

MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION 2017-2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Faced with governance challenges, in March 2017, the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) Tribal Executive Committee authorized a Constitutional Convention to open the discussion to the membership for input/feedback. MCT hosted seven educational sessions from August 2017 to February 2018. The Native Nations Institute (NNI) at the University of Arizona facilitated six of the seven.

The sessions were designed to 1) provide general information on constitutions, the role of governments, governmental forms found in Indian Country, and how others have revised their constitution; 2) provide a historical overview and a review of the MCT Constitution; and 3) allot ample time for member input on the existing constitution and possible revisions.

Discussion Topics

The discussion prompts sought to elicit feedback in four main areas: strategic thinking (visioning a healthy MCT community), assessment (what's working and not with the existing constitution), solutions (ideas to address key issues), and implementation (recommendations for continuing the MCT constitution reform process). NNI provided a written questionnaire as an alternative for participants to provide input on the MCT constitution. This report summarizes key discussions and recommendations for strengthening the MCT government from the 398 tribal members/ individuals who attended. (Summaries of individual reservation sessions are provided in separate reports.)

The Results

The MCT sessions created significant momentum to produce member engaged outcomes. The sessions spoke to important social and governance challenges and increased the likelihood of future member involvement. They motivated new conversations and provided a space to address old queries or concerns. They offered ideas for progressing effective MCT governance. Highlights include:

- MCT tribal members want to continue to be included in their governmental decisions.
- Continued education is essential for significant community engagement.
- Youth and elder perspectives should not be overlooked in this process.
- Key topics to be addressed include incorporation of Anishinabeg culture, enrollment criteria, separation of powers between the Tribal Executive Committee and Reservation Business Committee, and the level of autonomy of the member bands.

A post-educational session task will be to determine whether this process involves amendments, major revision, or the creation of a new constitution.

SUMMARY REPORT: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Constitution Meetings August 2017- February 2018

I. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

In June 2017, the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) agreed to hold three constitutional convention meetings throughout the state in August, September, and October. The TEC called for the Constitutional Convention to address several critical areas of concerns within the MCT governing document adopted originally in 1936 and revised in 1963. The current constitution reflects the influence the U.S. federal government had on many early Indigenous constitutions after passage of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which offered a model for Native nations to organize that often conflicted with their own governing traditions.

As the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (MLBO) was the first of the three meetings, in early August, MLBO representatives contacted the Native Nations Institute (NNI) at the University of Arizona to facilitate the meeting scheduled on their reservation. Subsequent meetings were held with representatives from the Mille Lacs Band, MCT's Executive Director, and NNI to arrive at a consensus on the goals of the sessions and agenda. As the partners worked toward a contractual agreement, the Native Governance Center (NGC) agreed to sponsor NNI through its existing contract.

At a Special Meeting on August 22, 2017, the TEC approved a motion by "Chairwoman Chavers to continue with the same format and utilize Native Nations Institute with an option for each Reservation to select a co-facilitator. The motion was seconded by Committeewoman Spry. With a vote of 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Silent, the motion carried."¹ In addition, the TEC approved four additional meetings scheduled for November 2017 to January 2018² to be facilitated by NNI and local co-facilitators. With support from the six MCT bands and NGC, the MCT hosted seven educational sessions from August 2017 to February 2018.

A. The Partners

The **Minnesota Chippewa Tribe** is a U.S. government-created federation of six Ojibwe tribes (referred to as bands) whose lands share a geography with the state of Minnesota. The MCT has governed under an Indian Reorganization Act-style government since 1936 when tribal members agreed to adopt a written constitution, "Constitution and Bylaws of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe." Six reservations comprise the governmental structure of the MCT: Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, and White Earth Nation. Although Fond du Lac voted against adopting the constitution, the BIA imposed it and inserted its reservation members into the government structure.

¹ See meeting notes from The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Tribal Executive Committee Special Meeting. August 22, 2017 at https://www.mnchippewatribe.org/pdf/2017%20August%20Special%20Meeting_EJ.pdf

² Inclement weather required MCT to reschedule the final January meeting for February 5-6, 2018.

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The 1936 MCT Constitution created the TEC and tribal delegates system. The MCT Tribal Executive Committee oversees the activities of this centralized government; the six bands also have their own decision-making bodies, known as Reservation Business Committees (RBCs). The TEC is composed of the Chairman and Secretary of each of the six RBCs. The MCT, through unified leadership, promotes and protects the member Bands while providing quality services and technical assistance to the reservation governments and tribal people. The MCT tribal divisions include Administration, Education, Finance, and Human Services.³ In 1963, tribal members approved the “Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.”

Founded in 2001, the **Native Nations Institute** is a research and outreach unit of the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy at the University of Arizona. NNI is an outgrowth of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development (HPAIED) and serves as self-determination, governance, and development resource for Indigenous nations. NNI’s extensive knowledge and experience has focused on strengthening Indigenous governance through its publications, Native Nation Building and constitutional seminars, and online courses and resources. NNI served as facilitators for six of the seven MCT Constitutional Convention educational sessions; developed and conducted the community questionnaires; and provided summary reports of each session.⁴

Founded in 2016, the **Native Governance Center** is a Native-led nonprofit that assists tribal nations in strengthening their systems of governance and their capacities to exercise their sovereignty. Its service area includes the 23 sovereign, politically-distinct Native nations that share a geography with Minnesota, South Dakota, and North Dakota. NGC financially contracted the Native Nations Institute to facilitate the MCT sessions.⁵

B. Meeting Dates and Locations

Originally, the TEC scheduled eight convenings; however, they later reduced the number to seven. This report covers the six sessions that the Native Nations institute facilitated. MCT and each reservation hosted a session providing meeting facilities, meals, equipment, and meeting materials. A total of 398 individuals⁶ attended the six sessions as indicated in **Table 1** below.

³ Information taken from the Minnesota Chippewa website at <https://www.mnchippewatribe.org/index.html>

⁴ For further information see <http://nni.arizona.edu/>

⁵ For further information see <https://nativegov.org/>

⁶ Participants at each session were encouraged to sign in, but was optional; thus, 398 attendees are those who signed the attendee list. There were several individuals who chose not to sign in. Some individuals identified themselves as members of the six bands or other tribes, others as descendants of the six bands, and others did not list a tribal affiliation. Attendees who signed in consented to the University’s use of photos or video taken during the sessions.

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Table 1. Meeting Dates, Locations, and Participants

MCT Band and/or Session Location (in order of occurrence)	Date and Location	Number of Participants ⁷
1. Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	August 21-22, 2017, Onamia, MN	93
2. White Earth Nation	September 25-26, 2017 Mahnomens, Minnesota	NNI did not facilitate this session
3. Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	October 23-24, 2017, Vermillion, MN	62
4. Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	November 20-21, 2017, Carlton, MN	151
5. Saint Paul, MN ⁸	InterContinental Hotel, December 14-15, 2017. St. Paul, MN	35
6. Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	December 18-19, 2017, Walker, MN	30
7. Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	February 5-6, 2018, Grand Portage, MN	27
Grand Total =	6	398

C. Methodology

Early discussions with representatives from the Mille Lacs Band and MCT resulted in agreement that the sessions should 1) provide general information on constitutions, the role of governments, governmental forms found in Indian Country, and how others have revised their constitution; 2) provide a historical overview and a review of the MCT Constitution; and 3) allot ample time for member input on the existing constitution and possible revisions.

⁷ There were participants who attended more than one session, therefore, numbers may be duplicated.

⁸ A session was held in the urban setting of Saint Paul, MN to allow off-reservation MCT members the opportunity to participate in the constitution meetings.

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Agenda. The agenda design sought to educate, elicit dialogue, and gather input via small group and plenary discussions. MCT representatives and NNI considered that consistent content delivery would ensure that the same message was shared at each of the sessions. Beginning with the Bois Forte session, representatives from each reservation and urban setting reviewed the proposed agenda prior to the session and modified it according to their needs. NNI made adjustments to the content according to their input. Five of six session agendas included the same content. The following are the topics that were discussed at five sessions:

1. *Development of the MCT and Current Structure*
2. *Government & Constitutions: What They Are, Do, and Look Like Across Indian Country*
3. *Why Are Some Native Nations More Successful Than Others?*⁹
4. *Three rounds of: How do we strengthen the MCT & Band governments?,* focused on what's working, what's not working, and how to address issues raised.
5. *Strengthening Our Government — How Have Other Native Nations Addressed the Process of Revising or Reforming their Constitutions?*

The St. Paul agenda was considerably revised onsite as more than 90% of the participants had attended previous sessions. The St. Paul discussion focused on “how to engage more MCT members and how to get them to vote in the subsequent referendum election.” **Section III.A.2.** provides a summary of that discussion.

Discussion Prompts. NNI has found through its extensive research that community engagement and input is essential for successful constitutional reform efforts. While a few of the presentations included educational content, NNI sought to ensure that participants would have plenty of opportunities to express their concerns or opinions. Most of the discussions were structured around large topic areas to guide participants through the conversations. Participant responses are summarized in **Section III.** The agendas—depending upon time and community assessment—included the following discussions:

1. *“I want my children (grandchildren) to live in a tribal community where ...”*
2. *What suggestions do you have for changing the MCT constitution?*
3. *What's WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?*
4. *What's NOT WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?*
5. *Of the issues identified in previous rounds, how might we address some of the key issues?*
6. *“Based on what we've heard and discussed today, our recommendations for continuing the MCT constitution process are...”*

⁹ This was presented at Mille Lacs, Bois Forte, and Fond du Lac. Leech Lake Band decided to omit this presentation from the agenda.

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Summary Reports. NNI summarized composite results of the six sessions facilitated by NNI and survey results (this report) and documented individual responses from the six sessions (see separate reports).

Optional Questionnaire. In addition, NNI designed a questionnaire to offer an alternative for participants to provide input on the MCT constitution. After the Mille Lacs session, MCT provided participants with a paper copy of the questionnaire during registration. Those who chose to participate submitted their completed survey in the survey box or handed them to NNI or NGC staff. NNI collected the responses and recorded them into Qualtrics, a survey software. In order to maintain the integrity of the survey, an NNI staff member recorded the responses verbatim into the online software. Misspellings were corrected. Illegible remarks are marked with [illegible]. See **Section III.B.** for composite survey results.

II. EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

A. Presentations

MCT Counsel Phil Brodeen (Bois Forte Band of Chippewa), NNI Executive Director Joan Timeche (Hopi Tribe), Senior Researcher/ Outreach Specialist Danielle Hiraldo (Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina), and Tribal Services Coordinator Lindsay Riggs (Navajo Nation) made educational presentations throughout the two days. Common questions and feedback that followed each presentation are summarized below. Details of specific discussions can be found in the individual session reports.



The Development of the MCT and Current Structure Presentation. MCT Counsel Brodeen provided information on the history of the MCT constitution; the powers and duties of the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) & Reservation Business Committees (RBC), and the constitution's day-to-day operations (Administration, Education, Finance, Human Services departments). A copy of the presentation is available on the MCT website, https://www.mnchippewatribe.org/constitution_convention.html.

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Common questions or feedback included the following:

- What is the role of MCT?
- What's the importance of the MCT constitution?
- Is there a need for an independent court at the MCT level?
- If the petition process begins, does MCT have to receive Secretary of Interior approval?
- Where does the authority for TEC to interpret come from in the constitutions?
- MCT needs to remain together with more local control.
- How much duties and responsibilities are specified within the constitution between TEC and RBCs? TEC and RBCs should be separate and different.
- Do we need to all be under the same constitution?
- Fond du Lac voted against it [the MCT Constitution]; Red Lake refused to join.
- The constitution had to be approved by the Secretary of Interior (SOI), do we still have to receive SOI approval if we amend the constitution?
- Concerning MCT interpretations, were these approved by the SOI?

Government & Constitutions: What They Are, Do, and Look Like Across Indian Country Presentation. Indigenous peoples have always known how to govern. To solve the problems of their time, they developed and adapted over time often sophisticated governing systems that supported their core cultural values and social institutions, solved problems, resolved disputes, advanced their priorities, and fit their circumstances. Relying upon these systems of their own design, Indigenous peoples built and maintained vibrant cultures, economies and societies, flourishing in often unforgiving environments and in the face of daunting obstacles. An overview and examples of traditional Indigenous governing systems, contemporary governing structures, and the role constitutions, whether oral or written, play in governing were presented by NNI staff.

Common questions or feedback included the following:

- The end product of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) is to assimilate us.
- We need to agree with a document whether it is called a constitution or not. It has to be something else, something we all agree to.
- What brought us here together? Why do we need to change?
- Change is difficult. The compartmental review of constitution will be beneficial. Where are we going to go? Will it be useful?

Strengthening Our Government — How Have Other Native Nations Addressed the Process of Revising or Reforming Their Constitutions? Presentation. To strengthen governments, NNI has found that four important steps are necessary: 1) Assessment (determine what needs to change), 2) Solutions (explore ways to address the challenges you face), 3) Implementation (put identified solutions to work), and 4) Sustainability (sustain changes over time).

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Many governments engage in a reform process for various reasons, this presentation highlighted several examples of tribal constitutional reform process and key considerations (who will manage the process, their responsibilities, mobilization of the community, process to be utilized, citizen engagement, and cultural solutions).

Common questions or feedback are included in **Appendix A Table 5**.



Videos. Several short videos produced by the Native Nations Institute were shown throughout the session. Additional videos on the MCT Constitution produced by Zaagibagaang were shown either before the opening session or during the lunch break. Zaagibagaang is a grassroots organization focused on governance and nation building within the MCT to empower people to ‘get informed’ and ‘get involved’ in the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.¹⁰

B. Educational Materials

Participants were provided a booklet of resource materials containing the MCT constitution, amendments, key resolutions and documents, as well as copies of the presentations made by the Native Nations Institute.

