

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS



CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
OF THE  
SPOKANE TRIBE OF THE  
SPOKANE RESERVATION,  
WASHINGTON.



APPROVED JUNE 27, 1951



Law Office  
Indian Trusts  
Spokane Tribe  
Spokane Nation  
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**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**  
**OF THE**  
**SPOKANE TRIBE OF THE SPOKANE**  
**RESERVATION, WASHINGTON**

**PREAMBLE**

We the Indians of the Spokane Reservation, in order to form a recognized tribal organization to manage our tribal affairs, do hereby establish this constitution and bylaws.

**ARTICLE I—PURPOSE**

Our purpose shall be to promote and protect the interests of the Spokane Indians and cooperate with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and his representatives.

**ARTICLE II—TERRITORY**

The jurisdiction of the Spokane Indians shall include all trust and tribal lands within the boundaries of the Spokane Reservation established by Executive Order of January 18, 1881, and any additions made thereto.

**ARTICLE III—MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1.** The membership of the Spokane Tribe shall consist of:

(a) All persons of Spokane Indian blood whose names appear on the official census of the Spokane Tribe as of January 1, 1947, provided, that corrections may be made in said census by the tribal governing body within five (5) years from the adoption and approval of the constitution, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior or his duly authorized representative.

(b) All children of one-fourth or more degree of Spokane Indian blood born subsequent to January 1, 1947, to any member of the Spokane Tribe maintaining residence on the Reservation at the time of the birth of said children.

**SEC. 2.** The Business Council shall have the power to propose ordinances, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, governing future membership, adoption, and loss of membership in the Spokane Tribe.

## ARTICLE IV—GOVERNING BODY

SECTION 1. The governing body of the Spokane Tribe shall be a Business Council of three members, consisting of a Chairman, Secretary-Treasurer, and one member.

SEC. 2. No person shall be a candidate for membership on the Business Council unless he is a member of the Spokane Tribe, shall have actually lived on the Reservation at least one year next preceding the election, and shall be at least twenty-five (25) years of age.

SEC. 3. The council members shall be elected at a general tribal meeting, and shall hold office for a period of one year.

SEC. 4. The General Council shall be composed of all the qualified voters of the Spokane Tribe.

## ARTICLE V—NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

SECTION. 1. The first election of the Business Council under this constitution shall be called and supervised by the Superintendent of the Reservation and the present Tribal Council within sixty days after its ratification and approval. Thereafter, annual elections shall be held at least sixty days before expiration of the term of office.

All elections shall be by secret ballot.

SEC. 2. Any member of the Spokane Tribe twenty-one (21) years of age or over actually living on the Reservation shall have the right to vote.

## ARTICLE VI—VACANCIES AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

SECTION 1. Any vacancy in the Business Council shall be filled by the Business Council. Such appointee shall hold office until the next regular election.

SEC. 2 Any member of the Business Council may be removed by majority vote at a regular or special meeting of the General Council.

## ARTICLE VII—POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BUSINESS COUNCIL

SECTION 1. The Business Council shall have the following powers, subject to any limitations imposed by the statutes of the Constitution of the United States:

(a) To negotiate with Federal, State, and local governments, and to advise with representatives of the Interior Department on appropriations, projects and legislation that affects the Tribe;

(b) To employ legal counsel, the choice of counsel and fixing of fees to be subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, or his duly authorized representative;

(c) To manage all affairs of the Tribe, including the administering of tribal lands, funds, timber, and other resources under appropriate contracts, leases, permits, or loan or sale agreements;

(d) To exclude from the restricted lands of the Reservation any persons not legally entitled to reside thereon;

(e) To regulate the inheritance of real and personal property, other than allotted lands, within the Spokane Reservation;

(f) To regulate domestic relations of members of the Spokane Tribe, and to provide for assessments or license fees upon nonmembers doing business within the Reservation or obtaining special rights or privileges, subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and the same may apply to members of the Tribe if approved by a referendum of the Spokane Tribe;

(g) To appoint necessary committees;

(h) To promulgate and enforce ordinances necessary to carry out the powers and duties of the Business Council.

