

To Our Nipmuc Community-

This letter is notification that the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band have separated from and are no longer part of the non-profit Nipmuc Nation organization, the Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council Inc., or its affiliated website. We declare that the Nipmuc Nation is hereby dissolved.

The Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band is the original state acknowledged Nipmuc community as stated in the 1974 Dukakis Executive Order and as validated by attached letter from the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs.

In May of 1995, the Hassanamisco Band, the Chaubunagungamaug Band, and Nipmucs associated with the Nipmuc Tribal Acknowledgement Project (NTAP) designated the Nipmuc Nation organization as the vehicle to facilitate federal recognition. The Chaubunagungamaug withdrew from the Nipmuc Nation in 1996 and many Nipmucs were removed from the Nipmuc Nation tribal roll in 2002, leaving only the current Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band.

After careful consideration, the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band Council believes that the best way for the Nipmuc community to thrive and remain a strong and united people is by severing ties with the defunct Nipmuc Nation organization and the Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council, Inc.

Nipmuc families that were removed in 2002 are now restored to the Hassanamisco tribal roll. We are determined to secure a future for our people by embracing our ancestral values of community and culture. The Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band Council affirms its commitment to support all Nipmuc People and to always act in the best interest of the Nipmuc community.

On August 5, 2020, the Elders Council and Chief made the following statement-

With regard to the upcoming Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council elections and tribal roll issue:

1. The Elders Council and I do NOT support the continued existence of the tribal council. The tribal council was formed in 1995 for the purpose of obtaining federal recognition. That struggle ended last year so there is no more need for the council. The Tribal Council no longer serves a purpose.
2. There has not been a tribal council election in at least 3 cycles. The last three planned elections were all cancelled. All council seats have expired terms.
3. The constitution that governs the Tribal Council has been violated multiple times without consequence by the council rendering it of no value.
4. The Traditional Government of the Nipmuc Nation (the Elders Council and Chief) (TG) have for the past ten years served the Nipmuc community in the council's stead as it did before the Nipmuc Nation existed. The TG works for the community in the areas of rematriating/repatriating ancestors, land acquisition, supporting Nipmuc non-profits, food sovereignty, health programs, youth programs, women's group, management and preservation of the reservation & homestead, and tribal & public education. The TG is the primary contact for state and federal agencies and private organizations. We have many volunteers who help deliver services to our community and represent Nipmuc in public and private events.
5. The resolution included in the election process outlined by the Tribal Council cannot be valid under the current (also invalid) constitution. A resolution to be voted on must have the signatures of at least 80 voters with it. And the resolution as written puts the painful burden of starting the entire "who is a Nipmuc" scenario on a new group of people.
6. The Nipmuc Nation roll should be opened and ALL Nipmuc people that were removed should be put back on it IF those persons choose to be added back on. It does not make sense to look at DNA evidence and new research that will add more conflict and years to an already hurtful situation.
7. We recognize that many Nipmuc families have already gone their own way and formed their own Nipmuc bands with their own leadership and chiefs (the Hazzards, the Walkers, the Natick Bands for example). None of these independent groups may want to rejoin the Nipmuc Nation. It may be better to include all the separate bands under one umbrella, the Nipmuc Nation. Each band could be represented under the Nipmuc Nation and remain autonomous.

In 18 months since that statement was issued,

1. the Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council, Inc. continues to refuse to be held accountable and claim that they are still in leadership.
2. They refuse to re-enroll people removed and are collecting donations under an expired 501(c)3 to pay for genealogist to continue to separate Nipmuc people.
3. They collect grant funds for tribal business training that does not exist.
4. They do not hold meetings for membership, do not produce annual reports, and the only election held in over 8 years was illegal.

The name change *back* to Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band -

- retains our state acknowledgment with no break in our relationships with state & federal agencies.
- It also preserves our integrity by separating our people from potentially illegal actions.
- The government formed by the Elders Council and Chief/Sonksq remains a functioning government with more transparency and representation by multiple Nipmuc families.
- We return to our original form of governance using consensus to make decisions.
- All of the Nipmuc families removed from the roll in 2002 are returned to the roll ending years of separation and reuniting our families.

The Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band Council-

Expanded to 15 members AND no one family group can be in the majority

Each council member has 5-year term limit

After 3 unexcused absences, a council member will be replaced

Council seats open to anyone over the age of 18 that actively contributes to the Nipmuc community for the period of 3 years or more.

People can apply for any open seat

The Sonksq or Chief is the 15th member of the council.

Every 7 years a new Sonksq will be chosen in the same manner as we now do – the current Sonksq will offer 3 candidates for the Council to choose from.

The Hassanamisco Band Council

Nellie Toney-Butler	Troy Phillips	Elizabeth White
Nancy Charleston	Lois Boyd	Licine Carter
Cheryl Stedtler	Gail Schuyler	Muriel Geter
Lisy Smith	Denise Lewis	Rae Gould
Open	Open	Cheryll Toney Holley - Sonksq

Website –

www.nipmucband.org

For questions, please email us at council@nipmucband.org

Kuttatobomish,

Cheryll Toney Holley, Sonksq	Cheryl Stedtler	Troy Philips
Nellie Toney-Butler, Chair	Lois Boyd	Licine Carter
Gail Schuyler, Clerk	Denise Lewis	Alicia Smith
Nancy Charleston, Treasurer	Elizabeth White	
Rae Gould	Muriel Geter	