Cobmoosa to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 16 January 1936, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013.

³³ EHR: E. Pego to Hon. Commissioner, 25 October 1935, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013; Memorandum to Mr. Reeves, 30 October 1935, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013.

³⁴ EHR: J. Cobmoosa to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 16 January 1936, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013; D. Murphy to J. Cobmoosa, 13 February 1936, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013; J. Cobmoosa to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 February 1936, CCF-General Services 96000-1919, 013.

³⁵ EHR: M. L. Burns to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 16 June 1936, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066.

In 1938, Commissioner Collier wrote a letter to Senator Wheeler saying that since the Grand River Bands had been taken care of by the State of Michigan, the Federal Government was reluctant to interfere until it had enough funding to do at least as good a job as the State had done. Again implicit in this letter is identification of an Indian entity encompassing the Grand River Bands.³⁶

Enos Pego opposed BIA inaction on Grand River Bands' reorganization in a series of correspondence; this correspondence also reflects that the Grand River Bands were still an Indian entity.³⁷

In 1947, Jacob Walker Cobmoosa filed Docket 4 on behalf of the Grand River Bands, as one Indian entity. It was the first Michigan Ottawa ICC claim cite. Furthermore, 1940's documents relevant to the formation of NMOA in 1948 establish that the Grand River Bands was still functioning as an American Indian Entity.³⁸

By December 1950, Grand River Bands communities had formed Units 4 and 5 of the NMOA, and by 1952 Grand River Bands Ottawas comprised 45% of NMOA total membership. Considering the significance of Grand River Bands influence in the NMOA, and the instant and developing recognition of the NMOA by the Federal Government, it is safe to say that the

³⁶ EHR: F. Langdon to R. Woodruff, 4 June 1935, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066.

³⁷ EHR: A. Engel to J. Collier, 22 April 1938, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; May 11, 1938. W. Zimmerman to E. Pego, 11 May 1938, CCF-Tomah (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; E. Pego to J. Collier, 3 June 1938, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; E. Pego to J. Collier, 27 May 1938, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066; F. Daiker to E. Pego, 18 October 1938, CCF-General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066.

³⁸ EHR: Robert Dominic to Cornelius Bailey, 11 September 1948, Bailey Papers. EHR: Names and Comments, 28 September 1948, Bailey Papers, EHR: Robert Dominic to Cornelius Bailey, 7 March 1949, Bailey Papers.

Federal Government recognized the Grand River Bands leadership as politically significant and legitimate during the several decades that the NMOA remained influential.

The efforts of the NMOA and the Grand River Bands membership soon resulted in an explicit acknowledgment by the Federal Government of the Grand River Bands as a continuing Indian Entity. On December 23, 1964, the ICC issued an interlocutory order recovering \$937,291.67 for the Grand River Bands members whose ancestors were party to the 1821 Treaty of Chicago, compensation for underpayment for ceded tribal lands.³⁹ This Federal recognition of its relationship with the Grand River Bands went further still – to collect the settlement, the Grand River Bands had to prepare a new tribal roll, which would essentially update the 1910 Durant Roll and determine current Grand River Bands membership. For this purpose, the NMOA on behalf fo the BIA created the Grand River Bands Descendants Committee. The work of this committee in establishing current Grand River Bands membership represented Federal acknowledgment of the legitimacy of Grand River Bands and sustaining tribal entity.

In December of 1975, during Hearings on the distribution method, the Grand River Bands rebuffed BIA claims that they should be paid on a decendancy basis. The testimony of Grand River members was "overwhelmingly" in favor of the quarter-blood requirement.⁴⁰

The Grand River Band worked with Senator Hart of Michigan to draft S. 1659, which was introduced on May 6, 1975. The BIA continued to recommend against inclusion of the

³⁹ EHR: Robert Dominic, et al., as the Representatives on behalf of all members by blood of the Ottawa Tribe of Indians vs. The United States of America, Second Interlocutory Order, 23 December 1964, Indian Claims Commission. Docket 40-K.

⁴⁰ Ibid., Senate Report 94-577, 15 December 1975, p. 6.

quarter-blood requirement.⁴¹ Representatives of the Band testified before the Subcommittee on Indian Affairs on September 26, 1975. During this hearing, Robert Dominic testified concerning his close working relationship with the local BIA offices. The Grand River Bands leaders and the NMOA Executive Council, in anticipation of the Docket 40-k payment, had created a membership Roll of the Grand River Bands. This Roll was created from information provided directly by Grand River Bands members.⁴² It is commonly referred to as the "Grand River Roll."

During the Hearing, Robert Dominic addressed the DOI's mistrust of the Grand River Roll, by pointing out that he has provided information on blood quantum of Grand River members from this Roll for years, at BIA request, for purposes of qualifying them for certain government services and programs, such as the Michigan Education Tuition Waiver Program.⁴³

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs ultimately rejected the recommendation of the BIA to remove the quarter-blood requirement from the bill. This was motivated, at least in part, by the fact that the Grand River Band was at the time being treated by the BIA as any other federally recognized Indian tribe.

⁴¹ PET: Memo: BIA Re: distribution of funds, 21 August 1975, Genia Papers.

⁴² Tribal Council Member, Joe Genia, recalls that Robert Dominic sent the attached form to all Grand River members to create the Grand River Roll. PET: Robert and Waunetta Dominic to Grand River Band of Ottawas, no date, Genia Papers.

⁴³ PET: Senate Report 94-577, p. 3, 15 December 1975, Bar Files 5D94:1,94-577: See Also EHR: Morris Thompson to the solicitor, 11 February 1976, p. 2. BIA-BAR; Dominic also testified re: Dockets 18E and 58. PET: Transcript of BIA hearing, 8 May 1975, Dominic Papers. Note that many other Ottawas, including Grand River Band members, also testified.

The Committee Report states "(t)he Secretary argues that since the band descendants are not Federally recognized they have no formally organized political entity to receive the funds."⁴⁴

The Committee rejected that claim, for the following reasons:

In anticipation of the subject award, the Descendants Committee has been compiling a roll of Grand River Band descendants based on lineal descendancy from person (sic) named on the Grand River Band portion of a roll approved by the Secretary of the Interior...

Because the persons who claim Grand River Band Descendancy are members of a non-Federally recognized entity, they are ineligible to participate in programs and services administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for tribal groups under their jurisdiction. However, during the Subcommittee hearing on S. 1659, the Descendants Committee witnesses revealed that the Bureau of Indian Affairs had recognized their roll in identifying persons who possess Grand River Ottawa blood to the degree of one-fourth or more and extended certain Bureau services to such individuals. In a later communication to the Committee, the Department confirmed this testimony.⁴⁵

Even the Central Office of the BIA, while opposing the quarter-blood limitation, recognized that the Grand River Bands was a "Tribal entity." In a memo to The Solicitor regarding its objections to the blood quantum limitation, then Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Morris Thompson, stated:

The Northern Michigan Ottawa Association and the Grand River organization are, in many basic senses, functioning as or at least are accepted as tribal political entities by the Minneapolis Area and Great Lakes Agency.⁴⁶
(Emphasis added)

Passage of this bill specifically rejected the argument of the BIA that the Grand River Band had "no formal organized political entity to receive the funds."

⁴⁴ PET: Senate Report 94-577, 15 December 1975, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 3.

⁴⁶ EHR: Morris Thompson to the Solicitor, 11 February 1976. BIA-BAR

Honoring the Band's certification of blood-quantum and honoring the Band's wishes for only quarter-blood distribution, are actions by the Federal Government which recognized the GRBOI as a Tribal political entity.

Furthermore, the BIA relied on the "Grand River Roll" to "certify" the Grand River Ottawas for payment under Docket 40-K.⁴⁷ BIA reliance on its self-created Membership Roll is more evidence of a GRBOI Tribal entity, if not de-facto federal recognition of the Grand River Bands.

In 1977, the American Indian Policy Commission addressed the reasons why the Ottawas had not been officially recognized to this point in its final report. On May 17, 1977, the AIPC list the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians among the tribes who had suffered from "the inequitable administration of Federal programs and laws and...the accidents and vagaries of history."⁴⁸

The Recent identification of the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians as an Indian entity by Federal authorities is evidenced by the BIA's regular practice of referring people requesting Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) to the GRBOI.⁴⁹ Similarly, the U.S. Army Corp. of Engineers keeps the GRBOI informed of their actions "as part of [it's] coordination effort with [the] tribe pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act."⁵⁰

⁴⁷ PET: Bob Van Alstine to Mrs. Waunetta Dominic, 9 September 1980, GRBOI Files.

⁴⁸ American Indian Policy Review Commission, Final Report. Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1977) pp.461, 470.

⁴⁹ PET: Gerald F. Parish to Karen L. Knuppenburg, 8 March 1999.

⁵⁰ PET: David L. Dulong to Mr. Ron Yob, 23 June 1997, GRBOI Files.

(2) Relationships with State governments based on identification of the group as Indian.

The Grand River Bands have had an extensive relationship with the Michigan State government. In 1996 the GRBOI was identified as a State Historic Tribe by the State of Michigan.⁵¹ As a result the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians has been listed in the "Michigan Indian Directory," an annual publication of the American Indian Affairs Office (earlier known as the Michigan Commission on Indian Affairs) of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, since 1997.⁵²

The State has also consistently certified the blood quantum provided by the GRBOI for participation in the Michigan Indian Higher Education Tuition Waiver Program.⁵³

The State of Michigan worked closely with the Grand River Bands throughout the late 1960's and 1970's, by assisting the efforts of the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation (GRBON). In 1968 the Grand River Bands formed the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation. Its By-Laws indicate that it formed for the purposes of promoting the political, social, and cultural goals of the Grand River Bands. The GRBON meeting minutes and newsletters evidence it as an active and cohesive Indian Entity.⁵⁴

In 1969, State Senator Charles Youngblood Jr. of Detroit worked with the Grand River Bands to charter their organization, the Grand River Bands Non-Profit Housing Corporation. State Senator Youngblood continued to assist the Grand River Bands organization thereafter in

⁵¹ PET: William A. LeBlanc to Ron Yob, 9 February 1996, GRBOI Files.

⁵² PET: Michigan Indian Directory, 24 March 1997.

⁵³ PET: William L. Church to Gentlemen, Grand Valley State College, 15 July 1986, Genia Papers

⁵⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the GRBON see *Infra*, p. 162.

achieving their housing goals; he and State Senator Oscar Bouwsma of Muskegon helped the Grand River Bands obtain loans and initial construction for its low-cost housing project.⁵⁵

These two State Senators helped the Grand River Bands develop a formal relationship with the State government, which included negotiating directly with the Michigan Housing Commission.⁵⁶

The Grand River Bands' most significant ties with the State have come through the Bands' relationship with the Michigan Commission of Indian Affairs (MCIA), an executive commission created in 1965 by the State legislature to deal with Indian issues in the State. The MCIA's enabling legislation states that "the primary duty of the commission shall be to assist tribal governments, Indian organizations and individuals with problems of education, employment, civil rights, health, housing, treaty rights and any other right or service due Indians of this state."⁵⁷

The first MCIA discussions of the Grand River Bands appear in the organization's minutes in 1970, addressing issues surrounding payment of Docket 40-K Claims money.⁵⁸ Also in 1970, the Grand River Bands tried to strengthen their political standing by placing a member of their organization, Clarence Battice, on the MCIA's board. The MCIA worked closely with

⁵⁵ EHR: "Plan 80 Unit Project, Indians take on Survey Housing," Muskegon Chronicle, 6 January 1970, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 9; "Indians' Housing Charter is Okd: Two-Week Completion time Seen," 4 May 1970, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 4.

⁵⁶ EHR: Herman Cameron to Mitchell Battice, 17 March 1970, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 16A; Foundation & Grand River Bands of the Nation, Inc. Meeting with Michigan Housing Authority and Grand River Bands, 20 March 1970, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 3.

⁵⁷ MCLA 16.714.

⁵⁸ EHR: James R., The Minutes of the Michigan Commission on Indian Affairs 1956-1977.. Canal Fulton, Ohio: Hillman Publishing Co., 1990(1):279-283.

urban members of the Grand River Bands through urban Indian centers in Grand Rapids and Muskegon.

MCIA influence and responsibility in the Grand River Bands community expanded in the early 1970s -- the Grand River Bands newsletter regularly advertised job openings within the MCIA, such as Staff Director.⁵⁹ On October 24, 1970, Annie Green raised health issues of the Grand Rapids Indian community with the MCIA -- she could not find a single Indian health representative in the City even though she had already counted 300 Indian families in the area and was still looking. On July 30, 1971, MCIA Commissioner Doris Adams recommended that State health organizations who had worked with Indians in Detroit extend their coverage to Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Lansing-- Grand River Bands areas also in need of State health assistance.⁶⁰ Several meetings in 1971 and 1972 dealt with the issue of expanding MCIA responsibilities to Grand Rapids and Muskegon Indian centers.

On August 16, 1972, the MCIA solidified its ties to the Grand River Bands community in Grand Rapids by appointing city resident Kathleen Ann Compos to represent urban Indian concerns. Further, the MCIA director's report for November 3, 1972 stated as one of its first priorities helping the new Grand Rapids Inter-Tribal Council develop a new center to help urban Indians -- the MCIA began raising money for the organization immediately.⁶¹ The MCIA held

⁵⁹ EHR: Grand River Band of the Ottawa Nations, Inc., monthly newsletter, 24 March 1972, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 2, Grand River Band Newsletter ; Grand River Band of the Ottawa Nations, Inc., monthly newsletter, 27 March 1973, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 2, Grand River Band Newsletter; Grand River Band monthly newsletter, July 1973, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 2.

⁶⁰ EHR: Hillman, James R., The Minutes of the Michigan Commission on Indian Affairs 1956-1977., Canal Fulton, Ohio: Hillman Publishing Co., 1990. Vol 1, pp. 376-377.

⁶¹ EHR: Hillman 1990(2):499, 507.

meetings in Grand Rapids in 1973 and 1974, strengthening the State's relationship to the Grand River Bands community there.⁶²

The MCIA expanded its interests to all off-Reservation Indians in the state in 1974 when James Hillman became the MCIA director.⁶³ The MCIA's mailing list in 1974 included the Grand River Band of the Ottawa Nation, the Grand Rapids Inter-Tribal Council, and the Grand Valley American Indian Lodge, a cultural preservation group with many members from the Grand River Bands community.⁶⁴ In addition to this recognition of the Grand River Bands community by the State, the MCIA under Hillman worked closely with NMOA Units 4, 5, 6, and 7 (the Grand River Bands units), issuing resolutions to promote payment of Docket 40-K funds. Hillman, as director of a State agency, the MCIA, communicated directly with NMOA Unit 4 President, Joe John, concerning actions that could expedite payments to the Grand River Bands.⁶⁵ In fact, in 1975, Hillman held the first MCIA planning meeting at Ludington, in Grand River Bands territory.⁶⁶ Throughout the 1970s, the Grand River Bands' relationship with the MCIA represented a direct relationship between the Grand River Bands and the Governor of Michigan. Most recently, the MCIA requested a resolution of support from the GRBOI, when Governor John Engler abolished the MCIA by executive order.⁶⁷

⁶² EHR: Hillman 1990(2):565, 587.

⁶³ EHR: Hillman 1990(2):599, 607, 610.

⁶⁴ EHR: Hillman 1990(2):600.

⁶⁵ EHR: Hillman 1990(2):618.

⁶⁶ EHR: Hillman 1990(2):654-655.

⁶⁷ PET: Donna Budnick to Sharon Detz, 30 August, 1999, GRBOI Files.

The Grand River Bands members have qualified for the higher education tuition waiver created by the Michigan legislature.

The State recognized the continuing presence of a Grand River Ottawa community in Oceana County when the Michigan Historical Society listed the "Pawbawme Burial Ground (Old Indian Cemetery), Hart, Oceana County... in the State Register of Historic Sites."⁶⁸ This was accomplished through the efforts of an active Grand River Bands population in its relationship with the State of Michigan.

The Michigan Department of Transportation included the Grand River Bands in meetings concerning the proper treatment of human remains and associated funerary items if found during a highway construction project in the Grand Rapids area in 1999. Grand River Bands participants included Sharron Detz, Anna Detz, Gilbert (Chip) DiPiazza, Fran Compo, Larry Plamondon, Ken Leosh and Ron Yob.⁶⁹

(3) Dealings with a county, parish, or other local government in a relationship based on the group's Indian identity.

The GRBOI has an extensive relationship with City and County governments in the GRB communities of Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Hart and Elbridge. Just a few examples follow. The GRBOI recently worked with the City of Grand Rapids to address Trader complaints regarding the vendor policies at the Pow Wow.⁷⁰ The City was so impressed with the GRBOI's handling

⁶⁸ EHR: Native American Indian's United Planning Committee, Agenda, Minutes, 7 March 1981, I.O.W. File 1; M. Bigelow to B. Tate, 18 March 1981, I.O.W. File 3.

⁶⁹ PET: Meeting Agenda, US-131, S-Curve, Archaeological Committee, 4 November 1999, MDOT/OSA/Grand River Bands of Ottawa.

⁷⁰ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: James Keedy to GRBOI Tribal Council. 13 September 1999.

of trader issues, Kelly Wesaw, Committee Chairperson, was invited to give a presentation on traders/vendors at the Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department's General Meeting for Festivals and Celebrations.⁷¹ The City of Grand Rapids passed a resolution in June of 1999, honoring the Pow Wow, and the "importance of the Grand River in the development of our community from the Grand River Ottawa Villages of years past to the city it is today."⁷²

The City of Ada recently deeded a piece of land in its City cemetery, to the GRBOI for repatriation of human remains found at an excavation site nearby.⁷³

Kent County also identifies the Grand River Bands as a Tribal entity. In September, 2000 the Kent County Sheriff's Department⁷⁴ turned over human remains to the GRB for repatriation.

Christian churches have provided significant centers for Grand River Bands cultural activities throughout the 19th and 20th centuries; through this process these parishes have repeatedly recognized the Grand River Bands as an Indian Entity. Even Christian churches that had been abandoned by their congregations still had significance within the Grand River Bands community during the 1960s because of their associated cemeteries, the significance of which will also be discussed under §83.7 (b).⁷⁵

St. Joseph's Church was established on the Oceana County Reservation in 1883. This Church's sacramental records of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and deaths indicate that the

⁷¹ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁷² PET: John H. Logie, Proclamation, 12 June 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁷³ PET: Ada Township Permit Transfer, No. 062600-1, 26 June 2000, GRBOI Files.

⁷⁴ PET: T.J. Sikkema to Ron, 5 September 2000, GRBOI Files

⁷⁵ EHR: Map of Indian Reservation by Lewis Johnson. Undated 1967. Rose Hawley Museum, Native American File.

Congregation was composed almost entirely of Grand River Bands members.⁷⁶ In her interview, Mary Bailey, who was baptized at the church, recalled that everyone spoke the Ottawa language and most people in the Grand River Bands Elbridge community where the church was located, were baptized as Christians.⁷⁷ The church's relationship with the Grand River Bands community did not fade away when many Grand River Bands left the reservations after World War II -- in 1984, St. Joseph's Catholic Church commemorated its centennial, an event attended by many Ottawas who lived throughout western Michigan.⁷⁸ In a history of St. Josephs in Elbridge, the Diocesan Archivist identified the Ottawa in the reservation Community (the Grand River Bands) as significant in the Church's history.⁷⁹

The Methodist Church has also played a significant role in the Grand River Bands community. At Methodist camp meetings during the late 19th and early 20th century, arranged marriages sometime took place within the Ottawa community -- these meetings doubled as both Christian events and as reunions for Grand River Bands members. The Methodist meetings would last several days to a week and Indians from throughout the state would attend.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Dennis Morrow. "Sacramental Records of St. Joseph's Catholic Church Elbridge Township, Oceana County, Michigan: 1890-1917," unpublished manuscript (Grand Rapids, MI: Diocesan Archives).

⁷⁷ PET: Interview with Mary Bailey, Viola Wilson, George Lawrence, Joe Lawrence, 20 August 1975.

⁷⁸ GRBOI-Battice, Folder 1, News Clippings. Undated. "St. Joseph's Opening Centennial Year Sunday. Building the church shows the vitality of the Elbridge community."

⁷⁹ PET: "A Brief History of St. Joseph's Church, Elbridge, Michigan," Dennis W. Morrow, Diocesan Archives, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 13 November 1984, GTBOI-Battice Folder page 1.

⁸⁰ PET: Interview with Delia, Lewis, Cadotte, September 16, 1975; Kurath, Ettawageshik, and Ettawageshik 1955. See also fn 5. Supra.

(4) Identification as an Indian entity by anthropologists, historians, and/or other scholars.

The Grand River Bands are widely recognized as a Tribal entity by historians and other scholars. In October of 1997, Erik Alexander, curator of the Van Andel Museum in Grand Rapids, contacted the GRBOI regarding the Museum's collection of Annishnabe artifacts and human remains.⁸¹ While he is only required under NAGPRA to contact federally recognized Tribes, he explained that the Museum made sure to include the GRBOI, because they are "convinced that the Grand River Bands are eligible for federal recognition, and because you are the band most closely tied to our area."⁸²

The Tree that Never Dies,⁸³ published in 1978 and edited by Pamela Dobson, is an oral history of Michigan Indians based on several interviews, including interviews of Grand River Bands members. The book discusses Ottawa lifestyles and history, including the importance of Ghost Suppers and Medicine Lodges, as well as describing life for the Ottawas at the Mt. Pleasant Indian School. The Tree that Never Dies reflects the continuance of traditions and the passing down of memories in the Michigan Ottawa community, including the Grand River Bands. Frances Compo Norberg, current secretary of the GRBOI, participated in the publication of this book, and is acknowledged as its typist.⁸⁴

Religious Customs of Modern Michigan Algonquins by Gertrude Kurath, Jane Ettawageshik, and Fred Ettawageshik, is a Field Report conducted for the American

⁸¹ PET: Erik Alexander to Ron Yob, 10 November 1997, GRBOI Files.

⁸² PET: Ibid.

⁸³ EHR: The Tree That Never Dies, 1978, Pamela Dobson. (Check cite)

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Philosophical Society in 1955. It describes the religious customs of Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi bands throughout Michigan, explaining the relationship between newly acquired Christian values and traditional Indian beliefs and practices. Further, it lists the sites of several Indian cultural festivals throughout Michigan, including some in Grand River Bands territory.

Finally, Professor James McClurken has written several ethnohistories of the Michigan Ottawas, including an ethnohistorical report of the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians

2.⁸⁵ In fact, Professor McClurken's 1988 dissertation for the Michigan State University Department of Anthropology, "We Wish to Be Civilized: Ottawa-American Political Contests on the Michigan Frontier," is significantly concerned with the Grand River Bands. Together, these documents show a recognition by anthropologists and historians that the Grand River Bands exist as a separate and cohesive unit of Ottawa Indians, deserving of scholarly attention.

(5) Identification as an Indian entity in newspapers and books.

Newspapers local to Grand River Bands territory have extensively covered Grand River Bands activities throughout the 20th century. This recognition reflects on the fact that the Grand River Bands' have had their own political organizations and their own culture, as well as reinforcing the Grand River Bands' recognition by State and Federal Government. In the 1930s, much of the press coverage of Grand River Bands political activities centered around community efforts to be reorganized under the IRA. In fact, one article from the era quotes Peru Farver,

⁸⁵ PET: James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990." McClurken & Associates, Lansing Michigan. 2000.

representative of the Indian Service, as saying about IRA reorganization, "Finance to carry out this work is of great concern at this time and may mean considerable delay even though your people are found to be eligible to come under the act."⁸⁶ Here, a newspaper article offers evidence of the terms of rejection the Grand River Bands often heard -- they were eligible, there just wasn't enough money. Another article from the 1930s describes the efforts of a Grand River Bands group headed by Enos Pego to draft a petition for new Reservation land.⁸⁷ Clearly, the local press was aware of separate and organized Grand River Bands political activities.

The next major era in Grand River Bands political activities, that following the establishment of the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) to hear Indian treaty based claims, also saw broad recognition of Grand River Bands political activity by the press. Articles covered both the efforts by Jacob Walker Cobmoosa of the Grand River Bands, and the later, successful efforts by the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association (NMOA) combined with Grand River Bands efforts.⁸⁸

Press coverage of Grand River Bands political activity continued with the ICC Docket 40-K decision at the end of 1964. One article recognizes the Grand River Bands explicitly, saying, "The Grand River band of Ottawa Indians has been awarded a settlement of \$937,291.67 for land south of the Grand River seded by the Treaty of 1821."⁸⁹ Newspapers extensively

⁸⁶ EHR: "Red Men Called to Meetings of Big Importance. Benefits are in Store. Changing picture at Washington stimulates local interest in Indians' future," 17 March 1936, *Traverse City Record Eagle*.

⁸⁷ EHR: "Indians Draft Request For New Oceana Reservation," 18 July 1938, *Grand Rapids Press*.

⁸⁸ EHR: "Cobmoosa Wants His 48 Acres," 13 June 1948, *Grand Rapids Press*; "Ottawa Indians Organize," 13 December 1953, *Grand Rapids Herald*; "Ottawas Hold Tribal Council Here Saturday," 27 August 1959, Rose Hawley Museum.

⁸⁹ EHR: "Indians Granted \$937, 291.67 For Land Treaty," 30 December 1964, Rose Hawley Museum.

covered Indian affairs generally and Grand River Bands affairs more specifically in the era leading up to and including the ICC decisions in favor of the Grand River Bands.

After these ICC decisions, the press continued to cover Grand River Bands political affairs and organization. In an article about the importance of Indians developing an "Indian identity" for the well being of their communities, one article identifies the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, based in Oceana County, as having plans for "an area Indian community with better housing, a cultural center and business establishments."⁹⁰ The press followed the Grand River Bands as it pursued these goals, especially its housing goals. A 1970 article states that "the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation organization is making headway on plans for 80 low-cost housing units." This article and others that followed describe the organization and plans of the Grand River Housing Authority, as well as clearly identifying certain individuals as members of the Grand River Bands. This recognition shows not just the existence of the Grand River Bands, but of its political activity, and a respect for their effectiveness as a community -- one article describes how a single mother of two children would have been left without food or money had the Grand River Bands not sponsored her to the welfare officials.⁹¹ One paper even identifies the Grand River Bands Non-profit Housing Corporation as "[Oceana] county's only active housing group."⁹²

⁹⁰ EHR: "Indians Need Identity Awareness," Undated 1969, GRBOI-Andre, Folder 1, Scrapbook.

⁹¹ EHR: "Indians Take Survey on Housing," 6 January 1970, *The Chronicle*; "Indians Still Hopeful -- Housing Plan Delayed," Undated 1969, GRBOI-Andre, Folder 1, Scrapbook; GRBOI-Battice; "Ottawa Indians Share Problems with Brothers," 28 April 1970, Envelope 4, News Clippings; "25 Housing Units Planned This Year," 11 February, 1971, *The Hart Journal*.

⁹² EHR: "Senior Citizen Housing Pushed," 24 May 1973. *The White Laker and Northshore Interurban*.

Coverage of the Grand River Bands efforts for housing was extensive and comprehensive, always identifying the Grand River Bands as an extant and active political unit. In fact, one article tells the story of a local farmer who donated 71 acres to the Grand River Bands because, in his words, "...they have a plan to improve the entire Walkerville community."⁹³ Obviously, the press coverage of the Grand River Bands organization had been positive and extensive enough to encourage this man to donate such a large amount of land with "no strings attached."

Newspapers also covered the efforts by the Grand River Bands community to receive its payments from favorable ICC decisions, including the process of compiling a tribal roll for payment purposes. One of these articles contains an announcement of "Midterm elections for the Grand River Band," demonstrating yet again that the local press was aware of and respected Grand River Bands political organizations and activities.⁹⁴ As late as 1985, the press reported on meetings concerning disbursement of judgment funds, saying, "Most of the Native Americans...at the...meeting were...members of the Grand River and Little Traverse Bay Bands."⁹⁵

During these periods, the press has not only extensively covered Grand River Bands political activities, but it has also reported on Grand River Bands social and cultural activities. Articles from early in the 20th century deal with memorials for the great Grand River Bands Chief Cobmoosa. These articles describe community efforts to properly memorialize Cobmoosa, including a tablet placed on the Reservation "to be a source of pride and uplift to his own

⁹³ EHR: "Farmer Donates 71 Acres to Indians," 6 April 1970, *The Muskegon Chronicle*.

⁹⁴ EHR: "Indian Census Going Slowly," 4 March 1970, *The Chronicle*.

⁹⁵ EHR: "Native Americans Meet on fund disbursement," 12 October 1985, *The Muskegon Chronicle*.

people," showing an acknowledgment of an active and social community of Grand River Bands Ottawa on that Reservation.⁹⁶ Other early articles discuss Grand River Bands harvest festivals and the tradition behind them, and some articles simply commemorate Grand River Bands soldiers in World War II who had not been lucky enough to make it home -- all of these articles show a respect for members of the Grand River Bands community and for its traditions.⁹⁷

One article tells of the meeting of two current Grand River Bands residents, Joseph Wabasis and Jacob Cobmoosa, who both descended from two great Grand River Bands chiefs, Chief John Wabasis and Chief Cobmoosa -- the article, like others, reflects a respect for the history and tradition present in the meeting of these two Grand River Bands men.⁹⁸ Finally, several articles discuss the community itself, telling the history and current status of the Grand River Bands community -- some focus on the Grand River Bands of Mason County.⁹⁹

In the 1950s, the press covered the Grand River Bands reunion plans for the descendants of Chief Cobmoosa to mark his then unmarked grave. These articles detail the cultural cohesion of the Grand River Bands community.¹⁰⁰ This long series of articles details a significant cultural

⁹⁶ EHR: "Ionia D.A.R. Unveils Tablet to Memory of Cob-moo-sa, Last Chief and Speaker of Ottawa Band That Roamed Valley of Grand," 22 July 1927, *Ionia County News*; "Honor Michigan's Greatest Native Son," 10 July 1927, *Grand Rapids Herald*.

⁹⁷ EHR: "By Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Bailey," "Military Rites Held for Sgt. Ernest McDaquette," 29 July 1948, Rose Hawley Museum.

⁹⁸ EHR: "After Years, They Finally Met." (chronological folder #431)

⁹⁹ EHR: "Spring Trek is Thing of the Past," 11 June 1951, Rose Hawley Museum; "Indian Totem Stones are Gifts to Mason," Rose Hawley Museum. "Several Ottawa Families Remain in Mason County," 19 May 1959, Rose Hawley Museum.

¹⁰⁰ EHR: "Chief's Descendants Map Reunion, May Erect Monument on Oceana Gravesite of Cobmoosa," 7 December 1957, Rose Hawley Museum, Native American File; "The Great Walker, Talker Led Tribe to Oceana, Mason Counties in Migration from Grand Valley," 15 July 1958, *Muskegon Chronicle*; "Chief's Descendants Map Reunion," 21 August 1958, GRBOI-Andre, Folder 1; "Anniversary Marked by Chief Cobmoosa's Descendants

event -- the bringing together of over 300 Grand River Bands people to commemorate a dead ancestor, a great Grand River Bands chief, and timed as it was as a centennial celebration of the mass migration of Grand River Bands in 1858 to their new lands. The articles also contain references to the continual giving of Indian names and the passing down of Ottawa traditions like basketry. While the cultural significance of this event will be discussed in greater detail under §83.7(b), it is sufficient here to say that this significance was not overlooked by the press, as evidenced by the many detailed and thoughtful articles about the continuous culture of the Grand River Bands. Interestingly, more recent newspapers have also published stories about Cobmoosa, educating the current generation about the Grand River Bands' long presence and history.¹⁰¹

Articles also discuss gatherings where Grand River Bands members would demonstrate such traditional arts as basket weaving and preparation, bead handiwork, and other crafts, demonstrating the unique and distinctive culture of the Grand River Bands.¹⁰² Recent articles have covered such cultural gatherings, including one that displayed pottery, baskets, arrows and arrowheads, as well as Ottawa dance demonstrations by "Chief Medacco...a full Ottawa Indian of the Grand River Band," for the 200 Brownies present.¹⁰³ Similar gatherings have been designed

Saturday," 25 August 1958, Rose Hawley Museum, Native American File; "Cobmoosa Centennial: Ottawa Indians' Old Spirit Rekindled as descendants of Chief Gather for Reunion," 28 September 1958, *Muskegon Chronicle*.

¹⁰¹ EHR: "Chief Cobmoosa -- he led his people to the Pentwater," 15 April 1981, GRBOI-Andre, Folder 1, Scrapbook, *The Observer/News*.

¹⁰² EHR: "Descendants of Cobmoosa Give Crafts Program," 19 June 1958, GRBOI-Andre, Folder 1.

¹⁰³ EHR: "70-year-old Chief Shares Indian Lore with 200 Girls," 5 February 1984, *The Sunday Chronicle*, Muskegon, Michigan.

to pass traditions from elders to younger Grand River Bands members, such as the art of making birch bark boxes trimmed with porcupine quills. Said one young woman, "It's a part of my culture and I want to know about it."¹⁰⁴

In 1987, the Muskegon Chronicle ran an article by Larry Romanelli discussing Grand River Ottawa history and culture.¹⁰⁵ In the Article, Romanelli discusses in detail the culture of this tribe. This discussion includes its relationship with other tribes, including Chippewa and Potawatomi, the types of houses they traditionally lived in, the use of sweat lodges and medicine lodges, the importance of Ghost Suppers, and Grand River Ottawa belief in the circularity of nature.¹⁰⁶ Romanelli also discusses Grand River Bands history, saying, "In Muskegon, or 'Maskego' as the Indians first called it, the primary group was Grand River Ottawas."¹⁰⁷ Romanelli recounts the 19th century forced removal of the Grand River Bands to reservations, the 1910 Durant Roll, Grand River Bands participation in the NMOA, and current discrimination against Ottawas. Finally, he discusses the continuing presence of Grand River Ottawas in Muskegon, including medicine man Francis Bailey and the continuance of Grand River Ottawa traditions in the present.

Romanelli, a resident of Muskegon, paints evidence of a thriving Grand River Ottawa community with a strong sense of its history and its traditions. The Muskegon Chronicle, by running this article in its issue commemorating both Michigan's and Muskegon's

¹⁰⁴ EHR: "Ancient Craft Preserved," 22 July 1984, GRBOI-Andre, Folder 1, Scrapbook.

¹⁰⁵ EHR: "Maskego and the True Story of Her Indians," Undated 1987, *Muskegon Chronicle*.

¹⁰⁶ EHR: "Maskego and the True Story of Her Indians," Undated 1987, *Muskegon Chronicle*.

¹⁰⁷ EHR: "Maskego and the True Story of Her Indians," Undated 1987, *Muskegon Chronicle*.

sesquicentennial, acknowledged both the presence and significance of the Grand River Bands community.

The *Win Awenen Nisitotung*, a news publication of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, carried an article about the signing of a Consensus Statement concerning the return to Indian remains. The article reported the participation of representatives of several Michigan Indian entities, including Anna Detz of the Grand River Bands.¹⁰⁸

The 2000 interment of human remains held by the Grand River Bands was covered by news media, including television news.¹⁰⁹

(6) Identification as an Indian entity in relationships with Indian tribes or national, regional, or state Indian organizations.

Grand River Bands contributions to Indian organizations are most notable and most telling within the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association (NMOA). In fact, documentation from the first election of officers for the NMOA gives evidence that the Grand River Bands was involved with the organization from its founding.¹¹⁰ The members who made up the foundation of the NMOA were selected from bands that had comprised the Ottawa Tribe during the 1836 and 1855 treaties, so these members came from the original Ottawa bands, including the Grand River Bands. Cornelius Bailey of Mason County represented the Grand River Bands with the NMOA in 1948. In that year, Robert Dominic, NMOA Vice-President, wrote to Bailey to

¹⁰⁸ PET: "Michigan Indians sign statement demanding return of Indian remains," 1 November 1999, *Win Awenen Nisitotung*, Sault St. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

¹⁰⁹ PET: (television news videotape).

¹¹⁰ EHR: Agreement with the Ottawa Tribe of Michigan and Northern Wisconsin, Undated 1948, Bailey Papers.

request that the Grand River Bands formally join the NMOA.¹¹¹ Further correspondence between Dominic and Bailey shows that the NMOA recognized the Grand River Bands as a continuing Indian tribe even before it officially joined the NMOA.¹¹²

Participation in the NMOA was not limited to a few Grand River Bands leaders, but involved the support and effort of the whole Grand River Bands community. Bailey visited elders in Muskegon and on the Oceana and Mason County Reservations to gather lists of potential claims, and he gathered statements about hunting and fishing rights, land claims, broken U.S. promises, and unpaid cash.¹¹³ In 1949, Dominic specifically invited Henry Negake of the Grand River Bands to attend NMOA meetings in Petoskey.¹¹⁴ By 1950, Grand River Bands members throughout Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and the Reservation communities had become active in the NMOA. After his claim was dismissed, Cobmoosa gave Dominic his blessing to pursue Grand River Bands claims through the NMOA. As a result, Dominic wrote to his attorney, saying, “downstate Indians, comprising the Grand River Bands of Ottawas, are going to have a large delegation at our [annual] meeting.”¹¹⁵

The Grand River Bands Tribes as a whole, not just a few of its leaders, played a significant role in a regional Indian organization, the NMOA. This community participation

¹¹¹ EHR: R. Dominic to C. Bailey, 5 July 1948, Bailey Papers.

¹¹² EHR: R. Dominic to C. Bailey, 11 September 1948, Bailey Papers; R. Dominic to C. Bailey, March 7 1949, Bailey Papers.

¹¹³ EHR: R. Dominic to C. Bailey; 11 September 1948, Bailey Papers; Names and Comments, 28 September 1948, Bailey Papers.

¹¹⁴ EHR: R. Dominic to H. Negake, 19 May 1949, Bailey Papers.

¹¹⁵ EHR: R. Dominic to A. B. Honnold, 23 May 1950, Dominic Papers.

eventually led to a victory in court for the Grand River Bands and the NMOA, the ICC decision on Docket 40-K in 1965, awarding Grand River Bands members \$937,291.67 for Grand River Bands claims under the 1821 Treaty of Chicago.

The close working relationship between the Grand River Bands and the NMOA continued after the ruling. The NMOA created the Grand River Bands Descendants Committee to represent the Grand River Bands for payments under the 40-K ruling. Also, the Grand River Bands Units worked with the NMOA on later claims, specifically Dockets 58 and 18-E, which in 1970 resulted in an award of over ten and a half million dollars to Ottawas and Chippewas of Michigan for claims under the 1836 Treaty of Washington -- Grand River Bands efforts within the NMOA helped win a claim for virtually the entire community of Michigan Ottawa and Chippewa.

In a Resolution dated July 11, 1999, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians of Michigan recognized the "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians" as an Indian entity.¹¹⁶ The Resolution further expressed support of the Grand River Bands' federal acknowledgment efforts.

