

Elected Chief breaks tie: Band Council goes ahead with alcohol referendum despite 1988 resolution

By Donna Duric
Writer

In a hurried special meeting Tuesday Six Nations Band Council voted to continue with advance polls on a proposed alcohol regulation law this Saturday despite a 1988 band resolution stating the community did not want alcohol to be sold here and that band council would not bring up the issue of alcohol regulation in the community again.

Band Council voted 4-4 Tuesday morning to move forward with the referendum but failed to rescind the 1988 resolution, with Six Nations Elected Chief Ava Hill breaking the tie to allow the referendum and community engagement to move forward.

"I'm in favour," said Hill upon seeing the tie. "So it's passed."

Voting in favour of the resolution were: Darryl Hill, Dave Hill, Melba Thomas and Wray Maracle.

Opposed were Bob Johnson, Lewis Staats, Carl Hill, and Roger Jonathan. Councillors Helen Miller, Sherrylyn Hill-Pierce, Mark Hill and Terry General were absent.

The May 3, 1988 Council minutes state the resolution as follows: Moved by Lewis Staats and seconded by Kenneth Hill, that this Council acknowledge the petition put forth on May 3, 1988, by the people of the community, that liquor not be sold on the Six Nations of the Grand River Indian Reserve and that the Six Nations Council concur with the wishes of the community that the question of the sale of liquor not be put forth again. Carried.

Band council did not rescind this motion Monday.

Councillor Helen Miller alerted Band Council to the existence of the 1988 resolution on Monday - almost two months after its economic development department initiated a community engagement session to determine

the community's acceptance of permissive alcohol regulations and a proposed beer brewery here.

Councillor Miller said she was disappointed with the re-

sults.

"If I had been there they would have lost. I would have supported honouring the 1988 resolution. True, the Council back then didn't actually say no to selling alcohol on the reserve but they

did support a petition from the community that said no to the sale of alcohol. I think all of Council should have been present given the importance of the issue but because the meeting was hastily called some of us couldn't rearrange our schedules. Also the half hour timeframe the Chief gave for the meeting didn't seem adequate to me to have meaningful discussion."

Councillor Miller said she could not attend because of a doctor's appointment.

The old resolution was moved on May 3, 1988 by Lewis Staats and seconded by then-councillor Kenneth Hill. It stated: "That this council acknowledges the petition put forth on May 3, 1988 by the people of the community, that liquor not be sold on the Six Nations of the Grand River Indian Reserve and that the Six Nations Council concur with the wishes of the community **that the question of the sale of liquor**



Elected Chief Ava Hill

not be put forth again."

Coun. Darryl Hill made a motion Tuesday morning, seconded by Coun. Dave Hill, to continue with a Jan. 17 referendum on creating an alcohol law that could also pave the way for the proposed beer brewery at Oneida Business Park.

Coun. Carl Hill was opposed to moving forward with the referendum and said band council should meet with the Confederacy Council to discuss regulating alcohol in the community. He said he will be "surprised" if people vote in favour of allowing alcohol

sales in the community in the Jan. 17 referendum.

Coun. Wray Maracle voted to move forward with the referendum, adding that band council didn't need to rescind the 1988 resolution because they've already been discussing alcohol for years, citing numerous resolutions it's made permitting the Six Nations Veterans Association to consume alcohol at the Community Hall in conjunction with its yearly Remembrance Day parade.

Band Council said it will rescind the 1988 resolution if the community votes in favour of permissive alcohol regulations.

The installation of the beer brewery is contingent on the community voting in favour of permissive alcohol regulations.

SNED was previously going to put the proposed beer brewery to a vote but instead decided to make the brewery's approval contingent on

(Continued on page 7)