

November 12, 2020



Dear People:

As your General Council Chairman, it is my pleasure to Welcome you to the 2020 Fall General Council session. The reason for the delay is our reservation has been hit hard with the covid-19. The dates of September 24-26, 2020 and October 15-17, 2020 had to be postponed due to rising COVID-19 numbers in our area. Our General Council Officers wanted to make sure the tribal members are protected. We will be moving forward with having a "Virtual" General Council Session on November 19 & 20, 2020.

During this unprecedented time, and after consultation with the Emergency Operations Committee, Dr. Hartwig, the Election Judges, the Roberts Rules expert from the University of Idaho, the NPTEC Tribal officials, we were strongly advised to cancel the Fall General Council elections on September 24-26. It was deemed such elections to be unsafe for our tribal elders and tribal members of the Nez Perce Tribe.

The Nez Perce Tribe Constitution calls for a September meeting each and every year. The General Council Officers did, in fact, convene a meeting in September, which was immediately adjourned by myself, General Council Chairman. This pandemic is very real and to more than 200,000 people (including members of the Nez Perce Tribe), has resulted in death. It is a very sobering reality that we cannot ignore. It would be irresponsible to sponsor a mass gathering under current conditions. The State of Idaho on October 27 moved from Stage 4 back to Stage 3 of crowds 50 people and less.

We have informed the General Council of a date on which a "virtual session" will be held in three separate locations, with safety protocols in place. However, a virtual session is not conducive to holding an election with nominations from the floor. Our reservation is still seeing a rise in cases so our virtual session will be only General Council Staff in Lapwai. The live feed will be available to the Orofino and Kamiah communities via chosen media.

<https://stream.lifetimesizecloud.com/extension/2810819/4695a37b-8b83-4398-af58-25fd10852bd3>

All persons currently holding elected positions on General Council Tribe Constitution, at Article, V, Section 3 states that "the officer of the Tribal General Council, elected under Section 2 of this Article, shall hold office for one year and until their successors have qualified." The underline language gives us a way to extend the terms of office holders until September 21, 2021, General Council meeting.

Board members holding office on Boards/Commissions, act on NPTEC's behalf.

This was the fairest, safest way we could find to address the General Council elections normally held each fall. We regret that a gathering with discussions cannot be safely held. As your chairman of the General Council, we ask that everyone continue to observe the CDC protocols and wash hands with soap and water, cover coughs and sneezes, do not shake hands, stay home if you feel sick, wear face coverings, and stay 6 feet apart from others.

Respectfully,

  
Julia Davis-Wheeler, Chairman  
Nez Perce Tribe General Council