The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians has identified the Grand River Bands as an Indian entity. An example of this identification is a letter dated March 9, 1993 sent to the Grand River Bands Council Chairman by Mark Dougher, Director of the Little River Band.¹¹⁷

The Saginaw Chippewa Tribe has also identified the Grand River Bands as an Indian entity. An example of this identification is a letter sent from the Saginaw Chippewa NAGPRA

¹¹⁶ PET: Resolution 07119902, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, 11 July 1999.

¹¹⁷ PET: Mark Dougher to Joe Genia, 9 March 1993.

Coordinator to the Grand River Bands, as well as seven other Michigan tribes, concerning a joint repatriation effort.¹¹⁸

83.7(b)

THE GRAND RIVER BANDS OF OTTAWA INDIANS COMPRISE A DISTINCT COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians meet the requirements for 25 CFR 83.7(b). The following criteria apply:

83.7(b) A predominant portion of the petitioning group comprises a distinct community from historical times until the present.

83.1 Community means any group of people which can demonstrate that consistent interactions and significant social relationships exist within its membership and that its members are differentiated from and identified as distinct from nonmembers. Community must be understood in the context of history, geography, culture and social organization of the group.

83.8(d)(2) The group meets the requirements of the criterion in section 83.7(b) to demonstrate that it comprises a distinct community at present.

OVERVIEW

Throughout the history of all these moves, the community of the Grand River Bands has remained coherent, distinguishable and vital. Kinship ties provide the basis for significant relationships between extended families. Kin-based relationships extend beyond geographic

¹¹⁸ PET: Kayle Crampton to Ron Yob, 4 September 1997.

regions, connecting the communities. Religious and political activity has also provided the basis for continuing significant social relationships, cooperative labor, and informal social interaction.

In addition, informal social interaction takes place at inter-Tribal events, in keeping with Ottawa tradition. Pow Wows and Kateri Circles are examples. Although inter-tribal, such events are also places where informal social interaction between GRB members occurs.

The following document is arranged by headings that correspond to the subdivisions of Section 83.7(b). However, please note that criteria overlap, and that evidence supportive of one requirement often addresses other requirements as well.

SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS CONNECTING INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS, 83.7(b)(1)(ii)

The Grand River Bands are a kin-based society. Thus, significant social relationships connect individual members through extended families which inevitably intertwine with other extended families.

For example, Patsy Beatty, who is both a Shagonaby and a Lewis, often attends “Family gatherings,” such as birthday parties, weddings, graduation parties and other events of her extended family members in Oceana/Mason Counties.¹¹⁹ They are large gatherings and “grandma” or Mamie Battice usually has a sign-in sheet. Although Mamie Battice is not Patsy’s

¹¹⁹ 2nd Interview with Patsy Beatty, 15 November 2000.

real grandmother, all of the extended family members call her “grandma” as a traditional way of honoring her.¹²⁰

The Battice family has been hosting annual family reunions for decades.¹²¹ The attendees trace to the following Grand River families: Battice, Bailey, Lewis, Kelsy, Shagonabe, McClellan, and Pego.¹²² The Battices are also related to the Cogswell and Micko families, and have always had significant social relationships with them. However, since “Aunt Minnie” (Micko) died, they have kept in touch with them at christmas parties, ghost suppers, and Kateri events.¹²³

The Cogswell and Micko extended families have always shared significant social relationships. In her interview, Sharron Detz¹²⁴ described Fall gatherings at her childhood home where Indian men who made their living by fishing, hunting and trapping would bring their harvest to her home on Crescent Street in Muskegon, Michigan. For example, one man would bring large turtles and show the children how they are beheaded and shelled in preparation for eating. Another trapper would bring muskrat and show the children how they are skinned and cooked into muskrat stew. Smelt, brought in barrels, were another featured food. “Everybody used to just love it,” said Sharron, “because it was like a big...six week family reunion.”¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ PET: Phone Conference with Emily Smith, 16 November 2000.

¹²² Ibid.; See also PET: Guest Lists: Battice Reunion, 1982-2000, 19 November 2000.

¹²³ PET: Phone Conference with Emily Smith, 16 November 2000.

¹²⁴ PET: Sharron Detz’s Family Tree, 13 March 2000.

¹²⁵ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March 2000.

Sharron described how her grandmother Fitch would stand at the stove for days cooking frybread. Participants stayed for varying lengths of time, such as a weekend, four days, or a whole week. Sharron recalled the character of the gathering was that everyone would be laughing, talking and sharing. On her mother's side, the family had a lot of basket makers, and Sharon recalled there would be a group of about five people sitting around in a circle making black ash baskets.^{126, 127} Ms. Detz remembered that all of her mothers brothers and sisters were basket makers. Some of the names of the basket makers that Ms. Detz recalled were Teresa, Jake, Hank, Albert (all Mickos), and Matilda and Jerome (Fitch), as well as her mother Winona May. Ms. Detz stated that basket making was a way that family members earned their living in the Fall.¹²⁸

According to Sharron, probably everybody at the gatherings was Grand River. She found it unusual if she wasn't related to everyone present. Some of the names she recalled were Paul Carey; her maternal grandfather Thomas Fitch; her great uncles Albert, Hank and Jake; the Cantu family, including Marie, her brothers and their children and wives; Sharron's great-aunts Delia and Maude; her great uncle Edward Kequom; her Aunts Sita and Jeanette, and Uncle Sonny and all their children; and members of the Memberto and Pete families, including Peter and Alice Pete and their children.¹²⁹ Sharron said that her maternal grandmother's

¹²⁶ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March 2000.

¹²⁷ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 8 March 1999.

¹²⁸ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March 2000.

¹²⁹ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March 2000.

brothers and sisters were Mickos.¹³⁰ The gatherings would draw people from Custer and Mason Counties. According to Ms. Detz, everybody at the gathering “would be speaking in our own language.” Ms. Detz stated that as a child, she understood the language but did not speak it for fear of punishment. As set forth below, Ms. Detz and her contemporaries were generally discouraged from speaking the Indian language as children.¹³¹ Sharron recalls such Fall gatherings from at least 1958 through the 1960's.¹³²

In interviews conducted in February, 2000, Grand River Bands member June Dart¹³³ described the interaction of families, both on a day to day informal basis, as well as at planned reunions. She said that when she was growing up in the area she alternately refers to as Elbridge, or Cobmoosa, the following families lived in proximity to each other, with the Saint Joseph Church serving as a central point: Bailey, Negake, Lewis, Wabsis, Stone.¹³⁴ June recalled that visiting between families was accomplished on foot, with family homesteads typically close together; traveling back and forth in this way was a part of daily life.¹³⁵

Until the late 1980's, these extended families all attended the Negake-Stone reunions in Muskegon. The Negake family traces to Chief Cobmoosa.. June Dart (her mother was a Negake) recalled the Negake-Stone reunions, which she said were an annual summer event

¹³⁰ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 8 March 1999.

¹³¹ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March 2000.

¹³² PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 8 March 1999, p.

¹³³ PET: June Dart's Family Tree, 14 February 2000.

¹³⁴ PET: Interview with June Dart, 14 February 2000, pp 2, 5-7.

¹³⁵ PET: Interview with June Dart, 14 February 2000.

until some family members had a falling out, probably sometime in the 1980s or 1990. The reunions included families tracing to the Negake, Stone, Wabsis, Genereaux, and Bailey families, among others. They were usually held in parks in Muskegon. June estimated the average attendance at about 200.¹³⁶

Michael Genereaux recalled attending these Reunions in his interview. His father and mother—Isaac Genereaux, and Susan Negake—were both Grand River Bands members. His maternal grandfather was Henry Negake. Michael's family lived in the rural Hart area. When asked in a 1998 interview if his family socialized with other Indian families, Michael stated, "Reunions used to be a big thing. That was mainly Muskegon... Yearly. When I was young it was yearly."¹³⁷

Grand River Bands members have widespread significant social relationships throughout the membership because most other members either live in the same community *or* are members of their extended families, or both. For example, June Dart recalled significant social relationships between the Negake-Stone extended families, and the Battice-Lewis-Pego families who lived nearby:

An, we used to go to ah Bob and Irene Lewis' .. and then all us kids, their kids and us kids would all play because there would be about 18 of us there in the house. And sometimes we'd end up staying over night ... And ah, Mitch and Mamie lived not too far from there, so. An on the west is Julia Lewis and I remember saying about her. An ah George and Lucille Pego and they had the Pego girls and .. Of course Paul. And Aunt Julia, my ma's aunt, Lewis. She took

¹³⁶ PET: Interview with June Dart, 14 February 2000.

¹³⁷ PET: Interview with Michael Genereaux, 13 July 1998, pp. 1. 2.

care of her son's kids. Paul had Frank Lewis and ah Pauline Lewis quite close, we were close to them.¹³⁸

Their kin-based society also ensures that significant social relationships bridge the geographic boundaries of the Grand River Bands communities. Emily Smith, from Oceana County, catches up with her relatives in Muskegon by attending the Muskegon Grand River events.¹³⁹ When Ron Yob was interviewed, he stated that because of the “kin-based” nature of Grand River community, the Grand Rapids members have always attended Ghost Suppers and funerals in other Grand River communities, such as Muskegon and Hart.¹⁴⁰

(vi) SHARED SACRED OR SECULAR RITUAL ACTIVITY ENCOMPASSING MOST OF THE GROUP

As an indicator of community, religion pervades the Grand River Bands. Although many of the people adopted Christian beliefs, they maintained Ottawa religious practices after the introduction of Christianity, and often combined the two. Ghost suppers, wakes and funerals, church attendance and cemetery maintenance are some religious activities that define the Grand River community.

The Grand River Bands have adapted to the socio-political realities of twentieth century life just as they have since the first Europeans arrived in the Great Lakes three centuries ago. They have combined their traditions with those of the Euro-American neighbors. This

¹³⁸ PET: Interview with June Dart, 14 February 2000, p. 22.

¹³⁹ PET: Phone Conference with Emily Smith, 16 November 2000.

¹⁴⁰ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 9 November 2000.

syncretism is clearly evident in the case of religious beliefs. As mentioned above, although many Grand River Bands members converted to Christianity during the middle nineteenth century, they incorporated traditional religious beliefs and practices within structures of this new faith.

Former Tribal Council member, Larry Plamondon, is one of the several GRBOI members who continues the Native traditions by conducting traditional Ottawa spiritual ceremonies. Larry conducts naming ceremonies, and other ceremonies in a Longhouse that he constructed on his property.¹⁴¹ Grand River people still observe traditional spiritual customs. As just one example, in 1988, Grand River Bands members Frank and Viola Compo celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary with a Pipe Ceremony.¹⁴²

Attendance at Indian Christian church services continues to bring the community together even though many Grand River Bands church members live throughout western Michigan. Rituals, especially those dealing with death and the afterlife, have been maintained and passed down from generation to generation within a Christian tradition. Funerals, wakes, cemetery maintenance, with associated social events involving food sharing, music, storytelling and dance remain essential elements in fostering solidarity among the Grand River Bands and reinforcing their cultural distinctiveness.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ PET: Photograph of Plamondon Longhouse, obtained from Larry, 13 July 1998.

¹⁴² PET: Anishnabe Kati-Neek, Vol. 3 No. 3, Fall 1988, Detz Papers.

¹⁴³ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990." McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan. 2000, p. 301.

The continuity of Grand River Bands religious beliefs is a strong indicator of cultural distinctiveness. Traditional Ottawa ontology and cosmology have continued to shape the community throughout the twentieth century. Two hundred years of Catholicism, with the recent arrival of Methodist missions in the middle nineteenth century, made Christianity an enduring part of Ottawa life. Christianity was tempered, however, with the core Ottawa beliefs about the *Maniduk* (pl. *Manitou*) that inhabit all living things, concepts of the creator, and visions of the afterlife. These concepts have been expressed in public and private rituals throughout Grand River Ottawa history.¹⁴⁴

Christian churches have provided important centers for Grand River Bands cultural activities throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When the Grand River Bands moved to Mason and Oceana Counties in 1857 and 1858, their leaders asked the United States to help them build schools, blacksmith shops and churches to help in the transition to their new villages. Several of these churches were still used during the twentieth century. The sites of Christian churches that had lost their congregations and decayed were still readily known in the community during the 1960s because of their associated cemeteries, places where Grand River Bands members cared for the spirits of their ancestors.¹⁴⁵

Christianity was not relegated to a small number of converts on the Grand River Bands Reservations. Nearly 200 pages of sacramental records, from 1890 to 1917, of baptisms, confirmations, marriages and deaths at Saint Joseph's Church established on the Oceana County

¹⁴⁴ McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 302.

¹⁴⁵ EHR: Lewis Johnson, "Map of Indian Reservation," 1967. Rose Hawley Museum, Native American File, Ludington, Michigan [hereafter Hawley Museum Papers]; McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 302.

Reservation in 1883 indicate that the congregations was composed almost entirely of GRB members.¹⁴⁶ Mary Bailey, who was baptized at the church, recalled that everyone spoke the Ottawa language and nearly everyone in the Elbridge community where the church was located were baptized as Christians.¹⁴⁷ Nor did the influence of Christian churches end when Ottawas left the reservations after World War II. In 1984, Saint Joseph's Catholic Church celebrated its centennial, an event that was well attended by the Ottawas who lived throughout western Michigan.¹⁴⁸

An estimated more than 1,000 members have been buried in a cemetery adjacent to Saint Joseph's Church over 150 years.¹⁴⁹ The cemetery was segregated from a non-Indian cemetery located nearby. Grand River Bands member Anthony Chingman stated that quite a few of his family, including his father, were buried in the cemetery. Chingman often conducted graveside services in the Ottawa language. Currently, an Indian mass is held once a month at Saint Joseph Church.

¹⁴⁶ PET: Dennis Morrow, "Sacramental Records of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Elbridge Township, Oceana County, Michigan: 1890-1917," Diocesan Archives, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1994.

¹⁴⁷ PET: Interview with Mary Bailey, Viola Wilson, George Lawrence, Joe Lawrence, 20 August 1975.

¹⁴⁸ EHR: "St. Joseph's Opening Centennial Year Sunday," n.d., Mamie and Mitchell Battice Papers, Private Collection, Mamie and Mitchell Battice, Hart, Michigan [hereafter Battice Papers]; McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 302-303.

¹⁴⁹ The attached newspaper clippings and mass cards were obtained from the papers of George and Lucille Pego and commemorate the passing of dozens of Grand River Bands members, from every community. They reflect not only burial in St. Josephs, but also the way the Grand River Bands kinship ties extend beyond geographic boundaries to connect the entire community. PET: Miscellaneous News Clippings, Album One, 13 September 1988. George & Lucille Pego Papers.

After the death of Grand River Bands member Marie Cantu, a funeral mass was held at Saint Joseph Church. The mass was conducted both in English by a Catholic priest, and in Indian by Joseph Genia, who utilized medicines and smudging.¹⁵⁰

In a 2000 interview, Sharron Detz recalled the funeral of Ms. Cantu, who had belonged to the Muskegon Catholic church, Our Lady of Grace. Ms. Detz said that prior to the 1978 Freedom of Religion Act, the Catholic Church did not accept Native American spiritual beliefs. However, after 1978, as at Marie Cantu's funeral, Native American beliefs were incorporated into the service. Ms. Detz said that after the Roman Catholic funeral mass, led by the priest, an Indian ceremony was led by Mr. Genia. She said that Genia smudged, spoke about Ms. Cantu, laid out tobacco, prayed and smoked a pipe. According to Ms. Detz, Marie Cantu was taken out the Indian way, in a long caravan to Saint Joseph's Indian Cemetery in Elbridge Township, where she was buried.¹⁵¹

A history of Saint Joseph's Church at Elbridge was published by the Diocesan Archives in 1984.¹⁵² A strong Indian connection is evident throughout the history. The "Indian Settlement of Oceana County" was discussed as first being listed in the national Catholic Directories in 1867, at which time it was attended by Saint Mary's in Muskegon, until 1876. Care of the settlement was then transferred to Saint Mary's in Big Rapids, and later to the Grand Rapids diocese. The priest in 1894, Father Frederick L. Ruessmann, reported that he celebrated mass at Elbridge monthly for 32 families: three English-speaking, four German and 25

¹⁵⁰ PET: Indian Cemetery, no date, GRBOI-Battice folder 1, news clipping.

¹⁵¹ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March 2000, page 14.

¹⁵² PET: "A Brief History of St. Joseph's Church, Elbridge, Michigan," Dennis W. Morrow, Diocesan Archives, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 13 November 1984, GTBOI-Battice Folder page 1.

Indian.¹⁵³ In 1898, Bishop Richter confirmed over 40 Indians at Elbridge. The Diocesan history notes that in 1917, a piece of land was donated to the Elbridge church “to serve as a cemetery for the white portion of the congregation, since the Indians had a cemetery of their own.” The history notes that in 1930 Bishop Finten “gave his written permission to allow Indian burials in the white cemetery since the Indian cemetery was filled up.”¹⁵⁴

Cemeteries associated with Christian churches were maintained even after congregations closed the doors of their physical structures. Indeed, the Grand River Bands made few distinctions between caring for the spirits of their ancestors whether buried in Christian or traditionalist graves, all of which were preserved.¹⁵⁵ Even Christian burials included elements of pre-Christian Ottawa culture.¹⁵⁶

A spring 1971 newsletter article called the community’s attention to the cemetery and its need for maintenance:

At the last meeting there was a discussion on the plight of the Indian cemetery in Elbridge. It was decided that some steel posts would be bought with some of the money in the treasury. When the weather is such so that work can be done, we will ask for help in repairing the fence and general clean-up. It was voted on that the

¹⁵³ PET: “A Brief History of St. Joseph’s Church, Elbridge, Michigan,” Dennis W. Morrow, Diocesan Archives, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1984, page 2.

¹⁵⁴ PET: “A Brief History of St. Joseph’s Church, Elbridge, Michigan,” Dennis W. Morrow, Diocesan Archives, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1984, page 3.

¹⁵⁵ EHR: Bicentennial Collection of Walkerville Area: Colfax, Elbridge, Leavitt Townships.” Oceana County Bicentennial Publication, 1976; Lewis Johnson, “Map of Indian Reservation,” 1967, Hawley Museum Papers.

¹⁵⁶ McClurken, “Grand River Bands,” p. 303.

large stones that were placed on a number of graves shall be removed and get someone to make crosses for the graves that do not have markers.¹⁵⁷

Cemetery clean-ups were noted in the newsletters monthly and columns recruited volunteer laborers.¹⁵⁸ Regular notices about grounds-keeping and erecting new crosses on gravesites were common.¹⁵⁹ At one time the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc. investigated the possibility of expanding the Ottawa cemetery at St. Josephs Church so they could continue to bury their kin there. The article noted that, "Opportunities to obtain land for an Indian cemetery are still being looked into. There are several options. The legality of using our land which is adjacent to a cemetery is being checked out."¹⁶⁰ Expansion of St. Joseph's Cemetery remains an important issue to the Catholic Grand River Ottawas, and cooperative cemetery maintenance continues to unite bands members.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ EHR: "Cemetery," *Grand River Bands of Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 24 March 1971, Battice Papers.

¹⁵⁸ EHR: "Cemetery Clean Up," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 4 May 1971, Battice Papers; "Cemetery Clean-Up Bee," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 17 July 1971, Battice Papers; "Cemetery," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 10 September 1971, Battice Papers; "Cemetery Clean-Up," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 29 February 1972, Battice Papers; "Cemetery Clean-Up," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 17 April 1972, Battice Papers; "Crosses," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 20 January 1973, Battice Papers; "Crosses," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 27 March 1973, Battice Papers; "Pancake Supper & Clean-Up," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 16 April 1973, Battice Papers; "Cemetery," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 20 June 1973, Battice Papers; "5th Annual Meeting," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 1973, Battice Papers.

¹⁵⁹ "Crosses," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 20 January 1973, Battice Papers.

¹⁶⁰ "Cemetery," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 20 June 1973, Battice Papers.

¹⁶¹ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 323-325.

Cleanup and maintenance of the Saint Joseph cemetery, as well as other cemeteries utilized by the Grand River Bands community, is an ongoing task. Grand River member, Emily Smith, has been organizing the cemetery maintenance of St. Joseph's for the past ten years.¹⁶² Prior to that her father, Mitchell Battice organized it. Prior to that David Lewis, and others were the organizers. Each year, the Saturday before Memorial Day, Grand River members from the Oceana County, Muskegon, and Grand Rapids communities, gather to clean and provide maintenance in the Indian Cemetery.¹⁶³

In 1993, a cleanup of the Saint Joseph cemetery was done in conjunction with an Indian health fair sponsored by a community health organization for Native Americans in Oceana, Kent and Muskegon counties. About 100 participants cleaned up the cemetery, concluding with spreading an offering of tobacco over the gravesites. Larry Fox, a Grand River member then 13 years old, located the headstone marking his grandfather's grave.¹⁶⁴

Since the early 1970s, Ron Yob has been participating in the cleanup of Grand River Bands burial mounds, and has served on the Indian Mounds Commission to that end.¹⁶⁵ Typically, he would take 30 or 40 young people to the mounds, in a school bus provided by Grand Rapids public schools. Participants would gather trash, including refrigerators, washers and couches, and load up a garbage truck provided by the city.

¹⁶² PET: Second Interview with Emily Smith, 18 November 2000.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ PET: "Cemetery Visit Awes Indian Teen," 25 May 1993, Grand Rapids Press.

¹⁶⁵ PET: Interview with Ron Yob. 8 May 2000.

Yob said that as children, he and other Grand River Bands members were taken to the mounds and educated on their history as burial grounds. Yob saw the trash dumping as desecration, and the cleanup as a way of honoring of ancestors.¹⁶⁶

The Indian cemetery in Muskegon is considered a sacred place of worship by Grand River Bands members.¹⁶⁷ Genia said that several thousand people of Ottawa descent live in the area, and use the cemetery for services at least once a year.¹⁶⁸ Genia conducts a native celebration, including storytelling and oral history, each year on Memorial Day at noon¹⁶⁹. This tradition has been ongoing since at least the 1930's, when Solomon Shalifoe and Anthony Chingman conducted the ceremony.¹⁷⁰

Concerned that the sanctity of the cemetery is being compromised by the surrounding rush of the city, The Grand River Bands have begun efforts to take possession of the cemetery from the city of Muskegon.¹⁷¹ Tribal Council member, Joe Genia, lead this effort, so that the Grand River Bands can ensure that its peace and spiritual integrity is maintained. Designated by a plaque as the "Old Indian Cemetery, A Burial Place of the Ottawa Nation," it has been used as a burial ground at least since the mid 1700s. The cemetery is currently surrounded by parking lots on three sides and Morris Avenue on the other, across which is a Greyhound bus station and

¹⁶⁶ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 8 May 2000.

¹⁶⁷ PET: "Serene, sacred...and surrounded" *Chronicle*, No Date.

¹⁶⁸ PET: "Serene, sacred...and surrounded" *Chronicle*, No Date.

¹⁶⁹ PET: Interview with Joe Genia, 9 November 2000.

¹⁷⁰ PET: Ibid.

¹⁷¹ PET: Serene, Sacred, and Surrounded, 3 September 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: Interview with Joe Genia, 9 November 2000.

According to Genia, traffic noise and occasionally shouted racial insults interfere with religious ceremonies.¹⁷²

KATERI CIRCLES

Grand River Bands member Sharron Detz is the Director of Native American Ministry of the Diocese of Grand Rapids. There is a large "Catholic Native American Community within the Diocese."¹⁷³ In the early 1980's Native Americans, including Grand River members Kay Compos and Ron Yob, created an "Indian Advisory Committee" within the Diocese.¹⁷⁴ In its infancy, the Indian Advisory Committee held monthly meetings, which rotated between the Grand River communities of Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Elbridge.¹⁷⁵ The Committee organized a Native American Mass to be said in Grand Rapids, and organized attendance at the National Tekakwitha Conference.¹⁷⁶ The Tekakwitha Conferences are named for Kateri Tekakwitha, who was a Mohawk catholic girl, who Catholic Indians hope will someday be canonized.¹⁷⁷ By 1987, Grand River members were participating in the first Michigan Tekakwitha Conference,¹⁷⁸ and a monthly

¹⁷² PET: Serene, Sacred, and Surrounded, 3 September 1999, GRBOI Files.

¹⁷³ PET: Roman Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids Mission Statement, No Date, Detz Papers.

¹⁷⁴ PET: History of the Indian Advisory Committee, 15 September 1982

¹⁷⁵ PET: Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ PET: Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ PET: Anishnabek News, 9 May 1998, Detz Papers.

¹⁷⁸ PET: Anishnabe Kati-Neek, Vol. 1, No. 3, April/May 1987. Detz Papers.

Liturgy group had formed in Grand Rapids.¹⁷⁹ the “Indian Catholic Ministries”¹⁸⁰ began a newsletter, Anishnabe Kati-Neek, to keep Catholic Native Americans informed about current events.¹⁸¹ Early Newsletters contain notice of the Grand River Bands’ Cemetery Clean Ups at St. Josephs in Elbridge.¹⁸² In June of 1988, the Ministry suggested that “(e)ach of the geographic areas (Hart, Muskegon, and Grand Rapids) should think about forming Kateri Circles.”¹⁸³

There are now active Kateri Circles in all Grand River communities. The Native American Ministry and the Kateri Circles provide an important part of the “shared secular ritual activity” and “informal social interaction”¹⁸⁴ within the Grand River Bands. Two of the Circles are in Grand Rapids, one in Muskegon and one is in Elbridge. Many Grand River members attend the Kateri Circle in their community.

The Muskegon Kateri Circle is large, with monthly meetings of two to three hundred people, approximately 90% of whom are GRBOI. The Elbridge Kateri, headed by Grand River Bands member, Emily Smith, is also predominately Grand River people.¹⁸⁵ The “On Eagles Wings” Kateri Circle, was first known as the “Grand River Kateri,” and originally met at the

¹⁷⁹ PET: Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Formerly “The Indian Advisory Committee,” and subsequently known as “The Native American Ministry” of the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

¹⁸¹ PET: Ibid.

¹⁸² PET: Anishnabe Kati-Neek, Vol. I, No. 3, April/May 1987, Detz Papers, PET: Anishnabe Kati-Neek, Vol. 2, No. 2, June/July 1988, p. 3.

¹⁸³ PET: Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ PET: 25 CFR 83.7(c)(1)(iii) and (vi).

¹⁸⁵ PET: Second Interview with Emily Smith, 18 November 2000.

Grand River Bands Tribal Office.¹⁸⁶ Its membership reflects the diverse urban Indian population in Grand Rapids, consisting of approximately 30% Grand River Bands people.¹⁸⁷

The Kateri Circles meet monthly, and hold prayer groups, which include traditional religious practices, such as pipe ceremonies.¹⁸⁸ They also hold Native American Liturgies in the Spring and Fall, and yearly weekend retreats, at which traditional spiritual rituals are performed,¹⁸⁹ including sweat lodge ceremonies.

In addition, the Kateri Circles host community events-- such as Ghost Suppers, Christmas Parties, and Valentine Parties-- which are widely attended by GRBOI members..¹⁹⁰ Mailings of all events are made to all Kateri members,¹⁷⁶ and these events often provide an opportunity for Grand River Bands members from different regions to socialize.¹⁷⁷

¹⁸⁶ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March, 2000. See also Grand River Kateri Thanksgiving Feast Postcard, 20 November 1997, Detz Papers and PET: Shirley Francis to Friends, 6 February 1992, Detz Papers.

¹⁸⁷ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March, 2000.

¹⁸⁸ PET: Interview With Sharon Detz, 8 March 1999.

¹⁸⁹ PET: Liturgies for Michigan Tekakwitha Conference, 8 May 1987, Detz Papers; PET: Anishnabe Kati-neek, Spring Gathering, 17 April 1993, Detz Papers; PET: Tekakwitha Spring Conference, 14 May 1994, Detz Papers; PET: Tekakwitha Spring Conference, 13 May 1995, Detz Papers; PET: Anishnabe Eucharistic Liturgy, 11 May 1996, Detz Papers; PET: Kateri Circles Fall Retreat, 25 October 1996, Detz Papers; PET: St. Joseph - Elbridge Kateri Circle Spring Gathering, 9 May 1998, Detz Papers;

¹⁹⁰ PET: Shirley Francis to Deb Gutowski et. al., 22 January 1997, Detz Papers; See also PET: Interview with Sharon Detz, 13 March 2000.

¹⁷⁶ PET: Muskegon Kateri Circle Christmas Party, Postcard, 20 December 1997, Detz Papers; PET: Muskegon Kateri Circle St. Valentines Party, Postcard, 14 February 1998, Detz Papers; PET: March Into Spring Flyer, 14 March 1998, Detz Papers; PET: On Eagles Wings Kateri Circle St. Patrick Feast, Postcard, 14 March 1998, Detz Papers; PET: Kateri Circle Summer Gathering, 18 July 1998, Detz Papers; PET: Kateri Circle Fall Gatherings, 24 October 1998, Detz Papers; PET: Native American Ministry Postcard, 5 December 1998, Detz Papers.

¹⁷⁷ PET: Phone Conference with Emily Smith, 16 November, 2000; PET: Interview with Patsy Beatty, 10 November 2000;

So many GRBOI members are involved in the Kateri Circles that the GRBOI Tribal Council often requests that information about its events be included in mailings.¹⁷⁸ Conversely, Kateri flyers advertise that an event will include "Grand River Bands updates."¹⁷⁹

When someone passes away, Kateri Circles facilitate direction from a spiritual leader in the community. If a family requests, a Kateri Circle will provide a Native American pall to drape over the casket at the funeral. The Circles also provide ministry for the sick, the lonely, the abused, the incarcerated and the dying. Special ceremonies honor people in the community. Sharron Detz cited as an example a recent Summer Gathering in Krause Park in Muskegon, where six adults received their first eagle feather in recognition of work in the Native American community.¹⁸⁰

GHOST SUPPERS

Every fall, Grand River Bands members hold Ghost Suppers to ensure the well-being of the deceased. Many GRB members travel outside their community and attend the Ghost Suppers put on in Muskegon, Hart, Grand Rapids, and Elbridge, to celebrate with their extended families and other Grand River members. For example Tribal Council Member, Patsy Beatty, who lives in the Oceana community, attended the Ghost Supper at St. Thomas Church in Muskegon.¹⁸¹ GRB member, Emily Smith keeps in touch with extended family that live out of the area by

¹⁷⁸ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 9 November 2000; See also PET: Anishnabek News, April 1998, Detz Papers; PET: Native American Ministry Postcard, 5 December 1998, Detz Papers.

¹⁷⁹ PET: Honoring Our Babies, 13 March 1999.

¹⁸⁰ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 8 March 1999.

¹⁸¹ PET: Interview with Patsy Beatty, 10 November 2000.

attending “Ghost Suppers” and other Muskegon Kateri events.¹⁸² They are held for six days before and after All Souls Day in early November. Ghost Supper participants eat a meal for someone who has died, thus feeding the person’s spirit. Song, dance and prayer also accompany Ghost Suppers.

In a recent interview Joe Genia listed several extended families who attend Ghost Suppers held by Genia or the Cantu family.¹⁸³ In addition to the Kateri Ghost Supper, a Ghost Supper is held annually in Grand Rapids by Ron Yob and the Grand Rapids community, at Yob’s Native American Alternative Learning Classroom.¹⁸⁴ GRBOI Tribal Council members Sharron Detz and Fran Compo assist with the dinner.¹⁸⁵ Grand River Bands members have held Ghost Suppers continuously throughout the twentieth century.

Sharron Detz discussed ghost suppers in a 1999 interview, offering as examples ghost suppers held by a Kateri Circle at Saint Joseph Church in Elbridge, a ghost supper held by the Grand River Bands, suppers held by the North American Indian Center and Lexington School in Grand Rapids, as well as suppers held all over Michigan at that time. Ms. Detz said that the Kateri Circle has been holding its ghost supper at Saint Joseph in Elbridge since 1986. Ms. Detz said that Grand River Bands members would likely be present at any of the suppers she described. She noted that Ghost Suppers were not limited to one band or tribe, because they were celebrations of people departed from all tribes. She said Indian gatherings have taken place

¹⁸² PET: Phone Conference with Emily Smith, 16 November 2000.

¹⁸³ PET: Interview with Joe Genia, 9 November 2000

¹⁸⁴ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 November 2000.

¹⁸⁵ PET: Need Cite. Just confirmation from TC member is okay.

at Saint Joseph for as long as she could remember, adding that she was 46 years old. She said the first event she remembers was cleaning the cemetery at Saint Joseph when she was three or four years old.¹⁸⁶

An example of a Ghost Supper held at the Saint Joseph Church was one noted in the minutes of the Oceana County Inter Tribal Council meeting minutes November 1, 1989, scheduled for the following Saturday.¹⁸⁷

**SIGNIFICANT RATES OF INFORMAL SOCIAL INTERACTION WHICH EXIST
BROADLY AMONG THE MEMBERS OF A GROUP, 83.7(b)(1)(iii)**

Grand River Bands members frequently interact at informal social events. Each community holds an annual Christmas party, which is widely attended by the GRB members from Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Oceana County communities.¹⁸⁸ In a recent interview, Emily (Battice) Smith recalled that the Oceana County Grand River people have always had a Christmas party. It has been organized for the past five years through the Elbridge Kateri Circle, which Emily runs. However, prior to that it was organized by extended family members in the Oceana County area.¹⁸⁹ It has always been attended by the other Grand River extended families in the Grand Rapids and Muskegon areas.¹⁹⁰ Other Christmas parties, attended widely by the

¹⁸⁶ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 8 March 1999.

¹⁸⁷ PET: Misl. Minutes, 1 November 1989, I.O.W. File 2.

¹⁸⁸ PET: Second Interview with Emily Smith, 18 November 2000.

¹⁸⁹ PET: Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ PET: Id.

GRBOI members, are held in Muskegon,¹⁹¹ and Grand Rapids. GRBOI Tribal Council Minutes for November of 1999, contain a reminder of all three: "12/4 - Hart Christmas Party begins at noon. 12/5 - Grand Rapids Christmas Party. 12/11 - Muskegon Christmas Party."¹⁹²

Ghost Suppers, as discussed above,¹⁹³ provide another example of informal social interaction between GRBOI members. Several Ghost Suppers are put on in each GRB Community, and widely publicized.¹⁹⁴

Pow Wows are also an important social event for GRB members. The GRBOI currently hosts two Pow Wows per year. The Three Fires Pow Wow, held at Riverside Park in June each year, brings together Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawottami Indians from throughout the State.¹⁹⁵ It is planned and sponsored by the GRBOI. It is the largest off-reservation Pow Wow in the State, and one of the largest annual events in the City of Grand Rapids. In addition, since 1996, the GRBOI Tribal Council has been sponsoring the Veterans Pow Wow, honoring veterans and their families.¹⁹⁶ Extended families from Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Hart and Elbridge attend both of these events. In addition, there are annual Pow Wows in Hart and Muskegon.

Pow Wows provide a setting for informal social interaction of GRBOI members. When Joe Genia was asked, in a recent interview, how he keeps the Muskegon members informed

¹⁹¹ PET: Phone Conference with Emily Smith, 16 November 2000.

¹⁹² PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 6 November 1999, GRBOI Files.

¹⁹³ See p. 58, Supra.

¹⁹⁴ PET: All Souls Day, Ghost Dinner, 2 November 1994, GRBOI Files,

¹⁹⁵ PET: Homecoming of The Three Fires Pow Wow Flyer, 13 June 1998, GRBOI Files.

¹⁹⁶ PET: A Gathering of Veterans and Families and Friends, 9 November 1996, GRBOI Files; GRBOI 1998 Veterans Pow Wow Report, 8 October 1998, GRBOI Files; 1998 Veterans' Pow Wow, 7 November 1998, GRBOI Files.

about GRBOI political issues, he gave an example of attending the Labor Day Pow Wow in *Hart* where he talked about GRBOI politics with “some of the family groups” from *Muskegon*. GRBOI attendance at the Pow Wows is so widespread, that Patsy Beatty recently suggested resheduling a Tribal Council Technical Assistance Training because the date conflicted with the Muskegon Pow Wow, which would affect the turnout.¹⁹⁷ GRBOI Many members, especially those with family members involved in drumming or dancing, follow the “Pow Wow Circuit,” attending several Pow Wows per year around the State.

Another form of informal social interaction occurs in the Spring. Each year in May, the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians organizes a spring celebration. The Duck Race is a potluck picnic, with games and prizes for children, including a “duck race” or “She she behn-Kweh kush weh win.”¹⁹⁸ It is always well-attended. For example, in 1998 the event was attended by one-hundred and fifty-nine people.¹⁹⁹

For several years the GRBOI, in cooperation with the Grand Rapids Public Schools, have been holding an Anishnabe Children’s Halloween Party.²⁰⁰

The Grand River Bands community also socializes informally at Potlucks, held frequently in the Muskegon and Oceana areas. Tribal Council members keep members from outside their geographic area informed of these by announcing them at GRBOI Tribal Council Meetings.

¹⁹⁷ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 12 January 1998, GRBOI Files.

¹⁹⁸ PET: Duck Race Flyer, 3 May 1997, GRBOI Files; PET: Duck Race Flyer, 2 May 1998, GRBOI Files; Duck Race Flyer, 8 May 1999, GRBOI Files; Duck Race Flyer, 6 May 2000, GRBOI Files.

¹⁹⁹ PET: Spring Celebration, Attendance and Winners, 2 May 1998, GRBOI Files

²⁰⁰ PET: Adult Educator Newsletter, November 1994, GRBOI Files; Anishnabe Children’s Halloween Party, 24 October 1997. GRBOI Files.

**(vii) CULTURAL PATTERNS SHARED AMONG
A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF GROUP**

Cultural patterns shared among Grand River Bands members include the continuance of trapping and basketry well into the Twentieth Century. Fran Compo's grandmother supported her family with a little money she made by walking miles to sell baskets that she would make from black ash and sweetgrass.²⁰¹ Ms. Compo's grandfather worked as a trapper. And, as mentioned above, her grandmother learned other languages to facilitate trading.

In a 1975 interview, Charity Micko recalled how her mother supplemented her father's food providing efforts by making baskets and selling them house to house, to white people. Ms. Micko said her father would gather the black ash, and her mother would make baskets all winter long, and sell them in the spring.²⁰² Charity added that her father made money by trapping. He would be gone two weeks at a time taking care of his trap lines, traveling by canoe. Charity said that her husband also trapped for a living-- muskrat and mink.²⁰³

Rose Shalifoe of Whitehall and her family have always maintained the band's culture over several generations.²⁰⁴ Rose was involved with the 1965 Grand River Bands Decendants Committee and was a member of the Grand River Bands O Hawk Council. In 1998, Ms. Shalifoe, then 82, was a great-great grandmother, and a great grandmother to over 100 children, by the research of her granddaughter, Christine Edwards. Ms. Edwards, then 38, carried on the

²⁰¹ PET: "Anishinabek women today: defying stereotypes," 15 February 1996, Grand Rapids Press.