III. PARTICIPANT INPUT

A. Constitutional Convention Sessions

Participants provided feedback and/or recommendations in either the small group settings or general sessions, facilitated largely by the NNI/NGC Team and in some sessions, by local co-facilitators. Small group discussions required participants in each group to individually document their input on large Post-Its¹¹, share that information with fellow group members, and as applicable, categorize like responses. **Figures 2 through 6** illustrate composite participant responses for each of the discussion prompts.

¹⁰ Information taken from the Zaagibagaang website at <https://zaagibagaang.com>. The videos are publicly available on the website.

¹¹ Although NNI strongly encouraged participants to write their thoughts onto the large post-its, some participants opted to express their thoughts and opinions to one another without documenting it. NNI documented as much discussion as possible; however, some of the small table discussions may not be accurately represented in this report if participants chose not to write down their thoughts.

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1. Strategically Thinking About MCT’s Future

Five of the six sessions began with an exercise that asked participants to individually complete the following sentence: “I want my (grand)children to live in a tribal community where ...”. This exercise offered the participants an opportunity to think about the broader impact of constitutional reform and discuss their own future aspirations. Participants found that the discussion grounded their sense of responsibility and transitioned the focus from talks of today’s governmental challenges to what the constitution should reflect for future generations as well as identified community goals. **Figure 1** highlights common responses and **Appendix A Table 1** provides the thematic categories per session.

FIGURE 1 | Thinking Strategically About MCT’s Future: “I want my (grand)children to live in a tribal community where:”



**Results are from 5 sessions (Mille Lacs, Bois Forte, Leech Lake, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage)*

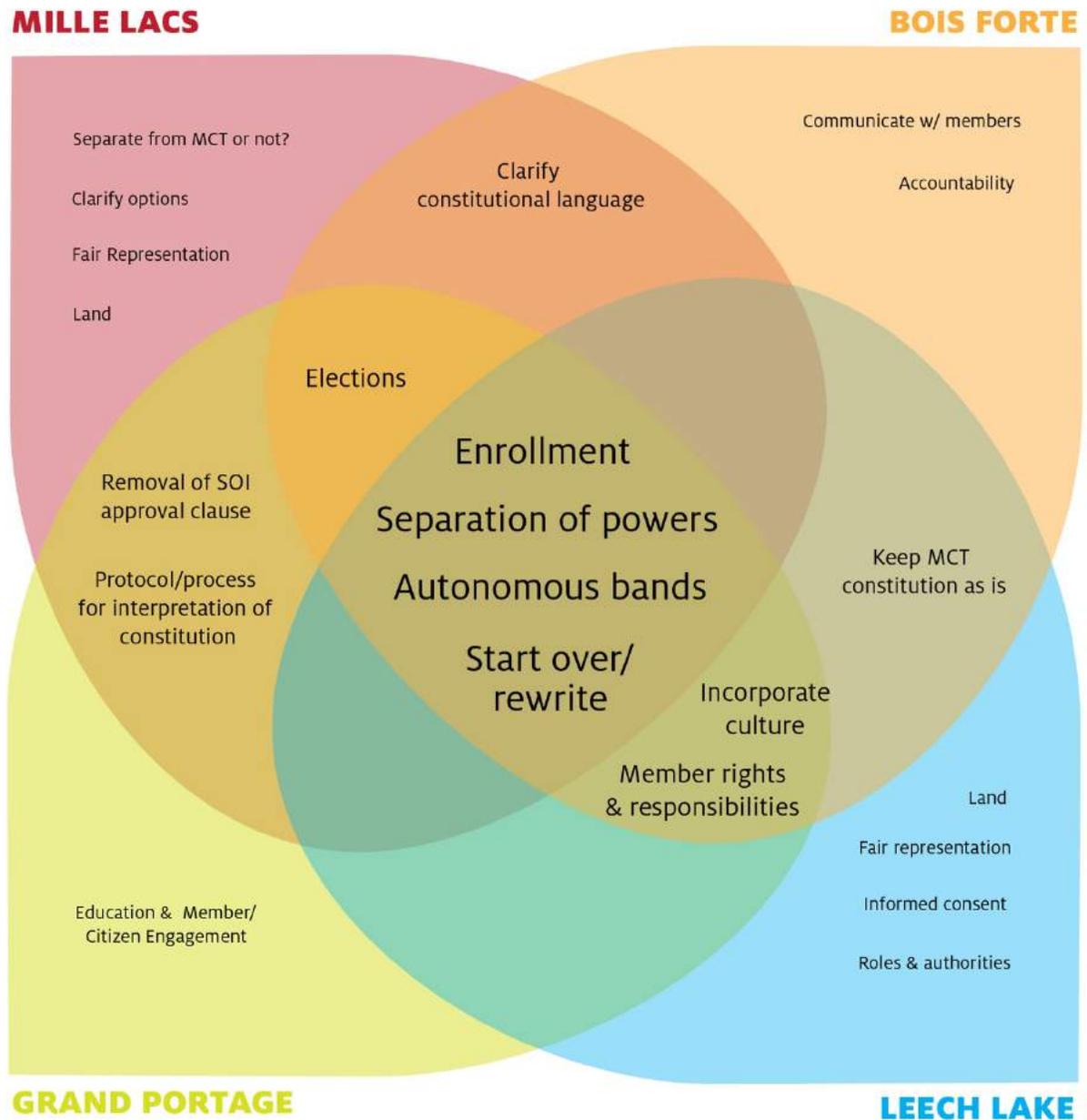


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2. What suggestions do you have for changing the MCT constitution?

This discussion occurred at four of the sessions. As indicated in **Figure 2** below, four suggestions were mentioned at each session: Enrollment, Separation of powers, Autonomous bands, and Start over/rewrite. Individual responses for the six sessions are summarized in **Appendix A Table 2**.*

FIGURE 2 | “What suggestions do you have in changing the MCT Constitution?”



*Fond Du Lac did not complete this activity

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***St. Paul participants answered the question as homework. The following are their responses:**

- One participant stated: Follow Article XII, which includes informed consent participation of the affected MCT members.
- Another stated that the Mille Lacs Band would like to be sovereign and removed from MCT. Mille Lacs people are sovereign; however, they ask the people to elect them into the MCT structure

3. *What's WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?*

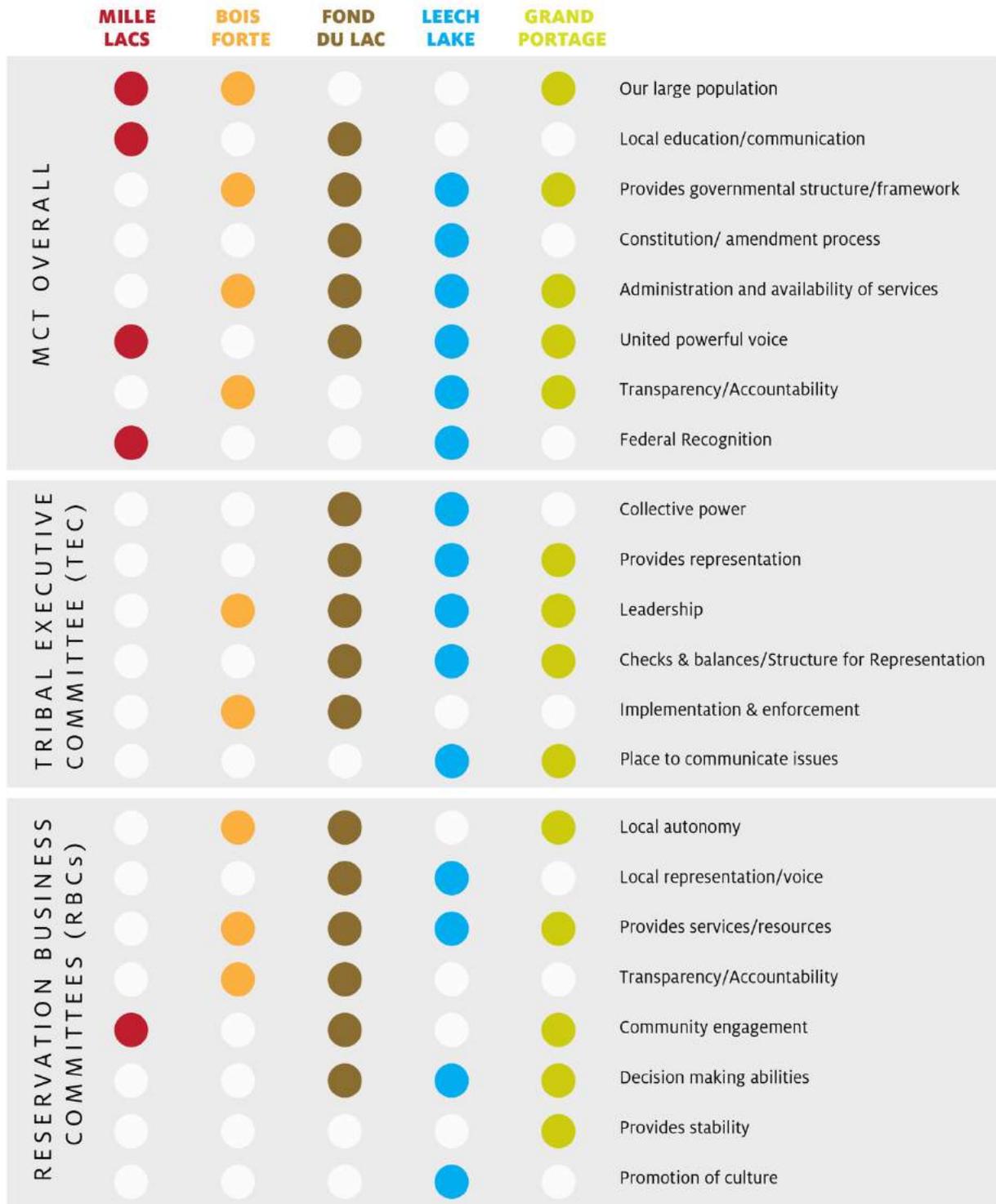
This discussion occurred at five of the sessions and was not asked at the St. Paul session due to changes to the agenda. As indicated in **Figure 3** below, common themes were:

- MCT Overall (4 out of 5): Provides governmental structure and framework; administration and availability of services
- TEC (4 out of 5): Leadership
- RBC (4 out of 5): Provides services and resources

Individual responses for the six sessions are summarized in **Appendix A Table 3**.

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FIGURE 3 | What's WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?



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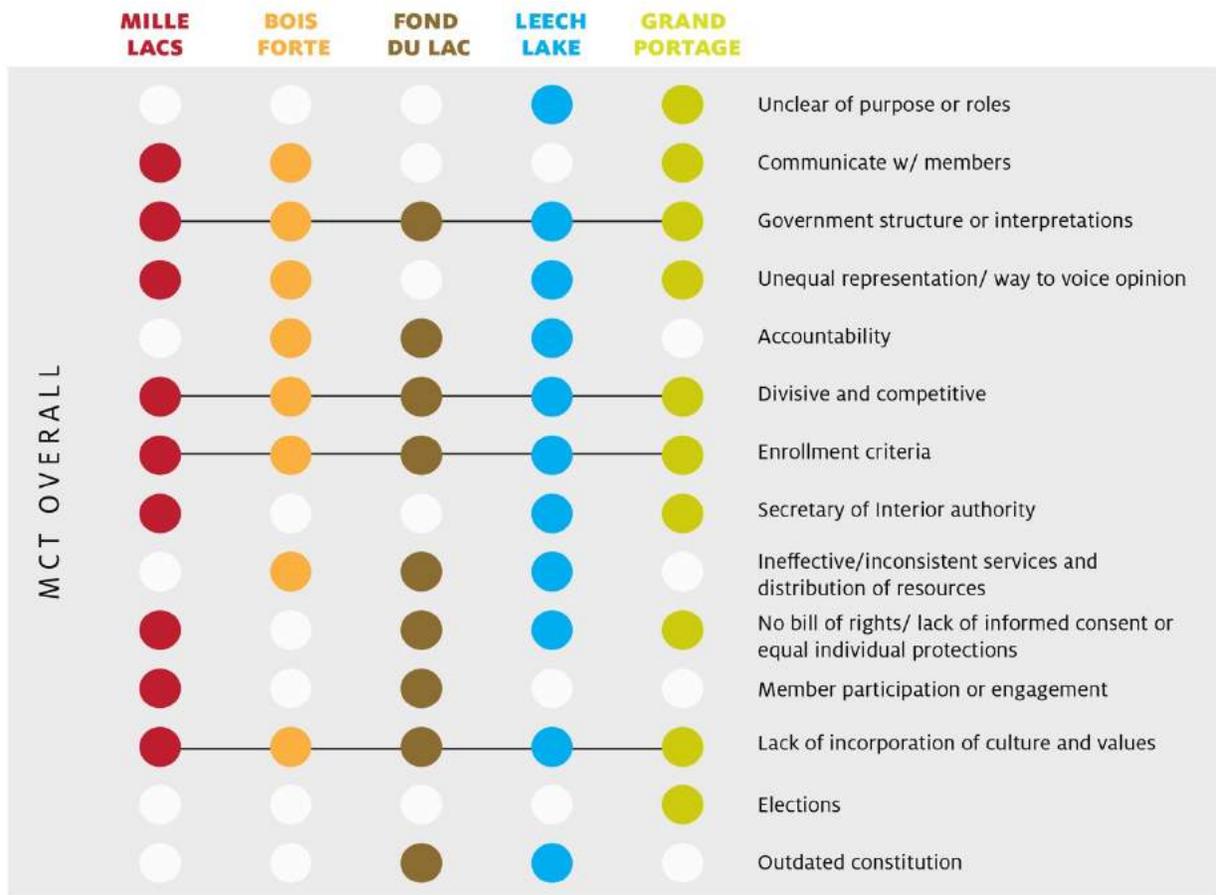
4. What's NOT WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?

