

Confederacy Council hears concerns, defence of HDI

By Nahnda Garlow

Approximately 200 people attended the monthly meeting of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy at Six Nations of the Grand River on Saturday to hear the rationale behind the physical removal of lawyer Aaron Detlor from the GREAT building in Ohsweken.

Members of the Men's Fire Bill Monture and Wilf Davey were invited to stand before the council and explain why they took action to remove Detlor.

Monture said the situation surrounding community disapproval of Detlor's involvement with community interests including land leases and establishing corporations is a long standing issue.

"What happened at GREAT that day it goes back over a year ago. I remember one time sitting at the community hall in Ohsweken. Talking about HDI and I said it was a good concept but you got the wrong people working in that entity. I get so many people a day complaining about this or complaining about that but the women are scared to stand up and voice their concerns."

Monture said he warned Detlor before he was removed from the community on April 28 and said, "If I gotta walk you to the edge of the territory I'll have no problem doing that because you're causing a lot of disruption in our community and it's not healthy for our people."

Monture said the removal of Detlor was peaceful and not the way it was described by media.

"There was no vicious assault that people claimed happened at the

GREAT building."

Monture said he asked Detlor five times to leave. "He sat back on the second time I asked him. He sat back in his chair and he said I ain't going nowhere and he threw his phone," said Monture.

Monture said Detlor then became confrontational which is what led to his physical removal.

Monture said, "He left on his own accord and the police escorted him. but the next day some women that work for HDI snuck him back in the building. Why?"

Monture said the actions of the Men's Fire on Wednesday were erroneously reported by the media.

"We were across the road. We were having pizza and pop. There was over 100 of us," said Monture. "It said in the paper the building was surrounded. It wasn't surrounded. It was peaceful. People were driving by, kids were going by on the bus holding their thumbs up in the air."

Detlor then got up to share what happened from his perspective to the Council. Several unidentified women in the longhouse crowd shouted out "Leave, there's the door. Leave. Leave."

Detlor had another take on the situation surrounding his physical removal from the GREAT building, claiming he was apprehended by six men and carried out the door.

"It wasn't peaceful. There was nothing peaceful about it," said Detlor. "Im still physically agitated by it."

The lawyer read a letter from the Men's Fire to him that was handed to him during his removal from the GREAT building saying "The inference that they were trying to make is that I was to

be ejected from a white law." Detlor said and affirmed his Mohawk identity to the council. "Yes I am from Tyendinaga. Yes I am 'Gan-ye-gah'."

Detlor further defended his work with the HDI. "I feel deeply, strongly about my role for the council, because that's who I report to. I continually report back to the council and I continually report back to the chiefs and clan mothers. I take direction from them. I do not act on my own," said Detlor.

HDI Director Hazel Hill then began to share her perspective on what she believes is the situation at hand.

Hill spoke for 45 minutes, saying multiple parties are involved in the controversy surrounding HDI and Detlor with intentions to destroy the progress the traditional government at Six Nations has made to revitalize.

Hill said the *Two Row Times*, Steve Charest, Six Nations Elected Chief Ava Hill, Six Nations Elected Council, the Six Nations Economic Development Corporation and their CEO Matt Jamieson, Grand River Enterprises, Ken Hill, Jerry Montour, lawyer Katherine Hensel, the Six Nations Police, the City of Brantford, the federal government, the provincial government, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, former band council Chief of Whitefish River Steve Miller, Phil Montour, the Mohawks at Kanata and the Ontario Power Authority, the Ontario Power Generation and the Independent Electricity System Operator are all part of a multi-pronged effort to usurp the authority of the Haudenosaunee traditional governing body and blacklist Aaron Det-

lor.

"They're playing games out there within the political structures of Ontario and Canada and it's because they feel to give a lot of credit to that," Hill said. "I don't, I give it to this council, I give it to Shogwayadihsoh."

Hill alleged that the *Two Row Times* have been advancing the position of the crown and basically trying to overthrow this Confederacy and I can tell you that because I know that Ava has been directly working with the owners giving them so called leaked documents."

Hill was interrupted by Cayuga Hoyane Sam General and asked to get back on track. "We want to hear what's going on with HDI, not what's going on with them," said General.

Hill replied by "I'm connecting the dots. Then I can show you. What happened at that office at GREAT. Kenny Hill and all those Black Escalades and whatever were sitting outside there helping so I'm connecting the dots and I just ask that, and I'm talking to you, I ask respectfully that you listen to what I have to say."

Hill continued saying it was her opinion that an incorrect Louie Hall versions of the Great Law was to blame for the disruption as well.

"It's my belief and my opinion, but that version was intentionally made. I think Louis was commissioned by the catholic priests to create a version of the law that would divide the confederacy," said Hill.

