

# Northern Ponca Elder's Committee Organizational Guidelines

November 2020

## ARTICLE I: FORMATION

**Section 1. Establishment.** There is hereby established a committee of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska elders to be known as the Northern Ponca Elders Committee under the Tribe and delegated the duties and responsibilities set forth in this Charter.

**Section 2. Mission Statement.** The mission of the Northern Ponca Elders Committee is to advocate for improved comprehensive services and provide the leadership needed to meet the needs of our Northern Ponca Tribal Elders (55 and older) by planning and advocating for an aging population in a manner designed to protect and improve their quality of life while maintaining individual dignity.

**Section 3. Vision Statement.** The Northern Ponca Elders Committee exists to enrich the lives and meet the needs of the Northern Ponca Tribal Elders, to foster social interaction and activities that enhance the lives of our Northern Ponca Tribal Elders, and to provide ways that positively impacts all Northern Ponca Tribal Elders.

**Section 4. Purpose.** The purpose of the Northern Ponca Elders Committee is guided by their Mission and Vision:

- a. Enrich the lives of our Tribal Elders;
- b. Provide social interaction and activities for our Tribal Elders to enhance culture and traditions;
- c. Identify, plan, and improve the services needed for our aging population; and
- d. Serve in an advisory capacity to the Tribal Council on the needs of Tribal Elders.

## **ARTICLE II: ELDERS COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Section 1. Composition.** The Elders Committee shall consist of two members from each of the four Council Districts established in the Constitution or as modified by redistricting. Each of the two members must reside in the Service Area or 100 miles of the counties constituting the Service Delivery Areas of the Tribe as designated in the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Constitution for Council members (Article IV Section 8). A ninth member shall be appointed from outside the Service Delivery Areas of the Tribe and shall reside outside the Service Delivery Area (including outside the area described in Article IV Section 8 of the Tribal Constitution). The Tribal Council shall strongly consider appointment of the two members from District 1 to represent an elder from the Niobrara Service Delivery Area and an elder from the Sioux City Service Delivery Area when possible.

**Section 2. Term of Office.** The term of office of Elders Committee members shall be four years from the date of appointment and at the end of each four year term, vacancies shall be declared by the Tribal Council of all nine members.

**Section 3. Appointments.** Appointments to the Elders Committee shall be made by the Ponca Tribal Council by the second Monday of January every four years beginning January 11, 2020. The outgoing Council will make the appointments for all nine members of the Elders Committee.

On the first Monday in November preceding the January appointments, the Tribal Council shall inform the community of the nine upcoming vacancies. The vacancies will be posted in the Ponca Tribe's Newsletter, in each of the offices of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, on the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Website, and all social media outlets used by the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska.

Any Tribal Elder wishing to apply for a position on the Elders Committee should send a letter expressing their desire to apply for a vacancy and any supporting documentation to the Administrative Assistant to the Tribal Council.

Applications will be accepted from the first Monday in November and must be received by December 15th to be considered.

All applicants selected to sit on the Elders Committee will be appointed to the Elders Committee pending a background check. The Tribal Council reserves the right to void the appointment to the Elders Committee based on the results of the background check.

**Section 4. Vacancies.** All vacancies that occur during any Elders Committee member's term of office will be filled by the Tribal Council. A notice of accepting applications for mid-term vacancies will be posted for a period of 30 days as directed by the Tribal Council at the Tribal Offices, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Website, and any social media outlets used by the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska as determined by the Tribal Council.

**Section 5. Ethics and Conduct.** The Elders Committee shall comply with the Constitution and Law and Order Code of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and must adhere to the confidentiality, privacy, and ethics requirements imposed on the Tribal Council in the Law and Order Code, including handling confidential matters in executive session when necessary or appropriate.

Members shall adhere to the principles and practices of good ethics, a high standard of professionalism, mutual respect, avoid political discussions, and behaviors reflective of wisdom and compassion per our Ponca Tribal values.

**Section 6. Resignation and Removal.** Any Elders Committee member may resign from the Elders Committee by delivering a written resignation to the Tribal Council.

The Tribal Council may remove any member of the Elders Committee with or without cause.

An Elders Committee member shall be removed for missing three (3) consecutive meetings without excuse, subject to Tribal Council allowing exceptions due to unforeseen circumstances.

### **ARTICLE III: OFFICERS OF THE ELDERS**

**Section 1. Officers.** The Elders Committee shall elect from its members a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers shall be elected in the month of January by a majority vote and shall serve a term of one (1) year. The remainder of the Elders Committee members shall serve as representatives of the Districts they serve. Should there become a vacancy in an officer position, there will be a special election of a new officer from the Elders Committee members who shall complete the term of the vacancy until the next year.

