

Seneca Nation seeks tobacco tax bill veto

By Sharon Turano

JAMESTOWN, N.Y. — Seneca Nation of Indians President Maurice A. John Sr. thinks a bill recently passed by the state Senate that would provide for tax collections on reservation sales to non-Indians is “certainly veto-worthy.”

Whether Gov. David Paterson will veto the bill, passed in June by the state Assembly and last week by the state Senate, however, is uncertain. Gubernatorial Spokesman Morgan Hook said the bill has not yet been delivered to the governor’s desk. It has 45 days to be delivered from the time it is passed. The governor then has 10 days for review. If no action is taken by him to sign the bill into law or veto it, the bill becomes law. Hook said, however, some bills do not get delivered in a timely manner. If the bill is not delivered by January, and the governor waits 30 days without action, the bill is automatically vetoed.

Hook said it is gubernatorial policy not to comment on what is expected of the governor within the time frames for a number of reasons, including stopping discussion on a bill that may be being sought if parties involved know a decision has been made before review occurs. Hook did say a press release will be issued once the governor decides what action to take on the matter.

The bill would make it illegal for tobacco manufacturers to sell cigarettes to any wholesalers who do not agree to stop selling tax-free cigarettes to Indian retailers.

“The Seneca Nation has one of the largest private-sector economies of any Native American tribe in North America,” President John said in reaction to the senate’s Friday passage of the bill.

He said the Nation will pursue all legal remedies to enforce federal treaty rights to sovereignty, which the Nation alleges are violated by state tax collection attempts.

“We will always act to protect the Seneca people’s rights because our treaties are the supreme law of the land, and this bill violates our right to free commerce,” he said.

“Further, legislation that would adversely impact the Western New York economy by damaging a \$200 million Seneca retailing sector, while violating treaties between the United States and the Nation, is certainly veto worthy,” said John.

“The state Legislature should not try to help close its budget gap by denying the right of purchase to the Seneca Nation and its licensed retailers or by jeopardizing the jobs and livelihoods of more than 1,000 Seneca and non-Seneca families involved in our retail economy,” he said.

“We understand the demands on state legislators seeking re-election this year, but we would not that the strong majority of Western New York voters and consumers elsewhere as well have long supported the Nation’s right to commerce and right to sell tax-immune products, while they enjoy their own freedom to shop where they choose,” he said.

Residents welcome takeover by Seminoles

By John Holland
South Florida Sun-Sentinel

HOLLYWOOD, Flor. — The old landlord and the new one are battling in federal court for control of her mobile home park, but Grace Arlotta has more important things to worry about.

“I’ve got to do my laps,” Arlotta, 93, said recently, drying herself beside the massive swimming pool she bikes to daily at Seminole Mobile Estates. “We’re in limbo right now, but at this stage of the game, I take things as they come.”

That seems to be the sentiment of her fellow seniors living in the 753-home mobile park, on Seminole tribal land off State Road 7 just north of Sheridan Street. The tribe seized control of the park last month, claiming its long-time management company violated the lease agreement.

The move triggered a flurry of legal squabbles and dire warnings from the management team, Hollywood Mobile Estates Ltd., which said the tribe would kick homeowners off the land — a claim the tribe vehemently denies.

Almost lost in the legal issues are the nearly 2,000 mostly elderly residents, many of whom have lived in the park for decades. More than two dozen residents said in interviews that they trust the Seminoles.

“After Hurricane Wilma [in 2005], they came in immediately with ice and water for all of us, and they opened up the police station for us, just like they did for the tribe members,” said Nancy Gallagher, vice president and treasurer of the Hollywood Estates Tenants Association.

For now, the Seminoles are in control of the park, and

their status as a sovereign nation makes it unlikely they will lose any future court battles, legal experts have said.

Gallagher, tenants association president Mary Moore and every resident interviewed said they are happy with the change. The tenants group has been fighting in state court with Hollywood Mobile Estates for months over what they call an illegal \$49 rent increase and subpar maintenance of the property, association lawyer Louis St. Laurent said. The tribe won more goodwill 10 days ago by reversing the rent increase.

Nearly all of the 753 mobile and manufactured homes in the park are owned by their occupants, who lease the land from the management company. Rents, which include trash pickup but no electric or water, average

\$503 per month.

Greg Griglak, general manager of the park under Hollywood Mobile Estates, said residents are mainly upset over the increase.

“It’s all about the money. I understand that people on a fixed income are going to be upset, but we are still \$100 below the market rent even after the increase,” Griglak said. “We have done a great job maintaining the property, and that’s obvious just by looking at it.”