²⁰² PET: Interview with Charity Micko and Theresa Micko, 12 September 1975, page 14, 15.

²⁰³ PET: Interview with Charity Micko and Theresa Micko, 12 September 1975, page 19, 20.

²⁰⁴ PET: "A Mother's Legacy," 10 May 1998, Grand Rapids Press.

practice of leather and bead craftwork that she learned from her mother, who learned from her mother, Rose Shalifoe. Ms. Shalifoe was married to her late husband Solomon Shalifoe, an Ojibwa chief, for 47 years.

Christine Edwards attributes the continuation of Indian heritage to her Grandmother, asserting that “We wouldn’t be who we are without this old lady and Grandpa. We have a cultural identity—we know who we are, where we came from. It makes us proud.” Ms. Edwards spent hours making videotapes of Ms. Shalifoe’s narratives, using the information to assemble a family tree.

Rose Shalifoe shared the common experience of being sent away from her home in Hart to a boarding school when she was five years old. There she was prohibited from speaking the Indian language or practicing Indian culture. She was a grown woman with seven children when Ms. Shalifoe returned to celebrating Indian traditions.

Her efforts are not confined to her family, but extend to the Indian community at large. Recognized as one of the most respected elders in Michigan, Ms. Shalifoe speaks at pow wows all over the state, where she offers invocations as well as her own advice. Ms. Shalifoe is known for hosting feasts for Indian children and elders, where she would cook traditional Indian food for over 50 guests in a rented hall.

In 1995, Rose Shalifoe and four generations of her family’s women, including granddaughter Rosie Homburg, were featured in a photograph which opened a permanent exhibit at the Van Andel Museum in Grand Rapids entitled, “Anishinabek: The People of This Place.”²⁰⁵

Rosie Holmberg, who died in 1992, was known as a community activist in North

²⁰⁵ PET: Grand Rapids Press, “A Mother’s Legacy,” 10 May 1998.

Muskegon.²⁰⁶ She served as coordinator of Indian Health Programs for the Muskegon County Health Department and was a representative for the Michigan Indian Employment Services, as well as serving on dozens of committees and boards.

Fran Compo is another Grand River Bands activist and keeper of tradition. A member of the Grand River Bands Council, she is the Indian Outreach Worker for the Kent County Family Independence Agency.²⁰⁷ As a mother of five, she has encouraged her children to learn traditional Indian language. Ms. Compo stated that when her grandparents settled in East Jordan, her grandmother could not speak English. Her grandmother taught herself to read and write English, and learned enough Polish and German to trade with local farmers.

When Ms. Compo was growing up in Grand Rapids, her father would speak a few words of the Anishinabek language to her, but not full conversations. When they visited her grandparents in East Jordan, the elders spoke the Anishinabek language. Now her father helps both Fran and her children pronounce Anishinabek words. Fran passes on family stories and histories to her children, to instill strong self image.

As an example of her community involvement, in 1996, Fran Compo and her 12 year old daughter Andrea took part in a panel discussion at the Van Andel Museum entitled, "Anishinabek Women in the '90s: Defying the Stereotypes." The panel, consisting of local Indian women, was sponsored by the Public Museum of Grand Rapids and the Greater Grand

²⁰⁶ PET: Grand Rapids Press, "Ancestors' stories were her message," [date unknown]

²⁰⁷ PET: Grand Rapids Press, "Anishinabek women today: defying stereotypes," 15 February 1996.

Rapids Women's History Council. The subject of the panel was how the panelists deal with popular conceptions of Indian people.²⁰⁸

From time to time public issues arise that demand the participation of Grand River Bands members. For example, in 1995, the Governor of Michigan proposed ending a program that paid tuition for Indian students at public colleges.²⁰⁹ That proposal was met with a protest rally of about 1,200 people, including Hunter Genia, then a 25 year old graduate of Grand Valley State University. Mr. Genia identifies as a Grand River Ottawa.

An ongoing point of public concern is the proper handling of Indian remains uncovered in the course of excavation activities. In 1995, the Koster Excavating company uncovered a skull and bones on property it owned on the border of Kent and Ottawa Counties, near Grand Rapids.²¹⁰ An associate professor of sociology and anthropology at Grand Valley State University estimated the skull to be prehistoric, possibly dating back as far as 250 B.C.

A controversy arose when more bones were found and the excavator was reluctant to curtail further digging. Joe Genia, then head of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, publicly stated that all he wanted was proper notification when remains were unearthed so that they could be reburied at another location

A gathering at the excavation site was organized to invite Anishinabek people to voice their concerns. A flyer distributed by the Grand River Ottawa Council stated "The 'Sunrise to Sunset Ceremonies' that are going to be held at the Koster Farms, on Linden Road, on September

²⁰⁸ PET: "Anishinabek women today: defying stereotypes," 15 February 1996, Grand Rapids Press.

²⁰⁹ PET: "Indians confront politicians in fight to keep free tuition," 9 March 1995, Grand Rapids Press.

²¹⁰ PET: "Ancient bones stir controversy," 5 September 1995, Grand Rapids Press.

16th, 1995 are to reflect our view that we have not forgotten the Ancient Ones, our Relatives.”²¹¹

Ron Yob, Chairman of the Grand River Bands Tribal Council, is a deeply involved community activist. He teaches for the Grand Rapids Public Schools’ Native American Alternative Learning Center in Grand Rapids. Yob was involved in establishing the classroom, which was designed partly to address high dropout rates among Indian students in seventh through 12th grades, blending a traditional school curriculum with Native American culture. Yob said that by the time a Native student gets to his program, the student has had nothing but negative school experiences. According to Yob, the Center tries to boost students’ self esteem through historical and cultural insights. To this end, the Center celebrated Ghost Day, an annual homage to Indian Elders. Elders were on hand to help students learn culture by preparing a day long feast, which included fry bread and corn soup.²¹²

Ron Yob served as advisor for another area student activity, Club Nuj-Enon-Dak, also known as the Rainbow Club, which had the dual goal of providing a social forum while furnishing information on the problems of Native American youth. With Yob as advisor, the group was involving 22 students from 12 Kent County schools in bi-weekly planning meetings.²¹³

²¹¹ PET: flyers, “Their Spirits Are Calling To Us,” and “Grand River Ottawa Council Native American Grave Protection,” 16 September 1995.

²¹² PET: “Paying Homage - Indian students focus on their unique culture, legacies of elders,” 5 November 1994, Grand Rapids Press.

²¹³ PET: “Breakin’ In - Native American Youth Dance Into a Special Day.” 8 March 1986, Grand Rapids Press.

THE COBMOOSA REUNION

Grand River Bands members could and did mobilize large extended kinship networks for special purposes. One of the most strongly documented examples of these projects was the 1958 Cobmoosa Reunion. While most of the cemetery maintenance activities were family functions and gained little public notice, the care of some cemeteries sometimes became a matter of public reporting in the non-Indian press. Caring for the grave of Ogema Cobmoosa gained notoriety in the 1950s and shows how Grand River Bands members organized kin for a special cultural preservation project. The amount of press coverage dedicated to the Cobmoosa Reunion also shows the degree to which the Grand River Bands were treated as a culturally discrete people by non-Indian residents of the towns and cities where they lived.

Henry Negake,²¹⁴ a great grandson of the Ogema Cobmoosa, decided to organize a reunion for Cobmoosa's descendants on the one hundred year anniversary of the Grand River Bands migration to Oceana County Reservation in 1857. The idea began with plans that Negake and his sister Julia Lewis Alberts made to honor their great grandfather Cobmoosa by marking his previously unmarked grave. They began their task by recruiting family and friends to help. Accompanied by his 77 year old cousin, Mitchell Memberto (another Cobmoosa great grandson who still lived in Elbridge), Negake made the rounds of his boyhood haunts in Elbridge, where he found support for his idea. Negake, Lewis and their supporters expanded their original idea of marking Cobmoosa's grave into a gathering of Cobmoosa's descendants at a reunion to

²¹⁴ PET: There are two Henry Negakes Discussed in the Petition. Henry A. Negake, was born in 1855 , and is now deceased. His nephew, Henry L. Negake, was born in 1939 and is still living. PET: June Dart's Family Tree, 14 February 2000.

commemorate the important role that their great grandfather had played in Grand River Bands history.

The local newspapers reported Negake's and Lewis's reunion plans widely. One newspaper summarized the history of Cobmoosa and his descendants, including their migration from the Grand River Valley to Oceana and Mason Counties.²¹⁵

Local newspaper coverage sparked the interest of local non-Indians in Ottawa history and led to more research on related topics. *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*, for example, printed a story about the old Sayles School (originally known as Pabami School), one of the first schoolhouses the U.S. built for the Ottawas who settled on the Oceana County Reservation. The article gave detailed and essentially correct information about Grand River Ottawa history, helping to reinforce the distinctiveness of the Grand River Ottawas in the non-Indian community throughout the late twentieth century.²¹⁶

Cobmoosa's descendants who lived scattered throughout western Michigan began to gather resources for the reunion which was scheduled for August 23, 1958. They publicized the reunion in newspapers, and personally visited local organizations to gather support. At the Garden Club of Pentwater, for example, Julia Lewis Alberts demonstrated the art of basket making while Ella Tawney spoke about Ottawa history. A local newspaper covered the event, describing Ms. Tawney's storytelling, as well as describing the process of making baskets,

²¹⁵ EHR: "Chief's Descendants Map Reunion: May Erect Monument of Oceana Gravesite of Cobmoosa," 7 December 1957, Hawley Museum Papers.

²¹⁶ EHR: School Dates Back to Indians, 19 February 1958, *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*, Linda Andre Papers, Private Collection, Linda Andre, Ludington, Michigan [hereafter Andre Papers]; McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 315-316.

including the methods of harvesting black ash from swamps and sweetgrass from river marshes.²¹⁷

The program ended with Henry Negake playing piano while Mrs. Tawney and Mrs. Albert sang hymns in the Ottawa language which they then translated into English. In their efforts, Negake, Lewis, and Tawney won support for their grave marking and reunion project and educated the general public about Ottawa history and culture.²¹⁸

A little more than one month before the centennial celebration honoring Chief Cobmoosa, *The (Muskegon) Chronicle* announced that reunion organizers expected 200 to 250 descendants to attend from many parts of Michigan. The article once again drew upon history and culture to give context to the reunion.²¹⁹

Press coverage after the Cobmoosa Reunion shows that the event drew Grand River Bands members from throughout Michigan and stimulated interest from the local non-Indian community as well.²²⁰ The event itself drew more people than organizers anticipated. The Indian Centennial guest book listed 346 Cobmoosa descendants who attended.²²¹

The local newspapers reporting on the Cobmoosa Reunion after the event, once again recited Grand River Ottawa history and reinforced the distinct cultural identity of Cobmoosa's

²¹⁷ EHR: "Descendants of Cobmoosa Give Crafts Program," 19 June 1958, Andre Papers; McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 317-317.

²¹⁸ McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 317.

²¹⁹ EHR: "The Great Walker, Talker Led Tribe to Oceana, Mason Counties in Migration from Grand Valley," 15 July 1958, *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*; McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 317-319.

²²⁰ EHR: "Chief's Descendants Map Reunion," 21 August 1958, Andre Papers.

²²¹ EHR: Indian Centennial Guest Book, 23 August 1958, Andre Papers; McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p.319.

descendants. One newspaper reported that almost a quarter century earlier, the Indians made their last community camp near Pentwater, before being pushed out by development.²²²

The Grand River Ottawas had taken the opportunity to educate the non-Indians who attended the Cobmoosa Reunion about their cultural distinctiveness in crafts exhibits, by performing ceremonial dances in “traditional” style clothing, and by conducting a naming ceremony for its members.²²³ All of these events were documented in *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*, in an article which was written with particular cultural sensitivity and awareness of continuing Ottawa tradition. *The (Muskegon) Chronicle* gave a detailed account of Julia Negake, born 70 years earlier in Elbridge Township of Oceana County. The newspaper also reported on Ms. Negake’s siblings and descendants, including five grandchildren who lived nearby Ms. Negake in Hart.²²⁴

The article clearly showed that the Grand River Bands’ culture was still being passed on generation-to-generation and that modern traditions, coupled with kinship ties, preserved a distinct Ottawa community from historical times to the present.²²⁵

²²² EHR: Leonore P. Williams, “Anniversary Marked by Chief Cobmoosa’s Descendants Saturday,” 25 August 1958, Hawley Museum Papers; McClurken, “Grand River Bands,” p. 319-320.

²²³ EHR: Leonore P. Williams, “Anniversary Marked by Chief Cobmoosa’s Descendants Saturday,” 25 August 1958, Hawley Museum Papers.

²²⁴ EHR: Lorraine P. Shaw, “Cobmoosa Centennial: Ottawa Indians’ Old Spirit Rekindled as Descendants of Chief Gather for Reunion,” 28 September 1958, *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*; McClurken, “Grand River Bands,” p. 320-321.

²²⁵ McClurken, “Grand River Bands,” p. 321-322.

The article also discussed preservation of Grand River Ottawa identity and the way that the reunion planning efforts of Ella Tawney and Henry Negake helped transmit traditions from one generation to another, and resulted in tentative plans to make the reunion an annual event.²²⁶

Although the Cobmoosa Reunion did not become an annual event the Cobmoosa monument and reunion had brought the Grand River Bands community together around issues of cultural history and identity, not around the political matters that dominate much of the historical record. The pow wow that accompanied the event has been repeated at Hart, Michigan many times since the reunion.²²⁷

The organizational efforts and successes of the Cobmoosa Reunion provide strong evidence of both significant social relationships connecting individual members as well as significant informal interaction among the entire group.

As an indication of earlier recognition by non-Indians, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) of Ionia erected a boulder monument to Cobmoosa in 1927.²²⁸

In a 2000 interview, Ron Yob discussed the Grand River Historical Expedition, which took place in the early 1980s.²²⁹ The purpose of the expedition was to help young Grand River Ottawa experience what a canoe trip would have been like 300 years earlier. Yob said the expedition was organized primarily by Grand River Bands member John Bailey. In preparation for the expedition, Yob and others researched the locations of Grand River chiefs and their

²²⁶ EHR: Lorraine P. Shaw, Cobmoosa Centennial: Ottawa Indians' Rekindled as Descendants of Chief Gather for Reunion," 28 September 1958, *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*; McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 322.

²²⁷ McClurken, "Grand River Bands," p. 322.

²²⁸ PET: "On Cobmoosa Monument," Undated, GRBOI-Andre, Folder 1, Scrapbook #66.

²²⁹ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 8 May 2000.

villages, burial sites and any other relevant sites. Participants came from the Grand Rapids and Lansing areas. Of the 38 participants, Yob said 25 to 30 were Grand River Bands members. The expedition carried its own food, meeting people periodically for restocking. A drum accompanied the trip. Participants were sometimes left by themselves and encouraged to meditate and "try to connect themselves to the spirits of that site."²³⁰

Yob said the expedition visited eight to ten village sites, including Maple River, Cedar River, Prairie Village, Cobmoosa Village, Hazy Cloud's Village, Thornapple Village, Cold Brook Creek and Mishemin Village.²³¹

A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE OF SHARED OR COOPERATIVE LABOR OR OTHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AMONG THE MEMBERSHIP, 83.7(b)(1)(iv)

One of the Tribe's greatest organizational success, the Grand River Bands Non-Profit Housing Foundation, was frequently reported in the Grand River Band newsletter, and in non-Indian newspapers, as well. This project, initiated to provide low-cost housing to elderly and poor Indian families in Oceana County, required all of the Grand River Ottawas' organizational, political, economic resources to achieve. The project is an example of the ways the Grand River Bands organized and united around common social and economic problems, and supported their community.²³²

²³⁰ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 8 May 2000.

²³¹ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 8 May 2000.

²³² James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 330.

The Grand River Bands noticed their community's need for lowcost housing, one factor that had lead to emigration from the reservation community in the past. They began to address the issue by appointing a board of directors and submitting an application for a corporate charter to the State of Michigan. They next created a housing authority called the "Grand River Bands Housing Corporation."²³³ Because the authority was created by and headed by Grand River Ottawas, and because the majority of housing applicants were also Ottawas, the authority believed that they would provide housing primarily to Indians, even though state laws dictated that the authority could not discriminate against non-Indians who might apply for housing.²³⁴ The Grand River Bands newsletter closely followed all of the housing authorities' activities from the beginning of its activities.²³⁵ The Grand River Ottawas hoped that by providing low-income housing to their members, they would enhance community cohesiveness. They also hoped that housing, coupled with economic development programs, would increase job opportunities and allow band members to return to the reservation from southern cities.²³⁶

The planning, organization, and negotiation were done by the Grand River Bands themselves. Doing so helped strengthen Grand River Bands leadership and political

²³³ EHR: Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc., Subject: Organizational Status as of the 30th of February 1969, 30 February 1969, Battice Papers.

²³⁴ EHR: Karen Moon, "Plan 80-Unit Project: Indians Take Survey on Housing," *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*, 6 January 1970, Battice Papers; Karen Moon, "Indian Census Going Slowly," *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*, 4 March 1970, Battice Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 330-331.

²³⁵ EHR: "Housing Authority Approved," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 4 April 1970, Battice Papers.

²³⁶ EHR: "Indians Need Identity Awareness," 1969, Andre Papers. Karen Moon, "Ottawa Indians Share Problems with Brothers," 28 April 1970, Battice Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 335.

organization. In a letter to the Board of Directors Charlow commended the board for its efforts and underscored the social significance of their undertaking.²³⁷

The Grand River Bands Non-Profit Housing Corporation, relying on their own leadership and community support, accomplished part of what it set out to do. They organized, incorporated, contracted, and built houses.²³⁸ Under the terms of their state-financed loan, what they could not do was assure that the houses would be rented to Grand River Ottawas. Because the Grand River Ottawas could not discriminate against housing applicants on the basis of race, few if any Ottawas actually moved into the housing the Grand River Bands Housing Authority built.²³⁹

In April, 1994, in order to access funding, the Tribe decided to incorporate as a non-profit organization. Ron Yob, Madeline Murray and Chip DiPiazza (Gilbert DiPiazza Jr.). Fran Compo signed the Articles of Incorporation, on behalf of the Tribe which were filed the following month, in May, 1994. Thereafter they applied for a grant to fund their effort, which enabled them to obtain an office. One of the first endeavors was to establish a procedure for updating membership records.²⁴⁰

²³⁷ EHR: Joseph J. Charlow to Board of Directors, Grand River Bands Non-Profit Housing Corporation, 29 March 1971, Andre Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 336.

²³⁸ EHR: Dick Lound, "Low Income Houses Draw Fire at Rothbury," *The Hart Journal*, 20 January 1972, Battice Papers; "Senior Citizens Housing Pushed," *The White Laker and North Shore Interurban*, 24 May 1973, Battice Papers.

²³⁹ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 338-339.

²⁴⁰ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 May 2000.

The enrollment data gathering process included announcements and information at community gatherings throughout the state, such as Ghost Suppers. Ms. Compo offered as an example, if a group in Oceana County was holding a Saint Valentine Day party, the group could call her or other council members, who would come up and address the gathering and update the people on what was going on. Ms. Compo stated that centralizing operations, such as regular council meetings, at Grand Rapids is actually a return to practices of traditional times, because Grand Rapids used to be a focal point for gatherings, given its location on the Grand River.²⁴¹

Economic and social support was also an important topic in the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc. newsletter. Grand River Bands volunteers collected food, clothing, furniture, and toys for children and distributed them among members in need.²⁴² These ventures often required a high degree of community organization as this excerpt regarding clothing distribution suggests:

A lot of people wondered why clothing was not distributed from 1366 Winston in Rothbury anymore. Through the winter months its [sic] to cold to sort clothing in the barn. The clothing is dropped off in Rothbury, then set to distribution points throughout the 5 counties we now cover. Persons wanting clothing can call 861-2234 and get addresses of where the clothing can be picked up. We would like to thank Mr. & Mrs. Oprinski for bringing the last shipment of clothing to us.²⁴³

²⁴¹ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 May 2000.

²⁴² EHR: "Toys," *Indian Enterprises, Inc.: Quarterly Newsletter*, 30 November 1971, Andre Papers; "Clothing, Toys, Furniture, Ect.," *Indian Enterprises, Inc.: Quarterly Newsletter*, 24 September 1971; "Clothing," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 8 September 1970, Battice Papers; "Clothing," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 3 November 1970, Battice Papers; "Clothing," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 18 December 1970, Battice Papers; "Clothes," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 4 May 1971, Battice Papers.

²⁴³ EHR: "Announcement," *Indian Enterprises, Inc.: Quarterly Newsletter*, 30 November 1971, Andre Papers.

Donations and the distribution of items like clothing and toys for children were particularly effective in uniting the community. To prepare for the winter season in 1970, the Grand River Bands collected a good supply of clothing and anticipated having enough for everyone in need by the following month.²⁴⁴ Contributions for the childrens' annual Christmas party were equally successful having collected enough toys to distribute to 600 children in 1971.²⁴⁵ Grand River Ottawas shared and distributed food informally during pot lucks, pancake breakfasts and raffles organized to raise money for a variety of community needs.²⁴⁶

The Grand River Bands newsletter informed bands members who were unable to attend the many meetings about important events and political decisions that concerned them. For example, the December 1971 newsletter printed a notice for a special meeting about ICC judgment funds distribution for Grand River Ottawas whose ancestors were parties to the 1821 Treaty of Chicago.²⁴⁷ The notice read:

²⁴⁴ EHR: "Clothing," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 8 September 1970, Battice Papers.

²⁴⁵ EHR: "Children's Christmas Party," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 9 December 1971, Battice Papers.

²⁴⁶ EHR: "Christmas Party," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 8 September 1970, Battice Papers; "Potluck Supper," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 29 October 1971, Battice Papers; "Raffle," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 22 November 1971, Battice Papers; "Christmas Potluck Dinner," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 9 December 1971, Battice Papers; "Christmas Potluck Dinner," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 20 January 1973, Battice Papers; "Pancake Supper," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 27 March 1973, Battice Papers; "Indians to Host Pancake Supper," 5 April 1973, Andre Papers; "Fish Fry," and "Pancake Supper and Clean Up," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 16 April 1973, Battice Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 325-326.

²⁴⁷ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 326.

There is going to a meeting held for the Grand River Band of Ottawas, whose ancestors were parties to the 1821 land cession or treaty and other interested Indians on Friday, December 10, 1971 at 7:00 p.m. at the convention hall, L. C. Walker Arena, 470 West Western Avenue, Muskegon, Michigan. The purpose of this meeting will be to meet with a Washington Indian bureau official and to get an explanation from him as to why the Grand River Ottawas are completely ignored on their requests for the method of distribution of Grand River Ottawa judgment fund which belongs to them. There will be other speakers at this meeting also. This is an important meeting. Try to attend. This meeting is being put on by the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association.²⁴⁸

The political relationship between the Grand River Ottawas and the U.S. continued to define and unify the bands and the newsletter helped bring government-to-government relations to the attention of band members throughout the state.²⁴⁹

The newsletter also frequently addressed the everyday needs of the Grand River Bands community. Information about small business loans for minorities, vocational training, job postings, and scholarship information provided by the newsletter also aided the Grand River Bands in dealing with economic uncertainty. Indian Enterprises, Inc., a business-related affiliate of the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nations, Inc., gave small business loans to several Grand River Ottawas.²⁵⁰ In fall 1971, the newsletter printed an article announcing the success that two families achieved with the money they had borrowed:

As you know Indian Enterprises Inc. is primarily set up to seek small business loans for persons of minority. We have to date small business loans through for two families. Robert Battice of Custer is now building a garage, and James

²⁴⁸ EHR: "Notice of Special Meeting," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 9 December 1971, Battice Papers.

²⁴⁹ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 327.

²⁵⁰ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 327.

Weaver is now the proud owner of a sport shop on U.S. 31 one mile north of Rothbury. Our representative Mr. Hiawatha Jones of Minority loans (SBA) and friend has got us off to a very good start, and we are very happy to be affiliated with him. Thank you Mr. Jones for the 3rd. feather. Any one interested in securing a small business loan please call or write. . . .²⁵¹

In addition to small business loans, adult vocational training was advertised for those in need of a skilled trade.²⁵² The March 1972 newsletter alerted Grand River Ottawas about trainings, saying:

Are you an Indian between the ages of 18 and 35 and interested in getting training? If you are eligible to have two years of training paid for. Fields of training which others have gone into are:

Accountant, Automobile Mechanic, Barber, Carpenter, Diesel Mechanic, Draftsman, Dressmaker, Machine Operator, Radio & TV Repairman, Stenographer and others.

You can get financial assistance for transportation to place of training; maintenance during the course of training; and training and related costs. Financial assistance is a grant, not a loan. It is not necessary to repay it. Financial assistance will be provided to maintain your family at your training destination, also. . . .²⁵³

²⁵¹ EHR: "Small Business," *Indian Enterprises, Inc.: Quarterly Newsletter*, 24 September 1971, Andre Papers.

²⁵² James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 327.

²⁵³ EHR: "Adult Vocational Training Services," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 24 March 1972, Battice Papers.

The newsletter also advertised family assistance money for those Grand River Ottawas who needed it.²⁵⁴ For example:

There is an Employment Assistance Program available that everyone should be aware of. It is a two-year school and training program for eligible Indians primarily between the ages of 18 and 35. Every effort will be made for the student to select the type of training he wishes. The head of the household is allowed to take his family with him. If the student cannot pay his own expenses, he is granted financial assistance in order to maintain his family during the course of his training.²⁵⁵

Job positions were advertised regularly in the Grand River Bands newsletter. An example reads:

We have received an announcement for the position opening of Staff Director for the Michigan Commission on Indian Affairs, Lansing, Michigan. Applicants should have a thorough knowledge of methods of supervision, administration and management as well as a considerable knowledge of the governmental structure surrounding Indian citizens at the federal, state, local and tribal levels, and of the problems involved in the betterment of human rights. Annual Salary. . . .²⁵⁶

A variety of scholarship opportunities were also brought to the communities' attention via the newsletter.²⁵⁷ As the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, and Alpena

²⁵⁴ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 328.

²⁵⁵ EHR: "Educational Program," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 8 September 1970, Battice Papers.

²⁵⁶ EHR: "Position Opening," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 24 March 1972, Battice Papers[not cited under this quotation in EHR]; [not cited under this quotation EHR]

²⁵⁷ EHR: "Scholarships," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, July 1973, Battice Papers; "Educational Program," and "Scholarships," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 8 September 1970, Battice Papers; "Scholarships," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 20 June 1973, Battice Papers.

Community College sought to increase their Indian enrollments, the newsletter again posted information and contacts for those wanting to pursue advanced degrees. One notice says:

The University of Michigan has an active program of American Indian recruitment & supportive services. This past year their Indian enrollment increased from 7 to 60. There is scholarship funding available to Indian students. If you are interested in finding out more about their program, contact. . . .

Alpena Community College also has an active Native American Program. Financial help is available. They offer 1 yr. or 2 yr. programs. It is not too late to enroll. A high school is not a prerequisite.²⁵⁸

By recognizing the importance of developing educational programs for Michigan Indians, the organizers of the Grand River Bands' newsletter provided a forum where such activities could be advanced.²⁵⁹

The tribe's leaders knew that federal and state programs did not adequately meet the needs of poor Indians on the reservation or in urban communities. The Grand River Bands organized to help themselves. Mrs. Ardith Pierson, a trustee of the Grand River Bands organization, told a local newspaper about the support they provide to members;

"Our organization is alive and functioning," Mrs. Ardith Pierson, trustee from Shelby said.

She related the recent incident of a young mother, a Grand River Band Indian, and her two children, deserted by her husband in Grand Rapids with no money for rent and food.

Mrs. Pierson said that the young woman telephoned her of her plight and efforts to call the welfare office only to be told that she would have to report to the office to prove her need. She had no transportation and was afraid to contact the police for fear that her children would be placed in foster homes.

²⁵⁸ EHR: "Education Opportunities," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 18 May 1973, Battice Papers; "Indians Need Identity Awareness," 1969, Andre Papers.

²⁵⁹ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 328-329.

"I contacted Bruce Krueger of the Oceana County Community Action Program, who arranged to have food delivered to the woman and her children," Mrs. Pierson said. With the Grand River Band Indians sponsoring her, the welfare officials made arrangements for the necessary aid.²⁶⁰

This networking relieved a small part of the most critical economic need in the community.

EVIDENCE OF STRONG PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION OR OTHER SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS BY NON-MEMBERS, 83.7(b)(1)(v)

Grand River Bands members experienced strong patterns of discrimination in their school experiences, particularly in the area of language.

As mentioned earlier, when she was five years old, Rose Shalifoe shared the common experience of being sent away from her home in Hart to a boarding school. There she was prohibited from speaking Indian language or practicing Indian culture. It was only as a grown woman with seven children that Ms. Shalifoe returned to celebrating Indian traditions.²⁶¹

Interviewed in 1975, Grand River Bands member Delia Cadotte recalled attending a small country school called Houk School, where she learned to speak English. She said speaking Indian was not allowed, and classmates were encouraged to coach Indian students to "get you to lose your native tongue."²⁶²

Interviewed in 1990, Grand River Bands member Elizabeth Bailey recalled incidents of social distinction by non-members due to her Indian status. She recalled church meetings in her

²⁶⁰ EHR: Karen Moon, "Indians Still Hopeful: Housing Plan Delayed," 1969, Andre Papers.

²⁶¹ PET: Grand Rapids Press, "A Mother's Legacy," 10 May 1998.

²⁶² PET: Interview with Delia Cadotte, 16 Sept. 1975.

home where Indian was the exclusive language, including singing. She also recalled being sent to Holy Childhood School at Harbor Springs for a year, where she had problems adapting to English, saying that they assigned a girl to teach her how to speak English. Elizabeth said she was later sent to Mount Pleasant Indian School for six years. When asked about visiting home from school, Elizabeth replied, "Once. Once in that six years."²⁶³

In a 2000 interview, Grand River Bands member Angie Yob recalled being raised by her grandmother, Elisa Kelsey, in Muskegon and attending school there: "The first day of school, grandma made my lunch. A nice little tin box, a little round tin lunch pail. And I went to school, and this little girl come and took me by the hand. And she says, we're going to have lunch now. We'll go sit by the tree, you know, it's in September. And we're sitting down, we're opening our lunch, we're going to eat. And this little white girl comes up, and she says, ah, don't eat with her. I never knew what Indian was. And, she says, she's Indian. And, and the little girl says, well I'm going to eat with her. She says, no you don't eat with Indians. She says, you don't talk to Indians, and she left. So then, from that time on kids said to run behind me, they'd make motions, and they'd poke. And says, there goes Indian, Indian. And I went through that for, for a while and then I just kind of learned to live with it. Learned to live with, ah, I was Indian. I went home and told my, asked my grandma what was Indian? She says, well that's what we are, that we were Indians."²⁶⁴

²⁶³ PET: Interview with Elizabeth Bailey, 13 October 1990.

²⁶⁴ PET: Interview with Angie Yob, Frank Compo and Pat DiPiazza, 25 February 2000, p. 4.

Angie Yob further recalled that Indian language was spoken while growing up in her grandmother's house: "We spoke, ah, Indian. The Ottawa language. But then, I had aunts, but I grew up with both languages. I spoke English, and Indian."²⁶⁵

Grand River Bands members George Lawrence and Joe Lawrence recalled their school experiences in a 1975 interview. Joe stated he spent two years in the Holy Childhood School. He stated that his mother spoke fluent Indian and that when he started Holy Childhood, he could hardly speak any English. When asked if students could talk to each other in Indian, Joe replied that he'd find Ottawas from Peshawbestown and Grand Traverse Bay and talk Ottawa with them.²⁶⁶

Many Grand River Band members spoke Ottawa as a first language, later learning English when they were sent off to school. In a 1975 interview, Ella Tawney, Maggie Jackson and Leonard Tawney discussed speaking Ottawa before learning English.²⁶⁷

Ella Tawney stated that she was nine years old when she started at May School in Oceana County, which had twelve Indians and ten non-Indians. She said she lived with her grandparents, and that they talked Indian all the time, and she didn't know how to speak English when she started school. She said she learned partly from a classmate who spoke only English, and they would share lunch and converse by pointing at food items and identifying them.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ PET: Interview with Angie Yob, Frank Compo and Pat DiPiazza, 25 February 2000.

²⁶⁶ PET: Interview with George Lawrence, Joe Lawrence, 20 August 1975.

²⁶⁷ PET: Interview with Ella Tawney, Maggie Jackson, Leonard Tawney, 14 May 1975.

²⁶⁸ PET: Interview with Ella Tawney, Maggie Jackson, Leonard Tawney, 14 May 1975.

Leonard Tawney stated that the reason younger generations of Indians can't preserve the language is that they go to non-Indian schools, where the structure of the English language that they are taught does not lend itself to Indian language use.²⁶⁹

Maggie Tawney said that there were some Indian speaking children in her school, but that they were absolutely not allowed to speak Indian among themselves. Maggie said she would be punished by having her ears pulled if she spoke Indian.²⁷⁰

Ella Tawney said she went to a Catholic school, where she and other Indian children taught the nun there how to properly speak Indian, while the nun taught them to speak English. However, Ella said that at the Harbor Springs boarding school, they didn't talk Indian in front of the teachers, but did speak it among themselves, whispering to hide it from the teachers. She said she would sometimes say Indian phrases after everyone had gone to bed in the dormitory, to see which schoolmates would respond. Then, they might later work together at a task such as ironing, and talk Indian in low voices.²⁷¹

In a 1975 recorded discussion, Bea Bailey and Lucy Wilson addressed the subject of losing Indian language abilities while at school. Bea said that some people who went to schools where Indian language was forbidden, forgot the language and only spoke English thereafter. Lucy said that she pretty much forgot how to speak Indian after a year and a half in school.²⁷²

Sharron Detz discussed the social distinction caused by language:
"Because I must have been about five years and I was probably going into

²⁶⁹ PET: Interview with Ella Tawney, Maggie Jackson, Leonard Tawney, 14 May 1975.

²⁷⁰ PET: Interview with Ella Tawney, Maggie Jackson, Leonard Tawney, 14 May 1975.

²⁷¹ PET: Interview with Ella Tawney, Maggie Jackson, Leonard Tawney, 14 May 1975.

²⁷² PET: Interview with Bea Bailey, Lucy Wilson, 17 October 1975.

kindergarten and I remember my great aunts and my great uncles and my grandmother they were all laughing and they talked in our language. They use our language. They didn't use English unless there was somebody with a European background that was in our [midst], that's the only time they would ever talk English. Otherwise they just used our language."²⁷³

Although she was generally discouraged from speaking the Indian language because her mother feared she would get beaten at school, Ms. Detz said that there was a desire by some elders to pass the language on, particularly on her mother's side of the family. For example, at some family dinners, Ms. Detz was required to converse in the Indian language.²⁷⁴

Angie Yob and Pat DiPiazza discussed the issue of language distinction in a February, 2000 interview. Ms. DiPiazza said, "You know a lot of Indian people our age don't speak Indian, because they weren't allowed to. But because we lived in the country probably why we retained it... Oh, Indian people, I would say probably my generation were, were punished. You know. Um, a lot of them were taken out of their homes, and were not allowed to speak... In the schools, yeah, a lot of times the schools, but they were sent to Indian schools. The Indian school would not let them. Well, there were Indian schools, but probably run by white people that didn't. They tried to just take everything from the Indian people which is that's a fact. You know. They took their language, and that was really, really important for. And the kids now are learning it again and are real happy to get back into their culture."²⁷⁵

²⁷³ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 8 March 1999.

²⁷⁴ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 13 March 2000.

²⁷⁵ PET: Interview with Angie Yob, Frank Compo and Pat DiPiazza, 25 February 2000.

Michael Genereaux stated that he understands the Ottawa language, and that his parents informally tried to teach him the Ottawa language: "They tried to encourage us to speak, but, I don't know... I regret we didn't have the interest... I have a sister and brother that—they have a better command of the language than I do." Michael stated that both his parents were "very proud of our people's heritage. There was always a distinction in the home that we were Native Americans and it was important to keep our identity alive."²⁷⁶

Kenny Pheasant is a teacher of Ottawa language.²⁷⁷ Although he is not a Grand River Bands member himself, he is an important resource for members of the Grand River Bands community. In 1993, when he was 39, he taught throughout west Michigan, including Grand Rapids. Pheasant grew up speaking Ottawa, and adapted to English. Raised on a Reserve in Canada, he was four years old before he saw his first white man, and as an adult, spoke nothing but Ottawa with his parents.²⁷⁸ He said his father was constantly whipped for speaking the language when he went to boarding school in Canada, but persisted. Pheasant gave up a construction management job to teach language full time, including classes at Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City. Since no teaching materials were available, Pheasant had to develop his own. His efforts included using computer technology to construct a program to preserve the sound of the language.

Among Pheasant's students have been Fran Compo, three of her children and Fran's father, Frank Compo. Although Frank Compo grew up in East Jordan speaking Ottawa, once he

²⁷⁶ PET: Interview with Michael Genereaux, 13 July 1998.

²⁷⁷ PET: "Voice of the People," 23 September 1993, Grand Rapids Press.

²⁷⁸ PET: Traverse Magazine, "Final Haven," May, 1993.

entered school, there was no one who spoke the language. Until he sat in on Pheasant's class, Mr. Compo had rarely spoken the language for several years. Mr. Compo, then 70, said Pheasant's class helped bring back his knowledge of the language. Some students would study with Pheasant for several years. Pheasant said, "I tell them that I expect them to take the language and teach it to others."²⁷⁹

In a 2000 interview, Fran Compo stated that she has always identified as a Grand River Bands member. She recalled that from the time of her childhood, her parents raised her as a Grand River Bands member. She said that her blood quantum is one half Grand River Bands from her father's side, and one half Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawas from her mother's side. Ms. Compo in turn has instilled the notion of Grand River Bands membership in her children. Ms. Compo attributes identification with the Grand River Bands in part to the geographical aspect of having been born and raised in Grand Rapids.²⁸⁰

In a February, 2000 interview, Grand River Bands member June Dart recalled incidents of discrimination from her mother's time. The first incident occurred while June's mother was in Mount Pleasant Indian School. A schoolmate of June's mother, Margaret Wabsis, became pregnant and gave birth to a daughter while in school. Officials took the daughter away and sterilized Ms. Wabsis. Because she did not want the same thing happening to her, June's mother ran away from the school with the help of another schoolmate, by climbing down from an eaves,

²⁷⁹ PET: Grand Rapids Press, "Voice of the People," 23 September 1993.

