

Emergency order keeps Tribal leadership in place

(KNZA)--A lawsuit is filed regarding Saturday's ouster of Kickapoo Tribal Leadership, with WIBW-TV reporting that court documents state that shortly after the June 10 meeting was called to order, members of the General Council took control of the forum. They motioned to remove the entire Lawful Tribal Council, with the plaintiffs saying the move directly violated the removal process and electoral procedures.

The decision for the removal, according to a release from the Tribe, is due to a failure to adhere to the budget, failure to comply with election ordinances, failure to comply with oaths and duties of their offices, and failure to uphold the Tribe's Code of Ethics, as reasons cited in the motion to remove the leadership, as voted on, and approved, Saturday.

According to the lawsuit, Chairman Lester Randall would not accept the motion due to its unconstitutionality, which led, court records show, to members of the General Council becoming disorderly. The Lawful Council then left as the meeting had juridically ended per the Constitution.

The record indicates that “several members of the General Council then found a way into the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas government center and proceeded to have a fallacious “swearing-in” and “tribal council meeting.” They trespassed into several offices and tried to gain access to others. Some of these offices contained very privileged and confidential information,” with the court document stating that “after much time elapsed,” Kickapoo Police Chief Nathan Gray coerced the trespassers out of the building.”

Court records, as cited by the TV station, also show that an emergency temporary order of injunction and declaratory relief has been granted to the Lawful Council, meaning that all tribal operations inherent to maintaining the function of tribal government are to remain as they were before the June 10 meeting until a hearing is held.

An evidentiary hearing will be set at the earliest date possible.

(KNZA)-A shakeup in local tribal leadership, with the leaders of the Tribal Council of the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas ousted Saturday through a vote of the membership of the General Council.

A release from the Tribe cites a failure to adhere to the budget, failure to comply with election ordinances, failure to comply with oaths and duties of their offices, and failure to uphold the Tribe- Code of Ethics, as reasons cited in the motion to remove the leadership.

Once the motion was seconded, at Saturday- meeting, the release states that the general membership demanded to vote on the issue, but the Tribal Council Leadership, comprised of Chairman Lester Randall, Vice-Chairwoman Johanna Thomas, Secretary Carla Cavin, along with members Jason Thomas, Bobbie Whitewater, and Tina Wahwassuck, “ignored the motion and walked out on the meeting.” Treasurer Christopher Tucker was not present.

According to the release, it was after the walkout that “a vote was held to remove and replace the 7 tribal members,” with 62 successfully voting to remove them.

Then, “following the vote, with the general membership as witnesses, the new tribal council was sworn in,” with the release naming them as Chairwoman Gail Cheatham, Vice-Chairwoman Jessi Blacksmith; Treasurer Grace Ross; Secretary Priscilla Wakole; Member Sharon Doxator; Member Laura Razo, and Member Gary Samqua.

The release notes that “local law enforcement from Horton Police Department, Kickapoo Police Department, and Brown County Sheriff officers were present to witness [the] ceremony.”

According to the release, “the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been notified,” noting that “the Bureau has provided direction throughout the move and will be onsite within the week.”

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