A stroll through the sprawling park reveals no visible signs of decay. Lawns and trees are well maintained, the 100-acre park appears litter-free and fresh paint covers most common buildings.

But during a tour, residents pointed out dozens of cracks on sidewalks, weeds growing out of holes in the putting greens and a handball court in serious disre-

pair. They may not seem like much, Moore and Laurent said, but they pose dangers to elderly people on strollers or struggling with balance.

Their real complaints stem from the recent rent rise and the threat of future rent increases, as well as a general unresponsiveness to their needs from Mobile Estates Ltd., residents said.

So they welcome the Seminoles.

Moore also said she’s not worried the tribe will close the park, as they did the nearby Candlelight Park in 2000 to make room for the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino.

“The Seminole Tribe has great respect for the elderly and takes care of their parents and grandparents,” said Moore, 82. “Anyone who does that is aces in my book, so I’m thinking we’re going to be OK.”

POWWOW



Associated Press

Derris Keahna, Jr., 18, of the Meskwaki Settlement near Tama, Iowa, performs the Shield Dance during the 94th Annual Meskwaki Indian Powwow at the Meskwaki Casino arena in Tama, on Thursday. The powwow was relocated to the casino because of flooding, which affected the usual powwow site on the Meskwaki Settlement, and continues through Sunday.

Grand Soleil to open soon

By Mary Hood
The Natchez Democrat

NATCHEZ — Grand Soleil representatives have announced that the hotel will be open for business the first week of October.

Construction has labored on for months on the bluff to create a main hotel that provides meeting spaces, a restaurant, workout facility, bar and lounge and business center.

On the edge of the bluff lies a pool with a tiki bar.

The main hotel is flanked by two small hotels, formerly the Ramada Inn Hilltop hotels.

Both of the buildings have been completely renovated and refurbished to complement the large hotel.

A total of 125 rooms will be open through the three hotels.

“My partners and I are very proud to offer our guests the accommodations and customer service which will exceed their expectations,” Grand Soleil President Bill Bayba said. “Our resort will enhance the Natchez experience.”

Grand Soleil officials also announced that the construction on the casino site is ongoing and on schedule.

Plans to open the casino boat are projected for after the first of the year, Bayba said.

The boat, anchored at the Natchez-Adams Port, was officially licensed as a casino operator by the Mississippi Gaming Commission in late May.

This license gives casino officials’ the ability to begin placing orders for gaming tables, slot machines and other casino amenities.

In mid-June all the boat’s mechanical testing was complete and the boat was soon to be outfitted.

Once both the hotel and the casino are open, Grand Soleil will offer more than 400 career opportunities.

Over the past months, the Grand Soleil has been faced with a lawsuit from one of the partners over contractual issues and also have received flak from members of the Indian tribe offering financial backing to the project.

Saskatoon police charge man after woman’s remains found

CBC News

CANADA — Police in Saskatoon have charged a man after finding the remains of a woman who has been missing for four years.

Daleen Bosse was attending university in Saskatoon when she disappeared in 2004. (CBC)

The remains belong to Daleen Kay Bosse, a member of the Lloyd-minster-area Onion Lake First Nation, who was 25 when she went missing in 2004, the Saskatoon Police Service said.

At the time of her disappearance, Bosse had been living in Saskatoon with her husband and three-year-old daughter, and attending university. She was last seen leaving a Saskatoon nightclub on May 18, 2004.

Douglas R. Hales, 30, of White Fox, Sask., has been charged with first-degree murder. He’s also charged with interfering with a dead body.

Hales was arrested on Saturday and appeared briefly in Saskatoon provincial court before being remanded into custody. People in the

packed courtroom cried out when the Crown prosecutor said it’s alleged that Bosse’s body had been set on fire.

People who knew Daleen Bosse wept and hugged outside a Saskatoon courthouse Monday. (CBC)

Outside the courthouse, friends and relatives of Bosse wept and hugged.

At a news conference later in the day, Saskatoon police chief Clive Weighill said investigators have always been aware of Hales.

“He was one of the last people

that was known to have been with Ms. Bosse before her disappearance,” Weighill said.

Probe intensified with new information

The investigation intensified over the last several months as new information came in, Weighill said.

Police found Bosse’s remains in a secluded, treed area near Warman, about 25 kilometres north of Saskatoon.

“We found out about the site. We searched on Friday and found the skeletal remains and a forensic

examination was done of the site,” Weighill said.

The Bosse case has received much public attention in Saskatchewan, where First Nations women account for a disproportionately large percentage of missing people.

Each summer since Bosse’s disappearance, her mother Pauline Muskego has walked from her Onion Lake home to Saskatoon to raise awareness of her daughter’s case and of missing aboriginal women.