This discussion occurred at five of the sessions and was not asked at the St. Paul session due to changes to the agenda. As indicated in **Figure 4** below, common themes were:

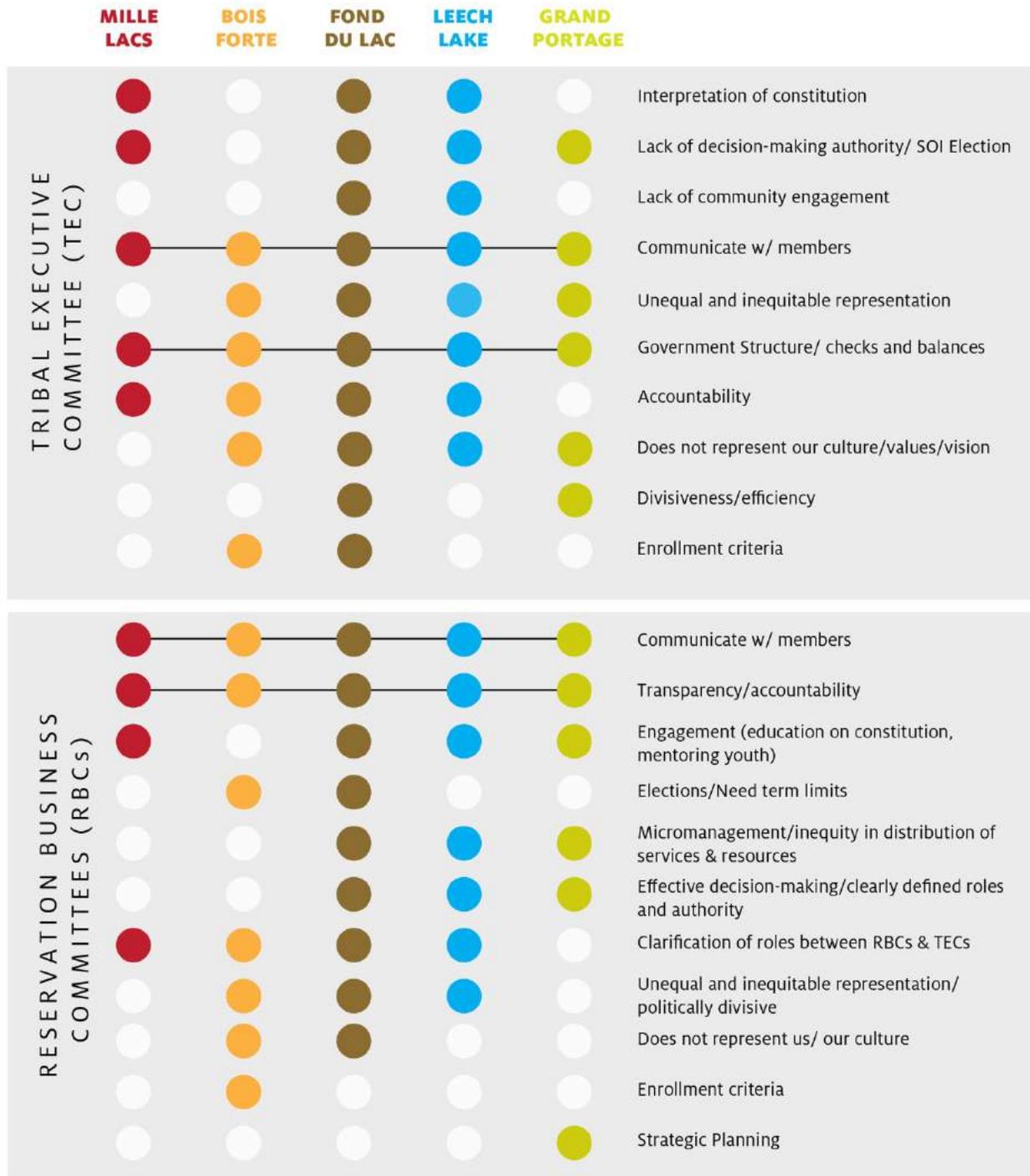
- MCT Overall (5 out of 5): Governmental structure or interpretations; Divisive and competitive; Enrollment criteria; Lack of incorporation of culture and values
- TEC (5 out of 5): Communication with members, Government structure/checks and balances
- RBC (5 out of 5): Communicate with members, Transparency/accountability

Individual responses for the six sessions are summarized in **Appendix A Table 4**.

FIGURE 4 | What's NOT WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?



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5. *Of the issues identified in previous rounds, how might we address some of the key issues?*

This discussion occurred at four of the sessions and was not asked at the Mille Lacs or St. Paul sessions due to changes to the agenda. As indicated in **Figure 5** below, common themes were:

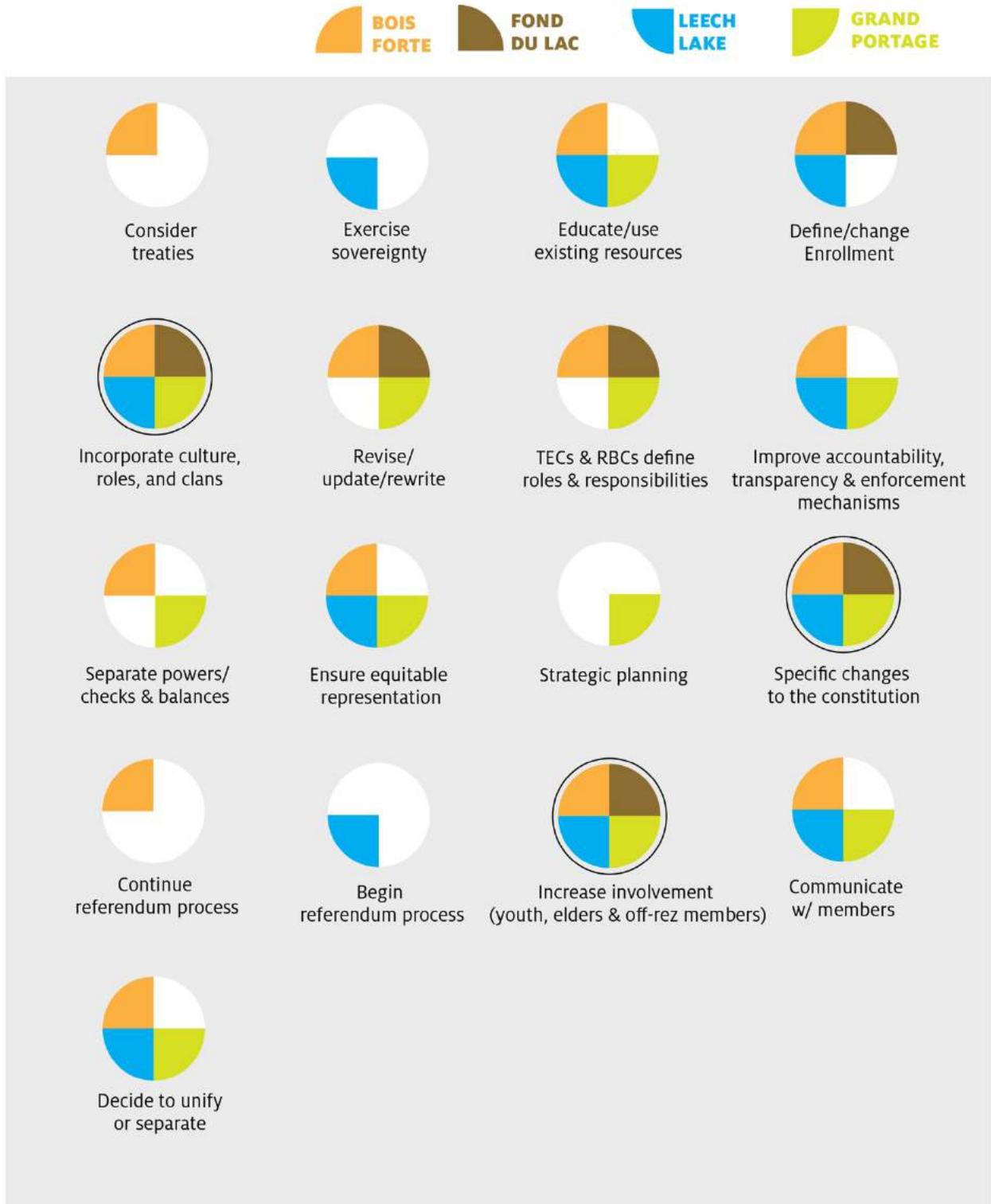
- Incorporate culture, roles, and clans
- Specific changes to the constitutions
- Increase involvement (youth, elders, and off-rez members)

Individual responses for the six sessions are summarized in **Appendix A Table 5**.



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FIGURE 5 | Of the issues identified in previous rounds, how might we address some of the key issues?



**Mille Lacs did not complete this activity*

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The discussion at the St. Paul session focused on strategies to engage MCT members. NNI posed two questions. Their responses are summarized below.

“Think of ways to engage your members/citizens to come to the meetings and get them to vote.”

- Identify messaging strategies that includes:
 - Identify/talk/educate on ‘hot’ issues.
 - Make the connection on why an MCT member ‘should care’ (how it impacts them personally).
 - Provide a ‘safe place’ to voice their thoughts without fear of retribution so members feel free to get involved, trust leadership, and know their vote counts.
 - Rebuild trust and faith in the system and in leadership.
- Logistical/Marketing:
 - Provide transportation to meetings/polls.
 - Provide advance information – dates/location, packet materials, etc.
 - Use every media opportunity possible (State of Band addresses, perhaps a TEC member could make a State of Indian Nations address and replicate that across each band to localize it).
- Share strategies other tribes are utilizing.
- Identify mechanisms for participation and informed consent.

“Why are people not showing up?”

- Relevance – it’s the same people attending, and other people don’t know why this is important.
- Most feel that their vote doesn’t matter, so why bother.
- Change sometimes was made for the personal interest of TEC, not for the all. We need enforcement mechanisms so when constitution is violated, you don’t have to move a mountain to address them.

6. *“Based on what we’ve heard and discussed today, our recommendations for continuing the MCT constitution process are...”*

This discussion occurred at all six of the sessions. As indicated in **Figure 6** below, common themes were:

- Continue the process locally and MCT-wide (5 of 6)
- Educate with videos and relevant materials (4 of 6)
- Communicate with members (4 of 6)
- Organize inclusive reform process (4 of 6)

Individual responses for the six sessions are summarized in **Appendix A Table 6**.

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FIGURE 6 | Based on what we've heard and discussed today, our recommendations for continuing the MCT constitution process are...



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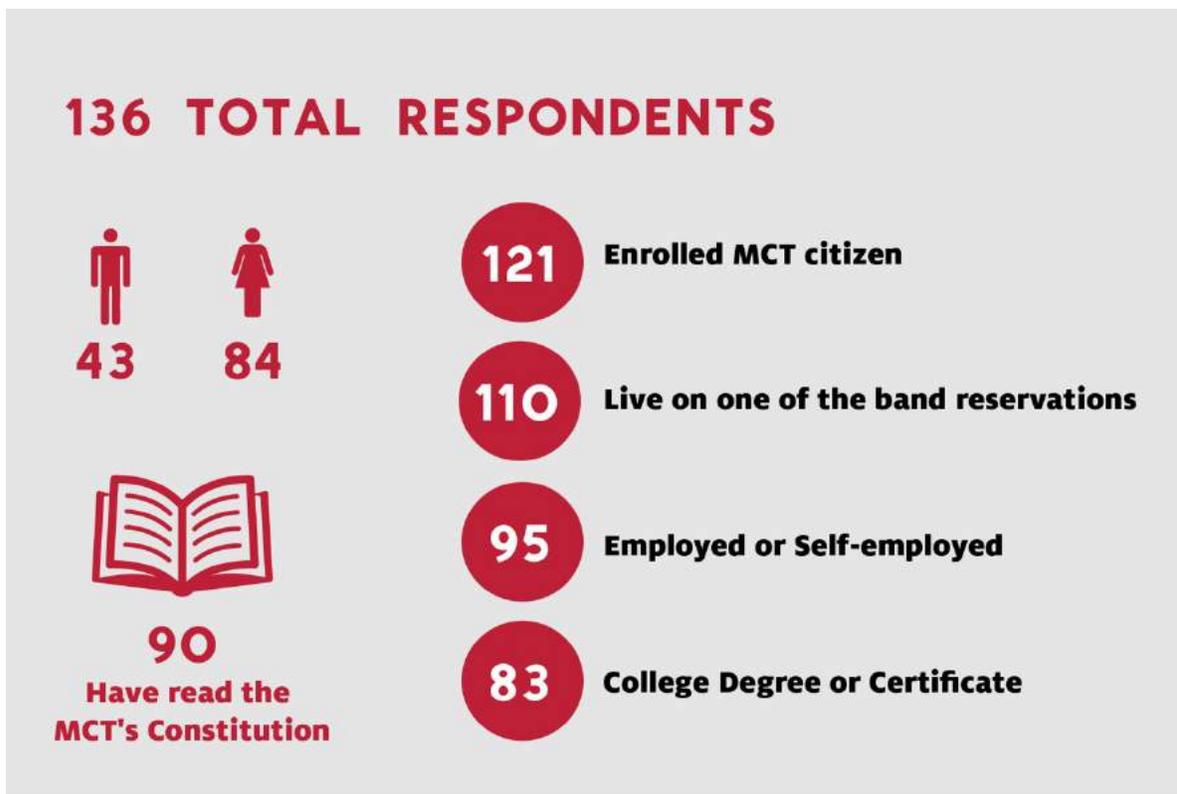
B. MCT Questionnaire Results

In total, **136 respondents** completed the survey with each survey question averaging 128 responses. While NNI did not facilitate the White Earth session, MCT officials provided copies of the questionnaire to participants who wanted to complete it. NNI received two (2) completed questionnaires from the White Earth session which were included in the survey tabulation and analysis.

