Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

Menominee Tribal Legislature
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Craig Corn, Chair
Lisa Waukau, Vice-Chairperson
Crystal Chapman-Chevalier, Secretary

Council Members:

Myrna Warrington
Orman “Chief” Waukau
Gary Besaw
Joan Delabreau
Randolph “Randy” Reiter
Ruth Waupoose

Location: Menominee County, northeast Wisconsin

Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

Tribal Statistics

There are currently 8,720 Menominee tribal members

- 19 and under = 2,159
- Ages 20-64 = 5,892
- 65 and older = 669

The Menominee Reservation and Menominee County share nearly identical boundaries, with the area known as Middle Village being the exception. The size of the reservation is 235,524 acres or approximately 357.96 square miles, and contains roughly 223,500 acres of heavily forested lands, representing the largest single tract of virgin timberland in Wisconsin. Approximately 98 percent of acreage is trust land and two (2) percent of acreage is fee land. The Menominee Tribe has no additional trust land outside of their contiguous boundaries.

The Menominee Tribe is the largest employer in Menominee County, employing approximately 701 people (*Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development).*

Tribal Government

The Tribal Government was created through Section 5(c) of the Menominee Restoration Act; Article IV Section I within the Constitution and Bylaws. The Menominee Tribal Legislature is composed of nine members. Elections are held every January.

- Chairperson
  - Elected by the Tribal Legislature
  - One year term
- Vice-Chairperson
  - Elected by the Tribal Legislature
  - One year term
- Secretary
  - Elected by the Tribal Legislature
  - One year term
- Six Legislators
  - 3 year terms, staggered
  - Meets twice a month
  - Decisions are majority rule.

Brief History

The Menominee Indian Tribe's current reservation was created in 1854 through treaty with the United States of America. On June 17, 1954 Congress implemented Public Law 108. This is known at the "Termination Bill" which was signed into law by President Eisenhower. This provided for termination of federal control of the Menominee Indian Reservation.

On July 3, 1959 Governor Gaylord Nelson signed a law making Menominee County the state's 72nd County. This was an experiment to force tribes to join the mainstream of American society as an assimilation attempt.

During the period from 1961 to 1973 federal supervision over the Tribe was terminated. On April 30, 1961 the Menominee Termination Plan was submitted to the Secretary of Interior. In 1962 the Menominee Council of Chiefs was organized as a non-profit organization ideally for the purpose of preserving the name "Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin" which was technically abolished during termination. A petition was signed by 780 Menominee's requesting the repeal of the Menominee Termination in 1964.

In May 1968 the Tribe had filed suit regarding the hunting and fishing rights of tribal members. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the Tribe's favor establishing that when termination was effective it did not relinquish their right to hunt and fish, Menominee Tribe vs. United States, 391 U.S. 404 (1968). When the Termination Plan was implemented the enrolled members became shareholders in Menominee Enterprises, Inc. which became known as M.E.I. The M.E.I. Board of Trustees consisted of seven (7) members; three (3) of whom were non-members. In 1968, the M.E.I. entered into the "Lakes of Menominee," project referred to now as Legend Lake.

In spite of many barriers, the Menominee persisted with their goal in restoring the land to trust status. On April 20, 1972, Wisconsin Senators Proxmire and Nelson introduced Senate Bill No. 3514 in response to the Menominee's ambition to seek reversal of termination. With the dedication and persistence of Tribal members and a coalition of supporters, the Menominee Restoration Act was signed into law on December 22, 1973 by President Nixon after two and one-half years of congressional testimony the Restoration Act was passed. It provided for the federal recognition of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin thereby returning the nation to trust status and sovereign immunity through the development of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Constitution and Bylaws.

The sovereign immunity of the Tribe is retained through Article XVIII of the Constitution and Bylaws, which allows suit to be brought against the Tribe in Menominee Tribal Court by those subject to the Tribe's jurisdiction. Suit may be brought against the Tribe to enforce an ordinance of the Tribe, a provision of the Menominee Constitution, or a provision of the Indian Civil Rights Act.

Tribal Services

Law Enforcement

- The Menominee Tribal Police Department (MTPD) employs 46 people, 25 of whom are sworn law enforcement officers that operate exclusively within the reservation boundaries

- Law Enforcement is funded by federal, state and tribal funds, with the overwhelming majority coming from the tribe and the federal government through the Department of Justice. The state provides funds for the Crime Victim's Grant.

- Menominee Law Enforcement is involved with the Multi-Jurisdictional team with the State of Wisconsin Division of Criminal Investigation.

