

## TRIBAL JUSTICE DEPARTMENT



Some of you may be aware from the Annual Membership Meeting in November 2007 that the Tribe received a grant for researching and planning a tribal court/judicial system. Since that meeting, a Project Advisory Team Committee has been established. The members are Amy Austin, Monte Davis, Jennie Heeren, Dawn Krauss, Nicole Overbeck, Ed Pigeon, Leslie Pigeon, and myself.

I would like to invite you on behalf of the Project Advisory Team Committee to attend any of our monthly meetings. Your input is vital to the success of this project. The Committee wants to hear what is important to you in the establishment of the tribal court/judicial system and what your concerns are. Our meetings are held in Chairman Sprague's office in Suite 7 of the Tribal Offices at 4:00 p.m. (dates noted below). The meetings will be noted on the tribal calendar as a reminder, but just so you have the dates for 2008, they are:

February 11  
March 10  
April 7  
May 5

June 2  
July 14  
August 11  
September 8

October 6  
November 3  
December 1

The Committee has three main objectives that it is working towards:

1. Conduct extensive research of other Tribal Court systems in the Midwest region and throughout the United States;
2. Complete training focused specifically on Tribal Court System structures and Tribal Code development; and
3. Develop a Tribal Court Code and a minimum of three other priority Codes as deemed necessary by research and community input.

Judge Michael Petoskey is the consultant for the Tribe regarding this project. He assisted the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians and Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians among others in researching, planning, and implementing their tribal court/judicial systems. He is an excellent resource, and we are very fortunate to have him on our team. The Committee has also been privileged to have BJ Jones, Director of the Tribal Judicial Institute, at the University of North Dakota, as our Technical Advisor through the Office of Justice Programs.

To date, the Committee has met twice. We have visited with the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians. This meeting was very informative and educational. We plan to meet with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians in the near future.

Please watch the newsletter for further updates as we progress. And again, please join us for our monthly meetings. The success of this project is totally dependent on your input during the researching and planning as well as your trust and willingness to utilize your own tribal court/judicial system.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss this project further, please feel free to contact me at the office or via email. My contact information is:

***Dawn Fenger***

*Tribal Justice Grant Coordinator*

Gun Lake Tribe ~ 1743 142nd Avenue, Suite 7 PO Box 218 ~ Dorr, MI 49323  
616.681.8830 (w) ~ 616.681.8836 (f) ~ 616.889.8462 (c)