Note on questionnaire. The 16-question questionnaire was developed to assess three main categories: 1) level of understanding, 2) personal views, and 3) general information. Respondents were asked to “rate each statement by circling a number between 1-5” where **1 =Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree**. There were two open-ended questions that focused on recommendations for specific changes to the MCT constitution. In order to maintain the integrity of the survey, an NNI staff member recorded the responses verbatim into the online software. Misspellings were corrected and illegible remarks are marked with [sic] and [illegible], respectfully.

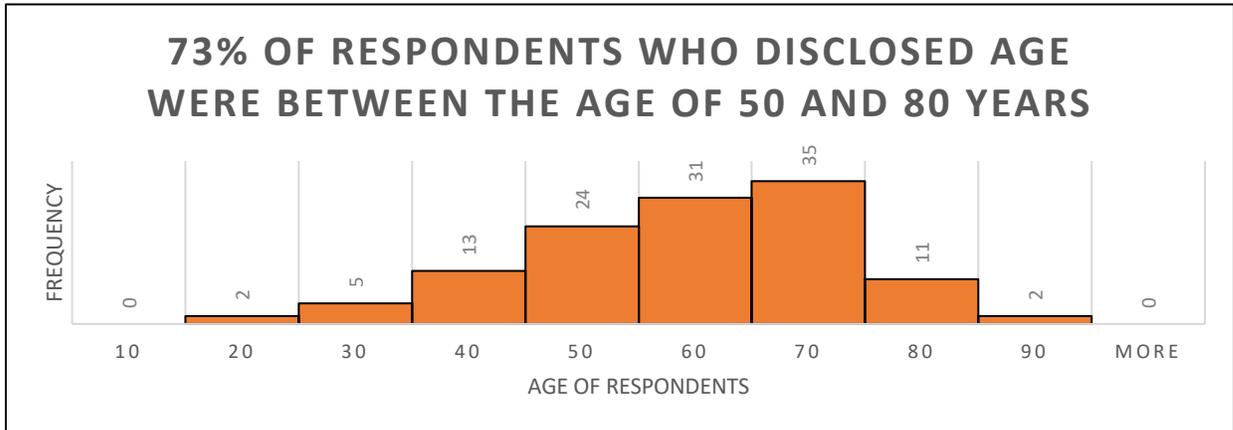
NNI has highlighted a few responses to inform MCT on key areas to consider when proceeding with education and the distribution of information. The complete survey results can be found in **Appendix B**.

Descriptive Statistics.



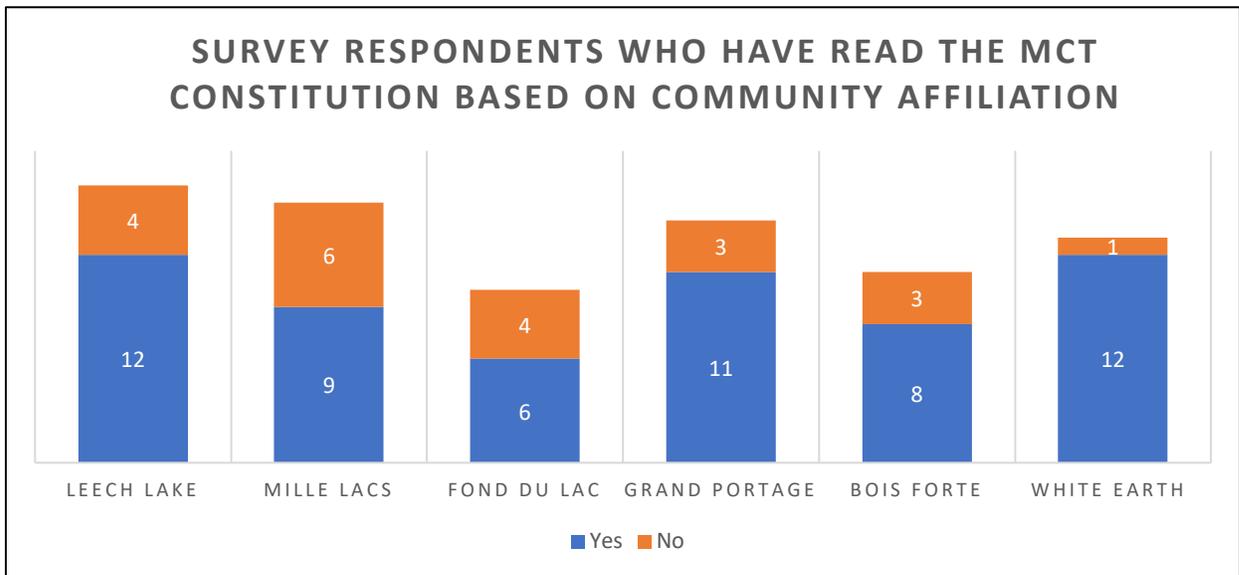
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Of the 123 respondents who disclosed their age, 90 were between the ages of **50 and 80 years**. Seven were between the ages of **10 and 30 years**.



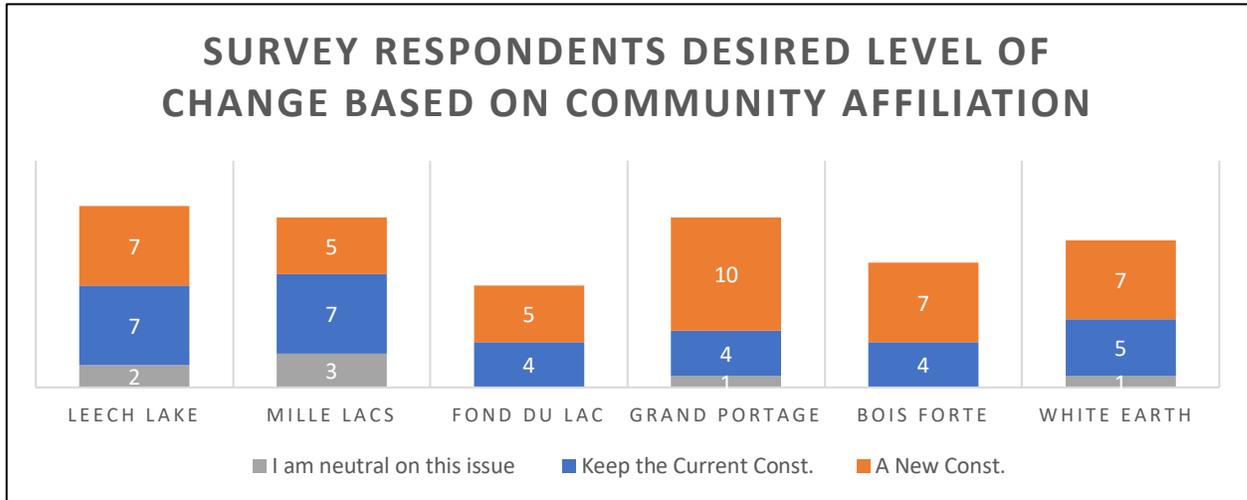
Community Affiliation

Of the respondents who disclosed their reservation affiliation, the graph below represents the respondent-identified community affiliation and whether they have read the constitution. **Question 5** *“I have read the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe’s Constitution.”*



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Of the respondents who disclosed their reservation affiliation, the following graph represents the respondent-identified community affiliation and the desired level of change in **Question 16** “In looking to the future of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government, how much change do you think should happen?”



Further statistical analysis can be found in **Appendix B**.

IV. RESOURCES

As MCT continues to engage in this process, below is a list of resources to assist with this endeavor. It is by no means all inclusive; however, serves as a starting point.

1) **Online Resources:**

- **Indigenous Governance Database (IGD)** was first developed by NNI, with support from the Bush Foundation, and was primarily designed with Native nation leaders, key decision-makers, employees, citizens, and scholars in mind. IGD account holders can customize a personal resource library and share resources with colleagues. Website: <https://nnigovernance.arizona.edu/>
- IGD includes the **Constitutions Resource Center (CRC)** that brings together research on Indigenous constitutions, examples of tribal constitutional reform, and videos of Native leaders and other governance experts discussing constitutional change. The CRC provides Native nations with access to a comprehensive set of tools and examples that can be helpful in the process of Indigenous constitutional reform. Website: <https://nniconstitutions.arizona.edu/>
- **Zaagibagaang** is a grassroots effort focused on governance and nation building. With Anishinaabe teachings guiding, it brings its members gifts together to provide information and work towards mino-bimaadiziwin today as well as for the next seven generations. Website: <https://zaagibagaang.com>

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- 2) **NNI Tribal Constitutions Seminars:** NNI provides customized executive programs that are designed to equip Native nation leaders and senior managers with knowledge and tools for Native nation building. NNI holds “Tribal Constitutions” executive education seminar, which is geared specifically toward individuals thinking about or engaging in constitutional reform efforts.

Website: <https://nnigovernance.arizona.edu/key-resources/tribal-constitutions-seminars>

- 3) **JOPNA (Joint Occasional Papers on Native Affairs):** The Joint Occasional Papers on Native Affairs (JOPNA) series is a joint venture of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development at Harvard University and the Native Nations Institute at the University of Arizona. The series grew from the desire to put the Harvard Project’s and Native Nations Institute’s academic research and policy reports together in one place.

Cornell, Stephen, Joseph P. Kalt. "**Sovereignty and Nation-Building: The Development Challenge in Indian Country Today.**" Joint Occasional Papers on Native Affairs No. 2003-03. The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy, The University of Arizona. Tucson, Arizona. 2003. JOPNA.

Website: <https://nnigovernance.arizona.edu/sovereignty-and-nation-building-development-challenge-indian-country-today>

Cornell, Stephen, Miriam Jorgensen, Joseph P. Kalt, Katherine A. Spilde. "**Seizing the Future: Why Some Native Nations Do and Others Don't.**" Joint Occasional Papers on Native Affairs No. 2005-01. Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management, and Policy, The University of Arizona. Tucson, Arizona. 2005. JOPNA.

Website: <https://nnigovernance.arizona.edu/seizing-future-why-some-native-nations-do-and-others-dont>

- 4) **Rebuilding Native Nations Distance Learning Courses (RNN DLC):** A distance learning course series that examines the governance and development challenges facing Native nations and chronicles success stories. Three modules are recommended: “An Introduction to Native Nation Building”, “Making Change Happen”, and “Constitutions” as each provides educational content, tribal examples, and additional resources. Modules are available for a nominal fee at RebuildingNativeNations.com.

Website: <http://www.rebuildingnativenations.com/>

- 5) **Indigenous Governance Programs (IGP)** January in Tucson (JIT) at the University of Arizona is a collaboration between the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program (at the James E. Rogers College of Law) and the Native Nations Institute. IGP provides opportunities for individuals interested in a deep, practical understanding of Indigenous

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governance and Indigenous rights. Utilizing courses designed and taught by an internationally renowned faculty, the Indigenous Governance Programs provide a combination of live and distance-learning options that allow participants to acquire the knowledge most useful to their unique circumstances.

Website: <http://igp.arizona.edu/>

6) Books:

Austin, Raymond D. 2009. *Navajo Courts and Navajo Common Law: A Tradition of Tribal Self-Governance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Dennison, Jean. 2012. *Colonial Entanglement: Constituting a Twenty-First-Century Osage Nation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Jorgensen, Miriam, ed. 2007. *Rebuilding Native Nations: Strategies for Governance and Development*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Lemont, Eric D., ed. 2006. *American Indian Constitutional Reform and the Rebuilding of Native Nations*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Tatum, Melissa L., Miriam Jorgensen, Mary E. Guss, Sarah Deer. 2014. *Structuring Sovereignty: Constitutions of Native Nations*. Los Angeles, California: American Indian Studies Center.

Vizenor, Gerald Robert and Jill Doerfler. 2012. *The White Earth Nation: Ratification of a Native Democratic Constitution*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

7) Native American Rights Fund:

Tribal Constitution Handbook: A Guide to Writing and Revising Tribal Constitutions.

Website: <https://www.narf.org>

8) Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development:

Constitutional Reform: Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Honoring Nations All Stars Profile.

Website: https://hpaied.org/sites/default/files/publications/CPN_Profile.pdf

V. CONCLUSION

Members of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe are tackling a challenge that many Native nations face - rethinking governing systems that are not of their own design. The constitutional convention sessions held thus far gave MCT members an opportunity to discuss what's working and what's not, suggest possible solutions to their concerns, and in particular, to voice their opinions about the processes the MCT uses to make decisions that affect their tribal lands and communities.

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Participants attending the sessions wanted to see MCT leadership continue with the current community engagement efforts to assist their nation in moving forward. While no final decisions were made at these convenings, common themes included (not in priority order):

- The importance of ensuring community input and consent throughout the entire process.
- MCT tribal members want to continue to be included in their governmental decisions. If it is either through equitable representation or mechanisms to hold elected leaders accountable, they want to know that there is a space and/or process for their concerns to be considered and when appropriate, acted upon. When tribal members were able to articulate concerns, their discussions progressed to identifying viable solutions to address MCT governance challenges.
- Youth and elder engagement should not be overlooked in this process. The evidence from this seven-session sample is that youth and elders provide a unique perspective of MCT's future. More importantly, there is a strong sense of commitment within these populations to broaden and deepen its effects. Continued education is essential for significant community engagement. While these six sessions sparked meaningful discussions, more work and investment into additional educational resources lie ahead. Open discussions throughout these sessions gave MCT tribal members and elected officials something to work on together.
- A strong appeal to incorporate Anishinaabe/Ojibwe culture into MCT governing documents. Participants at a few sessions suggested starting with rewriting the current preamble to include concepts found within Anishinaabe/Ojibwe culture. A number of Native nations have used their constitutions to make statements about who they are and how they see themselves in relation to the world. These ideas affirm the ways that people identify with the nation and reinforce the nation's long-term existence as a cultural and political community.
- The importance of addressing member enrollment requirements. Like many other Native nations, MCT's changing demographics and the recent Wilder Population Projections Report necessitate a review of existing constitutional language.
- A desire to clearly define the authorities of existing governing bodies (TEC and RBCs) to achieve 'separation of powers' and 'role clarification' and enhanced communication with MCT members.
- Related to the previous point, tribal members desired further discussions on the level of autonomy of member bands.
- Continued education on the MCT governing documents to a greater MCT population.