## **Section 2. Duties of the Officers.**

a. Chairperson: The Chairperson calls and presides over meetings of the Elders Committee. The Chairperson also attends Tribal Council meetings when asked and to advocate on behalf of the Tribal Elders or Elders Committee. The Chairperson approves items to be placed on the proposed agenda for all Elders Committee meetings. Approval of the agenda will be approved at Elder Committee meetings after any additional items are brought forth by Elders Committee members. The Chairperson shall present proposed budgets to the Tribal Council for approval on an annual basis prior to the start of the next fiscal year; shall schedule, re-schedule, or cancel meetings when necessary, and inform all Elders Committee members, Tribal members and Tribal Council of any changes. The Chairperson must be flexible and able to work closely with the Elders Committee, Tribal Council, and Tribal members.

b. Vice Chairperson: The Vice Chairperson is responsible for assuming the duties of the Chairperson when the Chairperson is absent or unable to fulfill their duties and follow the same guidelines of Chairperson.

c. Secretary: The Secretary is responsible for recording the meetings, taking the meeting minutes, and obtaining an attendance sheet for each meeting of Elders Members and others present. The minutes shall be written in a professional manner without opinion or bias and submitted to the Elders Committee and to the Administrative Assistant of the Tribal Council within one week following the meeting. The Secretary will keep a detailed record of all activities of the Elders Committee in a manner that the all activities can be retrieved by the Elders Committee members and their successors. The Secretary shall be responsible to inform the Administrative Assistant to the Tribal Council of all Elders Committee meetings scheduled or any community events the Elders Committee may sponsors. The Secretary shall send out agendas of upcoming meetings to the Elders Committee Members, Administrative Assistant to the Tribal Council and all Tribal offices. The Secretary shall be responsible for putting all information needed for an Elders Committee meeting into a packet and distributing such packets via e-mail or mail to each Elders Committee member no later than one week before the Elders Committee meeting.

d. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be responsible for monitoring the Elders Committee budget, finances, and any accounts of the Elders Committee. The Treasurer shall provide monthly budget reports to the Elders Committee and work with the Tribal Finance Department as needed.

## **ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS**

**Section 1. Regular Meetings.** The Elders Committee shall meet in accordance with a schedule to be adopted by the Elders Committee annually. Meeting locations shall rotate between each Tribal government office site of Niobrara, Sioux City, Omaha / Ralston, Lincoln, and Norfolk or remotely/LifeSize to best meet the needs of the Elders Committee and constituents. The Elders Committee shall meet annually by August to agree on a proposed budget for the next fiscal year and present to Tribal Council for approval.

**Section 2. Quorum.** Five members of the Elders Committee shall constitute a quorum for conducting business.

**Section 3. Decisions.** Provided a quorum is present, all decisions of the Elders Committee shall be made by consensus of the members attending a meeting when possible, but may be decided by majority vote of those in attendance if necessary to make a decision.

**Section 4. District Meetings/Activities.** District meetings/activities that are separate from the planned meeting and/or activities of the Elders Committee shall be the responsibility of the Elders members representing that district. All plans for meetings/activities shall be submitted to the Secretary to file.

**Section 5. Notice of Meetings.** All meetings will be posted at each of the offices of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and announced via the Ponca Tribe's Newsletter, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Website, all social media used by the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, and any other means identified to reach the Tribal Elders.

## **ARTICLE V: ACTIVITIES**

**Section 1. District Activities.** Activities of the Elders Committee will vary within each District due to having such a diverse population. District representatives will match activities according to what the areas offer and the needs of the elders residing in their district.

**Section 2. Fundraising.** The Elders Committee may operate fundraising activities / events in districts to secure additional funding for marketing, event planning, and special activities. Any and all fundraising activities by the Elders Committee must be approved by the Tribal Council.

**Section 3. Staff Presentation.** The Elders Committee may from time to time request staff of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska to present and answer questions for information purposes to assist the Elders Committee with its Mission, Vision and Purpose. The Elders Committee will send notification of their request to the staff member as well as the Tribal Council. Consideration should be at the forefront in the use of staff's time by using the option of Lifesize if the Elders Committee meeting is not in the staff's Service Area. Staff priority will be to their employment and they may need to schedule another meeting and time that benefits and coordinates with the employee's job responsibilities.

**Section 4. Reports to Tribal Council.** The Chairperson of the Elders Committee shall present a written report to the Tribal Council on a quarterly basis. The Chairperson may present in person or via Lifesize along with the written quarterly report.

TRIBAL COUNCIL APPROVED 11/2/20

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of Elders Committee

  
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Chairman of Tribal Council

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Tribal Council

11-2-2020  
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Date