## ARTICLE VIII—AMENDMENTS

This constitution and bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the qualified voters of the Spokane Tribe voting in an election called for that purpose by the Business Council, but no amendment shall become effective until it shall have been approved by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It shall be the duty of the Business Council to call an election on receipt of a petition signed by seventy-five (75) qualified voters.

## BYLAWS OF THE SPOKANE TRIBE

### ARTICLE I—DUTIES OF OFFICERS

**SECTION 1. *Chairman.*** The Chairman of the Business Council shall preside over all meetings of the Tribe and of the Business Council. He shall perform all duties of the Chairman and exercise any authority delegated to him by the Business Council. In the absence of the Chairman, the member not holding office shall perform the duties of the Chairman.

**SEC. 2. *Secretary-Treasurer.*** The Secretary-Treasurer shall conduct all correspondence and keep accurate records of all matters transacted by the Council. He shall submit to the Superintendent copies of the minutes of all special and regular meetings of the Business Council.

He shall have charge of all funds in the custody of the Business Council. He shall keep accurate records of all money received and deposit it with the Superintendent. He shall not pay out or otherwise

disburse any funds coming into his custody by virtue of his office or in the possession or custody of the Business Council except when properly authorized so to do by resolution of the Business Council. He shall make reports when called to do so.

When in the opinion of the General Council sufficient funds have accumulated in the tribal treasury to justify a bonded treasurer, the Secretary-Treasurer shall furnish a bond satisfactory to the General Council and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

**SEC. 3. *Appointive Officers.*** The duties of all committees and officers appointed by the Business Council shall be clearly defined in a resolution passed by the Council. Such committees and officers shall make reports to the Business Council as required.

## ARTICLE II—TIME AND PLACE OF MEETINGS

**SECTION 1.** Regular meetings of the Business Council shall be the third Friday of July, October, January, and April, at Wellpinit, Washington, at a designated building.

**SEC. 2.** Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairman or a majority of the Council members.

**SEC. 3.** The April meeting shall be a General Spokane Indian Tribal meeting.

**SEC. 4. *Quorum.*** No business shall be transacted by the Business Council unless a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of two members.

**SEC. 5. *Quorum. General Council.*** The quorum of the General Council shall consist of twenty-five (25) qualified voters of the Tribe.

**SEC. 6. *Order of Business.*** The following order of business is established for all meetings :

1. Call to order by Chairman.
2. Roll call.
3. Ascertainment of a quorum.
4. Reading of the minutes of last meeting.
5. Adoption of the minutes.
6. Unfinished business.
7. New business.
8. Adjournment.

**SEC. 7. *Compensation.*** The Business Council may prescribe such compensation of officers and members of the Council as it deems advisable from such funds as may be available, subject to the approval of the Spokane Tribe.

## ARTICLE III—RATIFICATION OF CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

This Constitution and Bylaws shall be in full force and effective whenever a majority of the adult voters of the Spokane Tribe, voting at an election called for the purpose by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in which at least thirty percent of the eligible voters living on the Spokane Indian Reservation vote shall have ratified such Constitution and Bylaws and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs shall have approved same.

## CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

Pursuant to the request of a majority of the Indians of the Spokane Reservation to obtain for themselves a representative organization, this Constitution and Bylaws was duly submitted by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the adult Indians living on the Reservation for ratification and was on May 12, 1951, duly ratified by a vote of 95 for, and 34 against, in an election in which over thirty percent of those entitled to vote cast their ballots.

ALEX SHERWOOD

*Chairman, Spokane Business Council*

CLAIR WYNECOOP

*Secretary, Spokane Business Council*

FLOYD H. PHILLIPS

*Superintendent, Colville Agency.*

## APPROVAL

This Constitution and Bylaws, having been proposed and duly ratified by the members of the Spokane Tribe of Indians on May 12, 1951, at a referendum called by the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, is herewith approved.

D. S. MYER

*Commissioner*

Washington, D. C., June 27, 1951