Whether current efforts result in a complete rewrite or an amended version of the current constitution, members want to be involved in the process and want a document that is culturally reflective of who they are as a people that can support MCT goals. In the end, this is what *Native Nation (Re)Building* is all about: *A Native nation enhancing its own foundational capacity for effective self-governance and for self-determined community and economic development.*

Appendices

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APPENDIX A

THEMATICALLY CATEGORIZED TABLES

THINKING STRATEGICALLY ABOUT MCT'S FUTURE exercise. Participants individually completed the following sentence: “*I want my (grand)children to live in a tribal community where...*”. After writing their individual responses on large post-its, participants shared their responses within their small groups. NNI categorized the responses thematically into the following:

TABLE 1. Thinking Strategically About MCT's Future: “I want my (grand)children to live in a tribal community where...”.

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
Safety	Stability	Safe	Safety	Safety
Culture/ Language	Culture/Language	Guided by Culture & Speak our language	Culture and language	Culture and language
	Identity/enrollment	Membership determined by culture & tradition	Identity/Enrollment	Identity/Enrollment
Respect for each other	Representation	Sense of community	Equality	
Drug Free	Safe/drug free	Drug and Alcohol free	Drug & Alcohol free	Drug & Alcohol free
Helping one another		Health care	Opportunities	Resources & Economy
Unity		Everyone has a voice		Participation
Education		Adequate housing		
Youth				
Accountability		Equity & Fairness	Accountability	Government
		Protect our resources	Natural Resources	
		Clean environment		

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Discussion: “What suggestions do you have in changing the MCT Constitution?” Participants responded individually and shared their responses within their small groups. NNI recorded the individual responses and categorized them thematically. The following are broad themes found at each of the sessions:

TABLE 2. Discussion: “What suggestions do you have in changing the MCT Constitution?”

Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Leech Lake	Grand Portage	Saint Paul
Enrollment	Enrollment	Enrollment	Enrollment	
Creating six autonomous bands outside of the MCT	Autonomous Bands	Separate from MCT	Autonomy of “groups” (bands)	Separate from MCT
Separation of powers	Separation of Powers	Separation of powers	Separation of powers	
Representation and elections	Elections	Fair & equitable representation	Elections	
Begin a constitutional reform process and rewrite the MCT constitution	Start Over	Rewrite constitution /Start over	Rewrite Constitution/Start Over	
Clarify options	Clarification	Roles & authorities		
The need for a decision to be made to separate from the MCT or not	Remain the Same	Keep MCT constitution as is		
	Culture	Incorporate culture/traditions into constitution	Culture	
	Rights of Members	Individual voice matters/ Informed consent	Member Rights & Responsibilities	Informed consent (Article XII)
Discuss who has the power to interpret the MCT constitution	Accountability		Protocol/process for interpretation of constitution	
Land	Communication	Land	Education & Member/ Citizen Engagement	
Removal of the Secretary of Interior approval clause			Removal of Secretary of Interior approval clause	

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Discussion: “What’s WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?”
Participants responded individually and shared their responses within their small groups. NNI recorded the individual responses and categorized them thematically. The following are broad themes found at each of the sessions:

TABLE 3. “What’s WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?”

Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage
MCT Overall				
Large population	Large Population			Large Population
Local education initiatives		Communicate information		
	Constitution works (ineffective)	Government structure (ineffective)	Defines a governmental process	Provides a government Framework
		Constitution process	Amendment process	
	Administration of services	Informed of programs	Opportunities exist	Services Available
All one Anishinaabe		United	Powerful	United Voice
	Transparency		Transparency and accountability	Voice/representation
Federal recognition			Legitimizes people	
Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage
Tribal Executive Committee (TEC)				
		Collective power	Unites the bands	
		Provides representation	Provides representation (ineffective)	Equal representation
	Good leadership	Holds together	Agreed to host MCT Constitutional Convention	Good intentions
		Checks and balances	Structure for Representation	Delegation of authority
			Communicate issues	Place to communicate issues for each band
	Transparency	Implementation and enforcement		

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Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage
Reservation Business Committees (RBCs)				
	Local autonomy	Local control		Local authority
		Local representation/voice opinions	Local representation/voice	
	Administration of services and resources	Provides services	Access to opportunities/resources	Provides services/programs
	Transparency	Accountability		
Community engagement		Engagement of community		Ability to engage officials at local level
		Decision-making abilities	Quick process to make decisions	Decision made locally
				Provides stability
			Promotion of culture	

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Discussion: “What’s NOT WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?”
Participants responded individually and shared their responses within their small groups. NNI recorded the individual responses and categorized them thematically. The following are broad themes found at each of the sessions:

TABLE 4. “What’s NOT WORKING with the existing constitution of the: MCT Overall? TEC? RBCs?”

Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage
MCT Overall				
			Unclear of purpose	Unclear of roles
Communication	Communication			Communication
Understanding of government (interpretations)	Government Structure	No independent court (interpretations)	Government Structure (Restrictive & Weak executive)	Inefficient elections
Inadequate representation of elders	Unequal representation		Unequal representation/inclusion of all voices	
	Accountability	No enforcement (Follow the constitution)	Lacks equal individual protections and rights	
Divisive	Lack of collaboration	Divisive	Creates individualism and competition among bands	Competition
Enrollment (Blood Quantum)	Enrollment	Enrollment	Blood quantum	Membership/enrollment
Secretary of Interior election			Secretarial election	Secretarial election
	Consistency of processes	Ineffective services (red tape)	Poor distribution of resources	
Not inclusive of members (youth, on and off)		No bill of rights	Lack of informed consent	Lack of ways to voice opinion
Band members need to engage (Apathy)		No participation/education		
Amend constitution to include Anishinaabe values	Lack of the incorporation of culture	Does not represent us/outdated	Outdated/Doesn't include culture	Doesn't represent the people (no inclusion of culture)

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Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage
Tribal Executive Committee (TEC)				
Interpretations		Interpretations	Interpretations	
Secretary election		Lack of decision-making	Decision-making authority	Decision-making authority
		Lack of community engagement	Lack of community engagement	
Lack of adequate communication	Communication	Communication	Communication	Communication
	Unequal and inequitable representation	Unequal and inequitable representation	Unequal and inequitable representation	Unequal and inequitable representation
Current government structure	Government Structure	No separation of powers	No checks and balances	Term limits
	Lack of the incorporation of culture	Does not represent us	Decisions not based on Anishinaabe values	Strategic visioning
No enforcement (Article XIII)	Accountability	Accountability (Constitution protects TEC and RBCs)	Accountability	
		Divisiveness		Efficiency
	Enrollment	Enrollment		

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Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage
Reservation Business Committees (RBCs)				
Communication and transparency	Communication	Communication	Communication	Communication
Transparency	Accountability	Accountability	Accountability	Accountability
Engagement at the local level		Engagement (education on constitution)	Engagement (Mentoring youth)	Participation/engagement
	Elections	Need term limits		
		Micromanage/restructure departments	Inequity in distribution of services and resources	Distribution of programs/services
		Lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities	Lack local authority (can't determine enrollment)	Effective decision-making
Government structure	Government Structure	No separation of powers/Ineffective meetings	Lack of separation of powers/checks and balances	
	Unequal and inequitable Representation	Politically divisive (rumor mill)	Unequal and inequitable representation	
	Lack of the incorporation of culture	Does not represent us		
	Enrollment			
				Strategic planning

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Discussion: *“Of the issues identified in previous rounds, how might we address some of the key issues?”*
Participants responded individually and shared their responses within their small groups. NNI recorded the individual responses and categorized them thematically. The following are broad themes found at each of the sessions:

TABLE 5. “Of the issues identified in previous rounds, how might we address some of the key issues?”

Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage
DID NOT COMPLETE	Consider treaties (inform and educate)		Effective exercise of sovereignty	
	Educate & use existing resources (Zaagibagaang, Anishinaabe history & language)		Education for elected officials and tribal civics for schools	Education
	Define enrollment	Enrollment	Change enrollment	
	Write preamble based on Anishinaabe values	Incorporate Tradition	Incorporate culture, roles, and clans	Promote culture
	Rewrite the constitution (IRA outdated)	Rewrite		Revise/update constitution
	Clearly define TEC and RBCs roles and responsibilities	Improve government structure		Role of elders
	Accountability		Enforcement mechanisms	Accountability and transparency
	Separation of powers			Checks and balances
	Equitable Representation		Equitable representation on TEC and RBCs	Elected leaders qualifications
				Strategic planning
	Create unified court system	Specific Changes to the Constitution	Membership rights (informed participation and consent)	
	Continue process (transport, excuse from work, broadcast meetings, etc.)		Begin referendum process	

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	Youth participation (offer scholarships)	Increase involvement	Engage all membership for input (inclusive)	Positive community engagement (Include off-reservation members)
	Communication and transparency (disseminate information, open dialogue, update websites)		Communication	Communication
	Unify		Decide to unite or separate	Unify

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Discussion: “Based on what we’ve heard and discussed today, our recommendations for continuing the MCT constitution process are...” Participants responded individually and shared their responses within their small groups. NNI recorded the individual responses and categorized them thematically. The following are broad themes found at each of the sessions:

TABLE 6. “Based on what we’ve heard and discussed today, our recommendations for continuing the MCT constitution process are...”

Mille Lacs	Bois Forte	Fond du Lac	Leech Lake	Grand Portage	Saint Paul
Education (create new materials & use existing, e.g. Zaagibagaang)		Educational seminars	Educate and create educational videos (Zaagibagaang)	Education	
	Hold Constitution Convention			Hold Constitutional Convention	
	Review notes from meetings		Review report	Review NNI Report	
Promote unity	Unify				
	Communicate		Access to meetings and Use technology (livestream, radio, transportation)	Communication	
Create a constitutional commission and commit funds to the process	Nominate and approve delegates		Hire a project manager and create independent committees	Organize reform efforts	
Individual reservation information meetings and information dissemination (communication, transparency)	Engage the community on reform (Inclusive process)		Hold local community gatherings (districts and bands)	Host more informational meetings	
Continue the process (create a timeline, engage more members)	Continue the process	Organize by culture to continue the process	Continue the process	Continue the process	
Incorporate culture, history into constitution	Draft revised constitution			Draft a constitution	

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Incorporate diverse perspectives (elders & youth)		Diverse representation (include more voices)		Ensure diverse participation	1-800 line for member input
	Include membership rights	Define membership (enrollment)			
Provide options			Provide options (pros and cons)		
	Accountability		Consult with tribal council		
Review constitution line by line			Conduct a survey		Questionnaire at clinic
			Advertise meetings		Clarify legal status of MCT



APPENDIX B



Strengthening Indigenous Governance

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MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE

Constitutional Convention 2017-2018

Survey Results

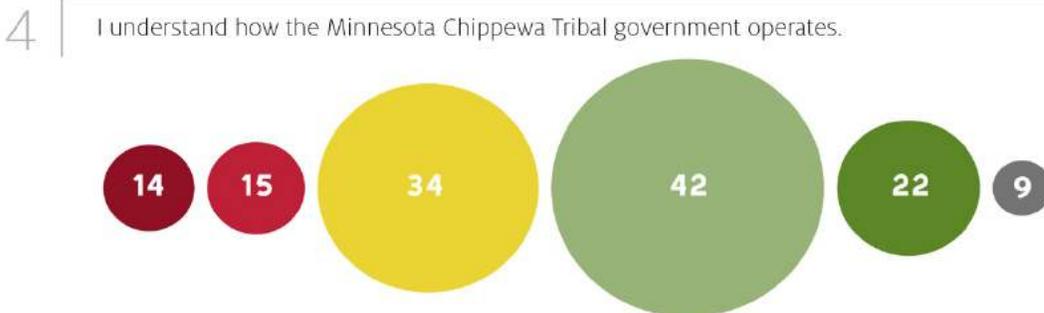
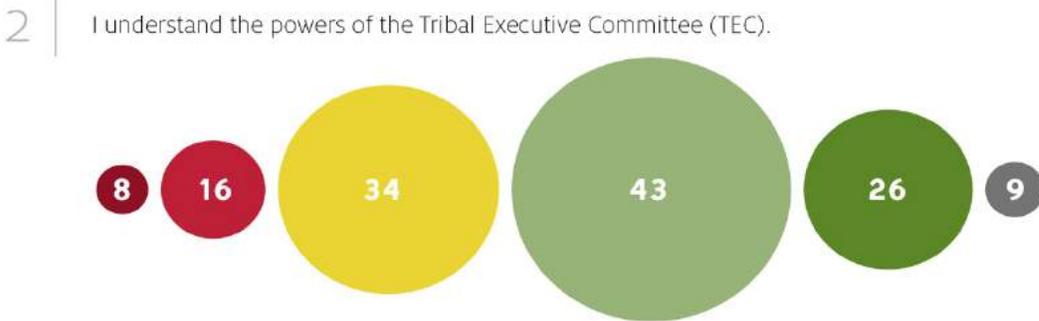
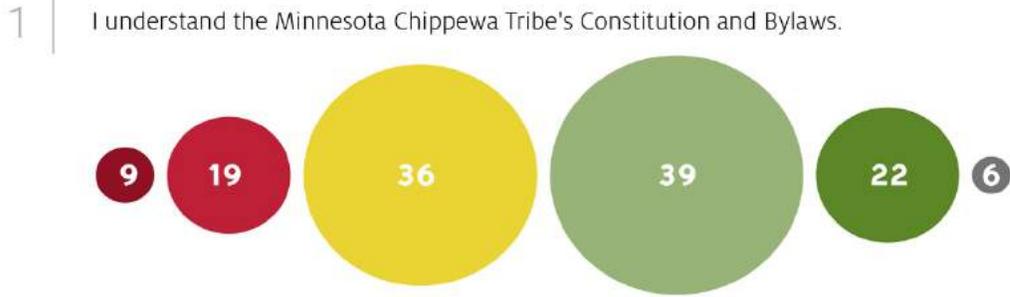