²⁸⁰ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 May 2000.

whereupon her friend threw her a pillowcase full of her belongings. June's mother then followed the railroad tracks away from the school, never to return.²⁸¹

Another incident occurred after June was born, in the time of Prohibition. June's father was imprisoned for a Prohibition-related offense and June's mother was not able to provide food for the family. When she went into Hart to apply for welfare or other assistance, the presiding judge rejected her request, saying that the state did not give welfare to Indians.²⁸²

In a 2000 interview, Ron Yob recalled his mother and aunt speaking Indian language when he was a child. If they caught Ron listening, the adults would stop talking and "kick us out of the room. Tell us to go outside."²⁸³ Yob said that when he was a child, his mother would take him to visit her childhood school, Holy Childhood, in part to threaten him with boarding school if he ever misbehaved. Yob said that at Holy Childhood, children's mouths were washed out with soap for speaking the language, and his mother didn't want him susceptible to similar treatment. He further stated that the school had "little jails" for locking children up. Despite discouragement by the adults, Yob said he gleaned bits of Indian language anyway.²⁸⁴

Ron Yob remembered purposeful distinctions among bands of the Grand River Ottawa, including an Indian Bible owned by his mother, on which was written "Grand River Ottawa Thorn Apple Forks Band."²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ PET: Interview with June Dart, 14 February 2000 and 24 February 2000.

²⁸² PET: Interview with June Dart, 14 February 2000 and 24 February 2000.

²⁸³ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 8 May 2000.

²⁸⁴ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 8 May 2000.

²⁸⁵ PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 8 May 2000.

In a February, 2000 interview, Pat DiPiazza discussed the recurrent issue of non-Indian governmental interference in Indian families. Ms. DiPiazza said, "I broke my arm when I was seven, and it really was a bad break. Ah, but as Angie said, we were always afraid somebody was going to take us away from grandma anyway. But then, we had this little hill up here with a chokecherry tree, and that's where I always thought somebody was hiding watching us. Looked for us to do anything wrong where they'd come and take us away. So when I was seven and I broke my arm, I broke it in the town, and it was a really bad break and they're wanting to take me to the hospital and I'm screaming, no, no I don't want to go, I'll never come home, I'll never come home. And they said, oh no you'll come home. Well, I didn't come home for seven years... But, I, I don't think that if I had not been in the, if I had been in, non-Indian child in a non-Indian home, I don't think they ever would have kept me for seven years for a broken arm. I realize it's a very bad break, and I almost lost my arm, and you know, I was disabled from and all that. That's a long time to have a kid in hospitals, then I went into foster care."²⁸⁶

Ms. Yob said, "And when my children were growing up, they grew up like anybody else. I mean there was no Indian language being spoken, which I am very sorry I didn't start talking or didn't talk to them when they were small. Let them grow up Indian."²⁸⁷

Social distinctions caused by discrimination continue to this day. As Indian Outreach Worker for the Michigan Department of Social Services (DSS), now known as Family Independence Agency (FIA) in 1994, one of Fran Compo's jobs was to contact approximately 70 Indian families on the Kent County FIA caseload. One of Ms. Compo's concerns was a pattern

²⁸⁶ PET: Interview with Angie Yob, Frank Compo and Pat DiPiazza, 25 February 2000.

²⁸⁷ PET: Interview with Angie Yob, Frank Compo and Pat DiPiazza, 25 February 2000.

of discrimination which made Indians reluctant to get involved in bureaucracy. She stated, "There's been a long history with Indian people getting involved with the system and the system not always being fair."²⁸⁸

POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND AUTHORITY, 83.7(C)

INTRODUCTION

The GRB meets the criteria for 25 CFR 83.7(c), political influence and authority over its members. The following definitions apply:

83.7(c) The petitioner has maintained political influence and authority over its members as an autonomous entity from historical times until the present.

83.1 Political influence or authority means a tribal council, leadership, internal process or other mechanism which the group has used as a means of influencing or controlling the behavior of its members in significant respects, and/or making decisions for the group which substantially affect its members, and/or representing the group in dealing with outsiders in matters of consequence.

83.8(d)(3) The group meets the requirements of the criterion in Sections 83.7(c) to demonstrate political influence or authority is exercised within the group at present. Sufficient evidence to meet the criterion in Section 83.7(c) from the point of last Federal acknowledgment to the present may be provided by demonstration of substantially continuous historical identification, by authoritative, knowledgeable external sources, of leaders and/or a governing body who exercise political influence or authority, together with demonstration of one form of evidence listed in Section 83.7(c).

The GRB's rich political history meets the requirement of "substantially continuous" leadership, as recognized by "authoritative, knowledgeable external sources." Evidence of other 83.7(c) criteria, such as membership involvement and internal political conflict, are also reflected in GRB's historic documents. This, in combination with GRB's

²⁸⁸ PET: Grand Rapids Press, "DSS worker helps American Indians, 12 October 1994.

strong history of community, discussed in 83.7(b), satisfies the requirements of 83.7(c), as modified by 83.8(d).

OVERVIEW

The GRB has had a continuous sequence of political leadership from 1870, the last date of unambiguous previous Federal acknowledgment, through the present. Descendants of Chiefs and Headmen took over the political leadership, weaving an unbroken line of kin-based leadership, which continues to this day.

Historically, the GRB, like other Ottawa Tribes, did not have a formal Tribal Council that met regularly.²⁸⁹ Each of the nineteen bands had a Chief or “Ogemagigido,” who was informally chosen by the band, or simply came forward, exhibiting leadership skills. Many other leaders were present within the bands, called “Headmen.” Headmen provided leadership in whatever way they were most proficient. Some were good speakers and were utilized as “Ogemuk” or negotiators. Headmen were generally men whose political opinions were well-respected, and sought out. Within the bands, the roles of Chief and Headmen were usually passed down through generations, within the same family. It was not uncommon for the man who married the daughter of a Chief or Headman to assume a leadership role. However, it was a very loose political system. The “political influence” that these leaders and elders had on the behavior of their members was a way of life. It was exercised daily on an informal basis, and formally, at various tribal ceremonies. It was only when important political matters arose that all the Chiefs and Headmen met in Council, and negotiated Treaties and other important business as a Tribe.

²⁸⁹ The historical perspective of GRBOI politics in this paragraph is taken from the Ethnohistorical Report. James M. McClurken, “Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990,” McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp.14-16

Often they joined with the other Ottawa Tribes to negotiate as a regional confederacy, such as in the Treaty of 1855.

These basic patterns continued well past the turn of the century. When Horace B. Durant, Indian Agent, created the Durant Roll of 1910, he was assisted by the next generation of GRB Chiefs and Headmen, descendants of the signers of the Treaty of 1855. In keeping with their political traditions, the GRB Chiefs joined with other Ottawa Chiefs, to formally petition the exclusion of certain half-breeds from the Durant Roll.

In the 1920's, changing economic conditions, and other factors dissolved the sharp line between individual Bands. During the first half of the 20th century, the GRB was in various stages of the transition from individual hunting bands to a modern political government. This transition had to survive many challenges of the times: Attempted assimilation, the Great Depression, and two world wars intervened. Most importantly, the Commission of Indian Affairs interpreted a clause in The Treaty of 1855, to have "dissolved" all Ottawa Tribes. The U.S. completely refused to recognize the Ottawas' political leadership. In 1918, the GRB, and other Ottawas, again joined their efforts. They gave formal "Power of Attorney" to J.W. Cobmoosa, grandson of Chief Cobmoosa, to represent their interests in Washington. From 1918 until at least 1948, he wielded political authority and represented the GRB in Washington. Local Headmen, however, continued to exercise political influence within their communities. Almost invariably descendants of previous Chiefs or Headmen, they lobbied the U.S. Government for the redress of Treaty violations, hunting and fishing rights, and later for inclusion in the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). As IRA issues came to the political forefront, the Headmen in each GRB Community became more visible politically. Their names indicate that the kin-based

political structure of the GRB was still functioning. Key IRA documents indicate that both U.S. Officials and GRB members recognized localized GRB leaders as representatives with political authority and influence over their members.

When the United States refused to recognize the Ottawa politically, they again banned together to negotiate. In 1948 the GRB political leaders joined with other Ottawa and Chippewa Indians around the State to form the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association (NMOA). NMOA provided the power in numbers that Ottawa Tribes needed to get results. While claims issues were the impetus for forming this umbrella organization, the GRB operated autonomously within NMOA on a variety of political issues important to the group. GRB members were concentrated in Units Four, Five, Six, and Seven of NMOA. The founders of these Units were the GRB political leaders of the time, and descendants of past GRB Chiefs and Headmen.

The GRB political leadership operated through NMOA from the 1950's through the 1980's. A large part of the politics during these years surrounded the GRB-ICC Claim regarded as "Docket 40K." Eventually, the "Grand River Bands Descendants Group" to separate itself from NMOA when dealing with the ICC. The "Descendants Group" was made up of the prominent GRB political leaders. In the 1970's and 80's the Descendants Group and other GRB groups began to operate politically within their local communities, beyond the confines of NMOA. The GRB's ties to NMOA were further weakened in the late 1980's, when the U.S. began to "recognize" Ottawa tribes individually. It was inevitable that the GRB would reorganize along historic tribal lines. The GRB branched off completely from NMOA and formed The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Inc., in 1994.

Throughout this time, internal political influence has been abundant in the GRB community as well. Kateri Circles, traditional celebrations, and Pow Wows have been the settings for GRB leaders and elders to influence the behavior of members. Aside from those pursuing formal political goals, the GRB has elders and leaders within their communities who influence the norms of behavior, and provide a sense of political identity, teaching the “old ways” to each new generation.

THE TREATY OF 1855 AND ITS AFTERMATH

1855 - 1910

Introduction

After the Treaty of 1855, The GRB were forced to move from the Grand River Valley, to land reserved under the Treaty. As discussed previously, they took eighty-acre allotments in distinct areas in Muskegon, Mason and Oceana Counties. There they joined with a few bands of Ottawas who were already living there, and continued living in a band structure, functioning much as they had before the move. In addition to the many letters and petitions sent by Grand River Chiefs and Headmen to U.S. officials, there are four important records which help to document this era: The 1870 Annuity Payroll, the Register of Land Grants, 1854-1875, the 1890 Census of Indians Taxed and Not Taxed, and finally the Durant Roll, a census of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians which was compiled between 1905 and 1908.

All of these documents depict the life of The GRB from 1855 - 1910. They show us that the GRB, as a tribe, sustained the tumultuous move northward intact, and began to live on the reservations in traditional bands much as they had before the move. Despite the U.S.

Government's insistence that the Treaty of 1855 dissolved the Tribe, the GRB lived in traditional tribal relations until well after the turn of the century.

The Move To Reservations

On February 15, 1857 a letter was sent to Indian Agent Maypenny stating:

Undersigned Ind(ian)s of Ott(awa) Colony assembled in council address you having concluded to move on the lands in Oceana County. Many Ind(ian)s wish to move this spring if govt will assist them in paying expenses and furnishing provisions when they get there with other articles specified in treaty. Want to know as soon as possible, as probablity (sic) is that all the Ind(ian)s of this band and others will move onto this land if those necessary things are provided for them.²⁹⁰

This message appears to be sent from Maish-Caw's band, as it is signed by "Mash Kah" (sic), and seventeen other Chiefs and Headmen, many of which are listed under Maish-Caw's band in the 1870 Annuity Payroll.²⁹¹

Maish-Caw's request was granted, and the Grand River Bands moved in the spring of 1858. An examination of patents issued pursuant to the 1855 treaty shows where the GRB relocated after the move.. The *Indian Agency Register of Land Grants* shows that the GRB took allotments on the Muskegon County Reservation (Township 12 north, range 15 west), the Oceana County Reservation (Townships 15 and 16 north, range 16 west), and on the Mason County Reservation (Townships 17 and 18 north, range 16 west).²⁹² According to the land selection list the Grand River Bands chose parcels numbered in consecutive order from 945 to

²⁹⁰ EHR: Mashkah et al. to George Manypenny, 16 February 1857, NAM M234 R.405:737-739.

²⁹¹ EHR: "1870 Annuity Pay Roll of the Grand River Band of Ottawas & Chippewas of Michigan," National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives).

²⁹² PET: Map of GRBOI Reservations, 5 November 2000.

1417, a total of 474 allotments within the three county area. Based upon these figures, forty-six percent of the entire population received an allotment²⁹³.

The largest number of allotments were patented in Township 15, range 16 west, in the area of Elbridge in Oceana County. Two hundred and eighteen persons, nearly forty-six percent of the total population whose allotment selections were recorded in 1864 and 1865, took allotments at or near Elbridge. An additional seventy-three people took selections in Township 16, Range 16 west, with the largest number of selections located in the lower tiers of Crystal Township, between the town of Crystal Valley and Paybame Lake. The combined allotments in Oceana County total sixty-one percent of the parcels selected in 1864 and 1865.²⁹⁴

Ottawas who lived in Mason County chose approximately ninety-four allotments, or roughly twenty percent of the total selections. Eighty-eight of these parcels lay within a four mile radius of Nabaquoung's original village at Custer.²⁹⁵ As the land patents indicate, two distinct GRB settlements emerged from the allotments: One in the northern reservation area, near the town of Custer in Mason County, and the other further south in Oceana County, near the town of Elbridge.

²⁹³ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 123-124.

²⁹⁴ EHR: Michigan Indian Agency Register of Land Grants, 1854-1875, Michigan Historical Collection, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. All subsequent allotment counts and descriptions are drawn from this document; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 125-128.

²⁹⁵ Nabaquoung's Band was an Ottawa Band that was already living on the GRBOI's Mason County Reservation lands prior to the signing of the 1855 Treaty; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 128.

Continuing Traditional Band Life

Documents from this period reflect that the GRB continued to live in Tribal relations, in bands headed by Chiefs and Headmen, after the move to reservations. One way in which the political leadership is documented during this period is the Annuity Payroll. The Treaty of 1855 provided for direct payments to the Bands every five years. When annuities were paid, the Ogema, or Chief, who lead each band played an important role. He was required to certify the payment for those in his band.

The final Nineteenth Century annuity payroll was compiled in 1870. That year the following Chiefs certified the payment: Nebawnaygezick, Aishkebawgosh, Wawbegaykake, Kenewegezick, Maishkeawshe, Payshawsegay, Paybawme, Chingwashe, Shawbequoung, Maishcaw, Kawgaygawbowe, Metayomeig, Aishquayosay, Awkebemosay, Payquotusk, Metaywis, Penayse, Mawbeece, Aken Bell, and Nawgawnequong.²⁹⁶

Fifteen years after the Treaty of 1855, and twelve years after the move to reservations, the nineteen historic bands were still intact. Of the original treaty signatories, ten remained the leaders of bands in 1870. There had been a continued succession of leadership within the bands, as younger men replaced elders at the heads of their lineages. Ogema Cobmoosa, for instance, was already elderly when he left the Grand River. He was replaced by his son, Mawbeece Cabmoosa.

This document is important proof of the political influence of the Chiefs. The fact that the Ogemuk certified payment for their members is indicative of their political authority within

²⁹⁶ "1870 Annuity Pay Roll of the Grand River Band of Ottawas & Chippewas of Michigan."

the Bands. They were representatives for their people in dealing with the United States, and made decisions which substantially affected their members.²⁹⁷

By comparing the 1870 Payroll Annuity²⁹⁸ with the Register of Land Grants, the general geographic location of each Band can be established. The allottees within the northern community or Mason County Reservation who were Chiefs or Headmen are: Nawgawneqnoung, Joseph Penasay, Payquotush, Kewaycushcam, Kewgaygawbowe, Chingwashe, and Metaywis. The leaders of the Elbridge settlement between 1859 and 1870 were: Mawbeece Cabmoosa, Aishkebawgosh, Paybawme, Maishcaw, Maishkeawshe, Pashawsega, Aishquayosay, Wabegaykake, Metayomeg, Nebawnaygeshik, and Opego.

While the GRB settled into two distinct communities after the move to reservations, they continued to operate as one Tribe politically. For example, on October 15, 1869, the GRB met in Council, and drafted an IOU of sorts, which stated:

We the undersigned Chiefs, Headmen, and Indians belonging to the Grand River Bands of Indians, of the Ottawa and Chippewas Tribes, entitled to annuities at Reservation at Oceana and Mason County acknowledge ourselves (sic) and our People severally and jointly indebted to John R. Robinson in the sum of Seven Thousand nine hundred sixty seven & 82/100 Dollars, and Harvey S. Sayles in the sum of Seven Thousand three hundred fifty one & 68/100 Dollars, and John F. Godfry in the sum of Five Hundred Dollars. . . ²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ 25 CFR 83.1

²⁹⁸ The Annuity PayRoll [EHR: "1870 Annuity Pay Roll of the Grand River Band of Ottawas & Chippewas of Michigan," National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives)], in addition to other documents discussed infra., help to identify the Chiefs, Headmen, and Ogemuk.

²⁹⁹ PET: IOU from Grand River Bands to John R. Robinson, Harvey Sayles, and John F. Godfrey, 15 October 1869, NAM M234 R.409 738-741.

Sayles, Godfry, and Robinson were merchants who had given credit to GRB. This IOU goes on to give them the right to collect their debt from "money due [GRB] from the United States."³⁰⁰ It also states "the undersigned (are) Chiefs, Headmen, and Members of said bands."³⁰¹

There are thirty-five signatures. Although the spellings are sometimes different, nearly all the Chiefs which certified the 1870 Annuity Payments can be identified again as signers of this IOU.³⁰² These are Chiefs, Headmen, and other members from *both* GRB settlements.

This simple IOU gives us a window into the GRB political structure of 1869. It reflects a strong tribal government-- one in which the debts of one are the debts of all. A tribal government in which the chiefs considered themselves one political unit, and represented the interests of all members in financial "matters of consequence."³⁰³

An 1873 letter to the Indian Commission, written from Hart, Oceana County, Michigan, shows similar unity. The letter requests more time for the selection of lands, since many of the younger members had not yet made selections.³⁰⁴ It is signed by the following Chiefs: Chingquash, Ne-be-nay-ke-zhick, Mawbeece, Kah-ge-she-quom, Ke-sis-waw-be, Aish-quay-o-say,

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² The IOU signatures identify at least fifteen of the nineteen chiefs. Only Nawgawnequoung, Maishcaw, Awkebemosay, Metayomeig, and Aken Bell from the 1870 payroll are unidentifiable here. This may be due to anglicization of their names, or penmanship. Some of the spellings are slightly different, probably due to phonetic spelling by the transcriber. For example Maishkeawshe appears on the IOU as 'Maysh Kay Ashy'

³⁰³ 25 CFR 83.1. For other jointly written documents of the time, see PET: Richard Smith to Nathaniel Taylor, 2 December 1867, NAM M234 R.408:323-328, PET: Shawbekoung to Hon. O.H. Browning, 11 December 1868, NAM, M234 R. 408: 702-709, and PET: Daniel Ashkebagas et al. to Payshaysegay et al, 17 May 1869. NAM, M234 R. 408: 718-724,

³⁰⁴ PET: EHR: 1870 Payroll Annuity. George Chingquash et al., to Wilder D. Foster and Thomas W. Ferry, 5 February 1873, Nam M234 R. 408: 949-951.

Pay-quo-tush. It is also signed by the following headmen: Battice Bailey, Dominick Ne-be-nay-ke-zhick, John Battice, and John Parisien. Comparing the names to the Register of Land Grants, it is clear that this request is made by the GRB leaders from both reservations.³⁰⁵

Evidence of a strong and cohesive political structure between the Oceana County and Mason County bands continues in documents from the 1880's. During the 1880's the GRB Ogemuk wrote several more letters to the Federal Government seeking the redress of grievances regarding prior treaties. In January of 1882, for example, the GRB presented a Petition to the United States Government demanding an accounting of funds owed them under the 1836 Treaty.³⁰⁶ The correspondence consists of a letter signed by the "authorized agent and correspondent" J. Cushaway, demanding the accounting. Also enclosed are two "Petitions," signed by scores of GRB leaders and members. One petition seeks to revoke any previous authority vested in "W.N. Severance and A.J. Topash for conducting GRB business. The other petition is a formal complaint regarding the missing funds. It reads, in part:

We your petitioners would respectfully represent that we are members of the tribe of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians known distinguished as the Grand River Bands of Michigan.

And we believe ourselves entitled to a certain annuities and to a certain trust fund or funds held for their benefit under a treaty made with them at Washington D.C. March 28th 1836.³⁰⁷

The letter is written from Crystal Valley, Oceana County, and is signed by Chiefs and Headmen from both reservations. It indicates the political organization and cohesion of the

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ PET: Joseph Cushaway et al. to Hiram Price, 16 January 1882, LROIA 1157-1882.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

GRB. The numerous signatures contain the names of current Chiefs, including Mawbeece, Joseph Medawie (Metaywis), Maish-Caw, Maishkeawsh, Chinggewash, and Pay-Co-Tush.

In addition to Chiefs and Headmen of previous years, this letter is signed by several Headmen who were new political leaders, and along with their descendants, would be a part of GRB politics well into the Twentieth Century: John R. Robinson, Sampson Robinson, Mishuawnawquot Bailey, Shaggonabe, Paqua Bailey, John Batius (Battice), Lewis Batius (Battice), James H. Cushaway, Selwick Bailey, William Mickko, and Cogshiguom (Cogswell) Muceutayosha.³⁰⁸

The planning and organization which must have gone into this and other letters³⁰⁹ indicate that the GRB was being represented during the late Nineteenth-Century by a Council with internal processes and significant political authority over its members.

Further insights during this period can be taken from the *Report on Indians Taxed and Not Taxed*, which was part of the 1890 Census, and published in 1894. The following are excerpts from that report:

MASON COUNTY- The census enumerators found 335 Indians, under the name of the "Ottawa and Chippewa tribe", residing in Mason county, and the Ottawa dialect is used.

Ninety families own houses, 10 frame and 80 log, for the most part neat and comfortable, with a patch of ground upon which vegetables are cultivated. The greater number of Indians follow a variety of callings, sometimes logging and laboring, then fishing, hunting, trapping, picking berries, gathering roots, according to the season. Three-fourths of the tribe are at this time (last

³⁰⁸ Id.

³⁰⁹ See also EHR: Mashcaw to Hiram Price, 24 April 1883, LROIA 7783-1883.

September) in the woods gathering ginseng root, which commands a good price. They raise no produce for market.

... There were originally 4 full townships in this reservation, but how much now belongs to the Indians is difficult to ascertain.

... Generally, they do not seem to know the first rudiments of economy.

OCEANA COUNTY- There were found in Oceana County, adjoining Mason county on the south, 271 Indians whose general conditions are kindred to those in Mason County.³¹⁰

These comments depict a tribe that is living in a traditional manner, even participating in "cooperative labor."³¹¹ The Band organization was vital to GRB life, providing the coordination of seasonal hunting and gathering excursions.

As illustrated above, in the initial decades after the move to the reservations, the nineteen individual bands continued to be lead by a chief, and headmen. When important business regarding treaties, debts, or dealings with other governments was necessary, leaders from each band gathered in a tribal Council and dealt with those matters as a tribe.

³¹⁰ EHR: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Report on Indians Taxed and Indians not Taxed in the United States (Except Alaska) at the Eleventh Census: 1890*, pp. 332-333 (Washington, D.C., 1894) [hereafter *Indians Taxed and Not Taxed*].

³¹¹ 25 CFR 83.7(c)(2)(iv).

The Early Twentieth Century

1890 - 1910

The 1890's until 1910 were years of evolution for GRB politics. An increasing white presence brought economic changes, such as an increase in wage labor. This, in turn, weakened the political structure of the hunting bands. Furthermore, young men who had been educated at the local Indian schools began influencing GRB politics. As a result, the lines between the nineteen historic hunting Bands slowly began to loosen, and GRB Headmen began to experiment with the idea of a formal "tribal council." Some Headmen were less anxious to adopt the white man's approach to government, and the early Twentieth Century reflects at least one "internal conflict" in GRB politics.³¹²

Three Little Traverse Band Headmen³¹³, Simon Kiji-go-benese, John S. Kewaygeshik, and John L. Miscogeeon, were corresponding with the U.S., on behalf of the Ottawa, regarding the alleged embezzlement of Indian money by former Indian Agent, J.W. Long. A letter dated June 2, 1900, reflects a very sophisticated leadership. It begins:

Referring to your letter, finance 14510, 1900, under date of March 28, 1900, replying to a letter from ourselves, you state in the closing portion of said letter that "The records show that this amount of coin was converted into currency, yeilding (sic) the sum of \$43,095.36, and on the 23rd day of August, 1870, was placed to the credit of Maj. J.W. Long, Indian Agent, and by him paid to the Indians mentioned in said Act."³¹⁴

³¹² 25 CFR 83.7(c)(1)(v)

³¹³ See PET: Durant field notes, Page 26, No. 4, and Page 32, No. 8.

³¹⁴ EHR: Simon Kijigobenese et al. to William Jones, 2 June 1900, LROIA 26720-1900.

Perhaps frustrated by the ineffective letter writing campaigns, some GRB Headmen held a Council and elected officers to represent the GRB. On July 11, 1900, this new Council sent a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington D.C., which stated:

We the undersigned members of the Ottawa Indians known as the Grand River Ottawas of Michigan would respectfully represent that on the 3d day of May A.D. 1900 the said Indians met in council at the town ship (sic) of Custer in Mason County, Mich (sic) and at said council Ash ke buy ne ka-- known in English as Amos Green was Elected Chief for two years from said date- and William Genereaux was elected Chairman and James Cogsequom secretary-- there was an executive committee of 5 member(s) elected consisting of Charles Genereaux and Rodney Negake for two years and Charles Me da quet, Wm Sam and Isaac Shaq wag no for one year.³¹⁵

This letter went on to ask for an investigation into several issues concerning possible monies and land owed the Indians.

Apparently a faction of the GRB leadership did not support this effort. They preferred the representation of the Little Traverse leaders. On December 4, 1900, A letter signed by John Battice, Battice Bailey, George McClellan, John Pete, Henry Bailey, Amos Wakefield, George Pete, George Hinman, Willie Hinman, and Louis Battice, and purporting to represent "Hundreds of Others," was received by the Commission of Indian Affairs in December of 1900. This letter stated "we the undersigned subscribers... (d)o hereby protest and pray that you or your department do not accept nor recognize the following named persons as our agents or attornies." It proceeds to name the newly elected Council. This letter states "(t)he only lawful agent or

³¹⁵ EHR: Ashkebyneka et al. to William Jones, 11 July 1900, LROIA 33159-1900.

attornies we have now in Washington, D.C. are Simon Ke-she-go-be-nas-si and John Ke-way-ge-shig.³¹⁶

While these letters reflect an internal political conflict, it was short lived. Names from both opposing factions appear together in future political documents and both are identified by Horace B. Durant, as GRB leaders who assisted him in preparing a Roll of the GRB.³¹⁷ Future correspondence between Henry Bailey, a Kiji-go-benese supporter, and several of the "Tribal Council" supporters³¹⁸ also indicates a unified voice.

The political structure of the nineteen historic hunting bands was giving way to a looser organization within the GRB. Some members of the Tribe were even experimenting with a more modern form of government. However, when Indian Agents arrived in 1905 to create Tribal Rolls for the Ottawa, the GRB were still firmly represented by Chiefs and Headmen who had political control, even to the extent of excluding some from the membership rolls.

Preparation of the Durant Roll

1905 - 1910

In 1905 a Petition was brought in the United States Court of Claims on behalf of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians that were parties to the 1836 Treaty of Washington, including the

³¹⁶ EHR: John Battice et al. to William Jones, 4 December 1900, LROIA 59976-1900.

³¹⁷ Durants notes regarding GRBOI Chiefs and Headmen are discussed *infra*.

³¹⁸ See EHR: Power of Attorney by Sampson Robinson et al. to Henry Bailey, 18 March 1911, Cornelius Bailey Papers, Private Collection, Daniel Bailey, Manistee, Michigan [hereafter Bailey Papers].

GRB.³¹⁹ It alleged misappropriations under that Treaty. In 1907 the Court of Claims ruling in favor of the Indians, requiring that they be reimbursed, plus interest.³²⁰ The payments to be administered under the Court of Claims ruling necessitated the government accelerate its efforts, already underway, to prepare rolls of the Michigan Indian Tribes.³²¹ The Roll was begun by Special Agent Conser in 1903, reassigned to Special Agent McNichols in 1906, and finally reassigned to Special Agent Horace B. Durant in 1908. The task was completed in 1910 by Durant, and consequently became known as "the Durant Roll."³²²

The correspondence between the special agents and their superiors, Durant's Field Notes, as well as the Roll itself, provide important documentation of this period. They illustrate the strong political leadership within the GRB during these years.

The Durant Roll reflects that the GRB was still living strictly in Tribal Relations, with Chiefs in control. The Roll is organized on the basis of the Chiefs that certified the 1870 Payroll Annuity. Each of the nineteen Chiefs is listed, followed by the names of all that received annuities under him. Durant then identified the descendants of each payee, adding some others that could be certified to be GRB by Chiefs and Headmen.³²³ Despite this method, Durant

³¹⁹ EHR: William Petoskey et al. v. The United States, 27 May 1905, RG 123, Docket 27,978.

³²⁰ PET: Court of Claims of the United State 27537, 4 March 1907, RG 123.

³²¹ The Court of Claims petition escalated the government's efforts to enroll the Ottawas, a task that was actually begun in 1903, by Special Agent Conser. See EHR: Charles Larrabee to Ethan Hitchcock, 10 November 1905, LSOIA C268:438.

³²² The information contained in the Durant Roll was published in book form in 1991 by Raymond C. Lantz. EHR: Ottawa and Chippewa Indian of Michigan, 1870-1909, Raymond C. Lantz, 1991, Heritage Books.

³²³ EHR: Horace Durant to Robert Valentine, 13 July 1909, BIA-Durant 45533-1908, 053, p. 2

states in his correspondence that "except possibly for the purpose of identification, such arrangement by bands is not now necessary, for time and circumstances have almost destroyed the distinction of bands".³²⁴

However, the correspondence of both McNichols and Durant, indicate that the Ottawa, including GRB, were living a largely traditional life, in which Chiefs and Headmen provided structure and political leadership. One indicator is that the Special Agents requested and received permission to rely on the Chiefs and Headmen of each Tribe to verify it's constituency. In his first correspondence, written in 1905, McNichols reflects that "the tentative list of the Grand River Band, secured by Mr. Conser nearly two years ago indicates about 650 belonging to that band to which my correspondence shows there should be some additions." This tells us that Conser was able to enroll the GRB in 1903, which surely reflects some degree of political organization. Furthermore, he was able to find out about necessary "additions" by correspondence, presumably with a political leader.

Later in this correspondence, Conser requests, "in view of the large number to be enrolled," that he be allowed to dispense with "specific proof" for Indians living in Villages or Bands.³²⁵

Receiving no answer to his first letter, McNichols wrote again. He again complains, asking for advice, and requesting permission to simplify the task, given the large number of Indians, living in Tribal relations, in sometimes remote areas. It is clear from his correspondence

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ PET: Charles McNichols to Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 26 October 1905, LROIA 86756-1905, pp. 4

that McNichols anticipated locating what he thought would be a small community of mixed bloods. What he found were villages of traditional Indians, and in some cases intact, functioning bands. He states: "conditions in this vicinity are different from what I anticipated and I imagine quite different from (what) you had in mind when the instructions were prepared for special agent Conser nearly two years ago." ³²⁶ He again request permission to rely on the Chiefs to verify their tribes constituency: As I think I suggested before it seems to me that the certificate of the Chief of each band might be regarded as sufficient."³²⁷

On November 10, 1905, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs C. Larrabee agreed with McNichols and informed the Secretary of Interior that:

I fully concur in the opinion of the Special Agent and have to recommend that the portion of the regulations referred to be modified so as to permit, when the Indians are living in tribal relations, of the acceptance of the certificate of the Chief of a band as sufficient evidence of the right to enrollment of any Indian belonging to such band. ³²⁸

Shortly thereafter, Larabee wrote to McNichols saying:

You are also advised that the Department under date of the 15th instant, modified the instructions given to Special Agent Conser under date of December 14, 1903, approved by the Department December 21, 1903, and under which you are now acting, so as to permit, when certificate of the Chief of a band as prima facie evidence of the right to enrollment of any Indian belonging to such band. You are directed to govern yourself accordingly in cases of this character. ³²⁹

³²⁶ PET: Charles McNichols to Charles Leupp, 5 November 1905, LROIA 89634-1905

³²⁷ Ibid., pp. 3-5

³²⁸ EHR: Charles Larrabee to Ethan Hitchcock, 10 November 1905, LSOIA C268:438.

³²⁹ EHR: Charles Larrabee to Charles McNichols, 17 November 1905, LSOIA A268:152.

Note that at least two of these men, Charles Genereaux and James J. Cogswell (Cogsequom), were members of the GRB Tribal Council of 1900. A third, Henry Bailey, also a Headman, was one of the critics of the Tribal Council. Several of these men (Sampson Robinson, Henry Bailey, the Cogswells) were prominent in GRB politics well into the future.

Another member of the 1900 Tribal Council, Rodney Negake appears in Durant's notes, along with Jacob Bailey, son of Battice Bailey, who also was a critic of the 1900 Tribal Council. Durant identified Negake and others, as Chiefs or Headmen by making the following note:

This family cannot be traced to the 1870 roll but by the (indecipherable) testimony of James Cogswell, Rodney Onegake, Jacob Bailey, Shay-go-nay-be, and many others, James Bananas & family are Ottawas of the Grand River Band, and I am satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that he is entitled to be enrolled.

Horace B. Durant
Spt. Ind. Agent,

Aug 11, 1908
Elbridge township
Michigan
Indian Church House ³³³

The authority of the GRB Chiefs and Headmen during this time is especially illustrated by their petitions to exclude certain mixed-bloods from the payment roll. Durant wrote to his superiors regarding the protests of the Chiefs and Headmen:

Although the tribes and its bands are now dissolved, there yet exists a custom to recognize certain of the older members as chief and headmen. These chiefs and headmen have protested to me and to the Office against the present enrollment of certain persons descendants of those half-breeds who were on the 1870 roll.³³⁴

³³³ EHR: Durant Field Notes, 11 August 1908, p. 50, No. 2, Second Sheet.

³³⁴ EHR: Horace Durant to Robert Valentine, 13 July 1909, BIA-Durant 45533-1908. 053.

The contention of Ottawa headmen that they should be allowed to determine the status of mixed blood claimants led Durant to ask the Bureau for instructions.³³⁵ The Bureau replied:

The facts as to the protest of the chiefs and other representatives of the tribe against the enrollment of any mixed bloods other than those whose names were borne on the roll of 1870, and also against the granting of such rights to their children, should be set out in full in your report, and you should designate, so far as practicable, the mixed bloods who are to share in the payment to these Indians. The matter will then be submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for his consideration and final determination.³³⁶

The GRB Chiefs and Headmen identified the objectionable persons in a written document, dated July 28, 1909.³³⁷ The protest is signed by Rodney Negake, John Williams, Samule Bailey, James Milchilhitmark, Bert Pego, Joseph Kequom, John Shagonaby, and John Cogswell, James Cogswell, C.E. Hickey, John Wah-ban-dwa-to, William Mac-saw-day-o-quot, and William Elliott³³⁸

Durant, in preparing his roll, designated those members against whose inclusion in the band the chiefs and headmen protested. In deciding the status of these persons, the Bureau put great weight on the fact that organized Indian communities had survived and that these communities had the right--using native customs--to determine their own memberships.

³³⁵ EHR: Horace Durant to Robert Valentine, 13 July 1909, BIA-Durant 45533-1908, 053.

³³⁶ EHR: Robert Valentine to Richard Ballinger, 25 January 1910, BIA-Durant 45533-1908, 053.

³³⁷ PET: Rodney L. Negake, et. al. To Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 July 1909 BIA-Durant 45533-1908,053.

³³⁸ William Elliott was also known as William Micko, a GRBOI Headman whose name would be prominent in GRBOI politics for generations to come. Charles Hickey was his father-in-law. See EHR: Raymond C. Lantz, *Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan, 1870-1909* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 1991), p. 101.

Ultimately, the Bureau agreed with the protests of the headmen and recommended that the contested mixed-blood not be included on the rolls:

His (Durant) reports show that the various Indian communities and groups still recognize chiefs and headmen and to some extent have maintained their tribal organization notwithstanding the treaty of 1855 by which such organization was to be dissolved; that the provision made for their mixed bloods in 1870 was in the nature of a settlement of such rights in the tribe as they had....It is shown also to be the tribal custom to designate what mixed bloods and their children should receive aid for the tribe: and that the several branches thereof protest strongly against permitting any mixed bloods not on the 1870 rolls and the children and other descendants of those enrolled at that time to share in the present award. and their descendants to whom the tribe protest, and recommends that they be allowed to participate in the judgment...Considering all of the facts in the case the Office is of opinion that these mixed bloods protested against by the Tribe should be excluded from sharing in the payment".³³⁹

Horace B. Durant, an "authoritative, knowledgeable external source" identified and worked with the GRB Chiefs for more than a year to prepare the GRB portion of the Durant Roll. The Chiefs' absolute insistence that the Government respect tribal custom in preparing it's Roll, also speaks to their authority. Surely the power to define its membership is the ultimate example of "political influence and authority" within the Tribe. The GRB Chiefs and Headmen were certainly "making decisions for the group which substantially affect(ed) (their) members" and "representing the group in dealing with outsiders in matters of consequence."³⁴⁰ By respecting their wishes, The Commission of Indian Affairs recognized the GRB Chiefs and Headmen as leaders "who exercise political influence or authority."³⁴¹ CFR 83.8(d)(3).

³³⁹ Robert Valentine to Richard Ballinger, 25 January 1910, BIA-Durant 45533-1908, 053.

³⁴⁰ 25 CFR 83.1

³⁴¹ 25 CFR 83.8(d)(3)

JACOB WALKER COBMOOSA AND THE IRA

1910 - 1939

Overview

The period from 1911 to 1948 was a frustrating one for the GRB and other Ottawa Tribes in northern Michigan. The cultural transition from migratory Band society to living on single-family farms had been difficult. As discussed previously, many Ottawa simply did not even attempt this new lifestyle. Instead, they sold their land (or never claimed it) and lived in clusters in the Elbridge and Custer areas. They continued to live by the same migratory means-- hunting and trapping in Fall and Winter, berry picking and maple syrup production in Spring, and subsistence farming in Summer. Many had also moved to the surrounding cities to find work, or followed the lumber industry North. By the 1930's, the GRB were living in clusters from Honor to Grand Haven along the Eastern shore of lake Michigan³⁴².

Even more challenging than their cultural transition however, was the U.S. policy of assimilation during these years.