- MTPD is a member of the Wisconsin Clearing House for Missing and Exploited Children.

- MTPD is in the development of a Multi-Disciplinary team for tribal Law Enforcement agencies on issues affecting agencies within Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Court System

- Menominee Tribal Court is a court of general jurisdiction for both civil and criminal matters. Except for some major crimes that are handled by the Federal courts, tribal court handles the same types of variety of cases as a Wisconsin circuit court. These include criminal, juvenile delinquency, Juveniles in need of Protective Services, Child in need of Protection/Services, civil litigation, probate, guardianships, mental health and alcohol commitments, traffic, civil ordinance violations, Termination of Parental Rights and adoptions.

- Menominee Tribal court is a two-level judicial system where all final trial court orders can be appealed to the Tribal Supreme Court.

- The court system is funded through federal and tribal funds.

Education

The Menominee Indian School District was established by the state of Wisconsin in 1976 and its boundaries encompass the Menominee Indian Reservation, making it one of only two public school districts located almost entirely on Indian lands.

Menominee Indian School District consists of 919 students/99.5% of student body is Native American. The district includes the Keshena Primary School in Keshena, Menominee Indian Middle School in Neopit, Menominee Indian High School and Adult Learning Center in Keshena.

The Menominee Indian School District offers everything that can be found in larger school districts including technology in every classroom, research based curriculum which meets national and state standards, tutoring, athletics, after school programs, and facilities that provide a safe learning environment.

The Menominee also have a tribally-administered school:

- The Menominee Tribal School is a K-8 grade school
- Total enrollment of 198 students
- The school is accredited
- Receives both federal and tribal funding

The tribe operates a comprehensive birth-to-five Head Start Program

- Early Head Start has an enrollment of 32 children and 13 pregnant mothers
- Head Start has an enrollment of 198 three and four year old children

The tribe also operates the College of Menominee Nation.

- The college was chartered by the Menominee Tribal Legislature in 1993. The college was granted full accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) in 1998.

- The college also offers classes on the Oneida reservation so that other Native Americans can benefit from a tribally run college. The college also represents an opportunity for individuals to continue their education while working. A large number of students are part-time.

Healthcare

- The Menominee Tribal Clinic provides comprehensive outpatient services in the area of Medical, Dental and Community Health Services.

- The Clinic is accredited from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

- The Clinic employs over 129 employees, including seven (7) board certified family physicians, two (2) mid-level practitioners, four (4) dentists, and two (2) optometrists.

- The Clinic has over 9,000 active medical charts, of which 10% are non-tribal members.

- Primary funding is through the Indian Health Services, and Department of Health & Family Services through contracts and grants.

Social Services

- Day care receives Tribal and Federal funds, including state funding through the Department of Children and Families.

- Tribal Social Services receives tribal and federal funds, including state funding through the Department of Health Services.

- Child support receives funding through the tribal and federal governments

- Family Preservation programs receive tribal and federal funds, including state funding through the Department of Justice and the Department of Health Services.

- The Menominee have a recreation program fully funded by the tribal government.

- Maehnowesekiyah, a comprehensive AODA treatment center, receives tribal and federal funds, including state funding through the Department of Health Services and Department of Children and Families.

- The Menominee Insurance Department administers funding received through the Department of Health Services for the Medical Relief Block Grant (MRBG). This program serves an average of fifty (50) persons in need of contracted health services.

Economic Enterprises

- The Menominee Tribe employs approximately 701 people:

  - 72% are Native American
  - 28% are Non-Native American

- The Menominee Tribe is the largest employer in Menominee County.

- The Menominee Chamber of Commerce is a 501(c) 3 Non-Profit Organization. There are currently 46 businesses who are members which include the Shawano, Gresham and Stockbridge communities. The Chamber and Menominee Business Center has worked with USDA-Rural Development, HUD - Indian Community Development Block Grant and the North woods NiiJii Enterprise Community, Inc.

Other Associates:

- University of Wisconsin Extension
- College of the Menominee Nation
- Shawano County Economic Progress, Inc.
- Menominee Revolving Loan Fund
- State of Wisconsin Department of Commerce
- USDA Rural Development
- Small Business Administration
- Professional Memberships
- National Business Incubators Association
- Wisconsin Business Incubators Association
- Shawano Chamber of Commerce

The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin has four chartered businesses:

• Menominee Casino, Bingo & Hotel	Gaming/Lodging/Entertainment
• Menominee Tribal Enterprises	Forest products/Sawmill
• Economic Development Authority	Business Development
• Kenosha Gaming Authority	Off-Reservation Gaming