136 TOTAL RESPONDENTS



Analysis by Adonis Trujillo, Graduate Student; Graphics by Amy Jorgensen, Graphic Designer

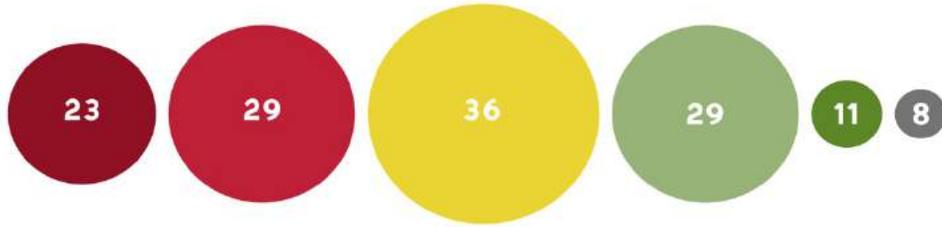
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**SUMMARY REPORT: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Constitution Meetings
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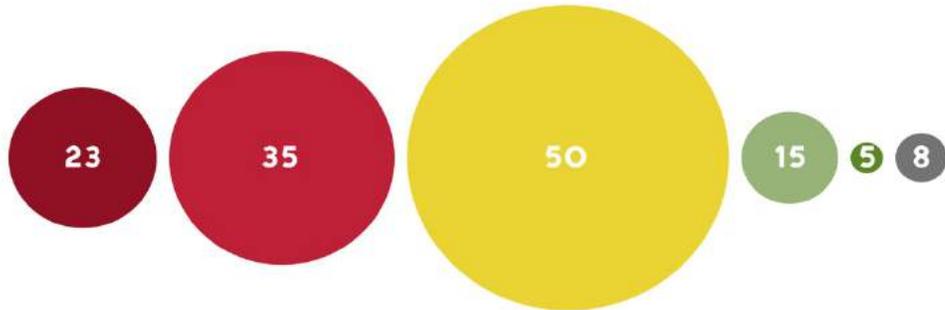
5

The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's election process is fair.



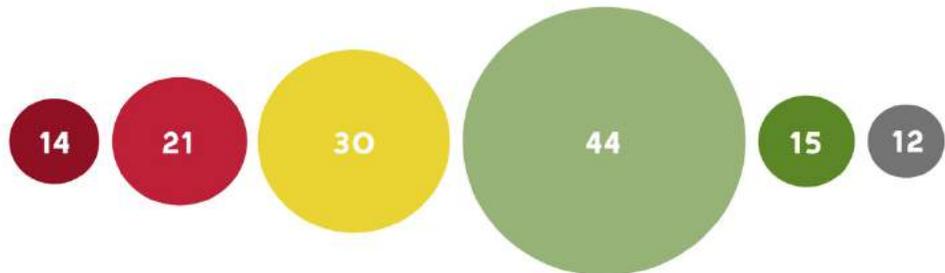
6

The Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) exercises power fairly.



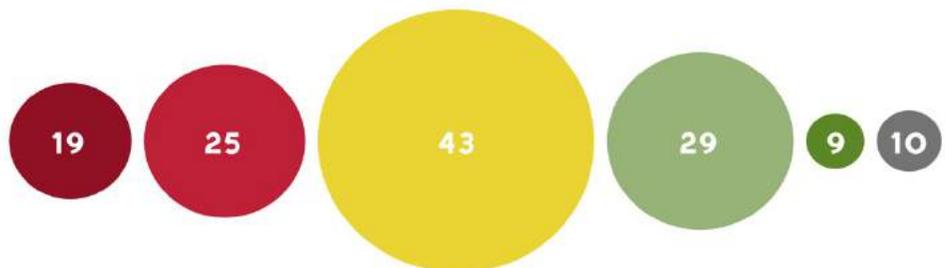
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The qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are clear to me.



8

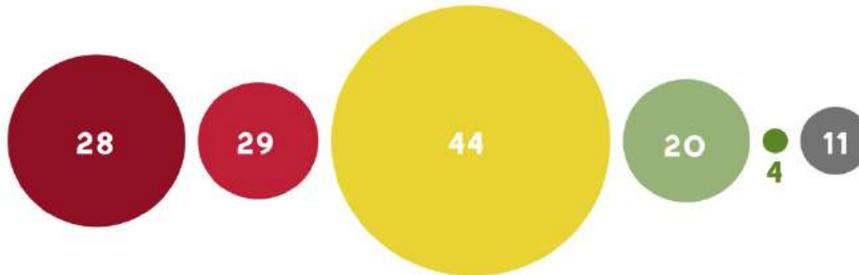
The qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are adequate.



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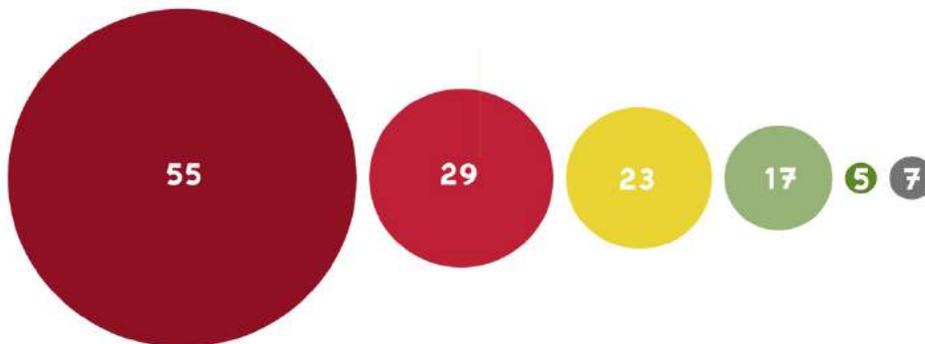
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The Reservation Business Committee (RBC) exercises power fairly.



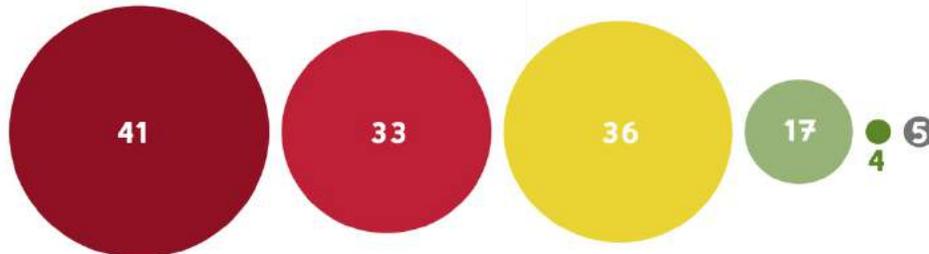
10

Current enrollment requirements reflect how we view ourselves as Anishinaabe.



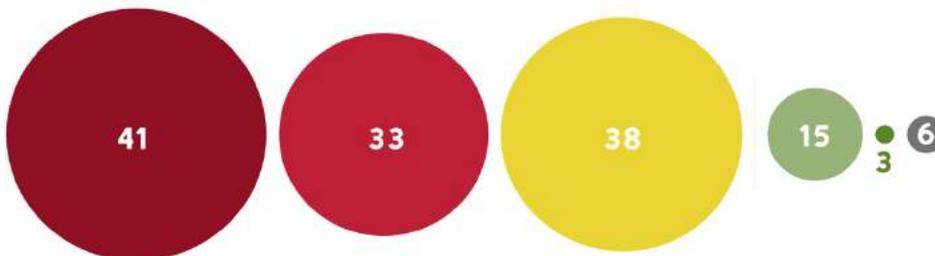
11

The needs of each band are equally considered.



12

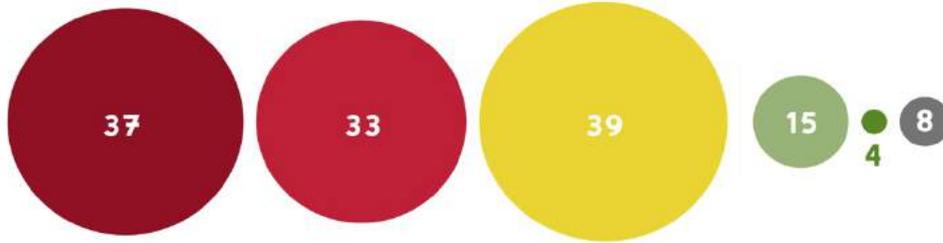
Major Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) decisions include band input.



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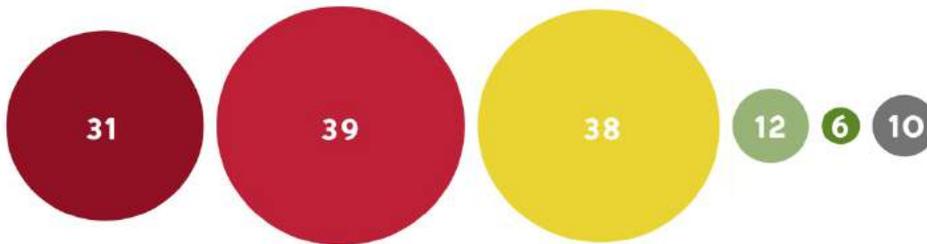
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There is ample opportunity to address concerns with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government



14

The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution serves the needs of the MCT people.

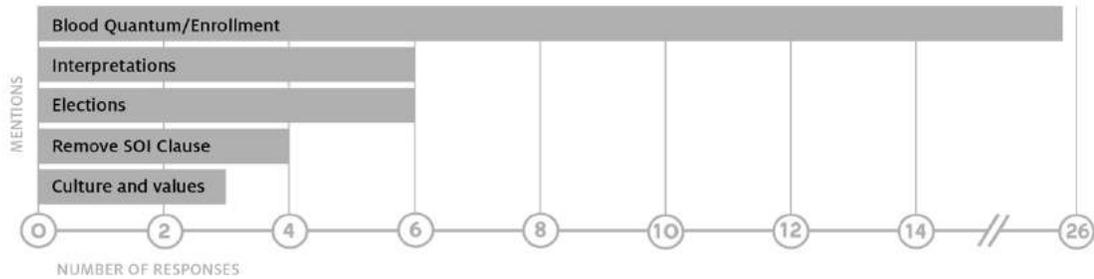


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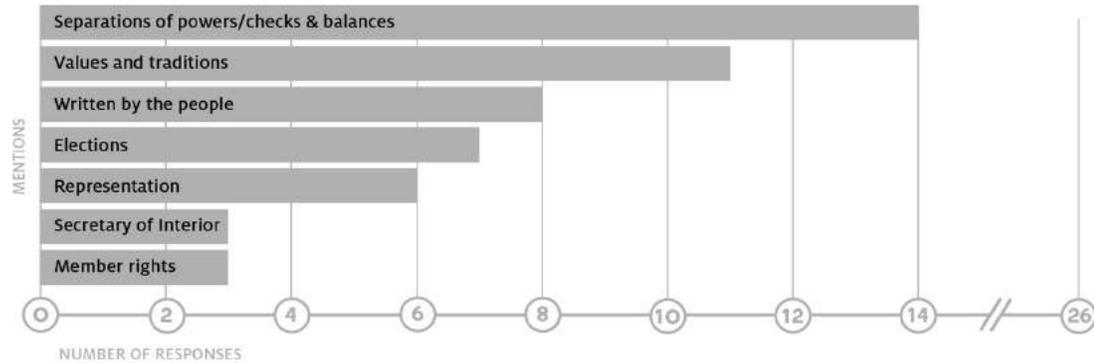
15

In looking to the future of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government, how much change do you think should happen?

43 RESPONSES "Keep the current constitution and make the following amendments:"



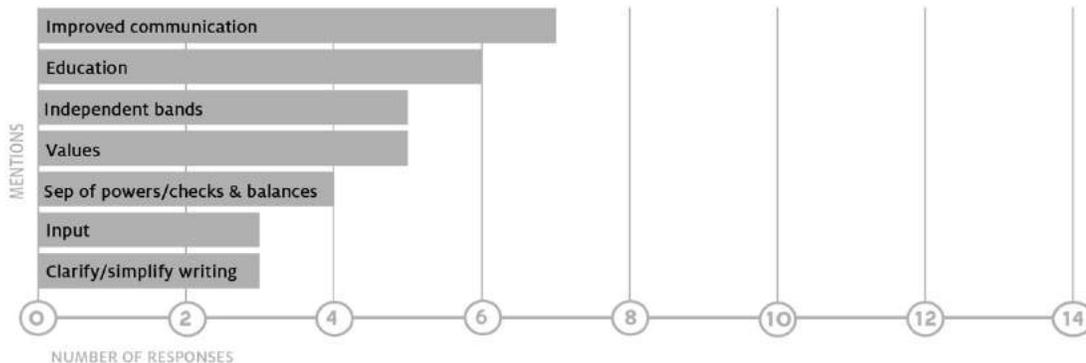
55 RESPONSES "A new constitution. The changes would include:"



16

What other suggestions do you have for strengthening the MCT constitution?