In 1910, the same GRB Chiefs and Headmen identified by Durant formed a tribal council, and attempted until at least 1916 to negotiate issues that had arisen under the Treaties of 1839 and 1855. However, the policy of the United States Government during this time was that the Treaty of 1855 "dissolved" all of the Ottawa Tribes, and they were individual citizens. The

³⁴² Mark Burns report on the "three distinct bands" of Indians in Michigan, one of which he lists as "the Ottawa band, numbering about 700, and living in scattered groups. Extending from Traverse City to Grand Haven." He is obviously referring to the GRBOI. EHR: Mark Burns to John Collier, 6 April 1936, CCF General Services 9634-1936,066

hope was that this would force the Ottawa Tribes to stop functioning as Indian Tribes, and all their members would "assimilate" into the white community.

In reality, of course, this did not happen. One reason was that many of the agreements the U.S. made with the Ottawa in 1855, were not carried out. Also, numerous conflicts arose over the terms of the Treaty. For example, the Ottawa understood that they would retain the right to hunt and fish on the land they were ceding. They were shocked when, as years went on, they were arrested for hunting and fishing violations. There were also payments that were never completed, and educational and other provisions which were halted after a few years, which the Ottawa understood to be perpetual. The U.S. decision to end political relations with the Ottawa was, of course, impractical. However, the official position was reiterated whenever the Indians tried to reinstate a government to government relationship.

When U.S. officials refused to recognize the Council created by the GRB Headmen, they united with other Ottawa Bands to send one individual to Washington, to make their formal complaints. Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, grandson of Chief Cobmoosa, who is known as the last Chief of the Grand River Bands,³⁴³ was granted a formal "Power of Attorney" for this purpose. Cobmoosa lobbied extensively on behalf of the GRB throughout the 1920's and 1930's.

While Cobmoosa was elected to represent the GRB in Washington, certain Headmen continued to exercise local political authority within their GRB communities. In 1928, GRB Headmen from the Manistee community attempted to negotiate with the COIA about hunting and fishing rights. The existence of local GRB Headmen in all the GRB communities becomes

³⁴³ EHR: "Ionia D.A.R. Unveils Tablet to Memory of Cobmoosa, Last Chief and Speaker of Ottawa Band That Roamed Valley of Grand," *Ionia County News*, 22 July 1927.

evident, however, as the Indian Reorganization Act (hereinafter IRA) comes to the forefront. lobbied hard for the GRB to be reorganized under IRA.

This robust resurgence of political activity, all of it by the descendants of Headmen, indicates that its kin-based political structure survived the GRB's change in demographics. The families of the headmen from twenty years before were still functioning as the GRB political leaders for their respective communities. They worked together, and independently, on behalf of the GRB throughout the 1930's, until WWII intervened, and all hopes of IRA reorganization was gone.

Early Organizational Efforts and Jacob Walker Cobmoosa

Shortly after the Durant Roll was published, the GRB leaders drafted a formal "Power of Attorney," retaining an attorney by the name of E.B. Stark to pursue a land claim along the Chicago lakefront³⁴⁴. This document suggests that the GRB was quite well organized politically. It lists as Chief and Delegate, Sampson Robinson, a headman who had long been active in GRB politics.³⁴⁵ Its "Secretary and Treasurer," William Sam, and the sole "Committee" member, William Mickoo, were also long-standing political leaders.³⁴⁶ This "Power of Attorney" was

³⁴⁴ EHR: Sampson Robinson to Henry Bailey, 18 March 1911, Bailey Papers.

³⁴⁵ Sampson Robinson, along with numerous other Chiefs and Headmen, signed a GRBOI petition sent to the U.S. Government on 16 January 1882. He was also cited by Indian Agent Horace B. Durant as one of the GRBOI leaders who assisted in preparing the GRBOI portion of the Durant Roll

³⁴⁶ William Sam was a Committee member of the first ever elected GRBOI Tribal Council of 1900. See EHR: Ashkebyneka et al. to William Jones, 11 July 1900, LROIA 33159-1900. He is also known as William Payquotush. See Durant, Field Notes, p. 58 no. 3. He married Nancy Micko, sister of William Micko, See Durant, Field Notes, p. 58 no. 3. William Mickoo (Micko), also known as William Elliott (See fn. 44, infra), was a Headman who participated in the 16 January 1882 Petition referenced above, and signed the Petition protesting certain mixed-bloods. PET: Rodney L. Negake et.al to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 July 1909 BIA-Durant

obtained from "the Bailey Papers," from descendants of Henry Bailey. It was sent to Henry Bailey, another prominent GRB Headman,³⁴⁷ by Sampson Robinson on May 19, 1913.

It is significant that these three men are still the prominent political leaders, and shows continuity in GRB politics since 1900. Their having sent the document to Bailey indicates that the rift between the first Tribal Council of 1900 and the Kiji-go-benese supporters had been healed, and these GRB leaders were now working together.

Although the Tribe represents itself in this document as the "Pottawatamie, Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan," all of the evidence reflects that it is in fact the GRB political unit of the time. As discussed above, all of the officers are GRB Headmen. The document states that the Tribe is "(l)ocated at Fountain, Mason County, Michigan"—the GRB Reservation site. It was drafted in Freesoil, which is also near the GRB original Reservation area.³⁴⁸ The reason for including the Pottawatamie Indians in this particular effort, is most likely that the document concerns the "Chicago Lakefront" claim, which involved all of the Tribes.³⁴⁹ Nonetheless, it indicates that the leaders of the Grand River Bands were meeting on a regular basis, representing their members in political matters.

45533-1908 053.

³⁴⁷ Henry Bailey comes from a long line of GRBOI Chiefs and Headmen. His father died young, but his uncles were prominent in GRBOI politics. His namesake, Paqua Bailey (or Henry Bailey Sr.) Signed the 16 January 1882 petition. His Uncle Battice Bailey was a Chief, who also signed the 1882 petition. See Durant Field Notes, 1909, p. 50, No. 14, pp. 1 & 2, and EHR: Richard Smith to Nathaniel Taylor, 2 December 1867, NAM M234 R.408:323-328.

³⁴⁸ Map of Reservations, 5 November 2000.

³⁴⁹ PET: E.B. Merritt to James McLaughlin, 16 July 1914, Bailey Papers

Merritt's response, which was then forwarded to Bailey, was to refuse to assist or even acknowledge the GRB Indians. Merritt states:

As above mentioned, these Indian claimants are citizens of the United States and of the States in which they reside and are not under the control or jurisdiction of the government. The Office has heretofore refused to approve contracts between them and their attorneys relating to the prosecution of their claims.³⁵⁰

The GRB also petitioned their Congressman, J.C. McLaughlin. On December 18, 1915. McLaughlin wrote to Bailey, acknowledging receipt of Bailey's correspondence about claims.³⁵¹ While he did not question Bailey's authority, he stated: "I doubt if there is anything I can do for the Indians of my district in the matter of claims."³⁵² Bailey's son, Cornelius, apparently took over the effort, and was given an even harsher answer by McLaughlin on January 8, 1916:

... every payment of money to the Indians has been made in full, (and) there is no money now due them, nor is there any land to which the Indians have any claim³⁵³

Perhaps discouraged, perhaps derailed by WWI, no evidence of the efforts of the GRB Tribal Council of 1911 survive past 1916.

Ironically, while the Oceana and Mason County GRB were completely refused recognition to pursue Treaty issues, other GRB Headmen were enlisted by the COIA to facilitate the Claims money due the Ottawa from the 1905 Claim. Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, grandson of

³⁵⁰ PET: E.B. Merritt to James McLaughlin, 16 July 1914, Bailey Papers. See also EHR: James McLaughlin to Henry Bailey, 21 July 1914, Bailey Papers.

³⁵¹ EHR: James McLaughlin to Henry Bailey, 18 December 1915, Bailey Papers.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ EHR: James McLaughlin to Cornelius Bailey, 8 January 1916, Bailey Papers.

Chief Cobmoosa, and Henry Pego, another GRB headman³⁵⁴ exhibited political authority by dictating where GRB Indians would go for payments. The Ottawa were complaining bitterly about the cost of travel for payment, because the COIA did not really know the Ottawa communities.³⁵⁵ On July 17, 1910, James W. Balmer, Superintendent of the Mt. Pleasant School, wrote to Indian Agent, Charles H. Dickson, who was authorized to make payment:

Jacob Cobmoosa has complied with your request and notified the Indians about the payment. He found the Indians of Remus, Weidman, Rosebush and Mt. Pleasant³⁵⁶ unable to go to Scottville, . . . Mr. Cobmoosa is by all Indians residing around Mt. Pleasant, orally empowered to go and appear before you in behalf of said Indians to beg the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, thru your influence, to authorize you to come to Mt. Pleasant to pay said Indians. Please accept Jacob Cobmoosa and his mission. He will give you information required in person.³⁵⁷

Further correspondence demonstrates that Jacob Walker Cobmoosa and Henry Pego had political authority and were not afraid to use it. On July 30, 1910, Dickson wrote to his superiors at the COIA that Jacob Cobmoosa was "Secretary of Business Committee of these Indians" and had considered the situation with "Mr. Henry Pego Sr" who Dickson identified as "Chairman of this Committee."³⁵⁸ Dickson reported that Pego "had advised most of his people to remain at

³⁵⁴ Henry Pego was the grandson of Maw-beece, great grandson of Chief Cobmoosa, and Jacob Walker's nephew. PET: Durant Field Notes, p. 62, No. 2, 11 February 1909, and PET: Durant Field Notes, p. 50, No. 1, 1909.

³⁵⁵ EHR: Charles Dickson to Robert Valentine, 20 June 1910, BIA-Durant 45533-1908

³⁵⁶ There was a significant population of GRBOI Indians living around the Mt. Pleasant area during this time, many of them relatives of J.W. Cobmoosa and Henry Pego. See PET: 1909 Durant Census Map, March 2000, GRBOI Files.

³⁵⁷ PET: James W. Balmer to Charles H. Dickson, 17 July 1910, BIA-Durant 45533-1908 053.

³⁵⁸ PET: Charles H. Dickson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 July 1910, BIA-Durant 4533-1908, 053.

their homes" as the trip was too long and expensive for them, and "this was a very busy time with many of the Indians."³⁵⁹ After further correspondence from Jacob Walker, the COIA capitulated, and instructed Dickson to "go to such other places as may be necessary in making the payment mentioned."³⁶⁰

The Ottawa leaders apparently disbanded their ineffective Tribal Council, and put matters into the hands of J.W. Cobmoosa. He represented Ottawa interests in Washington throughout the 1920's and 30's.

On July 10, 1918, Jacob Walker Cobmoosa (hereinafter Cobmoosa) sent a request to E.B. Merritt, requesting detailed information about all appropriations made to the "Ottawa and Chippewa of Michigan" since 1872.³⁶¹ He also requested information on how minors and infirm or drafted Indians could grant him authority to act on their behalf.³⁶² He informed Merritt that he "landed safely at home and found my wife and child well and happy Monday evening, July first,"³⁶³ suggesting that the two had met recently. Merritt's response accorded Walker significant respect, and treated him as a leader with political authority. He addressed Walker as

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ PET: John R. T. Reeves to Charles H. Dickson, 5 August 1910, BIA-Durant 45533-1908 053.

³⁶¹ EHR: Jacob Walker Cobmoosa to Your Honor Sir, 10 July 1918, CCF Mackinac 58250-1918, 052.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Id.

"my friend."³⁶⁴ He also informed Cobmoosa that R.S. Buckland at Baraga "can no doubt give you the information from his files," and "tell you about power of attorney for drafted Indians."³⁶⁵

Although it seemed to recognize him as the Ottawa representative, the COIA Publicly challenged Walker's authority in 1918.³⁶⁶ Cobmoosa, however, had already been compiling signatures on a "Power of Attorney" ratified by the Ottawa and Chippewa Tribes at Elbridge, Mt. Pleasant, Harbor Springs, Mackinaw City and Sault St. Marie, Michigan.³⁶⁷ It was received by the LOIA on December 21, 1918. First and foremost on this document are the Grand River Bands members. On December 2, 1918, one-hundred and thirty-five GRB members, among them most of the men identified by Durant as Chiefs and Headmen, "assembled at Elbridge" to sign this document before a notary public.³⁶⁸ Scores of others, too ill or poor to make the trip, sent "letters and other forms of credentials" from which Cobmoosa made an additional list of names.³⁶⁹ The Power-Of-Attorney includes the signatures of the following GRB Chiefs and Headmen who had been identified by Horace B. Durant:³⁷⁰ Rodney Negake,³⁷¹ James J.

³⁶⁴ EHR: Edgar Meritt to Jacob Cobmoosa, 8 August 1918, CCF Mackinac 58250-1918, 052.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ PET: Traverse City Record Eagle, 5 December 1918

³⁶⁷ PET: Power of Attorney for Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, Record Group 75, Entry 637, 2 December 1918, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (Hereinafter Power of Attorney)

³⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 357-363.

³⁶⁹ Id., pp. 375, 370-372.

³⁷⁰ See pp. 18-20, *infra*.

³⁷¹ Power of Attorney, p. 361.

Cogswell,³⁷² Jacob (Jake) Bailey,³⁷³ Francis Bailey, William Sam,³⁷⁴ John Shagonaby,³⁷⁵ and Burt Pego.³⁷⁶ It was also signed by Headmen of the current and future generations:³⁷⁷ Enos Pego,³⁷⁸ Henry Negake,³⁷⁹ John Waymegwans,³⁸⁰ James Theodore,³⁸¹ and Louie Bailey.³⁸²

This Power of Attorney, by its very terms, gave Cobmoosa a "leadership" role to be "used as a means of . . . making decisions for the group which substantially affect its members, and () representing the group in dealing with outsiders in matters of consequence."³⁸³ As will be discussed, *supra*, it was only part of a larger leadership consisting also of localized Headmen.

Sampson Robinson, Headman listed as the "Chief and Delegate" of the 1911 GRB Tribal Council, did not sign the Power of Attorney. In fact, Robinson competed for the position of Attorney for the Ottawa Tribes throughout the late Nineteen Teens and early Twenties. Around

³⁷² Power of Attorney, p. 357.

³⁷³ Power of Attorney, p. 360.

³⁷⁴ Power of Attorney, p. 360.

³⁷⁵ Power of Attorney, p. 360.

³⁷⁶ Power of Attorney, p. 360.

³⁷⁷ See pp. 38-40, *infra*. -

³⁷⁸ Power of Attorney, p. 360.

³⁷⁹ Power of Attorney, p. 361.

³⁸⁰ Power of Attorney, p. 371.

³⁸¹ Power of Attorney, p. 371.

³⁸² Power of Attorney, p. 358.

³⁸³ 25 CFR 83.1

1917, Robinson began organizing to petition Washington in person.³⁸⁴ In an apparent attempt to discredit Cobmoosa, Robinson announced to the press that Cobmoosa had another wife in Washington, and that the Council of Chiefs elected him, instead, to go to Washington. Walker countered, claiming the Council is a sham, and that he will "fight to the bitter end" to retain the "Power of Attorney" granted to him by the Indians.³⁸⁵ Importantly, Walker is described, in the article, even by his competitors, as "the attorney (the Ottawa) chose in 1910 to care for their business and prosecute their claims."³⁸⁶

Walker Cobmoosa's lobbying began to pay off when, in October of 1919, the Michigan House of Representatives and the Senate introduced legislation to grant the Ottawas permission to bring suit for claims against the U.S.³⁸⁷ At least some members of Congress were swayed by Cobmoosa's political efforts. Charles Curtis, Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, supported the bill because "certain of these Indians strongly believe they have a just claim against the Government" and "the proposed bill would properly protect the interests of both the Indians and the Government."³⁸⁸

³⁸⁴ PET: Manistee News Advocate, 13 January 1917, Manistee News Advocate, 22 January 1917, Manistee News Advocate, 23 January 1917, Manistee News Advocate, 24 January 1917.

³⁸⁵ EHR: Ibid.

³⁸⁶ EHR: Ibid.

³⁸⁷ EHR: Congressional Record, House Resolution 10188, 66th Cong., 1st sess., 25 October 1919, 58, pt. 8:7539; Congressional Record, Senate Bill S.3307, 66th Cong., 1st sess., 25 October 1919, 58, pt. 8:7505; Alexander Vogelsang to Charles Curtis, 19 November 1919, National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, Central Classified Files, (Washington D.C.: National Archives), Entry 96000-1919. 013. [Hereinafter CCF General Services Files 96000-1919, 013].

³⁸⁸ EHR: Congressional Record, House Reports 1344, 66th Cong., 3^d sess., 21 February 1921.

Walker Cobmoosa followed the legislation closely, and lobbied actively during 1920 and 1921.³⁸⁹ He was kept apprised of the status of the Bill by U.S. officials.³⁹⁰ A 1920 correspondence indicates that the COIA "advised" Cobmoosa, and other Ottawa leaders, that it would take no action until the bill was passed.³⁹¹ Ultimately, however, the Acting Secretary of Interior twice recommended against the legislation, and it died in both houses.³⁹²

Walker Cobmoosa also took up the fight to regain land patents that had been swindled from the Ottawa. He lobbied the Commission of Indian Affairs throughout 1920, in an effort to clear title to the land allotment of Kaykaykoonse, a GRB Ottawa.³⁹³

It is evidenced by the large number of signatures on his Power of Attorney that Walker Cobmoosa communicated with GRB Ottawa, and they were involved and knowledgeable about his efforts.³⁹⁴ Newspaper articles also reflect that he traveled from village to village in 1918, to defend himself amidst Robinson's attacks. The Traverse City Record Eagle reported,

³⁸⁹ EHR: Jacob Cobmoosa to Woodrow Wilson, 31 May 1920, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013, J.W. Cobmoosa to Woodrow Wilson, 9 June 1921, CCF-Sault 96000-1919:013,

³⁹⁰ PET: S.G. Hopkins to J.W. Cobmoosa, 9 June 1920, CCF-General Services 96000-1919:013, F.M. Godwin to Mr. Jacob Cobmoosa, 21 June 1921, CCF-General Services 96000-1919:013.

³⁹¹ PET: E.B. Merritt to Geo Allen, 260, 23 June 1920, CCF Mackinac 54767- 1919.

³⁹² EHR: Albert Fall to Charles Curtis, 15 June 1921, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013., EHR: E. C. Finney to Homer Snyder, 7 February 1922, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013.

³⁹³ PET: Jacob Walker Cobmoosa to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 5 July 1920, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350; PET: Jacob Walker Cobmoosa to the Hon. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 August 1920, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350; PET: E.B. Merritt to J.W. Cobmoosa, 8 September 1920, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350; PET: E.B. Merritt to Mr. Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, 30 October 1920, CCF-MACK 9495-1917:350.rec; PET: C.F. Hauke to Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, 8 December 1922, CCF-Mackinac 9495-1917:350.

³⁹⁴ PET: Power of Attorney for Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, Record Group 75. Entry 637, 2 December 1918, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

specifically, that he "spoke to Indians at Elbridge, Monday, there addressing the Grand River Band;".³⁹⁵

In 1923 the Ottawa and Chippewa again tried to unite their tribes within one formal political organization. The effort was led by Albert Shanannaquot, a Grand Traverse Band Indian, who had been lobbying in Congress with Paul Kijigobenesse, since at least 1921.³⁹⁶ It is unknown whether Jacob Walker Cobmoosa was involved in this effort. However, "The Michigan Indian Organization" wrote detailed 'by-laws,' which preserved the integrity of the individual bands.³⁹⁷ Like Sampson Robinson's ideas, the Organization sought to bring Ottawa politics on a par with the white man's political system. It envisioned an "executive council," to which each band would have one delegate for every fifty members.³⁹⁸

Despite the obvious organization which went into writing the by-laws, there is no evidence that the Michigan Indian Organization ever got off the ground. Perhaps the Ottawa leaders were not quite ready for a such a revolutionary concept. It is likely, also, that the complete refusal of the Commission on Indian affairs (COIA) to recognize it, had at least something to do with its demise. The Commission was sent a copy of the by-laws, and E.B. Merritt responded:

³⁹⁵ PET: Traverse City Record Eagle, 5 December 1918.

³⁹⁶ EHR: Congressional Record, S. J. R. 141, 67th Cong., 2^d sess., 12 December 1921, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272-1921, 311, PET: E.F. Ladd to Mr. Charles Burke, 9 March 1922, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272-1921:211.

³⁹⁷ EHR: "By Laws of Michigan Indian Organization," 1923, National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, Central Classified Files, Mt. Pleasant Agency (Washington, D. C.: National Archives), File 25507-1923, 311 [hereafter CCF Mt. Pleasant 25507-1923, 311].

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

In response you are informed that this Office must decline to recognize any authority in you to transact business for any tribe of Indians in Michigan or elsewhere.³⁹⁹

Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, however, continued to represent the GRB, and other Ottawa Tribes. Despite the failure of the Claims legislation, Walker continued to lobby the COIA, detailing how the U.S. had not complied with the Treaty of 1855, and other agreements. In 1924, he set about recovering the interest which should have been paid under an 1880 statute. The COIA recognized his authority, to the extent that his demands were seriously researched and answered by high ranking officials.⁴⁰⁰ Walker lobbied on this, and other issues, throughout 1925 and 1926.⁴⁰¹ The COIA, however, continued to claim that the Ottawa dealings with the U.S. were over, and nothing more was due them.⁴⁰²

While J. W. Cobmoosa was the GRB leader chosen to pursue treaty claims, the other GRB headmen continued to have political authority in their respective Ottawa communities. This is apparent from documents of the 1920's and 1930's, concerning non-claim issues such as hunting and fishing rights, and the Indian Reorganization Act, hereinafter IRA.

While obviously less articulate than the educated Cobmoosa, the headmen of the Manistee community petitioned the COIA in 1928 to protect their hunting and fishing rights:

³⁹⁹ EHR: Edgar Meritt to Albert Shanaquet, 12 April 1923, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272-1921, 311 PET:

⁴⁰⁰ Commissioner to Secretary of Interior, 13 April 1924, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272: 1921: 311 PET: Chas H. Burke to James Cousens, 4 February 1924, CCF General Services 96000- 1919: 013

⁴⁰¹ PET: J.W. Cobmoosa to President, 7 April 1926, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272-1921: 311 (511)(11), PET: J. Walker Cobmoosa to President, 29 April 1926, CCF-Mt. Pleasant 59272-1921: 311 (511)(11).

⁴⁰² PET: Chas. H. Burke to the Department of the Interior, 17 April 1926, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272- 1921: 311, PET: E.C. Finney to Mr. Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, 20 April 1926, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272- 1921: 311, PET: E. B. Merritt to Mr. Jacob Walker Cobmoosa, 15 May 1926, CCF Mt. Pleasant 59272 1921: 311

This Items refers in regarding Michigan Indian game and fish Rights reserved by various treaties when, we the Michigan Indians, Ottawas and Chippewas ceded this land to the government we did not include with the wild game we Reserved them for our own use.

And we the Indians are molested by the whites lease they see us traping (sic) muskrats for our own food they Rested us and fine us or go to the jail ⁴⁰³

The letter identifies, albeit crudely, the headmen of the Manistee community:

Here, in Manistee County, those whom it got pull are names as follows

1. John Waymegwans
2. James Theodore
3. Nelson Theodore
4. Louie Bailey
5. Wm. Sam

The continuity of kin-based leadership is evident from these names. The leadership was often passed down from father to son, or son-in-law, as was the pattern in Ottawa politics. John

Waymegwans was the son-in-law of Mawbeece, a Chief listed on the 1870 Payroll Annuity.⁴⁰⁴

William Sam was a prominent GRB Headman with political authority dating back to 1900.⁴⁰⁵

Louie Bailey was the son of Samule Bailey, a GRB headman who signed Durant's Petition regarding mixed-bloods, in 1909.⁴⁰⁶ James and Nelson Theodore are the great-grandsons of Chief

⁴⁰³ EHR: John Waymegwans et al. to [Commissioner of Indian Affairs], 7 December 1928, CCF Mt. Pleasant 55390-1928, 115.

⁴⁰⁴ See PET: Durant Field Notes, 1908, p. 50, No. 1, and PET: Durant Field Notes, 1908, p. 58(a), No. 9.

⁴⁰⁵ William Sam was a Committee member of the first ever elected GRBOI Tribal Council of 1900. See EHR: Ashkebyneka et al. to William Jones, 11 July 1900, LROIA 33159-1900.

⁴⁰⁶ PET: Rodney L. Negake et.al to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 July 1909 BIA-Durant 45533-1908 053.

Shaw-Be-Quo-Ung, a Chief listed on the 1870 Payroll Annuity.⁴⁰⁷ They are also step-sons of John Waymegwans.⁴⁰⁸

Other GRB Headmen came to the political forefront as news of the IRA reached GRB communities. Their lineages are further evidence that the GRB kin-based political system had survived the move to the cities.

The 1930's and the Indian Reorganization ACT (IRA)

In 1930, news of the IRA gave Ottawa communities new hope for relieving the poverty of their tribes. Cobmoosa continued his role as Attorney-in-Fact, pursuing claims on behalf of the collective Ottawa Tribes, throughout the 1930's.⁴⁰⁹ The IRA, however, was an issue the Tribes would pursue individually. Local GRB Headmen fought hard for the Grand River Bands' inclusion in the IRA. The COIA, waffled throughout the 1930's regarding GRB reorganization. They ultimately failed to apply the Act to the GRB, despite admissions that they were eligible.⁴¹⁰ This campaign is important however, because it documents that, in addition to Cobmoosa's authority to pursue claims, there were still headmen throughout the GRB communities who

⁴⁰⁷ John and Nelson were the sons of John Theodore and Jennie Hinman Waymegwans, daughter of Wallace Hinman. Wallace Hinman (or Wallace Foster) was the only son of Shaw-Be-Quo-Ung, or Moses Foster. See PET: Durant Field Notes, 1908, p. 58(a), No. 9 and PET: Durant Field Notes, 1908, p. 53, No. 1

⁴⁰⁸ Jennie Hinman Waymegwans was married first to John Theodore, and later to John Waymegwans. PET: Durant Field Notes, 1908, P. 58(a) No. 9.

⁴⁰⁹ EHR: John Collier to Mr. Reeves, 30 October 1935, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013., EHR: Jacob Cobmoosa to John Collier, 6 June 1935, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013, EHR: Jacob Cobmoosa to John Collier, 16 January 1936, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013, EHR: [no longer cited], EHR: Jacob Cobmoosa to John Collier, 15 February 1936, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013, EHR: Jacob Cobmoosa to Franklin Roosevelt, 30 April 1936, CCF General Services 96000-1919:013.

⁴¹⁰ See Ethnohistorical Report, pp. 223-251.

exercised local political authority. They worked together, attempting to gain IRA reorganization for their Tribe.

In October of 1935, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier met personally with GRB leaders Enos Pego and J.W. Cobmoosa, and Grand Traverse Band leader, Peshawby in Grand Rapids. They confronted Collier about certain monies owed the Ottawa under the Treaty of 1855,⁴¹¹ and about inclusion of their Tribes in the IRA.⁴¹² In a subsequent memo, Collier reported "(t)he Ottawa spokesmen talked with me at Grand Rapids."⁴¹³ Collier obviously regarded these men as leaders "who exercise political influence and authority"⁴¹⁴ for their Tribes. He was on familiar enough terms with Pego to have "stopped in at (his) place" in 1935, at which time they discussed Ottawa inclusion in The IRA.⁴¹⁵

Enos Pego was the son of GRB Headman, Henry Pego.⁴¹⁶ After meeting with Collier in October of 1935, Pego documented this meeting with a follow up letter to the Commissioner:

This is to remind you that I and Cobmoosa and Peshawby personally (sic) conferred with yesterday at the Park Congregational Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan on Indian Affairs of this State. . .⁴¹⁷

⁴¹¹ EHR: Enos Pego to John Collier, 25 October 1935, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013.

⁴¹² EHR: Jacob Cobmoosa to John Collier, 16 January 1936, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013.

⁴¹³ EHR: John Collier to Mr. Reeves, 30 October 1935, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013.

⁴¹⁴ 25 CFR 83.8(d)(3)

⁴¹⁵ EHR: Enos Pego to John Collier, 27 May 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066.

⁴¹⁶ Henry Pego was "chairman" of the GRBOI when he and J.W. Cobmoosa facilitated Claims payments in 1910. See pp. 118 Supra, and fn. 358.

⁴¹⁷ EHR: Enos Pego to John Collier, 25 October 1935, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013.

When early efforts to obtain IRA reorganization for the GRB failed, he and Headman Peter Stone called a meeting at Elbridge, and obtained formal status as "temporary chairman" and "temporary secretary" from the GRB members.⁴¹⁸ They lobbied for GRB inclusion in the IRA throughout the late 1930's.⁴¹⁹ The COIA responded, and addressed many letters to the GRB Headmen.⁴²⁰

Pego and Stone worked with Muskegon GRB leader John Chingman,⁴²¹ toward GRB Regoranzation. Chingman lobbied, from the Muskegon community, about IRA application to the GRB.⁴²² In 1934, Chingman met with Frank Christy, and was advised to "collect . . . names" in favor of the Bill, before it was even passed in 1934.⁴²³ In a letter that confirms that these GRB

⁴¹⁸ PET: Enos Pego to John Collier, 31 March 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066.

⁴¹⁹ EHR Enos Pego and Peter Stone to Senator Wheeler, 29 March 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066. PET: Albert Engel to John Collier, 22 April 1938, CCF-Mich. Misc. 9634-1936:066, EHR: Enos Pego to John Collier, 27 May 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066. EHR: Enos Pego to John Collier, 3 June 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066.

⁴²⁰ EHR: John Collier to John Chingman, 23 August 1935, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066, EHR: John Collier to Enos Pego, 13 November 1935, CCF General Services 96000-1919, 013, EHR: William Zimmerman, Jr. to Enos Pego, 11 May 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066, EHR: F. H. Daiker to Enos Pego, 18 October 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066.

⁴²¹ John Chingman (or Chingwow) was the nephew of John Williams, who was a headman in 1909. See fn 51, *infra*. See also Durant Field Notes, No. 2, p. 61 and No. 6, p. 50. He was also the nephew of Dominicke Louis, a GRBOI Headman in 1873 (see George Chingquash et. Al. To Wilder D. Foster & Thomas W. Ferry, 5 February 1973, NAM M234 R. 408:949-951) who was the great grandson of Ne-Be-Nay-Ke-Zhick, a Chief listed on the 1870 Payroll Annuity. See Durant Field Notes p. 50, No. 6, p. 49, No. 1, and p. 49, No. 5. John Chingman, and his brother Anthony, continued to be GRBOI political leaders throughout their lives, into the 1980's.

⁴²² EHR: Frank Christy to John Chingman, 1 August 1935, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066, PET: Chingman to Collier, 9 August 1935, CCF General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066, EHR: Collier to Chingman, 23 August 1935, CCF General Services (Mich. Misc. I) 9634-1936, 066.

⁴²³ EHR: Enos Pego to John Collier, 3 June 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066.

Headmen were working together, Pego later complained to Christy about the use of the list that Chingman assembled.⁴²⁴

In May of 1938 the GRB leaders still did not have a decision about GRB inclusion in the IRA. They continued to correspond with Commissioner Collier. Enos Pego wrote him a scathing letter on May 27, 1938. Excerpts from it illustrate that the GRB leaders were informed about Ottawa political matters:

I want to take this opportunity to answer your two letters to us April 18th and May 11th, 1938, regardless of whether you accept us to come under the benefits of the Wheeler-Howard Bill or not. (Emphasis added)

. . . Christy approved of the Saginaw Band being accepted in the Reorganization Act, still there is very few wards in that band, most of them being classed as citizens. In this band there is some who still hold restricted patents to their allotments issued to them in 1895 or 1892, these are the wards referred to by Christy.

There has been ten or more decisions by the State Supreme Court, against the Indians of Michigan of their hunting, fishing and game reserve rights, reserved for them in the treaty of 1795, Greenville Treaty.

. . . Another decision that was made in 1870 or Seventies reads: Where an Indian becomes an allottee of a peice of land which is taxable land he automatically becomes a citizen and can vote. An Act that was passed by our Congress in 1934 has a provision which reads: An Indian can become a citizen of the United States providing it does not interfere with his tribal rights. So we don't know where we stand.⁴²⁵

The GRB leaders planned a more aggressive campaign for IRA benefits in July of 1938. They planned to circulate their own petitions to authorize the GRB for IRA benefits. The Grand Rapids Press reported on their activities:

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ EHR: Enos Pego to John Collier, 27 May 1938. CCF General Services 9634-1936. 066.

Shelby-- Fifteen Ottawa Indians, descendants of a band of 1,300 Indians who were moved to a reservation in Oceana and Muskegon county for the Grand River valley before the Civil war, Saturday met to draft petitions to the federal government to establish a new reservation including all of Greenwood township.

The Indians' request is base upon the Wheeler-Howard act, which appropriates \$2,000,000 to give each American Indian a farm site, a horse, a cow and farm implements.

The Saturday meeting was held at the little town hall at Elbridge, east of Hart, and although only 15 Indians attended the meeting the leaders anticipated that from 500 to 600 Indians would sign the petition for the new reservation.

Pego Heads Group

In charge of the session, Enos Pego, Oceana county farmer and leader among Indians of western Michigan, said that the Petitions would be circulated among Indians in Grand Rapids, Saginaw, and virtually all western Michigan communities where descendants of the original Ottawa band here reside.

To facilitate the efforts to establish the reservation the group meeting at Elbridge organized as the Ottawa Grand River band and elected the following officers: President, Pego; vice president, Henry Negake of Hesperia, and secretary-treasurer, John Chingman of Muskegon. These officers later will meet with Peru Farver, Indian agent under the department of interior, and M. L. Burns co-ordinator of the department's field service. Burns is stationed at Minneapolis.

In their meeting Saturday the Indians were reminded of the events that denied them the use of the reservation that once had been established for them in this area. After the Civil War the area, which had been designated as a reservation, was opened to homesteading and in a short time the entire reservation area had been taken over by their white neighbors.

Want Wooded Area.

The original reservation included Elbridge and Crystal townships in Oceana County and Holton, Eden and Custer townships in Muskegon county.

Explaining their request for the Greenwood township area, Pego said that the White river flowed through that area and that it was well wooded and abundant with game. The land is suitable for farming, he added.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁶ EHR: Copy of article "Indians Draft Request for New Oceana Reservation." *Grand Rapids Press*, 18 July 1938, CCF General Services 9634-1936. 066.

Henry Negake, (b. 14 Feb 1885) named vice-president of the Council, was the son-in-law of GRB Headman Jacob Bailey.⁴²⁷ His appointment as vice-president, indicates that he, too, already held a position of political authority in the GRB community.

As evidenced above, GRB leaders were united in their efforts, and were recognized as the GRB political leaders by the local COIA officials. The Grand River Ottawa political organization had evolved directly from earlier band organization, and this kin-based political structure remained vital. Virtually every GRB leader identified during this period can trace his lineage to a Headman of the previous generation.

World War II

The United States continued to string the GRB and other Ottawa Tribes along until 1940. In May of 1940, the COIA finally concluded that "there (would) be no further extension of Organization under the Indian Reorganization Act in Lower Michigan."⁴²⁸ By then, the GRB, and the rest of the Nation, were preoccupied with the war effort.

In several Grand River Ottawa communities, virtually all of the able bodied men joined the U.S. Armed Services. Despite the fact that they were not expected to enlist, even married men who had several children served in the military.⁴²⁹ With the men away, the Ottawas who

⁴²⁷ PET: Durant Field Notes, 1908, P. 58 No. 2. Jacob Bailey was a GRBOI Headman (see PET: Durant Field Notes, p. 50, No. 2, 11 August 1908, Second Sheet), and his father, Battice Bailey, was a Chief. (See EHR: John Battice et al. to William Jones, 4 December 1900, LROIA 59976-1900) and PET: George Chingquash et al., to Wilder D. Foster and Thomas W. Ferry, 5 February 1873, Nam M234 R. 408: 949-951.)

⁴²⁸ EHR: John Collier to Jesse Cavill et al., 29 May 1940, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066.

⁴²⁹ EHR: Katherine Sam Glocheski, Connie Waitner, and Rose Sams, interview by James M. McClurken, tape recordings, 29 July 1990 and 30 July 1990

remained at home diligently focused their efforts on staying alive while the war effort continued.⁴³⁰

GRB ORGANIZATION UNDER THE NMOA

1948 - 1990

Overview

Ironically, the "reorganization" that the GRB leaders of the 1930's sought would be accomplished in the 1940's by the Indians themselves. While the Office of Indian Affairs recognized Cobmoosa, and Enos Pego's group, as representatives of the GRB, Their efforts to obtain relief had been unsuccessful. This found the GRB in need of another approach.

The Indian Claims Commission and the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association (NMOA) provided another approach. After World War II, Congress finally created the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) in 1946. The ICC gave Indians a *right* to file Claims against the United States.

The GRB were among the first to file an ICC Claim. Jacob Walker Cobmoosa filed Docket-4 on behalf of the Grand River Bands in 1947. But, it was not until the Michigan Ottawa pooled their efforts, forming the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, (NMOA) that GRB Claims were given credence.

⁴³⁰ EHR: Henry Lewis, George Pego, and Bill Stone, interview by James M. McClurken, tape recording, 15 August 1995; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000. p. 250.

Levi McClellan of Charlevoix County, whose family originated with the Grand River Bands, and his young son-in-law, Robert Dominic, organized NMOA to bring ICC Claims on behalf of all Ottawa Indians. McClellan and Dominic were Grand Traverse Bands Indians who had also been frustrated by the failures of the IRA.⁴³¹ On March 17, 1946 they drafted a letter to Senator Homer Ferguson on behalf of *all* the northern Michigan Ottawas. McClellan and Dominic requested authority to hire attorneys and bring suit in court to win treaty-based claims for their people under provisions of the Indian Claims Commission (ICC).⁴³² This undertaking led directly to the formation of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association (NMOA). Its first formal meeting occurred just two years later in 1948.⁴³³

NMOA was created for the sole purpose of bringing claims before the ICC.⁴³⁴ However, it was, from its inception, much more than a claims organization. It began a "reorganization" of the Ottawa Tribes that even the IRA could not have accomplished. It did so by providing the strength in numbers which provided political power that each Ottawa Tribe lacked individually. The structure consisted of "units," organized geographically, roughly along Ottawa Tribal lines. It was not intended to create a separate Tribe, and its organization respected the autonomy of each Tribe. Yet NMOA provided a statewide umbrella organization for the units, guiding their

⁴³¹ EHR: William Zimmerman, Jr. to Prentiss Brown, 11 May 1938, CCF Tomah 17413-1938, 310.

⁴³² PET: R. Dominic to H. Ferguson, 17 March 1946, Dominic Papers.

