

Penobscot Hearing Findings and Recommendations

These are the findings and recommendations of the five-member panel appointed to investigate the controversy surrounding the election of officers in the Penobscot County Republican Party. It should be noted and emphasized that these findings and recommendations are non-binding. Still, it is the hope of the panel that Penobscot County will put into place the measures recommended.

- 1) We find no evidence of fraud or intentional wrongdoing by any of the candidates in the election of officers in the Penobscot County Republican Party.
- 2) The candidates in this election were victims of a systemic dysfunction that has been a pattern and issue for much of Penobscot's history.
- 3) To disallow the election of Penobscot's officers for cause of this dysfunction would by extension disallow all elections and business that has happened within the state of dysfunction that Penobscot is in. This is far too problematic and is not recommended.
- 4) Much of Penobscot's dysfunction centers on their inability to verify who is and who is not voting members. The panel recommends that Penobscot use the caucus list available from its last caucus as a foundation for a rebuilding of its membership.
- 5) It is recommended that Penobscot strictly adhere to or discontinue their dues policy.
- 6) It is recommended the County Chair hold a municipal chairs meeting to review committee membership lists, verify who is a valid member and establish the process to how they are removed or replaced if need be, using last winter's caucus list as a guide.
- 7) It is recommended that Penobscot appoint a bylaws committee to rewrite their bylaws.
- 8) The tasks and duties of the Penobscot County officials should be clearly stated and drawn out in their bylaws. If the officials cannot abide by the duties and tasks dictated in their job description, they should vacate their position or be removed and replaced.
- 9) Penobscot should strictly adhere to its bylaws and not use it as merely a guideline.
- 10) Bylaws should include a set amount of meetings for the Executive Committee.
- 11) Bylaws should clearly state the process by which a sub committee is formed.

- 12) Due to the size of Penobscot County, it is recommended that the County either move its meetings on a monthly basis to different locals within the County or have the Chair or Vice-chair in attendance at satellite meetings, if they are to continue.
- 13) Whether there is a vote or not, attendance/roll call should be taken at every meeting. This file should be kept with the minutes.
- 14) Minutes should be provided to the members prior to each meeting within a certain number of days prior to the next committee meeting and this should be stated in the bylaws.
- 15) When the Penobscot Committee is going to hold a vote, it is recommended that colored sheets be provided with member's names on them for voting purposes, alternating colors between elections.
- 16) Candidates for office should never be involved with the election process other than to campaign. They should not verify votes, handle ballots or count ballots.
- 17) If Penobscot wishes to maintain its three meeting minimum requirement, it is recommended that clear, consistent and accountable attendance records be kept and made available to the committee. It is suggested that allowances be made for emergencies, family commitments, etc. These allowances could be determined and approved by the Executive Committee. Once two consecutive meetings have been missed, a reminder should be issued notifying the committee member of their attendance status.
- 18) Going forward, a current and accurate voting members list should be readily available for every member of the Penobscot County Republican Party. Every town or municipal chair should review and verify his or her membership. If there are discrepancies, they should notify the Executive Committee and make recommendations to fix it. If there is a replacement that needs to be made or a vacancy to be filled, they should do so, notify the Executive Committee, and the changes presented at the next County Committee meeting. The voting list should be updated and noted.
- 19) The Penobscot County Republicans should consider rebranding their Committee, something that could symbolize a new start, a logo, etc.