57 RESPONSES

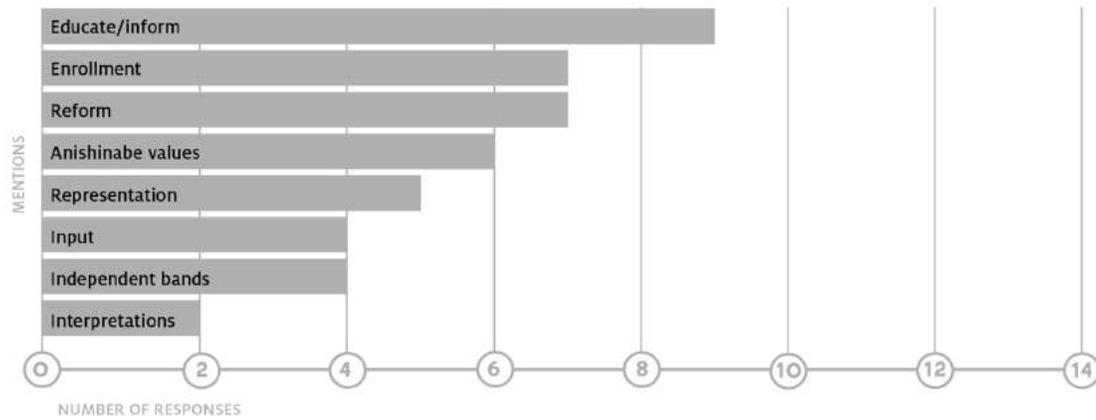


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17

Comments and/or suggestions:

74 RESPONSES



15 | In looking to the future of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government, how much change do you think should happen?

Keep the current constitution and make amendments. Area(s) that need to be amended in the MCT constitution (if you know the article and section, please list it):

- Art. II. Enrollment Look at all resolutions should be worked at and the interpretations done in the past
- Felony Backgrounds should be allowed to run for office after certain years have passed of convictions.
- Blood Quantum needs to be revised
- Membership enrollment blood quantum criteria should be lowered to 1/8 or instead do lineal descendants.
- Change the preamble to include our sovereignty, culture and values, and natural resources
- There are areas that need attention as it should be reviewed every 5 years at least
- Blood quantum should be dropped lower, but still be enough to be considered native. I have grandchildren
- (Biological) that can't even be get native things/recognition but there want to be native
- Enrollment, Powers, Accountability remain at tribal. Leave out US Gov. Change Language like MCT Chippewa
- Enrollment
- The election ordinance is a little loose regarding removal of an elected official. The threshold for a removal petition (number of voting members required) is very low and can lead to factionalism and divisiveness.
- Enrollments- Lineal descent
- Enrollment requirements - open the enrollment for descendants born between 1962 and 1981 regardless of BQ. It is not opening the flood gates but does compensate for lower enrollment numbers as more and more of our elders pass on.

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- Open up the rolls some. Maybe open for descendants born between 1962-1981 - [regard]less of blood quantum.
- It would compensate for lower enrollment numbers. -with so many more of our elders passing on.
- Enrollment
- enrollments, define: sections i.e. removal, accountability residency
- Enrollment, more culture
- Utilize amendment process Article XII, authorize clauses must be adhered to as it exists! Additional powers have to be delegated by people. Enforcement mechanism
- Clarify some aspects
- Appeal process for membership rights
- 13-09 Tribal Interpretation - changed from what we voted for. Would we retain federal recognition - count all Ojibwe blood
- Enrollment - if one parent is enrolled then the children of that parent should be enrolled – Why are we letting a number say we aren't. So, all should be enrolled as long as parent is.
- Enrollments (Change or get rid of)
- Enrollments, individual sovereignty, separate constitution, removal of the Department of the Interior.
- Ojibwa Values, Culture
- Enrollment
- Referendum vote on interpretations - set up an appellate board to interpret constitution referendum votes for any change/amendment
- I think we should go section by section and amend to update sections for present and future time.
- Go through it line by line and word for word.
- Term limits, Court of appeals added, Interpretations of Constitution, Enrollments
- Stop making interpretations!!
- Go through step by step probably [going to] take a good 2 months of weekly mtg's [meetings]
- Election (13)
- Strengthen preamble, clarify TEC and individual band duplications regarding land authorities at individual rezes [reservations]. Clarify relief process for person subject to removal. Enrollment reg's [regulations] need updating.
- Do a referendum vote to make interpretations legal. Accept other Chippewa blood.
- Go line by line and explain what each means.
- Article II - membership/blood quantum or not. Article III - Governing Body- power to the people!
- Elected officials to abide by oath of office and 2. Enrollment requirement
- Enrollments, membership, remove Secretary of Interior - Authority of MCT manner of review should not have to get ok from Secretary of Interior.
- Election ordinance, Enrollment policies, petition process, voting age, Department of Interior oversight
- Look at complete change

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- Amend according to needs of each reservation. We are still known as MCT. We need to foster the needs of our own people on our reservations. We do know what Leech Lake or Boise Forte Ojibwe or others need.

A new constitution. The major changes would include:

- I would like a shiny new reformatted constitution that is written in a different format that the "boiler plate IRA constitution" It seems that amending the current constitution maybe easier or more palatable. I would like to see it changed.
- Clear accountability by the people for important decisions
- Reporting to the people before decisions are made
- Like to see a Mission Statement
- Division of power - Voting no RBC Members - Voting Elders Council
- everything, create a new document that reflect Anishanabe values and customs
- enrollment
- Clearly define the 3 branches of government and define what the duties are
- 3 branches of govt. enrollment; inclusion and recognition of members who live off reservation
- Land acquisition Fee to trust; enrollment/membership; an at larger member to TEC from each reservation maybe from the local Indian councils of each band someone who has gained trust of people.
- Blood quantum Eliminate the Sec. of Interior approval
- Checks and balances need to be instituted. TEC needs to be held accountable to the constituents. Reservation goals of the TEC should not muddle/dominate MCT decisions. Huge conflict of interest exists in the current set up.
- For each concentration area.
- Adding Anishinaabe cultures and values. Creating a more clear language within the constitution so someone that doesn't study law can interpret it.
- Elections - enrollment - voices of members
- Enrollment
- Anything that allows the people to draft a document that will reflect our traditional way of life.
- Enrollment BQ change or opening enrollment to "direct descendants" on those enrollees listed between 1/2 and 1/2 BQ
- Develop government structure based on traditional values, the re-write the constitution based on that structure.
- Limit RBC power and develop RBC minimum qualification to run that include experience / educations for chair / secretary / treasurer
- Separation of Power Each reservation does their own enrollment Rights of members
- Fair representation of Band members from all Bands. A balance of power. (New structure)
- Participation by tribal membership in developing a governing document.
- Lower blood quant.
- MCT needs to be eliminated it has out lived its need. Reservations are capable of their own leading they

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need const. separation of powers. NO MCT separations of powers

- A constitution that is written by the people, producing fairness for all band members.
- We will scrap the MNCT constitution, then we will decide upon a framework to form a new constitution, we will write a new constitution based upon our traditional political culture, Anishnaabe values and historical knowledge.
- Redoing it!!
- Change Everything
- Enrollment, Government duties spelled out clearly
- Enrollment to lineage
- Enrollment - All Chippewa included (Red Lake, Canadian) Term Limits, Clear Language, Code of Ethics + accountability more referendums on major issues, Disputes settles by their own. Blood Quantum to include Red Lake and + Canadian Ojibwe, see above
- For been members if you are convicted of theft drug sales then you should be revoked of their rights, payments-loans-housing. Unless they go to programs to help their problems. In order for you to receive a lump sum payment they have to go to college for at least two years
- Provided input during session
- Enrollment Criteria
- Needs to be written by Anishnaabe people
- Bicameral Legislative. Tribal Wide constitution and local constitutions as well. Three branches, bill of rights, mechanisms for expansion, direct election of tribal Offices and citizenship
- Allow the separate inherent sovereigns to separate from the white man's constitution that don't reflect our Anishnaabe values language and traditions. Allow Bands as inherent sovereign to determine their own destiny. The MCT is a barrier to self-government
- Add culture and tribal language
- Communication Officials responsible to send summary to band members so all are informed
- Term Limits- Eligibility - Secretary of Interior- Remove- Judicial Powers Separate
- Separation of powers, greater representation, membership and citizenship, tribes with bands and reservations for individual nations?
- Separation of powers, rights of citizens, checks and balances, citizenship.
- Enrollment qualifications for office RBC components and Land distribution/Release to each band
- Dissolution of the MCT under the 1934 IRA rules in United States department of interior authority. Replacement with tribally organized body of all Anishnaabe tribes who sit to participate, to work together equitably, with strength together, stronger than anything that federal government ever made. We are bonded by family, ceremony, history, and culture. We do not need their oversight and will not lose our status.
- Separation of Powers, Enrollment criteria
- Enrolling all children of members voting and candidate that should be 18, make petition process easily accessible, remove Federal oversight and approval of tribal and reservation decisions live by our treaties.
- Developed by ourselves and not by a government, attorney, BIA etc. Incorporate our culture and values

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- Allowing MCT members to create and write our own system of governing ourselves (constitution)
- Enrollment land issues written by native people
- Each tribe is its own reservation we are not a big band. Each tribe needs to be there [their] own
- Our Traditional values to govern our tribe
- The needs of each band separation of power, family values and teachings of our grandparent[s]
- Input from the Band members

16 | What other suggestions do you have for strengthening the MCT constitution? Please be as specific as possible:

- I have but to read the constitution so I'm neutral about this issue.
- Education and engagements of the membership, integration of teaching regarding the constitution roles/responsibilities
- Language that spells out the values and principles (Anishnabeg) that gives direction of a government aspect of community
- General assemblies held at each reservation to collect each community profile for constitution changes
- create a participatory democracy, read the literature from The Age of Reason
- Education! it needs to be taught to everyone
- Write it at a 10th grade level so people can read and understand what they are reading
- Provide information to all band members, not just those who live on their reservation
- Hire a lobbyist to further our land issues (getting our land restored to trust) on TEC level. Ordinances to protect resources that are under attack from states, corporations - for extraction/exploitation
- Amendment to review constitution and amendments every 15 or 20 years
- Tribes of smaller enrollment numbers should make own decisions, not where larger reservations have more say.
- Make sure it is understood by all constituents of MCT- changes etc. A Tribe can be only as strong as the people of the tribe: Should reflect the differences that each reservation has and how isolated we have become from each other in terms of sharing resources.
- Better representation is needed. The elected members should hold the duty to reach out to members far and wide to hear their concerns.
- To become more part of the council's decisions to create more fairness, eliminate nepotism, eliminate the behaviors to where they represent "our" reservation. MCT should be more involved with meetings and overall, they can see where changes are needed.
- If all were required to follow the constitution, it could be a [decent] document
- Develop voting process better, its lacking people destroy each others singing and it ok. Develop the process to change /amend the constitution in the future develop based on customs
- Accountability of tribal leadership
- Not knowledgeable about the constitution

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- Involve motivate the members, use the mass activities to get info out to members use mail, media
- Separate Powers ex: Same people on TEC board and RBC board
- MCT needs to be more inclusive of other tribal govt. in Wisconsin, Michigan, N. Dakota, etc. We need nation building not diversion by another useless MCT const. exercise
- Once developed (new constitution) all amendments need to be voted on by the band population residing on the reservation
- If an old problem from the past has been solved, let the wound heal, leave it alone!
- 4 branches of govt, governing by consensus, caring for the community and natural resources
- Either way would work - there is a process to amend, so why not? A new one would do the same.
- Restructuring the Chippewa Tribe role & take into account the local levels.
- enrollments
- More values
- People involvement by informed consent!
- Autonomy for the individual Bands has always been important - Any changes to MCT Constitution should not diminish the sovereign status of individual Bands
- MCT must remain but more autonomy for individual bands to make enrollment decisions
- Remove Secretary of Interior, only Chippewa / Ojibwe Blood- Red Lake, St. Breiox [?]
- Keep members of all tribes updated on MTC websites, newsletters, or mail
- To be informed
- Recognition of Articles of constitution
- Each tribe should have their own constitution
- Accountability- follow it
- Add judicial components, cultural additions for resolution
- Ask Members their opinions every step of the way
- Remove secretarial approval of everything.
- There are too many political agendas. There are elected leaders that want to build a kingdom so they can be king.
- To incorporate the 7 teachings - we won't fail then, change from the heart
- Education
- All Bands responsible to govern as they see fit. Mille Lacs has separation of powers form of Government.
- Leave us be- it works for us!!
- Are Interpretations- needed? We need a referendum vote today! ASAP
- Same as needing a new constitution.
- Call a referendum on the Q's on # [number] 16 and let membership decide what we should do so we can start working on it and move forward.
- The MCT needs to educate the constituents of our powers & rights, and the differences of amendments and

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interpretations "No MCT- TEC interpretations. Follow the proper MCT article XII amendment process."

- Make wording specific and clear so there can be no (interpretations), recognize our treaty rights
- Have committees to advise the TEC members from your tribe
- [To] be able to be independent, sovereign, self-determination. As MCT Tribe we have different viewpoints, different ideas that we can't exercise on our own Reservation
- I am in favor of Mille Lacs band becoming its own tribe- no longer under MCT
- Start teaching whatever we come up with at a young age. Design Curriculum from K-12 and [Continued education]
- Do away with MCT all together. If we don't have the MCT we don't need a revision/amended MCT constitution
- Making sure all of the reservations have [casinos] for their [revenue] and other [businesses], our [casinos] take care of the needs of our reservation
- More input from the band members.

17 | COMMENTS and SUGGESTIONS:

- This presentation was very interesting and I hope to see/hear actual outcomes from this.
- Education for all members 41,330 on the constitution and process for reform, so that we have a "shared understanding/foundation" for which to go through the process of reforming the constitution.
- Mission Statement that reflects Anishanaabe values.
- Enrollment of 1/4 blood quantum is a federally imposed standard for membership. I believe that our people had valued one another and family values, culture and tradition over their blood quantum.
- Inform the people of what is the current constitution by educating them so they can see where change is needed.
- Who other than elected council must be accountable and to inform the people.
- Hold sessions to teach about the existing constitution as it stands
- Hold a vote on each reserve to not change the constitution
- Maintain a political voice for all Minnesota Indian peoples
- State wide convention for reform at [US Stadium Bank]
- Get this done - no lagging forge ahead- the constitution is overdue for a facelift
- Get rid of interpretations - "interpretations" come from the Business/political actions of the MCT members, ETAL.
- Makes no sense to write resolutions on how to interpret rules.
- These meetings were very informative and inspiring - part of a wake-up call ----- Thank you for giving us a lot of [information]
- Glad we are having this meeting today. I wish more people are here to participate. I hope whoever runs this meeting will not allow some people to monopolize the meeting with unnecessary topics. We need to keep a point of [order] and keep working on the constitution so we can move ahead and get the constitution

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finished and move on with working towards the betterment of future of our children.