⁴³³ EHR: Robert Dominic to Charles Rogers, 7 January 1948, Dominic Papers. John Provinse to Robert Dominic, 8 April 1948, CCF Tomah 5207-1948, 066. Roland Miller to All Ottawa Indians, 26 April 1948, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Acknowledgment and Research Files, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. [hereafter BIA-BAR]. Charles Rogers to Robert Dominic, 26 May 1948, Dominic Papers. Minutes of Ottawa Council Meeting, 5 June 1948, Bailey Papers.

⁴³⁴ EHR: Minutes of Ottawa Council Meeting, 5 June 1948, Bailey Papers.

efforts through "officers meetings," and a general membership meeting once per year.⁴³⁵ It was just the structure that the Michigan Ottawas needed to gain political power.

NMOA proved an especially effective organizing tool for the GRB. It was statewide, and thus drew in those GRB members who had moved to urban areas to find work. It gave the, then informal, political leaders, formal recognition and authority. This, in turn, increased member involvement. Mostly, however, NMOA provided power in numbers. By representing all of the Ottawa in Michigan, the NMOA gained recognition from the BIA that had been denied to the Ottawa Tribes who had been petitioning the U.S. Government for years. The BIA began attending NMOA meetings, and assisting with Ottawa Claims.⁴³⁶ This lent legitimacy to the

⁴³⁵ In addition to the individual Unit meetings, and Executive Board Meetings, NMOA held an Annual Membership meeting once per year from 1948 throughout the 1980's. See PET: NMOA notice of meeting and list of officers, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 21 June 1952, Dominic Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 19 June 1954, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA 10th Annual Meeting, 21 June 1958 Dart Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting, 9 June 1959, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Minutes Annual Council meeting and Pageant, 1 June 1960, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Minutes, 17 March 1962, Dart Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting, 16 May 1963, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 10 June 1964, Genia Papers; PET: Minutes from the 17th Annual meeting of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, Resolution No. 103, 16 October 1965, Dominic Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting; 6 June 1966, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notes of Annual Council Meeting, June 1967, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 21 June 1969, Genia Papers; PET: Notice 22nd Annual NMOA Meeting, May 1970, Dart Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting, Unit 2 Notes, 12 June 1971, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 17 May 1972, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 9 June 1973, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 14 May 1974, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 27 March 1976, Genia Papers, p. 1; PET: NMOA minutes of meeting, 7 October 1977, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Minutes, 17 June 1978, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice and Minutes of Annual Council Meeting Minutes, 5 June 1979, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting, 20 September 1980, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Minutes and Follow-up Report, 19 September 1981, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 19 June 1982, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 18 June 1983, Genia Papers; PET: Minutes of 36th Annual NMOA Meeting, 23 June 1984, Genia Papers; PET: Notice of Annual Meeting Agenda, 21-22 June 1985, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 19 September 1987, GRBOI -Jobes Folder 2; PET: Minutes of NMOA Meeting, 7 November 1987, GRBOI-Jobes, Folder 2; PET: NMOA Agenda and Letter from Robert Dominic, 18 January 1990, Chandler Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 17 May 1997, Genia Papers;

⁴³⁶ In time, several representatives from State and Federal Offices, and other Indian Organizations, were attending NMOA meetings. See documents cited in fn. 435, above.

NMOA and gave GRB members reason to believe their Claims would finally be heard. Now that the ICC provided a right to petition the U.S., and NMOA provided a vehicle, the GRB turned out in droves to pursue their rights.

The hopes of receiving "Indian Money," may have been the motive for forming GRB units under NMOA, but it certainly did not define them. The GRB units immediately began acting as any elected Tribal Council. They initiated widespread involvement by GRB members, and provided leadership on all issues important to the group, from internal social issues to hunting and fishing rights.

The GRB worked effectively within this framework until the 1980's, at which time many of the Tribes were withdrawing from NMOA to seek Federal recognition on their own. The GRB split off from NMOA in the early 1990's, and for a time the local GRB political leaders worked through individual organizations, although they always networked between the GRB communities. In 1994, GRB leader Joe Genia brought all of the GRB leaders together to create a formal GRB Tribal Council. This was accomplished when Genia's Grand River Ottawa Council merged with the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Inc. The GRB officially withdrew from NMOA shortly after.

NMOA Beginnings

NMOA held its first public council in June of 1948-- a meeting attended by approximately 300 persons, including Grand River Ottawas.⁴³⁷ The attendance at this meeting speaks to the informal political organization already in place within internal Ottawa circles.

⁴³⁷ EHR: Robert Dominic to Roland Miller, 21 January 1949, Dominic Papers.

GRB Leader from Custer in Mason County, Cornelius Bailey attended, and brought forth the concerns of GRB members. Shortly after, Robert Dominic wrote to him. Dominic was concerned about the actions of Walker Cobmoosa, and the ICC claim he had filed on behalf of the GRB. He tried to woo Bailey away from this effort, stating that NMOA attorneys had assured him that the document was so vague, indefinite, and uncertain as to amount to nothing whatever."⁴³⁸ However, he also hinted at cooperation with Cobmoosa by stating: "I think we should get together with him somehow at some future time."⁴³⁹ He asked Bailey about any historical documents the band might own that would support the claims case. Dominic was hopeful that Bailey could find Enos Pego's papers which, he had been informed, were "fairly well straightened out."⁴⁴⁰ Finally, he requested that the GRB "work() cooperatively with our claims committee in somewhat the same manner as the Peshabetown group." Dominic suggested that he form a local, "where they have a chief, sub-chief, secretary, treasurer, and social committee."⁴⁴¹

This invitation caused a rift within GRB politics. Although Cobmoosa had been working tirelessly for the GRB, NMOA had already gained the cooperation of the Office of Indian Affairs, and they had an attorney!⁴⁴² In the end, Bailey began to work with Dominic and

⁴³⁸ EHR: Robert Dominic to Cornelius Bailey, 5 July 1948, Bailey Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 258.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Id.

⁴⁴¹ Id.

⁴⁴² EHR: Roland Miller to all Ottawa Indians. 26 April 1948, BIA-BAR

NMOA. He urged the other GRB leaders to do the same, and was instrumental in the formation of the three GRB Units⁴⁴³ of NMOA: Unit 4, Grand Rapids, Unit 5, Muskegon, Hart and the Oceana County Reservation area (Elbridge, Crystal Valley), and Unit 7, The Reservation area of Mason County (Custer, Freesoil, Fountain), Manistee and Benzie Counties.⁴⁴⁴

In the end, the ICC dismissed Docket 4 because Cobmoosa did not file the necessary paperwork.

Bailey and his followers had more success. The NMOA attorneys filed Dockets 18, 40 and 58, which included GRB Treaty claims, in 1948.⁴⁴⁵ All of these claims were eventually successful. Most importantly, Bailey helped to successfully organize all three GRB Communities into three NMOA Units that worked closely toward GRB goals.

Cornelius Bailey began organizing the Grand River Ottawa communities around the issue of unresolved claims in 1948. He visited elders who lived in Muskegon and on the Oceana and Mason county reservations to gather lists of potential claims. Bailey gathered statements about hunting and fishing rights, land claims, unkept U.S. promises, and unpaid cash.⁴⁴⁶ Although

⁴⁴³ While the NMOA units were organized along geographic, and not tribal lines, these three units were comprised of the GRBOI communities, and were made up largely of GRBOI members. In fact, early NMOA document refer to units 3, 4 and 5 as Grand River Units." PET: NMOA notice of meeting and list of officers, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers; EHR: Virginia Chingman to Unknown and Robert Dominic to Virginia Chingman, 28 December 1950, Bailey Papers.(These documents pre-date the formation of Unit 7.)

⁴⁴⁴ While Unit 3- Hopkins area, was founded by GRBOI members, it was not located in a large GRBOI Community, and thus was not ultimately considered a "GRBOI Unit."

⁴⁴⁵ Docket 40-k, as it became known, was the most important claim filed. It addressed the issue of the undervaluation of GRBOI territories ceded in the 1821 Treaty of Chicago. A reputable lawyer, Charles B. Rogers of Tulsa Oklahoma represented the NMOA. See EHR: Robert Dominic to Charles Rogers, 7 January 1948, Dominic Papers.)

⁴⁴⁶ EHR: Robert Dominic to Cornelius Bailey, 11 September 1948. Bailey Papers. Names and Comments, 28 September 1948. Bailey Papers.

NMOA attorneys advised the new NMOA officers that these claims would cost much to examine and that most did not come fall under ICC jurisdiction, the Ottawas remembered the work of others, especially Enos Pego and Sampson Robinson.⁴⁴⁷

Dominic reached out to the remaining Grand River Bands leaders who had formerly worked for IRA reorganization. On May 19, 1949, Robert Dominic, at Bailey's request, specifically invited Henry Negake, who had worked with Enos Pego, to attend the next NMOA meeting.⁴⁴⁸ The *Grand Rapids Press*, *Muskegon Chronicle*, as well as smaller local newspapers throughout western Michigan, continued to print articles which spoke of claims due to the Ottawas, about Walker Cobmoosa and other Grand River Ottawas throughout the late 1940s and 1950s.⁴⁴⁹ These articles raised the consciousness of even the most urban Ottawas about their treaty rights and generated interest in the NMOA claims.

Grand River Ottawas throughout Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and the Reservation communities became active in the NMOA by 1950. That year the ICC dismissed Cobmoosa's Docket 4 claim. Dominic spoke directly with Cobmoosa afterwards and won the old Grand River

⁴⁴⁷ EHR: Robert Dominic to Cornelius Bailey, 7 March 1949, Bailey Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 260.

⁴⁴⁸ EHR: Robert Dominic to Henry Negake, 19 May 1949, Bailey Papers.

⁴⁴⁹ EHR: Indian Claims Commission. DKT.4:1949; EHR: "They're Real 'Old Residents': After years, They Finally Met," *Grand Rapids Herald*, 18 March 1949, RG 279 Docket 4; EHR: G. Pearl Surrarrer, "Spring Trek of Indians Is Thing of the Past," 11 June 1951, Hawley Museum Papers; EHR: "West State Ottawa Indians Organize in Meeting Here," 12 December 1953, Hawley Museum Papers; EHR: "Ottawa Indians Organize," 13 December 1953, Hawley Museum Papers; EHR: "Chicken Dinner at Bailey Home," 25 July 1956, Hawley Museum Papers; EHR: "Several Ottawa Families Remain in Mason County," 19 May 1959, Hawley Museum Papers; EHR: "Ottawas Hold Tribal Council Here Saturday," 27 August 1959, Hawley Museum Papers.

Ottawa leader's support for pursuing NMOA claims.⁴⁵⁰ A letter to Joshua Shagonaby in February of 1951, indicates that Unit 4 of Grand Rapids was up and running by that time.⁴⁵¹ Cobmoosa's followers had joined with the other GRB communities, and organized under NMOA.

In May 1950, Dominic wrote to his attorney saying that he anticipated that, "down state Indians, comprising the Grand River band of Ottawas, are going to have a large delegation at our [annual] meeting."⁴⁵² A 1600 seat gymnasium was reserved, as it was thought that the auditorium would be "too small" for this meeting.⁴⁵³

The NMOA "units" were comprised of Ottawa Indians, and organized along geographic lines. The following is a general breakdown of the first eight Units which formed, and their geographic locations: Unit 1: Petoskey (Little Traverse Bay Bands) Unit 2: Peshabetown (Grand Traverse Band); Unit 3, Hopkins, Bradley Area; Unit 4: Grand Rapids (Grand River Bands), Unit 5: Muskegon (Grand River Bands), Unit 6: Lansing; Unit 7: Manistee/Mason County (Grand River Bands), Unit 8: St. Ignace (Sault Ste. Marie Band).⁴⁵⁴

Although the units were divided along geographic lines and not Tribal lines, Units 4, 5, and 7 represented the three GRB Communities: Muskegon, Grand Rapids, and the Reservation communities of Oceana and Mason Counties. The minutes of these Units sometimes referred to

⁴⁵⁰ Walker Cobmoosa died shortly thereafter; EHR: R. Dominic to A. Honnold, 11 October 1951, Dominic Papers.

⁴⁵¹ PET: NMOA Notice of Meeting & List of Officers, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers.

⁴⁵² EHR: Robert Dominic to Arthur Honnold, 23 May 1950, Dominic Papers.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ PET: NMOA Survey Report, 6 October, 1957 p. 2, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA "Notice of meeting and list of officer, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA 10th Annual Meeting, 21 June 1958 Dart Papers.

the meetings as "Grand River" meetings, and their sign in sheets reflect almost total GRB membership and involvement.⁴⁵⁵ However, there were GRB members who had relocated to Lansing or other cities, who were members of other Units.⁴⁵⁶ As discussed below, all GRB members were seated together when issues specific to the GRB were being voted on.

The Units operated within NMOA much the way the nineteen individual bands had operated. Historically, each of the nineteen bands made their own decisions and served their individual communities. However, they were in close contact, and when an issue which required one voice arose, such as Treaty negotiations, the leaders met "in council" and worked together.⁴⁵⁷ The NMOA Units also provided much of the internal political leadership within their individual communities, but worked through the NMOA Executive Council on issues of Claims, Education, Hunting and Fishing.

⁴⁵⁵ EHR: Virginia Chingman to Unknown and Robert Dominic to Virginia Chingman, 28 December 1950, EHR: Bailey Papers. "Several Ottawa Families Remain in Mason County," 19 May 1959, Hawley Museum Papers. EHR: "Chicken Dinner at Bailey Home," 25 July 1956, Hawley Museum Papers. EHR: NMOA Unit 5 list/dues, 25 March 1962, Battice Papers; EHR: NMOA Unit 5 Lists/ Dues, 7 May 1962, Battice Papers; EHR: NMOA Unit 5 Lists/ Dues, 7 May 1962, Battice Papers.

⁴⁵⁶ For example Unit 3 was initially referred to as a "Grand River" Unit, due to GRBOI Member involvement. PET: Notice of Meeting and List of Officers, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers; Also, GRBOI members Alvina and Anthony Chingman were active in Unit 6, the Lansing Unit. See NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 21 June 1952, Dominic Papers. However, Units 4, 5, and 7 were formed in GRBOI communities, by the GRBOI political leaders of the time, and were dominated by GRBOI members from the time of their inception, until the GRBOI withdrew from NMOA.

⁴⁵⁷ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture. 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 53, 54.

GRB Units: 4, 5, 6 and 7

In December 1950, a note to Robert Dominic announced the formation of "Grand River, Unit 5." It is clear from this note that Cornelius Bailey was still the liaison between NMOA and the newly emerging GRB Units. The note suggests that all three GRB Units were formed at approximately the same time. It seeks "approv(al) of our Muskegon Unit as organized, and plans for the other two Grand River Units."⁴⁵⁸ This language indicates that, while not demographically dense, the GRB population maintained a "Community."

Although no early minutes of Unit 4 meetings are available, a letter to Chairman Joshua Shagonaby in early 1951 indicates that it was active at that time.⁴⁵⁹ Cornelius Bailey is listed as the "Intermediary Emeritus."⁴⁶⁰

By June of 1952, GRB Unit 6 had also been formed.⁴⁶¹ Although never as active as Units 4, 5, and 7, Unit 6 members included several prominent GRB political families that had relocated to the Lansing area.⁴⁶²

Unit 7 of NMOA had its first official meeting on December 12, 1953. Several Newspapers reported the forming of Unit 7, representing Mason, Benzie and Manistee Counties. They reported that Albert Micko was elected the first President, with Mrs. Nicholas Bailey and Mrs. Margaret Chandler as Vice President and Secretary. Mrs. Irene Bailey was first Treasurer, and Nicholas

⁴⁵⁸ EHR: Virginia Chingman to Unknown and Robert Dominic to Virginia Chingman, 28 December 1950, Bailey Papers.

⁴⁵⁹ PET: R. Dominic to Joshua Shagonaby, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 21 June 1952, Dominic Papers.

⁴⁶² PET: Members of the Genereaux, Micko, and Compeau, families, as well as Alvina an Anthony Chingman, were active members of Unit 6. PET: Second Interview with Fran Compo, 8 November 2000.

Bailey, advisor.⁴⁶³ The portion of the 1855 Treaty which "concerned those who had lived in the former reservation in Custer, Eden townships in Mason county and Crystal and Elbridge in Oceana county" was read.⁴⁶⁴ GRB member Anthony Chingman, tribal counselor of the "executive committee," and Mrs. Robert Dominic "assisted" in organizing the Unit.⁴⁶⁵

When the Grand River NMOA Units formed, the informal leaders in each GRB Community were, naturally, those elected to the first leadership positions. Their names reveal an unbroken line of Kin Based GRB leadership from at least the 1930's, often tracing all the way back to Chiefs and Headmen of Treaty times.

John and Virginia Chingman were the first Chair and Vice-Chair of Unit 5 of NMOA. John had been a GRB leader in the Muskegon Community in the 1930's.⁴⁶⁶ His brother Anthony was a "Counselor" on the NMOA Executive Board, and also a founding member of Unit 6.⁴⁶⁷ The Chingmans trace their lineage, and leadership in GRB politics, back to Chief Ne-Be-Nay-Ke-Zhick, of the 1870 Payroll Annuity.

Cornelius Bailey, of Custer, was a respected political leader in Mason County when he attended the first NMOA meeting. He, of course, helped form all three GRB Units. His brother Nicholas and his wife, were leaders of Unit 7 for many years. Cornelius and Nicholas were the

⁴⁶³ EHR: "Ottawa Indians Organize," 13 December 1953, Hawley Museum Papers.

⁴⁶⁴ EHR: "West State Ottawa Indians Organize in Meeting Here," 12 December 1953, Hawley Museum Papers

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ EHR: Frank Christy to John Chingman, 1 August 1935, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066, John Chingman to John Collier, 9 August 1935, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066 John Collier to John Chingman, 23 August 1935, CCF General Services 9634-1936, 066.

⁴⁶⁷ PET: NMOA meeting Minutes, 21 June 1952, Dominic Papers.

sons of Henry Bailey who was political leader in Custer in the early Twentieth Century.⁴⁶⁸ His great-grandfather was Francis Bailey, a headman whose influence dates back to 1869.⁴⁶⁹

Albert Micko of Custer, first president of Unit 7 of NMOA, was the son of William Mickoo. Mickoo, or "Micko" as it came to be spelled, was a prominent GRB Headman in the 1880's, and later became a member of the GRB Tribal Council formed in 1911.⁴⁷⁰

Joshua Shagonaby, first Chairman of Unit 4 was also of a prominent GRB political family.⁴⁷¹

It is no coincidence that the leaders and descendants of leaders of the previous generations would pick up the torch when NMOA formed. It indicates that an informal political structure already existed in each of the GRB communities.

The Units met and operated completely autonomously from NMOA. However, NMOA president, Robert Dominic, served as a liason between the Units and the Office of Indian Affairs. He attended local meetings to report on claims,⁴⁷² held occasional "officers meetings," to give guidance to Unit Chairmen,⁴⁷³ and organized an Annual Meeting in the Spring, at which all Units

⁴⁶⁸ See Infra, footnotes 349, 350, and 351.

⁴⁶⁹ PET: David Ashkebagusung to unknown , 17 May 1869, NAM M234 R.408:718-724; PET: Shawbeking to Hon. U. H. Browning, 11 December 1868, NAM M234 R. 408: 702-709.

⁴⁷⁰ EHR: "Ottawa Indians Organize," 13 December 1953, Hawley Museum Papers. Charity Micko, Theresa Micko, Joe John and Hazel John, interview by Bea Bailey and Lee Cohen, Tape recording, 12 September 1875, Native American Oral History Project, Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids Michigan. Joseph Cushaway et al. To Hiram Price, 16 January 1882, LROIA 1157-1882.

⁴⁷¹ PET: R. Dominic to Joshua Shagonaby, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers.

⁴⁷² EHR: Margaret Chandler's notes of Northern Michigan Ottawa Association meetings, 9 May 1959, Margaret Chandler Papers, Private Collection, James M. McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan [hereafter Chandler Papers].

⁴⁷³ EHR: Robert Dominic to Unit Officers. 20 March 1951, Bailey Papers

would come together.⁴⁷⁴ An unidentified set of notes from an NMOA officers meeting held in Grand Rapids in 1951 indicate the kind of general guidance the officers received from Robert Dominic: "Start meeting on time, keep meeting brief, plan an agenda, respect others views, and {have a} specific time for education at each meeting,"⁴⁷⁵

A series of correspondence between Robert Dominic and NMOA attorney Arthur Honnold, illustrates the large scale of involvement by GRB members in NMOA. In the Fall of 1951 through Spring of 1952 Dominic was procuring "questionnaires" from NMOA members, apparently at Honnold's request, "to refute the commission's contention that a roll can't be made of [the Ottawa]." ⁴⁷⁶ In January of 1952, Dominic sent Honnold one-hundred-and-fifty-seven (157) questionnaires, which contained six-hundred (600) names. Of these, two-hundred-and-seventy (270) names are of GRB members.⁴⁷⁷ That is roughly forty-five percent. In addition to revealing the huge involvement of GRB members in the political process at this time, this questionnaire reveals the extent to which the GRB leaders were in contact with their members. At the request of their attorney, they had been able to get questionnaires filled out by two-hundred-and-seventy GRB members, on short notice. This indicates that a network of communication, and political community, already existed.

⁴⁷⁴ EHR: Minutes from the 17th Annual meeting of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, Resolution No. 103, 16 October 1965, Dominic Papers.

⁴⁷⁵ EHR: Robert Dominic to Unit Officers, 20 March 1951, Bailey Papers; Robert Dominic to James Smith, 12 April 1951, Bailey Papers; Meeting of NMOA, Officers Meeting, 20 April 1951, Bailey Papers.

⁴⁷⁶ EHR: Robert Dominic to Arthur Honnold, 11 October 1951, Dominic Papers.

⁴⁷⁷ EHR: Robert Dominic to Arthur Honnold, 29 January 1952, Dominic Papers.

GRB Units Provided Political Leadership

NMOA served as the political arm of the GRB from its inception until GRB detached itself in the late 1980's. NMOA was the vehicle by which the GRB leadership lead its members, on *all* "matters of consequence." ⁴⁷⁸

Unit 7 was formed by the sons and daughters of prominent GRB Headmen. Albert Micko, Cornelius Bailey, Nicholas Bailey, and Mrs. Margaret Chandler. It immediately concerned itself with mobilizing its members to provide "group resources" to those in need.⁴⁷⁹ On July 25, 1956, fifty- one GRB members attended a fundraiser put on because Unit 7 "has voted to raise money toward assistance of their people who are unable to take care of burial service when death occurs in a family."⁴⁸⁰ By 1959, Unit 7 was being described by an area newspaper as an organization which "has as its main purpose the establishment of a scholarship for eligible Indian children."⁴⁸¹ Minutes of the organization reflect that this was an area in which they kept their community informed.⁴⁸² Unit 7 also formed an "emergency benefits fund" for children in need, and compiled of a list of "willing homes," that might keep a homeless child.⁴⁸³ It also organized a "building bee" for one of its members, evidencing "shared or cooperative labor."⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁷⁸ 25 CFR 83.1

⁴⁷⁹ 25 CFR 83.7(l)(i)

⁴⁸⁰ EHR: "Chicken Dinner at Bailey Home," 25 July 1956, Hawley Museum Papers

⁴⁸¹ EHR: "Several Ottawa families remain in Mason County" 19 May 1959, Hawley Museum Papers.

⁴⁸² EHR: Margaret Chandler's notes of Northern Michigan Ottawa Association meetings, 9 May 1959, Chandler Papers.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁴ 25 CFR 83.7(c)(2)(iv)

In 1961, each Unit was responsible for organizing involvement in an "all State Indian Pageant." The pageant involved "group dancers" and "individual performers." It also crowned its very own "Indian Princess."⁴⁸⁵

A 1974 notice for a Unit 5 meeting announces that "study groups" will meet concerning issues such as hunting and fishing rights, financial aid for college and the Indian Education Act, C.E.N.A., and combating discrimination.⁴⁸⁶

As evidenced above, the NMOA Units quickly took on the form of being the political and community center of the Grand River Bands communities.

⁴⁸⁵ PET: "All Indian Pageant Letter," 27 June 1961, Dart Papers.

⁴⁸⁶ PET: NMOA Notice for Seminar, 19 November 1974, Genia Papers.

NMOA Provided Political Leadership

The Minutes of the NMOA Annual Meetings⁴⁸⁷ and the Executive Board reflect that, from the beginning, the organization was a true political organization, representing and guiding the Michigan Ottawa and Chippewa Tribes on all political issues, not just those involving claims.

For example, at the Tenth Annual Meeting of NMOA in 1958, considerable time was spent at that meeting discussing the "National Congress of American Indians," and passing a resolution that at least one person from each Unit become a member and keep informed with that organization.⁴⁸⁸ A resolution, applauding the efforts of the NCAI in "legislative, welfare, and other fields," was read and a resolution to "cooperat(e)" with their efforts, was passed by the NMOA Executive Board.⁴⁸⁹ Another resolution at this meeting involved "Senate Concurrent

⁴⁸⁷ See PET: NMOA notice of meeting and list of officers, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 21 June 1952, Dominic Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 19 June 1954, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA 10th Annual Meeting, 21 June 1958 Dart Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting, 9 June 1959, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Minutes Annual Council meeting and Pageant, 1 June 1960, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Minutes, 17 March 1962, Dart Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting, 16 May 1963, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 10 June 1964, Genia Papers; PET: Minutes from the 17th Annual meeting of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, Resolution No. 103, 16 October 1965, Dominic Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 6 June 1966, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notes of Annual Council Meeting, June 1967, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 21 June 1969, Genia Papers; PET: Notice 22nd Annual NMOA Meeting, May 1970, Dart Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting, Unit 2 Notes, 12 June 1971, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 17 May 1972, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 9 June 1973, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 14 May 1974, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 27 March 1976, Genia Papers, p. 1; PET: NMOA minutes of meeting, 7 October 1977, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Minutes, 17 June 1978, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Notice and Minutes of Annual Council Meeting Minutes, 5 June 1979, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting, 20 September 1980, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Minutes and Follow-up Report, 19 September 1981, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 19 June 1982, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 18 June 1983, Genia Papers; PET: Minutes of 36th Annual NMOA Meeting, 23 June 1984, Genia Papers; PET: Notice of Annual Meeting Agenda, 21-22 June 1985, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 19 September 1987, GRBOI-Jobes Folder 2; PET: Minutes of NMOA Meeting, 7 November 1987, GRBOI-Jobes, Folder 2; PET: NMOA Agenda and Letter from Robert Dominic, 18 January 1990, Chandler Papers; PET: NMOA Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 17 May 1997, Genia Papers; PET:

⁴⁸⁸ PET: NMOA 10th Annual Meeting, 21 June 1958, Dart Papers.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid

Resolution 108" which was effectively "terminating" several Indian tribes.⁴⁹⁰ NMOA voted to "support the Michigan Indians who are now and will be faced with termination according to best means available" by writing congressmen, and using other political pressure.⁴⁹¹

At the March 17, 1962, NMOA meeting, a pending House Bill regarding the internment of Indians was discussed, and members were urged to "write their representatives urging support of this bill."⁴⁹²

The NMOA Executive Board also spent considerable time researching and providing information on Indian education and scholarships. The February 5th, 1959, Newsletter of NMOA , "Tribal Trails," announces the formation of a scholarship committee, comprised of the Secretaries of all eight NMOA Units.⁴⁹³ The Newsletter describes "educating the Indian youth" as "a vital part of our Indian program."⁴⁹⁴ In fact, by the end of the 1960s, the Dominics were consulted by the Indian office about distribution of a wide range of services to Michigan Ottawas. The Bureau relied upon the NMOA to provide certifications for financial aid, requests for education, employment, and medical care, as well as genealogical information regarding heirship on trust

⁴⁹⁰ Id.

⁴⁹¹ Id.

⁴⁹² PET: NMOA-Minutes, 17 March 1962, Dart Papers.

⁴⁹³ PET: "Tribal Trails," 5 February 1959 Dart Papers .

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

lands.⁴⁹⁵ Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, NMOA represented its members in obtaining Indian education scholarships.⁴⁹⁶

When the State of Michigan was considering creation of the Indian Affairs Commission in 1957, NMOA took the proposed legislation to each of its Units, where it was discussed at length. A "Survey Report" was created, and forwarded to the legislature.⁴⁹⁷

In the early 1970's, NMOA became powerful enough to take on the issue of Ottawa hunting and fishing rights.⁴⁹⁸ In 1971, a representative from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) attended the Annual meeting, and stated that the State would honor NMOA Identification cards for hunting and fishing purposes.⁴⁹⁹ Hunting and Fishing continued to be an area in which NMOA worked, and represented its members.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁵ EHR: Minutes of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association Meeting enclosing Resolutions 001A, 002A, and 003A, 20 January 1973, Chandler Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan 2000, pp. 264-265.

⁴⁹⁶ PET: NMOA Annual Meeting, Unit 2 Notes, 12 June 1971, Genia Papers, PET: NMOA Minutes of Meeting, 13 May 1978, Genia Papers, PET: Senate Report 94-577, p. 3, 15 December 1975, BIA-BAR Files, SD 94: 1,94-57 7

⁴⁹⁷ PET: NMOA Survey Report, 6 October 1957, Report Genia Papers.

⁴⁹⁸ PET: Notice of Annual Council Meeting, 11 May 1971, Genia Papers; Special Grand River Ottawa Meeting, 22 May 1971, Genia Papers.

⁴⁹⁹ PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Unit 2 Notes, 12 June 1971, Genia Papers.

⁵⁰⁰ PET: Proposed Code of Ethics RE: Hunting and Fishing, 28 July 1971, Genia Papers: Code of Ethics RE: Hunting and Fishing, 4 August 1971, Genia Papers: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 23 June 1973, Genia Papers: NMOA & DNR Meeting RE: Commercial Fishing, 24 October 1974, Genia Papers: NMOA Business Committee - Hunting and Fishing Ethics, 30 October 1974, Genia Papers: NMOA Minutes of Meeting, 13 May 1978, Genia Papers: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Minutes, 17 June 1978, Genia Papers: Attorney General to Waunetta Dominic RE: Fishing Rights, 22 May 1979, Genia Papers: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Follow Up Minutes & Report, 19 September 1981, Genia Papers: NMOA Special Meeting Minutes, 20 March 1982, Genia Papers: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 19 June 1982, Genia Papers: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 18 June 1983, Genia Papers: Exec. Council and Descendants Committee Meeting Minutes, 14 April 1984, Genia Papers: Minutes of 36th Annual NMOA Meeting, 23 June 1984, Genia Papers: Annual Meeting Agenda, 21-22 June 1985, Chandler Papers: Northern Michigan Ottawa Association Special Meeting, 23 November 1985, Chandler Papers. William

NMOA representatives worked closely with the DNR and the Michigan Commission On Indian Affairs in the early 1980's.⁵⁰¹ In fact, in 1982 Michigan Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA) director, William LeBlanc suggested that NMOA intervene in a Federal court case rearding hunting/fishing.⁵⁰² LeBlanc also suggested that NMOA pursue federal recognition, and suggested that NMOA had "defacto status" as a federally recognized tribe.

It is not accurate to classify NMOA, or any of its Units, as "claims organizations." The Units provided real political leadership and representation on *all* issues. NMOA networked with other Indian groups, and worked on many non-claim issues. By 1960, NMOA had, in effect, become a central government for Ottawa Indians, with several Ottawa Tribes, operating under its umbrella. One of these Tribes was the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians.

GRB within NMOA: An Autonomous Political Entity

In NMOA, the GRB had found a political "mechanism" which worked for its Tribe.⁵⁰³ As stated previously, the Units maintained their own distinct social and political systems, as had the historic Bands. However, they were in close contact, and when a major issue arose they met in Council and negotiated as one political unit.

LeBlanc to Mr. Frank Kelly, 9 November 1982, Genia Papers; William LeBlanc to Mr. Joe Genia, 6 October 1982, Genia Papers.

⁵⁰¹ PET: William LeBlanc to Mr. Frank Kelly, 9 November 1982, Genia Papers; PET: William LeBlanc to Mr. Joe Genia, 6 October 1982, Genia Papers.

⁵⁰² PET: William LeBlanc to Mr. Joe Genia, 6 October 1982, Genia Papers.

⁵⁰³ 25CFR 83.1

The Docket 40-K Claims distribution illustrates how the GRB operated as an autonomous political entity within NMOA. Docket 40-k was an ICC Claim, filed by NMOA, on behalf of the Grand River Bands, which sought restitution for underpayment of lands that were ceded by the GRB in 1821.⁵⁰⁴ Although Robert Dominic was involved, as the president of NMOA, the GRB handled the distribution as an autonomous Tribal entity.

On December 23, 1964, the ICC found in favor of the GRB, awarding them \$937,291.67.⁵⁰⁵ Shortly thereafter, NMOA President, Robert Dominic, appointed a five member "Grand River Committee" to "take care of any matters arising on the Grand River Claim."⁵⁰⁶ The Committee met for the first time on June 24, 1965,⁵⁰⁷ and consisted of five members, all leaders from Grand River communities throughout the State: Francis Wakefield and June Gardner from Unit 4-Grand Rapids, Nicholas Bailey from Unit 7- Mason County, Peter Stone from Unit 5-Muskegon, and Bill Hennessy from Flint.⁵⁰⁸ These Grand River leaders effectively researched and drafted resolutions regarding "valued group goals," and ensured that they were included in the distribution legislation.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁴ EHR: Robert Dominic, et al., as the Representatives on behalf of all members by blood of the Ottawa Tribe of Indians v.s. The United States of America, Second Interlocutory Order, 23 December 1964, Indian Claims Commission, Docket 40-K.

⁵⁰⁵ PET: Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶ PET: Grand River Bands Minutes, 10 October 1965, Dart Papers

⁵⁰⁷ PET: Grand River Indians Committee, 24 June 1965, Dart Papers: , Grand River Band Meeting, 24 June 1965, Dart Papers: EHR: Margaret Chandler's notes from Northern Michigan Ottawa Association meetings, 24 June 1965, Chandler Papers.

⁵⁰⁸ PET: Grand River Bands Minutes, 10 October 1965, Dart Papers.

⁵⁰⁹ The NMOA had passed broadly termed Resolutions regarding these issues as early as 1952. See PET: Minutes of meeting & Resolution #1, 21 June 1952 Genia Papers: However, it was this GRBOI Committee that researched and drafted the specific language.

Shortly after the first meeting of the "Grand River Committee," the GRB leaders began researching the issues important to the Tribe. Francis Wakefield, chairman of the Committee, wrote to his Congressman, and requested "copies of what the Commissioner of Indian Affairs allowed and disallowed in the way of divisions of money, degree of blood, escrows for minors, and so on."⁵¹⁰ Bill Hennessy and Francis Wakefield worked closely together on a proposal to protect the funds of minor children.⁵¹¹ Their work included much correspondence, drafts of proposals, and even contacting the Probate Court,⁵¹² and a bondsman for advice.⁵¹³ Wakefield also worked closely with Peter Stone and Nicholas Bailey on other issues, including blood-quantum.⁵¹⁴

The Grand River Committee met again on August 7, 1965, where the issues of compensation to the Dominics, and protection of minors, were discussed.⁵¹⁵ It is obvious from this meeting, that the membership was in close contact with the leaders, and were openly debating these issues at monthly Unit meetings. Nicholas Bailey reported that the issue of compensation to

⁵¹⁰ PET: Wakefield to Ford, 26 June 1965, Dart Papers.

⁵¹¹ See PET: Hennessy to Wakefield, 6 July 1965 Dart Papers; PET: Wakefield to Hennessy, 8 July 1965, Dart Papers; PET: Hennessy to Wakefield, 9 July 1965, Dart Papers; PET: Wakefield to Hennessy, 15 July 1965, Dart Papers; PET: Hennessy to Wakefield, 1 August 1965, Dart Papers; PET: Grand River Proposal, 7 August 1965, Dart Papers.

⁵¹² PET: Wakefield to Waalkes, 15 July 1965, Dart Papers.

⁵¹³ PET: Reed to Wakefield, 26 July 1965, Genia Papers.

⁵¹⁴ PET: Wakefield to Stone, 8 July 1965, Dart Papers; PET: Wakefield to Bailey, 8 July 1965, Dart Papers; PET: Stone to Wakefield, 12 July 1965, Dart Papers; PET: Other Areas- Wakefield note, no date, 1965 Dart Papers.

⁵¹⁵ PET: Notes of 8/7/65 Grand River Meeting, 7 August 1965. Chandler Papers.

the Dominics had received "much deliberation" at the July, Unit 7 meeting.⁵¹⁶ More discussion was had on this at the October 10, 1965 Committee meeting, at which time a motion to recommend 1% of the Docket 40-k Award as compensation to the Dominics and the executive board, was passed by Unit 7.⁵¹⁷ A proposal for how to deal with "mixed-bloods," mostly children, who are Grand River Ottawa and Pottawatomi, was also recommended at this meeting.⁵¹⁸ The GRB passed a proposal regarding minor children after much research and debates.⁵¹⁹

On October 16, 1965, the Seventeenth Annual NMOA meeting was held, where the "members of the Grand River Bands were seated in a separate section for voting purposes."⁵²⁰ Harold LaRoche, tribal relations officer of the Great Lakes Indian Agency was present. The Grand River Committee "submitted its report and made recommendations."⁵²¹ The GRB passed five resolutions at this meeting, reaffirming their commitment to protect minors' funds and, limit distribution to quarter-blood Indians, and allocate 1% of the Award to the Dominics for their unpaid work.⁵²²

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ PET: Grand River Bands Minutes, 10 October 1965 Dart Papers.

⁵¹⁸ PET: Grand River Indians Committee, 10 October 1965, Dart Papers.

⁵¹⁹ PET: Proposed adopted 7 August 1965 & 10 October 1965 Dart Papers.

⁵²⁰ EHR: Minutes from the 17th Annual meeting of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, Resolution No. 103, 16 October 1965, Dominic Papers.

⁵²¹ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵²² A Resolution was also introduced regarding the Ottawa-Potawatomi mixed bloods, but after much discussion, it was tabled. Id., p. 4.

These Resolutions were "reaffirmed" on July 20, 1968.⁵²³ Again, Representatives of the BIA were present to observe the voting. A sample of the ballot from this vote indicates that it was not a rubber stamp.⁵²⁴ The GRB specifically considered and rejected amendments that would pay on a descendancy basis, or drop blood quantum requirements from one-quarter to one-eighth.⁵²⁵

Nevertheless, the BIA drafted the initial Bill, HR 1100, without honoring any of the GRB's requests. The BIA had a "long-standing policy" not to honor blood-degree limitations in "descendancy" situations, and believed that the GRB had no reliable Roll on which to base blood-quantum.⁵²⁶

On June 21, 1969, at the Twenty-First annual NMOA Meeting, the GRB again were assembled, and again "reaffirmed" their Resolutions regarding the judgment funds.⁵²⁷ GRB objections were filed with the BIA,⁵²⁸ and a response was drafted, reiterating the GRB's concerns.⁵²⁹ The GRB continued to meet and discuss the Bill,⁵³⁰ and to defend the reliability of their Rolls, passing yet another Resolution on June 6, 1970.⁵³¹

⁵²³ PET: NMOA to BIA Re: Draft Bill, 15 July 1969, Genia Papers.

