

**(3) Technical Assistance Letter(s)**

**- October 13, 1987**

Mr. David Mackety  
2221 1 1/2 Mile Road  
Fulton, Michigan 49052

Dear Mr. Mackety:

The Branch of Acknowledgment and Research has completed an initial review for obvious deficiencies and significant omissions of the Huron Potawatomi Band's petition for Federal acknowledgment. The initial review of a petition for obvious deficiencies and significant omissions is required by Part 83.9(b) of Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The obvious deficiencies letter is a requirement which is provided for in the regulations to insure that a petitioner is not rejected because of technical problems in the petition and that the group's status will be considered on its merits. The letter does not constitute any evidence that a positive conclusion has been or will be reached on the petition, or on the portions of it not discussed in the letter. Nor does the fact that a petitioner responds to the obvious deficiencies review imply in any way that the group meets the seven mandatory criteria by simply submitting additional data. The obvious deficiencies review of the petition merely provides the petitioner the opportunity to submit additional information or clarification prior to the actual active consideration period, at which time the petition will be thoroughly reviewed and evaluated to determine whether the group is entitled to be acknowledged as an Indian tribe.

Our review points out several areas regarding the social community and political processes of the group that need additional description and documentation in order to evaluate the petition adequately. These areas are discussed at length in the paragraphs that follow. We urge you to make every effort to provide the information requested below in as much detail as possible. In addition, there are requests for several items of documentation.

With the requested documentation, the Acknowledgment staff can fully evaluate the petition when it is placed on active consideration. The staff's research during active consideration is for the purpose of verifying and/or elaborating on an already complete petition. The Acknowledgment staff may be unable to do the research necessary to fill in gaps in the petition on behalf of the petitioner to the extent they have done in the past.

A more detailed description of the current community of the Huron Potawatomi Band is essential. This description should include how the group has maintained social cohesion. Such description should include discussion of the following subjects:

The lines of communication and/or of social interaction that have been maintained between the members living on the Pine Creek reservation and those in Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, Wyoming and other towns in southwestern Michigan.

Activities or events which tended to bring the membership together such as pow-wows or other group social activities. A homecoming celebration is referred to in an August 17, 1961, newspaper article. Was this a regular event?

How members who live elsewhere learn of council actions and decisions. If a newsletter is used, please submit representative copies.

As an example of how social contact is maintained within the group, you might want to describe a typical, recent wedding and/or funeral of a Huron Potawatomi member. If possible provide a list of the people who attended any social functions both before and after the ceremony or service.

The petition does not adequately describe the group's past and present political processes. A discussion of the political process should cover the following:

It is important for us to more clearly understand the modern-day political system. To do this, we would like a description of how group decisions and agreements are reached, i.e., beyond the formal mechanisms of voting in the council. What kinds of formal or informal political divisions exist within the band? Please describe what political functions are exercised by the council, leaders or by other processes, e.g., how are disputes within the group resolved and community resources allocated?

More complete examples of the leadership of the chiefs from Cush-ee-was, who died in 1836, through Samuel Mandoka, who died in 1934, that is, how these leaders maintained political influence or authority over group members. What were considered the typical political activities of the Chief? What sanctions, if any, could these leaders utilize to maintain political control? What influence did the community have on its leaders, and how did members demonstrate their political support?

How the political system of the group functioned between the death of Samuel Mandoka in 1934 and the organization of the current government in 1970. If there was a consensus form of government during this period, describe how this community consensus was achieved. Were there informal leaders or influential figures? Were community meetings held to discuss the claims cases or other questions? Examples of any issues that were resolved by the community at large during this era would be helpful.

Reference has been made to two factions within the group. Please describe these factions, their composition and history, and issues over which the factions have been or are in disagreement. The description should include how the factions present the issues with which they are in

Disagreement. For example, are disputes presented to the council or to the leaders? Are these disputes discussed in council meetings or privately? What process is followed to resolve the issues?

A description of Huron Potawatomi church activities would be helpful. From the newspaper clippings it appears that the local Methodist church was an important focal point of the community. There are several references to identified group leaders playing key roles in church activities. For example, there is a June 12, 1901, reference to Chief Pamptopee preaching at local services; a May 21, 1925, reference to Stephen Pamptopee and Samuel Mandoka serving on the church building committee; a July 23, 1925, reference to Mandoka as the chairman of the camp meeting committee; and a September 1, 1948, reference to Albert Mackety serving on the same committee. How were the church activities of these leaders related to their political influence over the group? Did the various Methodist camp meetings, revivals, and church socials serve the purpose of bringing the membership together and/or otherwise provide a mechanism for maintaining tribal relationships? For example did the various church meetings, such as the "Potawatomi quarterly meeting" referenced in a June 15, 1906, newspaper article, serve as a forum for tribal political issues as well as church business? As part of this discussion include a description of the most recent camp meeting indicating how many Huron Potawatomi members attended, what role the group may have had as organizers, leaders or attendees, and if non-Indians attended, how many and what role they had.

There are several specific items that we would like:

1. A resolution or motion from the governing body indicating the exact name by which the group wants to be known if the group is acknowledged. The group has used Huron Potawatomi Band, Nottawaseppi Band of Huron Potawatomis, and Nottawaseppi-Huron Potawatomi when referring to themselves.
2. A copy of the National Register nomination of the Pine Creek Reservation.
3. A copy of the minutes of the meeting when the undated "Constitution of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi" was adopted by the group.
4. A copy of the group's incorporation papers.
5. A list of all tribal committees with the names of current and past members of the committees.
6. Any former lists of members that may exist. A copy of the list of members, undated but notarized October 5, 1978, prepared by Leona Bush, Enrollment Clerk, and signed by David Mackety, Tribal Chairman, was submitted with the petition. The petition mentions that a list of members prepared around September 8, 1979, may exist. If such a list exists please provide a copy.

The membership roll submitted with the petition is dated July 1, 1986. There are a total of 234 members listed (not counting the one member listed as deceased on the roll). We suggest that the group keep its membership list current by recording new births and deaths which will take place in the interim between July 1, 1986, and the date when the group's petition is placed on active consideration. When the group is notified that the petition is being placed on active consideration, a supplemental list should be submitted to be attached to your list of July 1, 1986. This list should include those additions to the membership, such as newborn infants, who are considered to be members and those individuals who were inadvertently omitted from the July 1, 1986, list. The supplemental list should also note those members on the July 1, 1986, list who are deceased. If recognized, the list of members submitted for acknowledgment purposes will become the group's base roll for Bureau purposes and, as such, will be binding on the group for some time to come, except for minor corrections.

Once the Branch of Acknowledgment and Research has received the requested materials, the staff will review the materials in order to determine whether the materials submitted sufficiently respond to the obvious deficiency letter. The Acknowledgment staff will be in touch with you by telephone to discuss the information requested above. They will be happy to answer any question you may have at that time. Should additional data be needed or questions arise in the future as a result of on-going research during active consideration, we reserve the right to request this information. Should you have any questions regarding this letter and the information that has been requested, please do not hesitate to contact the Acknowledgment staff at (202) 343-3568, or write Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Acknowledgment and Research, Mail Stop 32-SIB, 18th and C Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240.

Sincerely,

**Hazel E. Elbert**

Deputy to the Assistant Secretary -  
Indian Affairs (Tribal Services)

cc: Senator Carl Levin  
Michigan Commission on Indian Affairs  
Michigan Indian Legal Services  
Minneapolis Area Director  
Superintendent, Michigan Agency

cc: Surname:Chron:400:44ORF:440B:  
Holdup:BDThompson:msb:10/1/87:HP-OD