

Dear Fellow Northeast Tribe members:

Recently some of you have been contacted with some rumors about ICS and our Northeast Tribe, and may have questions that deserve answers. In this open letter to the Northeast Tribe I want to provide you with the facts so that you can make your own judgment.

Q: Our Northeast Tribe is a non-profit corporation, separate from the International Comanche Society (ICS). The ICS has bylaws that specify frequency of elections. Does our Northeast Tribe have bylaws that specify the frequency of our tribe elections, or specify term limits for our tribe officers?

A: Our tribe is a non-profit incorporated in Kansas in 1992. The Secretary of State of Kansas has on file our articles of incorporation ([you can read them here](#)) but no by-laws. It appears that our tribe never adopted any bylaws. I have researched this thoroughly, including speaking with our founding tribe chief and several of his successors, and none of them remembers adopting any bylaws. One of our members has been circulating a document claiming that it is our tribe's bylaws. This document is undated, unsigned, and most importantly, the title of the document does not match our corporation's legal name, "Northeast Comanche Tribe, Inc.". Names must match. Several past tribe chiefs and I have reviewed this document, and our best guess is that it may have been proposed bylaws for a northeast tribe prior to its incorporation. In any case, this document does not apply to our corporation. We do not have term limits.

Q: How often does our tribe hold elections?

A: Our tribe holds election annually. Nominations (including self-nominations) usually close in July every year, with the election closing in August at the fly-in. 2017 was an exception as Northeast announced in the Nor'Easter it was holding early elections due to the Convention.

*"With the ICS Convention in June we need to nominate and elect our NE Tribe officers for 2017-2018. There is Nomination Form on our ICS-NE website for anyone who wishes to nominate someone (or to volunteer) for an office"* therefore 2017 nominations closed in May ([12/27/16 Nor'Easter p1](#)).

Q: Our tribe held an officer election in fall 2017, but it was cancelled before it was concluded. Why was the election canceled? Was the cancellation at the behest of our incumbent tribe chief?

A: Last fall's election was not canceled at my behest. The officers held a vote in which I did not participate. The reasons why are explained in a report (attached) dated 10/13/2017 by Hank Spellman, Chairman ICS Bylaws Committee, which details the events and specifically ratifies:

- the current Northeast Tribe Rep is properly seated through August 2018
- the action to cancel and restart the election, giving all candidates the ability to state their positions and respond to questions, was appropriate and fair to both sides.

The report further explains, there is plenty of time to hold another election, and that, as both candidates already had seats on the ICS board (ours to 2018, Mr. Shiloh to 2019), no one would be slighted.

As I was a candidate in the election, it was not my place to decide to cancel the election, and I was not involved in the final decision. I resent the rumor that I was involved in the cancellation, and feel this allegation was started in an attempt to corrode our tribe's morale and your confidence in our tribe's leadership.

Q: How do we know that the election wasn't canceled because of who was ahead in the vote count?

A: The election was never completed, so the results were never reported. The votes were received by our tribe secretary, who released only the total number of ballots he received. He has not released any information about the vote count, to me or anyone else. If you have heard a rumored vote count, please understand it is an opinion, and is not based on any actual data.

To end this I am willing, once and for all, to waive the confidentiality of the ballot box and to have Pete report the vote result (**NOT** the confidentiality of who voted or how, only the result). I request Mr. Shiloh to agree this release and thereby end this speculation, or to provide an explanation as to why he does not agree to this.

Q: What is the reason that the 2017 election was not promptly re-held?

A: Your tribe officers wish that had occurred. However, after the election was canceled, one of the candidates proceeded to **threaten the tribe officers with lawsuits**. It was not possible to conduct a free and fair election under a threat of a lawsuit. The situation greatly distressed your all-volunteer tribe officers - so much so that we considering resigning en masse. We then decided we had better create rules for a strongly contested election. We have done so, and a [draft is now avail for your comments at our website](#).

Because the only requirement for our election is that it be complete by August 2018, there is plenty of time to hold them by then, and also to give others the opportunity to run. I hope you will review our proposed new process, which requires candidates and incumbents to put forth a platform and vision for the Northeast and the ICS, so that we may all decide for ourselves what we are voting for.

Q: I heard that the Northeast Tribe has lost its vote on the ICS board.

A: This rumor is untrue. Our vote on the ICS Board has always counted and will continue to count. For proof of this, please review the voting record in the [minutes of the ICS board](#) meetings.

Q: It appears that the facts refute each of the rumors (about the tribe election being canceled at the behest of the incumbent tribe chief; about our tribe having bylaws and term limits; and about our tribe's vote on the ICS board being invalidated). Can you help us understand why these rumors were started? Who stands to gain by circulating them?

A: I do not wish to point fingers, but it may help to understand that there were irregularities in the proceedings of the ICS board under the prior ICS president. My voice at the ICS board meetings has been one of the ones calling for a review of these irregularities and the behavior of those ICS board members involved. Some of the ICS board members involved during that time are still on the board and have attempted to oust the current (duly elected) ICS president and silence those who wish to shed light on what occurred during the prior term.

The questioning of our elections, and **the putting forth of the undated document as if it were our tribe's bylaws, appear to be retaliation for my having joined other board members in requesting a review of the past ICS president's behavior**. Please let me know if you will join me in a call for a meeting and special voting of members to address the situation with the conflicts of interest in the ICS board.

If there are other rumors you have heard that I have not addressed here, please let me know so that we can address them in a subsequent email. With open questions and answers, we should be able to clear the air and shed light on the facts.

I apologize for not having written sooner to clarify the strange events of the past year. Because the cancellation of our tribe's election involved behavior by one of our members which was contrary to ICS bylaws (as several of you noticed and brought to our attention), your current tribe officers decided to remain low-key in hopes that the problematic behavior could be handled privately. In retrospect, we should have immediately informed you all of the reasons for the cancellation and shared the message from the ICS so that you could form your own opinion.

Our 2018 elections will proceed as usual. As usual, [nominations close in July, and our nominations forms are available on our website.](#)

I have repeatedly invited our members to participate in tribe leadership and to put their name in the hat to take a turn as an officer, or otherwise get involved. We currently have many Northeast members actively helping advise our tribe leadership. The Northeast remains the most active and successful tribe in the country, and it is that way because of all of you!

Please feel free to write back with any and all questions to [netribechief@gmail.com](mailto:netribechief@gmail.com).

Tailwinds,

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CJ Stumpf

Northeast Tribe Chief

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