⁵²⁴ PET: NMOA: Special Meeting of Grand River Band of Ottawa, 20 July 1968, Genia Papers.

⁵²⁵ PET: Ibid. See attached ballot.

⁵²⁶ PET: Memo from Chief Division of Tribal Government Services to Director, Minn. Area Office, BIA, 14 March 1974 Genia Papers.

⁵²⁷ PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 21 June 1969, Genia Papers.

⁵²⁸ PET: NMOA to BIA Re: Draft Bill, 15 July 1969, Genia Papers.

⁵²⁹ PET: NMOA to BIA Re: Draft Bill, 15 July 1969, Genia Papers.

⁵³⁰ PET: NMOA Special Meeting, 23 May 1970, Genia Papers.

⁵³¹ PET: Grand River Ottawa Resolution No.201, 6 June 1970. Genia Papers.

When GRB objections failed to persuade Rep. Phillip Ruppe to amend the Bill, it was passed by the House of Representatives in 1971. However, the GRB borrowed \$900.00 from the first National Bank of Petoskey, personally signed for by Robert Dominic, and sent representatives to Washington to testify before the Senate Committee.⁵³² With the help of Senator Phillip Hart and Senator Robert Griffin, the GRB blocked HR1100 in the Senate.⁵³³

In this way the GRB brought BIA officials "to the table," so to speak. On December 10, 1971, and again on March 18, 1972, the Grand River Band and their attorney, met with representatives of the BIA in Muskegon, Michigan to discuss the disposition of the funds.

After the first meeting, however, the BIA objected to NMOA representation in the Grand River Bands Claim, The BIA would not deal with the NMOA representatives, because NMOA "has among its membership many who are not descendants of the Grand River Ottawas."⁵³⁴ This, despite the fact that the GRB leaders, many of whom held positions on the Executive Board,⁵³⁵ had independently researched and drafted the Resolutions, which had been voted on by the GRB membership under BIA supervision.⁵³⁶ While it rejected NMOA's role as the representative group, the BIA did not seem to doubt that the GRB leaders were providing "political leadership"

⁵³² PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Minutes, 12 June 1971, p. 3, Genia Papers.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ PET: John Crow to Robert Dominic, 21 January 1972, Genia Papers.

⁵³⁵ PET: Art Markham Waunetta Dominic, Anthony Chingman, and Francis Wakefield, were all members of the Executive Board. See PET: NMOA Special Meeting, 23 May 1970, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA: Special Meeting of the Grand River Committee and Executive Board, 13 March 1971, Genia Papers.

⁵³⁶ PET: NMOA: Special Meeting of the Grand River Band of Ottawas, 20 July 1968, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA: Special Meeting for Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians, 6 June 1970, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA: Special Meeting of the Grand River Committee and Executive Board, 13 March 1971, Genia Papers.

to the Grand River Bands, within the structure of NMOA. It had recently reinvested the Docket 40-K funds, authorized by a Grand River vote, at an NMOA meeting.⁵³⁷ Furthermore, the comments of BIA official John Crow of the Muskegon meeting, reflect strong GRB political leadership. Crow states:

It is our understanding that the several local "Grand River organizations" can generally identify those persons within their jurisdiction that possess Grand River blood.

The courtesy extended by representatives at Muskegon was greatly appreciated. Much was accomplished to clarify the cloudy issues. That several hundred people were in attendance underlined the concern of the Grand River descendants with regard to the disposition of the award.⁵³⁸

These comments would indicate that the membership had "widespread knowledge, communication and involvement in political processes,"⁵³⁹ had "mobiliz(ed) significant numbers of members ... for group purposes,"⁵⁴⁰ and "consider(ed) actions taken by group leaders ... to be of importance."⁵⁴¹

Prior to the next meeting, however, NMOA created the "Grand River Band of Ottawa Descendants Committee" to formally represent the GRB before the BIA.⁵⁴² This Committee was comprised of the same people on the "Grand River Committee" who had been representing the

⁵³⁷ PET: NMOA: Special Meeting of the Grand River Band of Ottawas, 20 July 1968, Genia Papers; PET: R.J. Pereau to Mr. Robert Dominic, with enclosure, 20 January 1970, Genia Papers.

⁵³⁸ PET: John Crow to Robert Dominic, 21 January 1972, Genia Papers.

⁵³⁹ 25 CFR 83.7(c)(1)(iii)

⁵⁴⁰ 25 CFR 83.7(c)(1)(i)

⁵⁴¹ 25 CFR 83.7(c)(ii)

⁵⁴² PET: Edmund Manydeeds to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 8 March 1972, Genia Papers.

GRB interests on this claim since 1965, with a few additions. For example, the 1971 Meeting Minutes of the "Grand River Committee" reflect the following Committee members: "Rose Shalifoe, William Hennessy, Arthur Markham, Anthony Chingman, John Cantu, June Gardner, and Waunetta Dominic."⁵⁴³ The Grand River Band of Ottawas Descendants Committee, "organized at meeting held at Muskegon, Michigan on March 18, 1972," consisted of: Rose Shalifoe,⁵⁴⁴ William Hennessy, Anthony Chingman, John Cantu, June Gardner, Albert Micko, Nicholas Bailey,⁵⁴⁵ Carol Bennet, Gladys Laws, Paul Johnson, (replacing William Hennessy, who was resigning due to health), and Waunetta Dominic.⁵⁴⁶ In fact, the Grand River Committee members were all appointed to the "Grand River Band of Ottawa Descendants Committee" by a letter sent "to verify the . . . previously-appointed Grand River Ottawa Committee members."⁵⁴⁷ The new members were formally appointed.⁵⁴⁸

The "newly formed" Descendants Committee again reviewed the Proposed Bill of the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians, with the quarter-blood and minors' trust provisions. Each

⁵⁴³ PET: NMOA: Special Meeting of the Grand River Committee and Executive Board, 13 March 1971, Genia Papers.

⁵⁴⁴ Note that Rose Shalifoe and the wife of John Cantu, Marie Cantu, were both members of the Grand River Ottawa Council, and signatories of the original request for federal acknowledgment. See PET: Grand River Band Ottawa Council Resolution, 7 November 1994, Genia Papers.

⁵⁴⁵ Note that Nicholas Bailey was an original member of the Grand River Committee. See PET: Grand River Bands Minutes, 10 October 1965, Dart Papers

⁵⁴⁶ PET: Grand River Band of Ottawas Descendants Committee, 18 March 1972, Genia Papers.

⁵⁴⁷ PET: Waunetta Dominic to Grand River Ottawa Indians of Michigan Committee, 9 March 1972, Genia Papers;

⁵⁴⁸ PET: Waunetta Dominic to Mrs. Gladys Laws, 9 March 1972, Genia Papers; PET: Waunetta Dominic to John Cantu, 9 March 1972, Genia Papers; Waunetta Dominic to Carol Bennet, 9 March 1972, Genia Papers;

member approved the GRB positions.⁵⁴⁹ and included specific comments. Accordingly, the Committee requested two changes to the BIA proposal. The first was that the minors' shares be held in trust for them until they reached the age of majority. The BIA agreed to this. The second was that the funds be distributed only to persons possessing at least one-fourth Grand River Ottawa blood.⁵⁵⁰ The BIA still refused to include this in the Bill.

A hearing of record was held in Michigan on May 18, 1974. The testimony of Grand River members was "overwhelmingly" in favor of the quarter-blood requirement.⁵⁵¹ However, the Secretary of the Interior again submitted its plan without the quarter-blood requirement. "Strenuous objections to the plan were raised by the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians."⁵⁵²

Due to the Grand River Band's objections, a resolution disapproving the plan was introduced early in the 94th Congress, and the Secretary withdrew the proposed plan, thus requiring affirmative legislative action to pass it.

The Grand River Band worked with Senator Hart of Michigan to draft S. 1659, which was introduced on May 6, 1975. The BIA continued to recommend against inclusion of the quarter-blood requirement.⁵⁵³ Representatives of the Band testified before the Subcommittee on Indian Affairs on September 26, 1975. During this hearing, Robert Dominic testified concerning his

⁵⁴⁹ PET: Comments of W.C. Hennessy, 3 April 1972, Genia Papers; PET: Comments of June A. Gardner, 3 April 1972, Genia Papers; PET: Comments of Albert Micko, 3 April 1972, Genia Papers; PET: Comments of Anthony Chingman Sr., 3 April 1972, PET: Comments of Nicholas Bailey, 3 April 1972, Genia Papers.

⁵⁵⁰ PET: Memorandum to Director of Minneapolis Area Office, BIA, from Chief, Division of Tribal Government Services, BIA, 14 March 1974, Genia Papers p. 3.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., Senate Report 94-577, 15 December 1975, p. 6.

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ PET: Memo: BIA Re: distribution of funds. 21 August 1975. Genia Papers.

close working relationship with the local BIA offices. He addressed the DOI's mistrust of the Durant Roll, by pointing out that he has provided information on blood quantum of Grand River members from this Roll for years, at BIA request, for purposes of qualifying them for certain government services and programs.⁵⁵⁴

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs ultimately rejected the recommendation of the BIA to remove the quarter-blood requirement from the bill. This was motivated, at least in part, by the fact that the Grand River Band was at the time being treated by the BIA as any other federally recognized Indian tribe.

The Committee Report states "(t)he Secretary argues that since the band descendants are not Federally recognized they have no formally organized political entity to receive the funds."⁵⁵⁵ However, The Report goes on to find that to be untrue:

In anticipation of the subject award, the Descendants Committee has been compiling a roll of Grand River Band descendants based on lineal descendancy from person (sic) named on the Grand River Band portion of a roll approved by the Secretary of the Interior...

Because the persons who claim Grand River Band Descendancy are members of a non-Federally recognized entity, they are ineligible to participate in programs and services administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for tribal groups under their jurisdiction. However, during the Subcommittee hearing on S. 1659, the Descendants Committee witnesses revealed that the Bureau of Indian Affairs had recognized their roll in identifying persons who possess Grand River Ottawa blood to the degree of one-fourth or more and extended certain Bureau services to

⁵⁵⁴ PET: Senate Report 94-577, p. 3, 15 December 1975, Bar Files 5D94:1,94-577: See Also EHR: Morris Thompson to the solicitor, 11 February 1976, p. 2. BIA-BAR; Dominic also testified re: Dockets 18E and 58. PET: Transcript of BIA hearing, 8 May 1975, Dominic Papers. Note that many other Ottawas, including Grand River Band members, also testified.

⁵⁵⁵ PET: Senate Report 94-577, 15 December 1975, p. 2.

such individuals. In a later communication to the Committee, the Department confirmed this testimony.⁵⁵⁶

Based on this, the Committee recommended the bill with the quarter-blood limitation, and it was passed by the Senate on December 15, 1975. It was passed by the House of Representatives and enacted into law on January 19, 1976.

Passage of this bill specifically rejected the argument of the BIA that the Grand River Band had "no formal organized political entity to receive the funds."

Honoring the Band's certification of blood-quantum, providing vocational and training services for which only Federally-recognized tribes are eligible, and finally, honoring the Band's wishes for only quarter-blood distribution, are all actions by the Federal Government which recognized the GRB as a tribal political entity.

Even the Central Office of the BIA, while opposing the quarter-blood limitation, recognized this. In a memo to The Solicitor regarding its objections to the blood quantum limitation, then Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Morris Thompson, stated:

The Northern Michigan Ottawa Association and the Grand River organization are, in many basic senses, functioning as or at least are accepted as tribal political entities by the Minneapolis Area and Great Lakes Agency.⁵⁵⁷
(Emphasis added)

In this memo, the Commissioner warns that accepting a blood quantum designation threatens the BIA's position that the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, and their descendants lost their tribal political identity in 1855. He further warns that if his office is compelled by Congress

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁵⁷ EHR: Morris Thompson to the Solicitor, 11 February 1976, BIA-BAR

to accept a blood-quantum designation, he feels it will "disastrously interfere with those situations in which we have found modern tribes to be the successors of the aggrieved historic groups."⁵⁵⁸

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs viewed S. 1659 as an Act, if passed with a blood-quantum limitation, which would acknowledge the Grand River Band as a tribal political entity. Congress, with this knowledge, and in contradiction of the "long standing policy" of distributing to all descendants of non-Federally recognized tribes, passed it anyway.

The BIA retaliated, by terminating the practice of providing BIA services based on the Grand River Roll. In order to rectify the conflict between its position on the GRB distribution, and its practice of certifying blood-quantum based on the Grand River Roll, the BIA sent a teletype informing the Minneapolis Area Office to:

Be advised that as of this date no further blood quantum certifications are to be accepted on the basis of the "Dominic Roll" for BIA services or any other purposes. Individuals previously so certified and presently participating in special Federal Indian programs are to be permitted to pursue all such programs which have definite terminal dates or periods. The basic question of eligibility of the Grand River Band descendants for Bureau services is pending in the Department but an early resolution is not anticipated.⁵⁵⁹

NMOA did not become aware of the Memo until March 15th.⁵⁶⁰ It immediately brought political pressure to bear on the BIA. At a March 27th NMOA meeting, a plan of action was determined. By a voice-vote, it was decided that an attorney from the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) would represent NMOA on this issue. Units were asked to create a special fund for trips to Washington. J. Hillman of the Michigan Commission of Indian Affairs attended and

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁵⁹ EHR: Morris Thompson to George Goodwin, 3 March 1976, BIA-BAR.

⁵⁶⁰ PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 27 March 1976, Genia Papers, p. 1.

offered his assistance. A meeting was set to be held in Muskegon on the issue.⁵⁶¹ Members were urged to contact their Congressmen, and information on contacting them was distributed.⁵⁶² At least two Congressmen took up the cause: Guy Vander Jagt and Lloyd Meeds sent letters to the Commissioner of the BIA, and kept GRB members apprised of the status.⁵⁶³

On May 13, 1976, the BIA reversed its decision, ordering the Area Office to "continue individual services on the same basis as you did prior to March 3, 1976."⁵⁶⁴ The Telegram was copied to Waunnetta Dominic.⁵⁶⁵

Aside from illustrating GRB autonomy, the Docket 40-K controversy shows the "political influence" and "authority" of the GRB leadership during the 1960's and 70's. Their leadership, representation, membership involvement, and valued group goals were evident throughout the process. All of the research, debate, and decision-making was done by GRB members only. Among other things, the GRB persuaded Congress that they should be entitled to limit the Docket 40-k distribution to 1/4 blood Indians-- a right previously granted only to federally recognized tribes.

⁵⁶¹ PET: NMOA Meeting Minutes, 27 March 1976, Genia Papers, p2.

⁵⁶² Ibid., p. 3

⁵⁶³ EHR: Lloyd Meeds to Morris Thompson, copied to Donald Riegle and Guy Vander Jagt, 3 May 1976, Emily Smith Papers, Private Collection, Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Grand Rapids, Michigan [hereafter Smith Papers]; EHR: Guy Vander Jagt to Emily Robles, 4 June 1976, Smith Papers; EHR: Assistant Secretary of the Interior Cohen to Guy Vander Jagt, 8 June 1976, Smith Papers; EHR: Guy Vander Jagt to Emily Robles, 22 June 1976, Smith Papers.

⁵⁶⁴ PET: Teletype, to Indian Education Resources Center from Martin Seneca, acting Deputy Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 13 May 1976, Genia Papers.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid.

During this controversy, the Department of Interior acknowledged that the Grand River Bands organization was being treated the same as other federally recognized tribes for purposes of BIA programs and services. Most importantly, it also recognized that the GRB was "functioning as" and "accepted as" a tribal political entity by the BIA Agencies in the area.

The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Nations, Inc.

GRB Members were doing well within NMOA to represent their members on issues from Education (and other Federal Services) to Claims. Once they were organized, however, some GRB leaders wanted to do more. In 1969 GRB leaders from all three GRB communities (the Reservation areas, Muskegon, and Grand Rapids) joined to form the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation, Inc. (Hereinafter GRBON). The GRBON attempted to provide serious economic opportunities and assistance to Grand River people on a large scale. While most GRB members considered NMOA to be their only political representative well into the 1980's, this organization was the first in a series of attempts to organize outside of NMOA, which culminated in the forming of the current GRB Tribal Council in the early 1990's. It attempted to provide basic infrastructure for the Grand River Bands members.

The organization grew out of a perceived need for Indian-operated cash lending institutions, low cost housing near the reservation communities, Indian operated business, and building a center for cultural programs.⁵⁶⁶ The purpose as defined in the mission statement reads:

⁵⁶⁶ EHR: Credit Union Proposal, 1969, Linda Andre Papers, Private Collection, Linda Andre, Ludington, Michigan [hereafter Andre Papers]; EHR: "Housing Plan Delayed," 1969, Andre Papers; EHR: "Indians Need Identity Awareness," 1969, Andre Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 267.

- I. To promote and reestablish Harmony and Cooperation between the Bands of the Ottawa Nation. To extend this reestablished spirit of goodwill to encompass the other two main tribes or nations of the State of Michigan so that once more they can call themselves "The Three Brothers."
- II. To Preserve those cultural traits, crafts and traditional Rites that are distinct and desirable to retain for our posterity.
- III. To provide greater participation in the economic and cultural life of the community through the political, education, assistance, and encouragement of the individual members and groups within the organization.
- IV. To provide for our economic, political, and social needs in a manner that is suitable and agreeable to our people.
- V. To serve as a clearinghouse for information and mutual assistance between the tribal members and the other assets of Society,⁵⁶⁷

The corporation based its operation in Hart, Michigan, a few miles west of the Oceana County Reservation. Although the organization was based in Hart, the officers of the new organization lived in Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and in the reservation communities.⁵⁶⁸ They were largely the same GRB members who were active in their respective NMOA Units. The founding officers included:

Harry Ance, P.O. Box, Hart, Michigan; Donald Crampton, 65 Monroe St., Muskegon, Michigan; Mitchell Battice, RFD #2, Shelby, Michigan; F. Douglas Pierson, 1366 Winston Rd., Rothbury, Michigan; George H. Pego, S. Dryden St., Hart, Michigan 49420; Elizabeth Chingman, 2620 8th St., Muskegon Hts., Michigan; Virginia Drollinger, 1108 Arlington NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505; Jacob Lewis, 208 Main St., Hart, Michigan 49420; Isaac Battice, RFD #3, Crystal Valley, Michigan.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁷ EHR: Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Articles of Incorporation, 11 August 1969, Battice Papers.

⁵⁶⁸ James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 268.

⁵⁶⁹ EHR: Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Articles of Incorporation, 11 August 1969, Battice Papers.

The Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation purposely limited its membership to Grand River Band descendants listed on the original Durant Roll. It did so for the following reasons:

Item: Membership in the organization is to be composed and limited as stated in our "Articles of Incorporation"; "to the descendants of the nineteen (19) Principal families of the Grand River Bands as determined by the "Durant Roll" of 1907. As of this date we have involved and on our mailing list, 200 names and addresses of house-holds who are qualified for membership and participation in our activities.

Item: We have chosen to limit our membership in this manner, for the following reasons:

1. Eventually, perhaps in the near future, we will have to make a determination of those who are descendants of the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Tribe for the purpose of governmental distribution of funds that are held in various trusts, trust funds, heirship property, and "trust property". Limiting our membership at the onset will make this requirement easier for the future.

2. We would like to see this limitation serve as an inducement for other groups to form an organization similar to ours built for their own problems and people.

The problems and difficulties, of the Indian People in the State of Michigan are generally the same; underemployment. Poor housing, Prejudices and Bias, Lack of public agency cooperation, and lack of organization within the tribal group.

However, the causes and reasons underlying these problems and difficulties vary from group to group, area to area, and county to county. Also: the priority, the method of operation needed to solve these problems and difficulties vary in much the same way.

We have been asked and we will aid and assist any other group within the State, who thinks that our assistance will be helpful to establish their own organization and/or methods of operation.

3. We want to reestablish the Bands along the old Ethnic lines so that we can authenticate our own arts and crafts, dances, and history; and thereby rekindle the pride in our own tribal grouping. Once this is done we will extend our efforts to aid other groups who wish to accomplish the same end.

4. We feel that we will be more effective and more rapidly eager to accomplish the purposes of our organization, if we only have to contend with the differences of opinion and view-point within our own group.⁵⁷⁰

The Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation published newsletters, hosted feasts, distributed clothing, and cash, besides working diligently to meet its broader financial and political goals. It did so by volunteer labor and cash donations from its members.⁵⁷¹

From the start of Grand River Band of the Ottawa Nation operations, the group worked to build a functioning tribal government. They saw their efforts to construct on-reservation housing and the formation of a credit union for its members as ways to rebuild a stable community where Indians controlled their own government.⁵⁷² This the founders hoped would bring their members back from the cities and restore their rural communities.⁵⁷³ As previously noted, the officers of this organization lived in urban and rural communities stretching from Muskegon to Ludington and worked to mobilize their Ottawa kin and friends within their home regions.⁵⁷⁴

From the earliest start-up, the group recruited Indian and non-Indian help throughout the Grand River Bands community to achieve its ambitious goals. The outstanding Docket 40-K judgment fund payments helped them in their recruitment efforts. As the Grand River Band

⁵⁷⁰ EHR: "Organizational status of the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.," 30 February 1969, Battice Papers. (The date is obviously a typographical error, however this review of "organizational status" is an important part of GRBON history.

⁵⁷¹ EHR: See discussion, James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 269-270.

⁵⁷² EHR: Credit Union Proposal, 1969, Andre Papers.

⁵⁷³ EHR: Jere Charlow to Mitchell Battice, 9 September 1969, Battice Papers.

⁵⁷⁴ EHR: "Grand River Bands Non-profit Housing Corporation: Articles of Incorporation," 3 March 1970, Andre Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 270.

officers organized for their housing efforts, band members also came to work on their genealogies to add to list of persons eligible for payment.⁵⁷⁵ The low cost housing project spurred the interests of Grand River Bands' members in Grand Rapids, Muskegon and in Oceana County. Forty to sixty people would attend small local survey groups that met throughout the Grand River Ottawa range and at meetings to discuss the housing plans.⁵⁷⁶ Community discussions lead the organization to plan further in advance to build a trading post, Indian school, medical care program, daycare facility, grocery store and gas station near to the housing project.⁵⁷⁷ Local on-reservation towns and villages supported the Grand River Bands' housing effort and even offered land for additional housing.⁵⁷⁸ One local farmer donated 71 acres of his land for the benefit of the Grand River Bands.⁵⁷⁹

Non-Indians recognized Grand River Ottawas as distinct and aided them in their organization and development efforts. State Senator Charles Youngblood, Jr. of Detroit worked with the Grand River Bands in 1969 to charter their organization, the Grand River Bands Non-

⁵⁷⁵ EHR: Grand River Bands Meeting Minutes, 9 September 1969, Battice Papers; EHR: Grand River Bands Meeting Minutes, 14 September 1969, Battice Papers; EHR: Karen Moon, "Indian Census Going Slowly," *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*, 4 March 1970, Battice Papers.

⁵⁷⁶ EHR: "Indians Still Hopeful: Housing Plan Delayed," 16 February 1970, Battice Papers; EHR: Karen Moon, "Indian Census Going Slowly," *The (Muskegon) Chronicle*, 4 March 1970, Battice Papers; EHR: "Unofficial meeting at Oceana Action Center in Shelby, Minutes," 27 March 1970, Battice Papers; EHR: "Indians' Housing Charter is Okd; Two-Week completion Time Seen," 4 May 1970, Battice Papers.

⁵⁷⁷ EHR: "Indians Still Hopeful: Housing Plan Delayed," 16 February 1970, Battice Papers

⁵⁷⁸ EHR: Glen W. Chase to Housing Authority Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Indian Nation, Inc., 12 March 1970, Battice Papers; "Housing Project Opposed," 4 April 1970, Battice Papers.

⁵⁷⁹ EHR: "Farmer Donates 71 Acres to Indians," 6 April 1970, Battice Papers; "Donations of Land," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 2 May 1970, Battice Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 270-271.

Profit Housing Corporation, and to help them achieve their housing goals thereafter. He and State Senator Oscar Bouwsma of Muskegon worked with the tribe throughout the process of obtaining loans and initial construction.⁵⁸⁰

They negotiated directly with the Michigan Housing Commission.⁵⁸¹ On March 23, 1970, Michigan State Housing Development Authority found such critical need among the reservation Indian community, that they authorized the Ottawas to build eight emergency housing units immediately, and worked with the Grand River Ottawas to construct 230-250 housing units over time. State housing authorities eventually funded far fewer houses, and the majority of the houses built, due to non-discrimination restrictions of the lending organization, went to non-Indian householders.⁵⁸²

While NMOA was still the vehicle for most GRB political action, the GRBON functioned as a political entity of the GRB in many ways from 1968 until the mid-eighties.⁵⁸³

⁵⁸⁰ EHR: "Plan 80 Unit Project, Indians take on Survey Housing," *The Muskegon Chronicle*, 6 January 1970, Battice Papers; "Indians' Housing Charter is Okd: Two-Week Completion Time Seen," 4 May 1970, Battice Papers.

⁵⁸¹ EHR: Helman Cameron to Mitchell Battice, 17 March 1970, Battice Papers; "Meeting with Michigan Housing Development Authority & the Grand River Bands," 20 March 1970, Battice Papers.

⁵⁸² EHR: "Approval for 8 Emergency Units," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 4 April 1970, Battice Papers; "Future Allocation of Units to the Housing Programs," *Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Monthly Newsletter*, 4 April 1970, Battice Papers; EHR: "25 Housing Units Planned This Year," 11 February 1971, Andre Papers; EHR: "Senior Citizen Housing Pushed," 24 May 1973, Battice Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 271-272.

⁵⁸³ EHR: Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Special Meeting Minutes, 20 July 1968, Dominic Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Emergency Meeting Minutes, 9 September 1969, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 14 September 1969, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc., with Michigan Housing Development Authority: Meeting Minutes, 20 March 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Unofficial Meeting Minutes, 27 March 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 5 April 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 12 July 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Band of the Ottawa Nations, Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 6 December 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River

The Organization provided information on claims and non-claim issues to the GRB members.. Their newsletter mailing list included dues-paying member in Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and in the many small communities throughout western Michigan.⁵⁸⁴ This newsletter began publication as a quarterly in September 1971. However, the number of submissions and announcements submitted by Grand River Bands Ottawas quickly necessitated a monthly publication. Newsletter distribution serves as evidence of widespread community and interest in

Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 23 December 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 3 January 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 7 February 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 14 March 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 4 April 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 2 May 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 6 June 1971, Battice Papers; Minutes of the 1971 Annual Meeting of Members of Grand River Bands Non-profit Housing Corporation, 16 June 1971, Andre Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 11 July 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 28 August 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 3 October 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Band of the Ottawa Nations, Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 7 November 1971, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 6 February 1972, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 7 May 1972, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: 4th Annual Stockholder's Meeting Minutes, 19 August 1972, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Board of Directors Special Meeting Minutes, 8 October 1972, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 5 November 1972, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 3 December 1972, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 7 January 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 4 February 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 11 March 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 13 May 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 10 June 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 8 July 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 11 August, 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 1 September 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 14 October 1973, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 3 November 1973, Battice Papers; Annual Meeting of the Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Minutes, 8 September 1974, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc.: Meeting Minutes, 13 October 1974, Battice Papers.

⁵⁸⁴ EHR: Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc., mailing list, September 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc., newsletter mailing list, 9 September 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc., newsletters mailed, 14 October 1970, Battice Papers; Grand River Bands of the Ottawa Nation Inc., newsletter mailing list, 28 December 1970, Battice Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, pp. 272-273.

cultural events from the first mailings onward. For example, the September 1970 mailing was sent to Brethren, Custer, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Ludington, Manistee, Muskegon, Norton Shores, Scotville, Shelby, Suttons Bay, Twin Lake, Walkerville, and Whitehall.⁵⁸⁵

Discouraged, by the housing situation, the GRBON stopped meeting for awhile in 1973. However, they reemerged in 1982,⁵⁸⁶ and met until 1984, although with much less participation.⁵⁸⁷ Consistently, their meetings concerned political and cultural issues, such as upkeep of the Elbridge Cemetery, upkeep of the land which was donated to them, participation in the Asparagus Festival in Hart, and periodically, the question of federal recognition.⁵⁸⁸

As discussed below, some GRBON members branched off, forming Native Americans United (NAU) in the 1980's. These GRB groups operated simultaneously (along with NMOA), until the early 1990's when they all consolidated to form the current GRB Tribal Council.

NMOA in the 1980's: Internal Conflict

⁵⁸⁵ EHR: "Newsletters Mailed Out" 9 September 1970, Battice Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 323.

⁵⁸⁶ PET: GRBOI-Battice - Envelope 8, 10 February 1974

⁵⁸⁷ The GRBON files for this period are not complete or well-documented. However, see PET: Mildred Chase to Clarence Battice, 25 March 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 8; Chet Eagleman to Robert F. Lewis, 2 April 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Folder 8; Jean Pannisidi to Emily Smith, 14 May 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 8; Meeting Minutes, 23 April 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 8; Meeting Minutes, 8 May 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 8; Meeting Minutes, 5 June 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 8; Minutes, 19 May 1984, GRBOI-Battice, Folder 8; Grand River Board Meeting Minutes, 7 July 1984, GRBOI-Battice, Folder 8; Minutes, 8 September 1984, GRBOI-Battice, Folder 8; Minutes, 18 September 1984(?), GRBOI-Battice, Folder 8; B.J. Dayton to Bob Lewis, 26 February 1990, I.O.W. File 2.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid.

The NMOA continued to make strides, but also experienced some internal struggles, in the 1980's. After the death of Waunetta Dominic in 1981, GRB member Joe Genia became president of NMOA. Genia announced the opening of the "Northern Michigan Ottawa Association, Grand River Band Office" in Muskegon on October 15, 1982.⁵⁸⁹

The struggle for official recognition of Ottawa hunting and fishing rights continued. NMOA hired attorney David Justian to protect the non-reservation Ottawas rights.⁵⁹⁰ Many government officials and other Indian organizations began to regularly attend the NMOA Annual Meetings.⁵⁹¹ The individual Units kept their members informed regarding claims and non-claims issues.⁵⁹²

In 1980's however, an internal battle regarding "claims distribution" weakened the GRB's ties to the NMOA. In 1972 the Court of Claims awarded 10.1 million dollars in Dockets 18E and 58 to descendants of the 1836 Treaty.⁵⁹³ The groups eligible to share in the award were: Grand River Bands, Grand Traverse Bands Maskigo and L'Arbre Croche Bands, the Sault Ste.

⁵⁸⁹ PET: NMOA notice of Muskegon Office, 15 October 1982.

⁵⁹⁰ PET: Record Eagle - Hunting & Fishing Rights, 26 March 1983, Genia Papers; Arlene Naganshe to Joe Genia Re: Proxy, 1 April 1983, Genia papers; Notice of Emergency NMOA Meeting, 2 April 1983, Genia papers; NMOA Emergency Meeting, 2 April 1983, Genia Papers; NMOA Press Release Re: Hunting and Fishing, 8 April 1983, Genia Papers;—"Ottawas Lose Bid to Enter Fishing Case," 9 April 1983, Record Eagle.

⁵⁹¹ PET: NMOA minutes of meeting, 7 October 1977, Genia Papers; PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting, 20 September 1980, Genia Papers; NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 19 June 1982, Genia Papers; NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 18 June 1983, Genia papers; Minutes of 36th Annual NMOA Meeting, 23 June 1984, Genia Papers; attendees at annual NMOA meeting, 23 June 1984, Genia Papers.

⁵⁹² PET: Status Report on Docket 58A & 18E, 13 July 1983, Genia Papers; Unit 4 NMOA News Release Re: Olympic Committee, Unite 4, 15 October 1982, Genia Papers; Report on Status of 1836 Treaty Award, 9 October 1981, Genia Papers.

⁵⁹³ PET: Letter from Pauline Barber to Earl Barlow, 10 June 1983, Genia Papers, see enclosure: Letter from BIA, Acting Superintendent, L. John Lufkins to B.J. Strong, 29 April 1983.

Marie Band, Michilimackinac and Cheboygan Bands of Chippewa Indians.⁵⁹⁴ NMOA created the Ottawa and Chippewa Descendants Committee (O & C Descendants Committee) to oversee distribution negotiations for the non-reservation Ottawa. Since the Grand Traverse Band had become Federally Recognized on May 28, 1980, (joining the Bay Mills and Sault Ste. Marie Bands who had already done so), the O&C Descendants Committee represented primarily the Grand River Band. The O & C Descendants Committee voted to receive the funds on a per-capita basis, with the same basic standards regarding 1/4 blood and minor children as were present in the Docket 40-k legislation.⁵⁹⁵ Distribution was, however, delayed due to the number of different groups involved.⁵⁹⁶

In the meantime, the new NMOA Executive Board was introduced to a distribution plan by Joe Genia used by the Oneida Indians, in which per-capita payments are staggered, according to age, so that the distribution funds can collect interest, which can then be used for investment and tribal development.⁵⁹⁷ NMOA President, Joe Genia, favored the "Investment Plan" over the "Minneapolis Plan" supported by the O & C Descendants Committee. The Executive Council "approve(d) the investment principle" and moved to set up meetings with the O & C Descendants committee regarding it.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁵ Id.

⁵⁹⁶ Id.

⁵⁹⁷ PET: Executive Council Meeting, 14 July 1984 , Genia Papers.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.

The O & C Descendants Committee, however, was not in favor of the plan. While Joe Genia traveled to individual Unit Meetings, seeking support for his "Investment Plan,"⁵⁹⁹ the O & C Descendants Committee organized opposition.⁶⁰⁰ June Dart, a GRB member, O & C Descendants Committee member, and longtime Unit 4 Chair, lead the opposition. She called on her uncle, Henry L. Negake,⁶⁰¹ to return to the area from California, to help her. Negake returned, and declared himself "Chief of the Grand River Bands" upon his return.⁶⁰²

More than one-hundred families attended a meeting to hear information on both plans on October 12, 1985.⁶⁰³ At the October 26, 1985 meeting, where a vote was held. The Minneapolis Plan won approval, with over three hundred members voting.⁶⁰⁴

Ironically, the bill languished for ten more years, and the final bill included neither of these plans.⁶⁰⁵ However, the quick and vehement response of the Grand River Community

⁵⁹⁹ EHR: Committee Meeting of Unit 4 NMOA, 10 October 1985, Chandler Papers

⁶⁰⁰ PET: Important Meeting: Meeting of the Michigan Ottawa & Chippewa Descendants Group of Non-Reservation Indians as referred to in Docket 58, 26 October 1985, Jobes Papers.

⁶⁰¹ Henry Negake, who has returned to California, but is still in contact with the current GRBOI Tribal Council, is the great, great grandson of Chief Cosmoosa. See PET: "'I have Come Home' Californian Returns to Become Chief of Ottawa Indians Here," 6 October 1985, Jobes Papers.

⁶⁰² PET: "'I have Come Home' Californian Returns to Become Chief of Ottawa Indians Here," 6 October 1985, Jobes Papers.

⁶⁰³ PET: "Native Americans Meet on Fund Disbursement," *The Muskegon Chronicle*, 12 October 1985, Jobes Papers

⁶⁰⁴ PET: Important Meeting: Meeting of the Michigan Ottawa & Chippewa Descendants Group of Non-Reservation Indians as referred to in Docket 58, 26 October 1985, Jobes Papers., Status Report and Position Paper by Henry L. Negake regarding the funds in Dockets 18E and 58 before the Indian Claims Commission, 30 October 1985, Chandler Papers.

⁶⁰⁵ The final Bill was passed after GRBOI had also succeeded from NMOA, and members of the current Tribal Council were involved in further negotiations with the BIA. See PET: Michigan Indian Land Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 105-143-15 December 1997.

indicates the autonomy of the GRB within NMOA. It also reflects "widespread knowledge, communication and involvement in political processes and/or decisions" and "internal conflicts which show controversy over valued group goals." ⁶⁰⁶

GRB Changed Strategies

It was perhaps the conflicts of the 1980's, as well as the trend for Ottawa Tribes to be federally recognized individually, which GRB's led to pursue other strategies.

NMOA had been unsuccessful at arguing that it should be federally acknowledged. In 1975, Robert Dominic had filed a request for Federal recognition of NMOA, under the IRA. There is no record of a formal Federal response to this request.⁶⁰⁷ In the summer of 1979, Waunnetta Dominic met again with BIA officials regarding Federal recognition of NMOA. She received a follow-up letter from BIA official John Shapard, suggesting that one way to approach the Federal acknowledgment process: "is to have naturally existing bands within your association's membership such as Grand River, Little Traverse, etc., petition as separate groups."⁶⁰⁸ He also warned that if NMOA chose to petition on behalf of all its members, "you must clearly establish that the Association meets the criteria in the regulations, that is, the group is a continuation of a pre-existing Indian political organization which has been in existence from historical times until the present."⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰⁶ 83.7(c)(1)(iii) and (v).

⁶⁰⁷ EHR: Robert Dominic to Rogers Morton, 5 May 1975, Dominic Papers.

⁶⁰⁸ PET: John A. Shapard to Wainnetta Dominic, 18 August 1979, BIA-BAR.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

As NMOA Units became more organized politically, they did begin to apply for Federal acknowledgment along historic Tribal lines. By 1981, the Sault Ste. Marie Band , (Unit 8), the Bay Mills Band, (Unit 9), the Grand Traverse Band (Unit 2), had all gained Federal acknowledgment.⁶¹⁰

Not surprisingly, when individual Tribes became Federally recognized, NMOA began to lose power with the Federal government. In 1981, shortly after the Grand Traverse Band was recognized, Indian Health Services at Sault Ste. Marie announced they would no longer accept NMOA certification for Indian services.⁶¹¹ At the 1982 Annual Meeting of NMOA, one man reported that, since the DNR gave wholesale fish dealers guidelines which recognized Bay Mills and Grand Traverse Bands' tribal cards, he could no longer sell his fish with his NMOA card.⁶¹² In a 1985 letter, Unit 1, the Little Traverse Bay Band acknowledged that:

The main reason we changed our name to Little Traverse Bay Bands is because of a recent Federal Court's opinion (John Case v. Michigan) that an individual Indian cannot enforce treaty rights. But a community, band/s or tribe can enforce these rights.⁶¹³

Perhaps bowing to these same pressures, the leaders of GRB Unit 7, in the Mason/Manistee Grand River Community created a separate tribal entity, incorporating as The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians in 1985.⁶¹⁴ The Little River Band opened their enrollment to

⁶¹⁰ PET: NMOA Annual Council Meeting Minutes & Follow up Report, 19 September 1981, Genia Papers.

⁶¹¹ Ibid., p. 2.

