

Election appeal filed in District Four

*By Lynda Powless
Editor*

The Six Nations Elections aren't over yet. A District Four candidate filed an appeal last Friday.

Terence (Tabby) Jamieson lost the election in District Four by one vote. There were also four rejected ballots in the count.

Jamieson said he is asking for a recount in his appeal.

He said with only one vote separating him from Alton VanEvery who won, a recount should not be unexpected. He said he also questions the interpretation of some of the rejected ballots. He said at least three of those ballots were clearly marked for him but were rejected by the Elections officer.

Jamieson said he knows of at least one local person who voted in District Four but is a New Credit Band member. "That person was ineligible but voted. There were different people coming in and

voting in districts they didn't live in. No body was keeping close track of people who were voting. You just give em your status card and tell em where you live, they don't ask for any proof of residency. They didn't ask for a driver's licence or even a utility bill. They don't ask you to prove you live in an area."

The election, he said, "was pretty wide open."

Jamieson isn't the only candidate unhappy with the election procedures.

Candidate for Chief, Melba Thomas, who lost in her first bid for the seat by only 37 votes, said she had planned to appeal but work commitments kept her away from the community last week.

Wellington Staats was re-elected after a roller coaster election night at the Six Nations Bingo Hall that saw him regain his seat after garnering 402 votes, only 37 votes over popular social worker and counsellor Melba Thomas who received 365 votes.

Third in the ranking was Reg Hill who took 264 votes overall, with 12 in the advance polls. Coming in fourth in the race was Roger Jonathan, a local businessman with 129 votes. Lillian Montour, a former councillor received 13 votes and William D. Hill, a hobby farmer and truck driver drew 10 votes.

There were a total of 1,193 votes

(Continued on page 2)

Slim Margains

(Continued from front page)

cast for chief with 10 rejected ballots. A total of 1290 votes were cast.

Thomas said she had planned to appeal but, "I had to be out of town and couldn't get back in time to appeal," she told Turtle Island News.

Thomas said she had planned to ask for a recount. "It was very close and I felt there should be a re-count."

"As well, I am very concerned that there are 95 votes that haven't been accounted for."

Thomas said there were 95 votes fewer cast for Chief than in the districts.

"I am very concerned about that. I asked the Elections Officer what happened. What happen to the 95 votes that weren't accounted for through voting for the chief."

She said she also asked for a copy of the electoral officer's guidelines.

"He told me he had not been instructed by council to provide his guidelines to anyone. That if I wanted them I would have to get them from the elections committee and that was councillor John Peters and Irvin Harris." Both Peters and Harris were candidates in the election. Peters was re-elected but Harris went down to defeat in District Six losing to Ken Hill and Barb Harris.

Thomas said she asked both councillors for a copy of the handbook. "They told me they didn't have them. So who has it."

Thomas said she has also been told by a number of people from Friendship Centres off reserve, "they didn't know they could vote. Especially from St. Catharines. A number of people from there said they weren't aware of the new election code at all."

Thomas said "that tells me, the "Six Nations Band Council and electoral officer didn't let people

know about the changes in the election guidelines and that they could vote,

Electoral officer Bob Johnson confirmed he received the appeal from District Four. He said his response will go out this week. Johnson has five days to respond to Jamieson's appeal. If Johnson rejects the request, Jamieson can appeal to the election appeals board.

Johnson said the difference in the number of people who voted for the chief and districts is not unusual. "Oh no, I wouldn't say so. We had some off reserve people who came in, some unknowns, some people just vote for the chief and not the district and others just vote in their district, so the difference isn't unusual. It's optional, its not mandatory, people could have cast only one vote."

Johnson said there were a number of first time voters this time around. "They may have just familiarizing themselves with the process and just came in to vote for one candidate."

There is a possible 13,906 eligible voters at Six Nations.

Johnson said the voters list eventually will be held in retention at band council. In the past after a certain number of days had passed the ballots were disposed of, but Johnson said, "there is no allowance in this Election Code, or the manual for disposal. I guess they hang on to them until they revisit the Election Code or decide they're collecting too much."