"If you look at what's happening, in particular in Mohawk communities, the arrogance and ignorance of individuals who don't understand

who will stand up and will fight for whatever, they have authority to club you over the head or whatever if you don't do your job as a chief," said Hill. "How contrary is that to the peace? How could that be real if the Peacemaker gave you those instructions? It doesn't make sense."

Two Row Times contacted a number of named conspirators for comment on the allegations raised by Hill.

Chief of Six Nations Police Glenn Lickers said, "Our position with both the Confederacy and the Band Council is that we enjoy a positive working relationship with the Confederacy. I have all respect in the world for the Chiefs and Clanmothers."

Lickers said since the incident at the GREAT building "our main focus has been to ensure Aaron Detlor's safety and ensure that we prevented any breach of the peace."

Lickers said Six Nations Police were called to help, escorting Detlor back into the building one evening following his removal so he could retrieve files he said were needed for a court case.

Steve Charest was also named among those parties Hill said have been working to remove Detlor.

Charest said, "Absolutely ridiculous. It's a bizarre and ridiculous accusation. I don't even know what to say it's so

ridiculous. Frankly, it sounds like it comes from a wild imagination."

The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs released a statement via email to the *Two Row Times* about their alleged part and said, "The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs does not involve itself with matters that are internal to Six Nations, and has no direct contact with Mr. Detlor."

Six Nations Elected Council also rose to respond to Hill's accusation and said, "Please know, this accusation is completely false. Chief Hill is not working with any organization(s) or individual(s) in an effort to "destroy" the Confederacy Council."

Hill continued by claiming the HDI did not file papers for incorporation.

"Never ever has HDI ever reported the name Haudenosaunee Development Institute to the NU-ANS for the purposes of incorporation," said Hill. "Somebody was trying to set us up."

Hill then alleged Toronto lawyer Katherine Hensel was the common denominator in the matter.

Hensel told *Two Row Times*, "I most certainly did not file any corporate documents relating to any entity at Six Nations or the HCCC."

Hensel said "The cur-

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rent dispute between various parties and groups at Six Nations are internal to the community. While I have had the privilege of assisting numerous individuals and organizations at Six Nations over the years, I am merely a technician. My competence, representation, and advocacy are confined to Canadian and provincial legal issues. It would be inappropriate for me to involve myself in the community's internal governance and disputes of this kind. I am Secwepemc, not Haudenosaunee."

Hill concluded by saying, "All these people and all these events were somehow trying to take out Detlor and HDI but more importantly this council. It's a direct hit by the government to try and take you out."

Hill then announced she was taking a leave of absence from her role with HDI.

The chiefs then had opportunity to speak regarding their family's position on the problems surrounding HDI – some support, some clan families are split, some in direct opposition – but it was clear on the matter of HDI and Detlor's work within it, the Confederacy does not have consensus.

Cayuga Hoyane Sam General spoke and said the Great Law states that when there is a presence in the territory that is a disruption to peace that there is protocol to deal with those matters.

General spoke directly to Detlor saying he addressed these concerns a year ago, saying there was disruption then and it has continued since and was never resolved.

General again spoke directly to Detlor in Gayogohono. He then began in English and said, "As of today I'm saying that you're relieved of

your responsibility with HDI. You walk out that door, you're not allowed back into our territory. Once you're gone that's it you can't come back into our territory."

General said, "That's the message I carry. When you go out that door you don't come back in."

Mohawk Clanmother Shirley Hill also spoke saying she agreed with General.

"What I see is the same as Sam. I hate to say it. This man here [Detlor] calls himself Haudenosaunee, Mohawk. That's what you call yourself?, the clan mother asked Detlor.

"You brought awful things to our people," Hill said. "If you don't know who you are it will show. There's a lot of things that my people have been telling me; a lot of things. The disrespect. That's not the way its supposed to be. You see how upset

the people are."

Hill addressed the council saying the Haudenosaunee citizens raising concerns about the HDI and Detlor have been silenced by claims of following protocol. Hill said all people with concerns have a right to be heard.

"The peacemaker never wanted us to be that way. That eagle is crying. Something is happening," Hill said. "They got a right just as much as anybody else. Even that child has a

right to speak they're sitting in council here they don't get to speak they sit there for months and months.'

"I think they all have a legitimate right to say what they're going to say," Hill said. "It's not gossip, it's all black and white. So don't say we're gossiping. There's treaties that have been broken, there's lands that have been sold. And do we all know about it? No we don't. See we got chil-

dren too and we'd like to have something for them for when they come. We have to respect the nations opinions."

Council ended abruptly when one Six Nations elder, Jan Longboat, invited people in attendance to join hands in a peace circle. Bursts of laughter were heard and about 70 people left the building.

The wampum was gathered and the meeting closed.