⁶¹² PET: NMOA Annual Meeting Minutes, 19 June 1982, p. 3, Genia Papers.

⁶¹³ PET: Ron Wemigwase to Pauline Barber, RE: Unit #1, 26 April 1985, Genia Papers.

⁶¹⁴ PET: Articles of Incorporation, Little River Bands of Ottawa Indians. 16 February 1983.

Grand River Bands members who trace to eight of the nineteen GRB Chiefs from the Treaty of 1855. While some GRB members have joined this Tribe, others who trace to the same eight chiefs, have refused to define themselves as anything but Grand River Bands members, and were active in reorganizing the Grand River Bands.⁶¹⁵ Nonetheless, The Little River Band was recognized by Congressional Act in 1994.

Reorganizing the Grand River Bands

By the the late 1980's and early 1990's, NMOA had lost substantial political power because members were being represented by federally recognized tribes. Without NMOA to provide structure, the GRB political structure reverted to a less centralized form of government, much as it had been during treaty times. Kin-based political leaders continued to meet informally, and worked through non-profit organizations they had formed to pursue their political goals.⁶¹⁶ Oceana County leader and current Tribal Council member, Patsy Beatty recalls that political leaders from the extended families in Oceana County discussed their political goals at informal famiy gatherings. She recalls discussions regarding federal recognition, obtaining the Grand River Membership Roll from the BIA, and who would represent the GRB in negotiations with the federal government at gatherings of the extended families.⁶¹⁷ Oceana County leader Emily Smith recalls that Joe Genia traveled to the Reservation areas during the late 1980's and early 1990's to talk about political issues and GRB organization. As Muskegon leader Joe Genia

⁶¹⁵ PET: Former Tribal Council member Patrick Wilson, NAGPRA Representative Sharon Detz, and scores of others, eligible for membership in the Little River Band, disapprove of this faction, and are loyal to the preservation of the historic Grand River Bands tribal entity. PET: Interview with Fran Compo

⁶¹⁶ PET: Interview with Patsy Beatty, 15 November 2000.

⁶¹⁷ PET: Interview with Patsy Beatty, 15 November 2000.

explained in a recent interview "when you are a kin-based society your extended family are your constituents."⁶¹⁸

He also reflected that during the 1980's and early 1990's, the non-profit organizations in the Grand River communities were created by the GRB political leaders, as a means to raise money and pursue political goals. Some of these organizations, discussed below, provide documentation of the political leadership and networking of the informal GRB leaders of the time.

For example, the Oceana County Reservation political leaders GRBON, Inc., renewed its non-profit status in 1982, and continued to meet in Hart.⁶¹⁹

In 1981, some members of the GRBON created another non-profit corporation, called Native Americans United. (NAU), which later became the Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council.⁶²⁰ and, it was made up primarily of GRB members,⁶²¹ and was lead by the same GRB leaders that were active in NMOA and the GRBON..

⁶¹⁸ PET: Interview with Joe Genia,

⁶¹⁹ Certificate of Change, 12 May 1982, GRBOI- Battice, Envelope 8

⁶²⁰ B.J. Strong, later known as B.J. Dayton or B.J. Rivera, was married to a GRBOI member, and became the Indian Outreach Worker for Oceana County. She was quite active in the NAU, and provided an important link to County government. See Also PET: Phone Conference with Emily Smith, 16 November 2000.

⁶²¹ PET: B.J. Dayton to Joe Miracle, 25 February 1990, I.O.W. File 2

For example, Joe Genia, President of NMOA from 1982 until 1986, was also active in Native Americans United..⁶²² Emily Smith, secretary of GRBON in 1982,⁶²³ was later quite active in NAU, and the Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council.⁶²⁴

In Grand Rapids, NMOA Unit 4 members were also politically active outside the confines of NMOA. In the late 1980's, a Committee of young GRB members with roots in Unit 4 of NMOA, implemented the Title IX Indian Education Program of Grand Rapids Public School System.⁶²⁵ A GRB member, Fran Compo, was chairperson of that Committee. Also on the committee were GRB members Richard Rittenhouse, Madelyn Murray, and Sharron Detz and Anna Detz.⁶²⁶ GRB members Gilbert C. (Chip) DiPiazza and Ron Yob were involved as consultants.⁶²⁷ The Committee assisted the Grand Rapids Public School System in providing special services to Indian children, most of whom were GRB.⁶²⁸

Each of these organizations, run by the GRB political leaders in their respective communities, networked between Kent, Oceana, Muskegon and Mason Counties.⁶²⁹ They worked

⁶²² PET: Minutes of NAU Meeting, 29 April 1980, GRBOI-Jobes, Folder 2; PET: Grand River Bands Meeting, 20 March 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 8.

⁶²³ PET: Certificate of Change, 12 May 1982, GRBOI-Battice, Envelope 8,

⁶²⁴ See EHR: Oceana Inter-Tribal Council: Meeting Minutes, 8 November 1989 Rivera Papers.

⁶²⁵ PET: Interview With Fran Compo, 8 May 2000, p. 1.

⁶²⁶ PET: Interview With Fran Compo, 8 May 2000, pp 1, 2. Richard Rittenhouse is the brother of long time NMOA Unit 4 Secretary, June Dart. Ibid.

⁶²⁷ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 May 2000, p. 1.

⁶²⁸ Ibid., p. 1.

⁶²⁹ PET: BJ Dayton to Joe Miracle, 25 February 1990, I.O.W. File 2; PET: BJ Dayton to Bob Lewis, 26 February 1990, I.O.W. File 2; PET: American Indian Service Plan, N.D. 1992, I.O.W. File 3; PET: Pow Wow Planning Committee, N.D. 1993, I.O.W. File 3; PET: Special Clinic for Native American Women Only, 16 September 1994, I.O.W. File 3; PET: 2nd Annual Honoring Our Elders Pow Wow, 3 September 1994, I.O.W. File

on issues such as maintenance and upkeep of the Grand River Bands' burial grounds, maintenance of land given to GRBON, participation in the Asparagus Festival in Hart, planning an annual inter-tribal Pow-Wow in Hart, organizing Christmas parties, ghost suppers, cultural films, and other community events, providing free health services, and combating cultural discrimination in schools.⁶³⁰

In early 1994, the Grand Rapids Area GRB leaders wished to expand their work in the GRB community, to address the health care and housing problems that Grand River people were facing in this area.⁶³¹ Ron Yob, Madelyn Murray, Chip DiPiazza, and Fran Compo organized a non-profit to pursue federal recognition.⁶³² They filed for non-profit status in May of 1994 as the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Inc.⁶³³

At about this same time, Muskegon GRB leader and past president of NMOA, Joe Genia, met with the Oceana County GRB "representatives," to discuss centralizing all of the GRB

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⁶³⁰ PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, 10 August 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, 8 November 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council Minutes, 17 August 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, 23 August 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, 31 August 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter Tribal Council, 6 September 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Junior Inter-Tribal Council, 4 October 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: "Schooled in Pride," *Grand Rapids Press*, 14 October 1990; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, 18 October 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, 25 October 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, 1 November 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of Oceana County Inter Tribal Council, 9 December 1989, I.O.W. File 2; PET: Minutes of the Inter-Tribal Pow Wow Committee Meeting, 22 November 1994, I.O.W. File 3; PET: Native American United Agenda and Minutes, 23 June 1980, I.O.W. File 1; PET: B. J. Stong to Unknown, 23 February 1981, I.O.W. File 1.

⁶³¹ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, p. 2-3.

⁶³² Id. at p. 3.

⁶³³ Id., at p. 3.

organizations "to work together as a unit for the good of all the Grand River Band people."⁶³⁴

Genia stressed that a "joint effort" toward federal recognition should be pursued. The representatives of Oceana, Muskegon, Mason and Kent County formed the "Grand River Band Ottawa Council" to "pursue federal acknowledgment and obtain a continued trust relationship with the United States."⁶³⁵ Their officers included representatives from Oceana, Muskegon, Mason and Kent Counties.⁶³⁶ Ron Yob, one of the leaders who formed the "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Inc.," was the Kent County representative for the "Grand River Band Ottawa Council."⁶³⁷

All of the GRB Political Leaders met in May of 1995, to centralize GRB political efforts, especially that of federal recognition. This meeting marks the beginning of the Grand River Bands' Current Political Authority.⁶³⁸ Continuing the less centralized political leadership that they had been providing throughout the 1980's and early 1990's,⁶³⁹ the Grand River Bands formed one Council to pursue federal recognition. Common political goals again united the Grand River Bands' political leadership, as they have since treaty times.

⁶³⁴ PET: Minutes of Meeting between Oceana County and Muskegon County Representatives, 5 October 1994, I.O.W. File 3.

⁶³⁵ Grand River Band Ottawa Council Resolution and Officers, 7 November 1994, Genia Papers. PET: Grand River Ottawa Council Meeting Minutes, 24 May 1995, GRBOI Files.

⁶³⁶ Ibid.

⁶³⁷ PET: Interview With Fran Compo, 8 May 2000, p. 5.

⁶³⁸ PET: Grand River Ottawa Council Meeting, 24 May 1995, GRBOI Files

⁶³⁹ At this meeting Emily Smith suggested renewing the Articles of Incorporation for the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Nation, Inc. since she, and several other members present had been officers. The Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Inc. was, however, already incorporated and became the official Tribal entity. However, the fact that this group could have continued under that name indicates the continuity in GRBOI politics.

CURRENT POLITICAL AUTHORITY

1995 marks the beginning of Tribal Council meetings which alternated between Muskegon, Hart, Elbridge and Grand Rapids, at which each community was represented.⁶⁴⁰ Early meetings focused on organization and procedures,⁶⁴¹ obtaining office space,⁶⁴² defining membership,⁶⁴³ creating a new Roll,⁶⁴⁴ defining a service area,⁶⁴⁵ and gathering information for Federal Recognition.⁶⁴⁶

Not unlike traditional Ottawa political structure, the GRB political leaders at first continued to see themselves as representatives of their individual GRB communities,⁶⁴⁷ and even met individually between the Council meetings.⁶⁴⁸ In 1997, however, it became obvious that their application for Federal Recognition required a modern political system of one formal Council. In

⁶⁴⁰ PET: Interview With Fran Compo, 8 May 2000, pp 5-7; PET: Enrollment Day Sign In Sheet, 27 January 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: Grand River Ottawa Council Meeting Minutes, 24 May 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI @ DiPiazza Home, 4 June 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Sign In Sheet, 13 November 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Meeting Sign In Sheet, 31 January 1996, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Meeting Sign In Sheet, 14 March 1996, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Meeting Sign In Sheet, 11 April 1996, GRBOI Files;

⁶⁴¹ PET: Grand River Ottawa Council Meeting Minutes, 24 May 1995, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁴² PET: GRBOI at DiPiazza Home, p. 1, 4 June 1995, GRBOI Files;

⁶⁴³ PET: GRBOI at DiPiazza Home, pp. 1, 6, 4 June 1995, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁴⁴ PET: Notice of Enrollment Research Information Day, 27 January 1996, GRBOI Files; PET: Enrollment Day Sign In Sheet, 27 January 1995, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁴⁵ PET: GRBOI at DiPiazza Home, p 7, 4 June 1995, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁴⁶ PET: Grand River Ottawa Council Meeting Minutes, pp. 2, 3, 24 May 1995, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁸ Tribal Council. encompassing all GRBOI communities, has been meeting since 1995. See

December of 1997, after adopting a Constitution and By-Laws, they merged into one Tribal Council, the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians.⁶⁴⁹

Currently, the GRBOI Tribal Council consists of eight officers, drawn from all three GRB communities. The Tribal Council brings together past and present generations of GRB political leadership, including factions embroiled in the controversy over distribution of the Docket 18E and 58 funds.⁶⁵⁰ Their past political leadership and kinship ties to Chiefs and Headmen of the past, demonstrates continuity in GRB politics. See a short biography on each Tribal Council member at the end of this section.

The GRBOI Tribal Council has been meeting more formally since May of 1994, and monthly since January of 1996.⁶⁵¹ It continues to carry on the work of NMOA, and the

⁶⁴⁹ The Grand Rapids organization had already been certified as a Non-Profit Corporation, so they retained its name and 501(c)(3) status. PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 May 2000, p. 6.

⁶⁵⁰ Joe Genia is a Tribal Council member, and often assists Tribal Chairman, Ron Yob with certain leadership duties. June Dart, Unit 4 Secretary throughout the 1980's, and a vehement opponent of Genia's "Investment Plan," is Tribal Enrollment Committee member the GRBOI Tribal Council, and assisted in the research for this Petition.

⁶⁵¹ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 21 May 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Meeting Notes, 10 May 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Sign-in Sheet and Meeting Notes, 27 September 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Meeting Sign-in Sheet, 13 November 1995, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council and Annual Membership Meeting Minutes, 19 December 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Files; GRBOI Board of Directors Meetings Minutes, 12 February 1996, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Meeting Notes, 23 September 1006, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 10 November 1997, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 1 December 1997, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 December 1997, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes 12 January 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes 9 February 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes 13 April 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 11 May 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 June 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 13 July 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 17 August 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 14 September 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Sign-in Sheet, 12 December 1998, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 February 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 12 April 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 14 June 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 19 July 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 6 November 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 12 June 2000, GRBOI Files.

informal political networks which have always existed in the GRB communities. The Tribal Council has created a formal centralized government which has been "making decisions for the group which substantially affect its members," "representing the (Tribe) in dealing with outsiders in matters of consequence," and "influencing ... the behavior of its members in significant respects."⁶⁵²

Significantly, the Bureau of Indian Affairs regularly refers requests for Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) to the Tribe.⁶⁵³ Assumably, it perceives the GRBOI as a reliable and legitimate "tribe."⁶⁵⁴ Furthermore, Federal authorities and other Indian Tribes, regularly treat the GRBOI as a federally recognized Tribe. Local, State, and Federal entities, involved in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, discussed below, treat the Grand River Bands as it does any other federally recognized Tribe. The U.S. Army Corp. of Engineers, cooperates with the GRB about actions that affect its historic lands.⁶⁵⁵

GRBOI standing committees regularly reach out into the Native and non-Native community. They include the Enrollment Committee, the Strategic Action Planning Committee, the NAGPRA Committee, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Committee, and the Pow Wow Committee.

⁶⁵² 25 CFR 83.1

⁶⁵³ PET: Gerald F. Parish to Mrs. Karen L. Knuppenburg, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁵ PET: David L. Dulong to Mr. Ron Yob, 23 June 1997, GRBOI Files.

Enrollment Committee

The GRBOI Enrollment Ordinance Planing Committee was formed in 1997 to draft an Enrollment Ordinance, and create a current Membership Roll. Initially, the Committee consisted of more than a dozen Grand River political leaders.⁶⁵⁶ They held meetings near each GRB community from September through November of 1997.⁶⁵⁷ On December 1, 1997, the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians Tribal Enrollment Ordinance was passed.⁶⁵⁸ The Tribal Council appointed an Enrollment Committee as established in this ordinance. The current Enrollment Committee members are: Emily Smith, June Dart, Ken Leosh, and Gaylord Boyer.

For the next three years, the Enrollment Committee spent countless hours researching hundreds of applications. It reports at Tribal Council meetings, recommending enrollment where appropriate.

The Strategic Action Planning Committee

In November of 1997, the GRBOI applied for an ANA Grant, to “develop and implement a Stratetic Action Plan (SAP) that will assist the tribe to address social and economic development according to community defined strengths.”⁶⁵⁹ The Grant was awarded to the GRBOI in April of 1998.⁶⁶⁰ The Strategic Action Planning Committee was formed. Fran Compo, Tribal Secretary is the Project Coordinator. The Committee has consisted of as many as

⁶⁵⁶ PET: Enrollment Ordinance Planning Committee Meeting, 19 November 1997, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁵⁷ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 10 November 1997, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁵⁸ GRBOI Tribal Enrollment Ordinance 97-01, 1 December 1997, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁵⁹ ANA Grant Application, Statement of Objectives, 24 November 1997, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁶⁰ Department of Health and Human Services. Financial Assistance Award. 17 April 1998.

seventeen members.⁶⁶¹ They have written a comprehensive outline of the Project's goals and objectives,⁶⁶² met independently,⁶⁶³ and reported to the Tribal Council.⁶⁶⁴ The Committee drafted a Survey, which was sent out to the membership to identify political priorities.⁶⁶⁵ The Survey's main purpose was to "to establish an active and responsive Tribal Government in anticipation of our reaffirmation as a sovereign nation."⁶⁶⁶ Two hundred and forty-nine members answered the Survey, which is a thirty-nine percent response rate.⁶⁶⁷ The Committee and the Tribal Council are continuing to assess ways in which they will use this vital information.

The NAGPRA Committee

In 1990, Congress passed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).⁶⁶⁸ In 1997, the Michigan Tribes formed a NAGPRA Committee,¹ to facilitate repatriation in Michigan. The NAGPRA Committee is a joint effort to protect and repatriate the human remains of ancestors, that may be disturbed by third parties. Kayle Crampton of the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe contacted the GRBOI⁶⁶⁹ and invited them to join the "Three Fires

⁶⁶¹ Grand River Bands to Conduct Tribal Survey, Spring 1999, *The Riverbends*.

⁶⁶² PET: Strategic Action Planning Project, 1 May 1998, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁶³ PET: Strategic Action Planning Committee, Topics for Discussion, 6 February 1999, GRBOI Files

⁶⁶⁴ PET: Strategic Action Planning Committee Report to the Tribal Council, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁶⁵ PET: GRBOI Survey Results, March 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁷ Six hundred and thirty-one members were surveyed. Id.

⁶⁶⁸ PET: Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 USC 3001 et seq., 16 November 1990

⁶⁶⁹ PET: Kayle Crampton to Ron Yob c/o Fran Compo, 4 September 1997, Detz Papers

Repatriation effort.”⁶⁷⁰ Tribal members Sharron Detz, Patrick Wilson, Anna Detz, Ken Leosh were appointed as the GRB NAGPRA Representatives.⁶⁷¹ Since that time, the GRB Representatives have been actively involved in the NAGPRA Committee, providing consultation and input, and even hosting the June 1999 Committee Meeting⁶⁷². On October 22, 1999, Representatives from fourteen Michigan tribes, including the GRB, signed the “Anishnabeg Consensus Statement on Repatriation of Native American Human Remains and Cultural Items.”⁶⁷³ Significantly, the GRB is the only non-federally recognized Tribe represented on the Committee.

Even prior to the formation of the NAGPRA Committee, the GRB had been contacted by The Van Andel Museum Center in Grand Rapids regarding NAGPRA⁶⁷⁴. In October of 1997, curator Erik Alexander informed the GRB that “NAGPRA applies differently to your band because you are not yet federally recognized.”⁶⁷⁵ He noted that the museum is “encouraged” instead of “required” to notify and work with non-federally recognized groups. However, he quickly added: “I want to make sure we include you because I’m convinced that the Grand River

⁶⁷⁰ PET: Ibid.

⁶⁷¹ PET: NAGPRA Conference, 10 September 1998, Detz Papers. Anna Detz has since replaced Patrick Wilson on the Committee; PET: Overview of State Legislation Meeting, 20 August 1999, Detz Papers.

⁶⁷² PET: Notice of NAGPRA Conference, 2 June 1999, Detz Papers.

⁶⁷³ Signatures have not yet been obtained from all parties. However, see PET: Anishnabeg Consensus Statement on Repatriation, 22 October 1999, Detz Papers; PET: Michigan Indians Sign Statement Demanding Return of Indian Remains, 1 November 1999, *Win Awenen Nisitotung*.

⁶⁷⁴ PET: Erik Alexander to Ron Yob, 10 November 1997, GRBOI Files

⁶⁷⁵ PET: Ibid.

Bands are eligible for federal recognition, and because you are the band most closely tied to our area.⁶⁷⁶

The S-Curve

In addition to its service on the Committee, the GRB has reached out into its own community on repatriation issues. In 1999, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) unearthed certain remains of an Indian village, during construction of the “S-Curve” on U.S. 131 in Grand Rapids.⁶⁷⁷ MDOT quickly contacted the GRB, and set up a joint meeting.⁶⁷⁸ Two committees resulted, with GRB members and State officials working side by side, to ensure safe and respectful excavation, and to commemorate the site.⁶⁷⁹

The Archeological Committee agreed that “all human remains and associated funerary objects would be returned to the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians for reburial and repatriation.”⁶⁸⁰ It was also agreed that “site ritual/ceremonial needs” of the GRB would be accommodated by MDOT.,⁶⁸¹ and furthermore that the GRB would be permitted to conduct “informal archeological monitoring”⁶⁸² of the site excavation.

⁶⁷⁶ PET: Ibid.

⁶⁷⁷ PET: Archeologists Unearth History under S-curve, 3 December 1999, *Grand Rapids Press*

⁶⁷⁸ PET: Margaret Barondess to Sharon Detz, 13 October 1999, Detz Papers.

⁶⁷⁹ PET: US 131 S-Curve Meeting Minutes, 18 October 1999, Detz Papers.

⁶⁸⁰ PET: US 131 S-Curve Meeting Minutes, p. 2, 4 November 1999, Detz Papers.

⁶⁸¹ PET: Ibid.

⁶⁸² PET: Ibid.

When the excavation was completed, MDOT issued a press release, citing the excellent teamwork between “various state departments, the Kent County Road Commission, the City of Grand Rapids, Grand Valley State University, and the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians.”⁶⁸³ Tribal leaders have accompanied Grand River teens to the Site, and spoken to them about their ancestors, and traditional Ottawa burial customs.⁶⁸⁴ Tribal Chairman, Ron Yob, is currently drafting the language for a State Historic Marker that will be placed on the site.⁶⁸⁵

In recent months, the Kent County Sheriff's Department,⁶⁸⁶ and several other individuals⁶⁸⁷ have turned over human remains to the GRB. In order to repatriate the remains as close as possible to their original resting place, the GRBOI inquired about purchasing burial plots in the Ada Cemetery. Ada Township donated land for GRB Repatriation.

The GRBOI held its first repatriation on the site on July 23, 2000. The GRB has also cooperated with the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians regarding repatriation of human remains of shared ancestry, obtained from The University of Michigan's Museum of Anthropology.⁶⁸⁸

The S-Curve excavation exemplifies the ways in which the GRBOI Tribal Council is making decisions which affect its members, and representing the group in dealing with

⁶⁸³ PET: To Sharon Detz from Ari Adler, 15 February 2000, Detz Papers.

⁶⁸⁴ PET: Indian Teens Among Those Calling For Proper Handling of S Curve, 2 October 1999, *The Grand Rapids Press*.

⁶⁸⁵ PET: Interview with Sharon Detz, 3 November 2000.

⁶⁸⁶ PET: T.J. Sikkema to Ron, 5 September 2000, GRBOI Files

⁶⁸⁷ PET: Bring the Ancestors Home, 9 May 2000, *The Grand Rapids Press*

⁶⁸⁸ PET: GRBOI Resolution No. 98-02-121298-6-0, 20 July 1999, GRBOI Files.

outsiders.⁶⁸⁹ Chairman Yob's taking GRB teens to the Site, raising their awareness of repatriation, is a way in which he "influences the behavior of the members."⁶⁹⁰ The deference accorded the Tribal Council by State and Local authorities is reflective of the Council's position in the Grand River Community.

The Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Committee

The Tribal Council also represents the membership on Indian Child Welfare (ICW) issues. The GRBOI currently has a three member Committee, which keeps the Tribe informed on State, local, and Tribal ICW issues. The Committee is comprised of Carol Gibner, Patsy Beatty, and Jennifer Beatty. The Tribe has been invited to serve on the State of Michigan ICW Implementation Team, and has been attending meetings since 1997.⁶⁹¹ The GRBOI is the only non-federally recognized Tribe represented on the Team.⁶⁹² The current Representatives, attended a Training set up by the Governor's Task Force on Children's Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office on child abuse issues.⁶⁹³ All three committee members attended, and were certified to take testimony in child abuse investigations.⁶⁹⁴ In July of 1999, The GRBOI coordinated an Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Training with the State of Michigan, Family Independence Agency

⁶⁸⁹ 25 CFR 83.1

⁶⁹⁰ 25 CFR 83.1

⁶⁹¹ PET: Fran Comp to Maura Brennan, 21 November 2000, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁹² PET: Interview with Carol Gibner, 13, November 2000.

⁶⁹³ PET: Paul Lochner to Ron Yob, 30 April 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁹⁴ PET: Interview with Carol Gibner, 13 November 2000.

(FIA). GRBOI-ICW Committee members and Tribal Council members presented on various ICWA topics.⁶⁹⁵

Pow Wow Committee

The GRBOI currently sponsors two annual Pow Wows. GRBOI hosts the Homecoming of the Three Fires Pow Wow, which brings together Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawottami Indians from throughout the state for the last 22 years.⁶⁹⁶ It is planned and sponsored by the GRBOI, and held each June at Riverside Park in Grand Rapids. It is the largest off-reservation Pow Wow in the State, and one of the largest annual events co-hosted by the City of Grand Rapids.⁶⁹⁷ The Pow Wow Committee works throughout the year, and reports to the GRBOI Tribal Council.⁶⁹⁸

The GRBOI recently worked with the City of Grand Rapids and the State of Michigan Department of Civil Rights to address Trader complaints regarding the vendor policies at the Pow Wow.⁶⁹⁹ The City was so impressed with the GRBOI's handling of trader issues, Kelly Wesaw, Committee Chairperson, was invited to give a presentation on traders/vendors at the Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department's General Meeting for Festivals and Celebrations.⁷⁰⁰ The City of Grand Rapids passed a resolution in June of 1999 as they have in many years, honoring the

⁶⁹⁵ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 November 2000.

⁶⁹⁶ PET: Homecoming of The Three Fires Pow Wow Flyer, 13 June 1998, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁹⁷ PET: Ron Yob and Kelly Wesaw to Traders, 14 June 1998, GRBOI Files.

⁶⁹⁸ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: GRBOI Homecoming of the Three Fires Pow Wow Report, 9 January 1999, GRBOI Files..

⁶⁹⁹ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files; PET: James Keedy to GRBOI Tribal Council, 13 September 1999.

⁷⁰⁰ PET: GRBOI Tribal Council Meeting Minutes, 8 March 1999, GRBOI Files.

Pow Wow, and the “importance of the Grand River in the development of our community from the Grand River Ottawa Villages of years past to the city it is today.”⁷⁰¹

In addition to a strong leadership, and several active committees, there have been recent “internal conflicts” which show widespread involvement of the membership, and “controversy over valued group goals.”⁷⁰² GRBOI members “consider issues acted upon by the Tribal Council to be of importance. For example, Tribal member Henry L. Negake⁷⁰³ recently approached the Tribal Council, suggesting that the Tribe bring action to recover the proceeds of the sale of a piece of land donated to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Nation, Inc.”⁷⁰⁴ When the Tribal Council’s action on this matter did not meet Mr. Negake’s expectation, a controversy developed.⁷⁰⁵ Negake, and some members, who agree with him voiced their disagreements at the recent Annual Membership Meeting. Tribal Secretary, Fran Compo, described the meeting as “highly politically charged.”⁷⁰⁶ In addition to the land dispute, many of the members at the Annual Meeting were angry over the election, and argued that by their interpretation of the By-Laws, all seats on the Tribal Council should be up for election.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰¹ PET: John H. Logie, Proclamation, 12 June 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁷⁰² PET: 25 CFR 83.7(e)(1)(iii) and (v)

⁷⁰³ Henry Negake currently resides in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. However he has extended family in the area. His involvement is indicative of the “widespread knowledge, communication, and involvement” that is spurred by a kin-based society.

⁷⁰⁴ PET: Henry Negake to Ron Yob, 7 September 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁷⁰⁵ PET: Henry Negake to Grand River Tribal Council, 11 October 1999, GRBOI Files.

⁷⁰⁶ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 November, 2000

⁷⁰⁷ PET: Ibid.

Sharron Detz estimates that seventy to one-hundred people attended the meeting.⁷⁰⁸ She stated that many present were angry about certain actions of the Tribal Council. In addition, many members voiced concern that the Tribal Council is not keeping them as informed as they would like to be,⁷⁰⁹ and not moving forward quickly enough on important Tribal issues, such as enrollment and federal recognition. All of this evidences “widespread” interest and “involvement” by the GRBOI membership. Furthermore, these conflicts show membership concern over “goals, policies, and processes” of the group.⁷¹⁰

Biographies of Tribal Council Members

Ron Yob

Ron Yob, Tribal Chairman of the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, is a direct descendant of 1870 Grand River Chief Maish-Ke-Aw-She,⁷¹¹ a signatory of the 1855 Treaty. Ron has been involved in the Kent County Grand River community throughout his life. He was on the Grand Rapids Inter-Tribal Council from approximately 1975 until 1983.⁷¹² He works in the Grand Rapids Public School system and developed a curriculum that specifically focused on teaching Native American children. He has spoken about his teaching throughout the country. During his years of teaching, he had many Grand River children in his classes. Oftentimes his

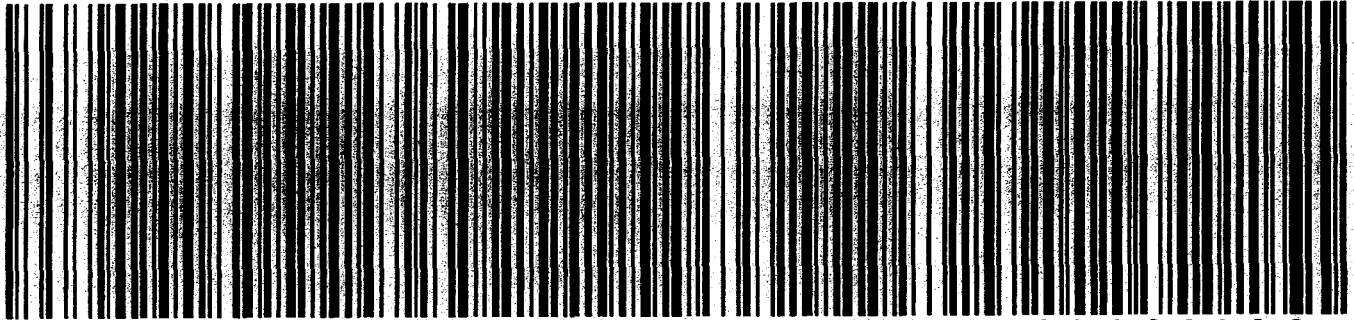
⁷⁰⁸ PET: Interview with Sharron Detz, 3 November 2000

⁷⁰⁹ PET: Ibid.

⁷¹⁰ 25 CFR 83.7(c)(1)(iii) and (v)

⁷¹¹ Yob's great great great grandfather, Randall Kelsey, is Chief Maish-Ke-Aw-She's son. PET: Durant Field Notes, 61-b, No.1, 1908. PET: Yob, Ron, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files.

⁷¹² PET: Interview with Ron Yob, 9 November 2000.



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students would ask why Grand River was not recognized by the federal government. Eventually, Ron tired of explaining the history of why the Tribe is not recognized and decided to pursue federal acknowledgment. Being a leader of Grand River people it was easy for Ron to formally incorporate the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, Inc. and pursue federal acknowledgment while continuing to act as a leader in the community.

Fran Compo

Fran Compo, Tribal Secretary of the Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians, traces to Grand River Headman, Charles Genereaux, who was elected in 1900 to represent GRBOI when dealing with the federal government.⁷¹³ Fran Compo has been involved with GRBOI issues since she was a child. She attended NMOA meetings regularly with her parents while she was growing up. When she was 17 years old, she transcribed oral histories of many Grand River members and was final typist for the book, the Tree that Never Dies. She has worked with the Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency assisting Indian people with services and appropriate placements for native children when they were removed from the home. Since then, she has worked for the Kent County Family Independence Agency as an Indian Outreach Worker where she has been instrumental on working with compliance of the Indian Child Welfare Act. Fran Compo was the Chairperson of the Title IX Indian Education Program for years. She has also been responsible for many community gatherings of Grand River people. As the Secretary of the GRBOI, Fran Compo is seen as a leader in the community.

⁷¹³ EHR: Ashkebyneka et al. to William Jones, 11 July 1900, LROIA 33159-1900. PET: Compo, Fran, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files.

Anna Detz

At 20 years old, Anna Detz, is the youngest Tribal member to sit on the Tribal Council. Anna traces to the Grand River Cogswells and Mickos.⁷¹⁴ James J. Cogswell, Anna's great great great great grandfather, was a headman of Grand River. When Durant was completing the 1870 Roll, he referred to James Cogswell as a headman and interpreter.⁷¹⁵ Cogswell later became a member of the GRB Tribal Council of 1900.⁷¹⁶

Anna's great great grandfather, William Micko, was a GRB Headman whose name would be prominent in GRB politics for generations to come.⁷¹⁷ William Mickoo, or "Micko" as it came to be spelled, was a prominent GRB Headman in the 1880's, and later became a member of the GRB Tribal Council formed in 1911.⁷¹⁸ William Micko's son, Albert Micko of Custer was the first president of Unit 7 of NMOA. Anna's mother, Sharron Detz, has been involved in NMOA, Kateri Circles, Enrollment and NAGPRA issues regarding Grand River people throughout her life.

Anna Detz served as a High School student rep for the Grand Rapids Title IX Indian Education Program. She also sits on three POW WOW committees including 3 Fires POW WOW Anna

⁷¹⁴ PET: Detz, Anna, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files.

⁷¹⁵ PET: Durant Field Notes, 18 February 1909, p. 49, No. 10. See also Durant Field Notes, p. 56(a) No. 14 and 56(a) No. 14, sheet 2, February, 1909 Durant Field Notes, p. 61(a), 20 February 1909.

⁷¹⁶ EHR: Ashkebyneka et al. to William Jones, 11 July 1900, LROIA 33159-1900. PET: Compo, Fran - GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files.

⁷¹⁷ EHR: Raymond C. Lantz, Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan, 1870-1909 (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 1991), p. 101.

⁷¹⁸ EHR: "Ottawa Indians Organize," 13 December 1953, Hawley Museum Papers. Charity Micko, Theresa Micko, Joe John and Hazel John, interview by Bea Bailey and Lee Cohen, Tape recording, 12 September 1875, Native American Oral History Project, Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids Michigan. Joseph Cushaway et al. To Hiram Price, 16 January 1882, LROIA 1157-1882.

Detz has been instrumental in working on Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) issues on behalf of the Tribe. She helped organize the Tribe's NAGPRA Committee and has been very involved in repatriating Grand River remains. She is current President of GVSU Native American Indians Organization.

Patsy Beatty

Patsy Beatty is the current treasure for the GRBOI, is a member of the "Lewis" family from Oceana County. Her great great great grandfather, Chief Ne-be-nay-ke-zhick was a singer of the Payroll Annuity.⁷¹⁹ Her grandfather, Jacob Lewis, was one of the founding members of Grand River Bands of Ottawa Nations, Inc.⁷²⁰ Like her ancestors, Patsy has been involved in Grand River politics throughout her life. She has been both president and treasurer of Oceana County Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. for a period of years. Patsy is on Reeths-Puffer, Montague, Whitehall, Hilton and Greater Muskegon Title IX Indian Education. Patsy serves two POW WOW Committees and volunteers for the 3 Fires POW WOW. She is a member of the Muskegon Kateri Circle. Patsy is the current Treasurer of GRBOI. She is well known in the Oceana County Grand River community and Tribal members address her as their community leader when concerns about the Grand River Tribe government are raised.

⁷¹⁹ PET: George Chingquash et al., to Wilder D. Foster and Thomas W. Ferry, 5 February 1873, Nam M234 R. 408: 949-951. PET: Patsy Beatty, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files.

⁷²⁰ EHR: Credit Union Proposal, 1969, Linda Andre Papers, Private Collection, Linda Andre, Ludington, Michigan [hereafter Andre Papers]; EHR: "Housing Plan Delayed," 1969, Andre Papers; EHR: "Indians Need Identity Awareness," 1969, Andre Papers; James M. McClurken, "Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians: History, Society, and Culture, 1615-1990," McClurken & Associates, Lansing, Michigan, 2000, p. 267.

Gilbert DiPiazza, Jr.

Gilbert DiPiazza, Jr. (Chip) is Vice Chairman of the Tribal Council. He is a direct descendant of 1870 Grand River Chief Maish-ke-as-she, a signer of the 1855 Treaty. Chip DiPiazza has been involved with GRBOI since it first incorporated. He has also been involved as a consultant for the Title 9 Indian Education Outreach program.⁷²¹ The Committee assisted the Grand Rapids Public School System in providing special services to Indian children, most of whom were GRBOI.⁷²² He is a master artist in the Expansion Arts Program with the Grand River Inter-Tribal Council.

His mother, Priscilla DiPiazza (Pat) has been involved in Grand River politics throughout her life.⁷²³ She was the Secretary of Unit 4 NMOA and worked with NMOA holding fundraisers and informing the Grand River people about their political status.⁷²⁴ Later, Pat DiPiazza donated many hours to answer phones and assist with running the GRBOI office.

Joseph Genia

Joe Genia⁷²⁵ is a Tribal Council member from the Muskegon community who has been a leader in Grand River politics for two decades. He has worked directly in the Muskegon community as well as working with other tribes on a national, as well as international level. In 1979 Joe was elected President of NMOA Unit 5 in Muskegon, replacing GRB leader John Cantu.

⁷²¹ PET: Interview with Fran Compo, 8 May 2000, p. 1.

⁷²² Ibid., p. 1.

⁷²³ PET: DiPiazza, Jr., Gilbert, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 200, GRBOI files.

⁷²⁴ PET: Interview with Angie Yob, Frank Compo and Pat DiPiazza, 25 February 2000.

⁷²⁵ PET: Genia, Joseph, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files.

on genealogy for the Grand River Bands for the past twenty-five years. He has often helped adult adoptees to locate their ancestry. He, too, is a descendant of the Shagonabe family.⁷³⁰ John Shagonabe, the Grand River Chief recognized by Durant,⁷³¹ was his grandfather's brother.⁷³² Joshua Shagonaby, first Chairman of Unit 5 of NMOA,⁷³³ was his mother's cousin.⁷³⁴

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⁷³⁰ PET: Knox, Elmer, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files.

⁷³¹ PET: Rodney L. Negake, et. al. To Commissioner of Indian Affairs , 29 July 1909 BIA-Durant . 45533-1908,053 PET: Knox, Elmer, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files, Durant Field Notes, Page 54, No. 2, August, 1908.

⁷³² PET: Cantu, Phillip, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November, GRBOI files. Power of Attorney, p. 360.

⁷³³ PET: R. Dominic to Joshua Shagonaby, 24 February 1951, Genia Papers.

⁷³⁴ PET: Knox, Elmer, GRBOI Ancestry Chart, 10 November 2000, GRBOI files; PET: Durant Field Notes, Page 54, No. 2, August, 1908.

⁷³⁵ 25 CFR 83.7(c)

⁷³⁶ 25 CFR 83.8(d)(3)

⁷³⁷ 25 CFR 83.8(d)(3)

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