- We are not citizens! We are citizens of USA and State NOT citizens of the Tribe!
- I think research should be done to name (& include in revisions) every name of the BANDS; not just the NAME OF THE RESERVATION because this is not truly a reflection of who we are. It is a construct of the federal govt. Just a thought I carry forward in my life forwarded to me by my grandma in the story telling tradition we have. Because it links our history to the present when so many of our people do not know where they came from before they were born on a reservation of made a member by enrollment. They do not realize this. The Band name Mississippi denotes that my family originates along the lands by that big river. (for example)
- I believe a constitution [convention] is needed to change some of the outdated articles of the present constitution.
- It will be a long process and the key is to keep people involved to arrive at suggested changes that will need to be
- Possibly more referendums within the tribes for own decision-making purposes.
- Other tribes shall not interfere or present in another tribe's issues. for instance, Mille Lacs Member cannot speak on behalf of Grand Portage issues!
- Repeal Amendments
- Change the wording of the RBC as it does not pertain to all tribes. MLB has a 3-branch government. Maybe refer them a Tribal Governments Elected bodies. (Councils)
- If a change is going to occur within the MCT - I'd like to see more constituents aware or "made" aware of on an individual level whether it be individual or community or reservation wide, I feel this would be better for MCT in more informed results!
- All people running for tribal government should have knowledge of tribal government, the history of our tribes - should be checks and balances on the people that are elected if they can't perform there should be a way of removing them or ask them to resign - they should be signing a code of ethics or performance requirement. Have a clear defined description of their roles and responsibilities to the tribe and communities
- Great that this is happening seems like people I speak with have lost faith in the MCT (if they ever had it) and if the MCT wants to move forward as a leader of the Ojibwe it needs to regain support and trust in the communities. Having this process and getting people involved to bring it forward seems like a good step in that direction.
- If we do not have a strong constitution now then we should work on getting one
- When attending the mtg for 40,000 ppl there needs to be more communication with the people on our reservations so we are aware of changes, or maybe have some input on how to improve the constitution
- People need to follow the constitution be accountable if not accountable there needs to be a disciplines or warnings, maybe answers to why you're not accountable.
- Constitution doesn't address who we are - The main thing I see and would really like change is protection - for our employees, families to have oversight on jobs, homes that they are not violated by tribal council or their assistants.
- We need job security and see that on all reservations, It needs to stop - we all have families and our own dignity, hope.
- Thanks for all the materials and questions raised. :)

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- There has to be checks and balances involving community members.
- Referendums "must" involve community. -Process must be [informational] as to pro's and con's of issues.
- It's been run as a corporation - which is based on a competitive [perspective] and a hierarchal structure. We need to utilize our old ways of "governing" our communities. - The purpose was to care for "all" people - not just those [related] on a special business relationship
- The entire process needs to be what the people want not elected officials. We need to remove everything that is harmful, the standard approach needs to be eliminated by the power of the RBC. We need a government structure based on the traditional ways of the Anishinabe. Don't mimic the federal government at all, the MCT constitution is an IRA document and has no place governing how we live and govern our resources. Develop a fair voting process, remove all corruption there should be minimum requirements of education/experience for Chair/Sec/Treas.
- Constitution should be based on all areas, we are currently involved in, gaming etc..., develop new blood quantum structure or allow each tribe to define their own, develop an elder/youth council that is advisory to the RBC's, involve people in the entire process, have an alliance for tribal members to be part of their government.
- IRA - Enacted June 18, 1934 -Section 18 - one year to have election and constitution approved -MCT constitution approved July 24, 1936
- Loved what I learned today but until talk is put into action these are the same words I've heard for the past 20 years. We need to have different members than the RBC on the TEC for the MCT - It's not fair, we (the people) have nowhere to go!
- Should be allowed to look on previous Rolls for blood quantum, married to a white earth member I am Fond Du Lac. our kids are denied enrollment we are both tribal members of Minnesota tribe's. why can't enroll my kids in our tribe??? This is my kids blood right and ancestors right why are we being chopped up by percentages of blood are we the only ethnic group this is being done to we are Anishinabe have been brought up this way why are my kids being denied there rights
- Be more aggressive to inform/educate band members. Consider all Indians with Indian Blood. Those or less inherent benefits when their elder dies. That why it would increase our roles but our dollars. It would remain at the same level until the descendant inherited their elders blood. We built a wonderful clinic and make money by volume is the other side of the economy.
- Marshall Trilogy- states that American Indian Tribes are "independent nations" not business communities. Cannot have gov to gov relationship if Bands are not considered Governments Cherokee Nation v. Georgia "domestic dependent nations" there was a specific relationship between American Indian Nations and the U.S. each Indian
- Nation "inherent sovereignty" in order of Bands to fully utilize their "inherent sovereignty" they need to be governments not Business committees.
- We need to get this process of writing the new constitution started, time is running short and we are more than capable of writing a new constitution. This is the fourth meeting and I cannot believe we have not started the actual writing. If you sit around without any actual reordering + synthesizing various ideas
- [Question 16] Redo it with membership included!!
- Would like to see more cultural values/traditions enumerated in the Constitution.
- TERM LIMITS
- Include membership of other "Affected Indians" [Question 15] If followed [Question 23] Hostile, hasn't been forced on to Reservation

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- Sovereign vs. Quasi-Sovereign membership oriented/Anishinaabe-Ojibwe
- Uniform Election Process. TEC- Certifies Candidates
- Executive director at MCT must be ethical- no variation from law and policies we need a new one- Peoples voices included. Don't reinvent the wheel
- [Question 11] If parent is enrolled then child should be also. [Question 13] No they leave the room. [Question 25]
- With all the drugs, stealing - reservations are not safe. I don't like my children even visiting any one on the reservation. It's too dangerous.
- Review blood quantum requirement. It is creating a non-acceptance issue for our youth. Increase knowledge to members local and remote and their descendants.
- Each tribe should have the [their] own constitution and enrollment criteria. Grandchildren blood from two or more tribes not recognized as any band member.
- Education is a Must!
- Fair representation to ensure the larger tribes don't over-run the smaller tribes
- Work with the people you represent at MCT and RBC levels
- Good Job, we are making progress!
- Keep at it, Miigwech for coming
- Member not citizen!
- I would like to see a video of the Hy [sic] of MCT- (using the Burris Report?) put together by ALL six nations
- They don't run, the chief and Treasurer are on this, what do you mean run? [comment on Question 8]
- Stop using citizen!!! I am not a citizen, I am a member, I belong!!! Tribal members Only, why are [we] allowing white people in and having input on our Government
- Culture needs to be a #1 addition to constitution and language also. What has TEC done for Mille Lacs.
- Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.
- Maybe to look at the per capita given to underage. It is ruining the use to be able to know they have more money
- than they have ever had in their lives. Takes away motivation for being a citizen with constructive ideas, thoughts, and actions. It's a waste of bonds money when most of this is spent on drugs, etc.!
- [Question] # 24 feels redundant.
- I think MCT is obsolete! Need to disband but fed [federal] administrator is threatening to recognize tribe.
- Good session - I enjoyed the format - minimize individuals from dominating sessions.
- A good start! Way to put this together on short notice. It is appreciated.
- The 4 smallest Reservations are the majority vote on the TEC. The 2 biggest reservations representing 70% of the MCT membership and the only two that aren't able to do per caps [per capita] are being out voted on issues that could benefit their reservations.
- My home is not a [tribal] home but mtg. [meetings] held by MCT casfes [sic] MN, until meeting is pd. My tribe reservation helps me because I am an elder

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NNI has provided surface level statistical analysis from the questionnaire to serve as food for thought as MCT engages in community education. Understanding the base level knowledge of the MCT Constitution allows elected officials to determine specific areas to focus. The questionnaire results illustrate a few areas to consider.

Comparing the Means¹²:

By comparing the means, readers can identify the average responses for each question. To obtain means (averages) of participant responses, NNI recoded the Likert values as the following:

*Recoded values: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5= Strongly Agree

Questions 6-10

The analysis below shows that respondents generally **disagreed** with many of the statements. When comparing the means of all 10 questions – the only question to move from Disagree to Neutral was **Question 8** “The qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are clear to me.” which had the highest mean among all questions at 3.20.

<i>6. The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's election process is fair.</i>	<i>7. The Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) exercises power fairly.</i>	<i>8. The qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are clear to me.</i>	<i>9. The qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are adequate.</i>	<i>10. The Reservation Business Committee (RBC) exercises power fairly.</i>
2.81	2.56	3.20	2.87	2.54

Questions 11-15

The two lowest means were for **Question 11** “Current enrollment requirements reflect how we view ourselves as Anishinaabe” at 2.13 and **Question 13** “Major Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) decisions include band input” at 2.28. These means suggest that respondents tended to **disagree** with these two points.

<i>11. Current enrollment requirements reflect how we view ourselves as Anishinaabe.</i>	<i>12. The needs of each band are equally considered.</i>	<i>13. Major Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) decisions include band input.</i>	<i>14. There is ample opportunity to address concerns with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government.</i>	<i>15. The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution serves the needs of the MCT people.</i>
2.13	2.31	2.28	2.34	2.39

Correlations

A correlation analysis is used to test the strength of a relationship between variables. The correlation matrix lists the variables down the 1st column and row. The closer the correlation is to 1, the stronger the likelihood that a relationship or “correlation” exists between the variables (highlighted in yellow). Correlations were run against all

¹² In statistics, the **mean** is the average of a set of data.

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demographic variables and compared against Questions 1-5, Questions 6-15, and Question 16. The most significant correlations came when comparing the questions against each other.

Correlations for Questions 1-5:

Reference:

Question 1: I understand the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution and Bylaws.

Question 2: I understand the powers of the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC).

Question 3: I understand the powers of the Reservation Business Committees (RBCs).

Question 4: I understand how the Minnesota Chippewa tribal government operates.

Question 5: I have read the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution.

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
Question 1	1				
Question 2	0.79247649	1			
Question 3	0.72587021	0.840248322	1		
Question 4	0.77790179	0.739731921	0.67374685	1	
Question 5	-0.3352919	-0.299297192	-0.2070706	-0.1564086	1

The graph above represents the correlation between the first five questions compared against one another. These correlations have the strongest correlation in the set. With these correlations, one can infer:

1. If a respondent **understands** the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution and Bylaws, this respondent is also **more likely to understand the powers** of the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) and Reservation Business Committees (RBCs); and **understand how the Minnesota Chippewa tribal government operates.**

2. If a respondent **understands the powers** of the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC), this respondent is also **more likely to understand the powers** of the Reservation Business Committees (RBCs) and **understand how the Minnesota Chippewa tribal government operates.**

3. If a respondent **understands the powers** of the Reservation Business Committees (RBCs), then the respondent is also **more likely to understand how the Minnesota Chippewa tribal government operates.**

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Correlations for Questions 6-15:

Reference:

Question 6: The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's election process is fair.

Question 7: The Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) exercises power fairly.

Question 8: The qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are clear to me.

Question 9: The qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are adequate.

Question 10: The Reservation Business Committee (RBC) exercises power fairly.

Question 11: Current enrollment requirements reflect how we view ourselves as Anishinaabe.

Question 12: The needs of each band are equally considered.

Question 13: Major Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) decisions include band input.

Question 14: There is ample opportunity to address concerns with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government.

Question 15: The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution serves the needs of the MCT people.

	Question 6	Question 7	Question 8	Question 9	Question 10	Question 11	Question 12	Question 13	Question 14	Question 15
Question 6	1									
Question 7	0.61060345	1								
Question 8	0.56873585	0.497710237	1							
Question 9	0.49585598	0.702476954	0.6282046	1						
Question 10	0.58559696	0.761720847	0.41420779	0.670567954	1					
Question 11	0.16583583	0.252555932	0.02137255	0.223137152	0.37211122	1				
Question 12	0.31712935	0.505148279	0.31753741	0.565821683	0.55915622	0.41321846	1			
Question 13	0.49188533	0.548508488	0.27883378	0.418720647	0.61226555	0.35783067	0.53228868	1		
Question 14	0.49572935	0.600582683	0.25320059	0.452448484	0.66170712	0.43650151	0.5915228	0.75548026	1	
Question 15	0.436535	0.515969359	0.37954469	0.512690343	0.58369592	0.35096092	0.50182118	0.57623856	0.6419897	1

The graph above is a correlation between the questions 6-15, compared against one another. With these correlations, one can infer:

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1. If a respondent **agrees** that the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) exercises power fairly, then these respondents are **more likely to agree that the qualifications to run** for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are adequate and that the Reservation Business Committee (RBC) exercises power fairly.
2. If a respondent **agrees** that the qualifications to run for the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) are adequate then these respondents are also **likely to agree that the Reservation Business Committee (RBC) exercises power fairly.**
3. If a respondent **agrees** that the Reservation Business Committee (RBC) exercises power fairly then these respondents are also **likely to agree that there is ample opportunity** to address concerns with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government.
4. If a respondent **agrees** that there is ample opportunity to address concerns with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government then these respondents are also **likely to agree that Major Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) decisions include band input.**
5. If a respondent **agrees** that there is ample opportunity to address concerns with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal government then these respondents are also **likely to agree that The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution serves the needs of the MCT people.**

While this questionnaire provides a small sample size of the MCT tribal membership, it illustrates how members view and understand the MCT constitution.