

**BY-LAWS OF THE  
ANISHINAABE LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE**

**A SANCTIONED COMMITTEE OF THE  
SAGINAW CHIPPEWA INDIAN TRIBE OF MICHIGAN**

Approved by the Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Committee on June 20, 2023

Approved by the Tribal Council of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan  
on July 26, 2023 via Resolution No. 23-134

**I. MISSION STATEMENT.**

The original spoken language of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian community is in a critical state of extinction. If action is not taken immediately the language that was spoken for thousands of years will cease to exist. The mission of the Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Committee (“ALRC”) is to cultivate and grow our Anishinaabemowin and generate fluent first language speakers. Anishinaabemowin is essential for our identity, Tribal sovereignty, and the survival and healing of our people. It is the greatest honor to our ancestors.

**II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES.**

- Respect, honor, and be truthful to all things that are placed upon this earth.
- To accept and realize that our language is not set up and applied like other languages, and that our language is endangered to the point of extinction.

**III. SANCTION AND AUTHORITY.**

The ALRC was established by Tribal Council Resolution No. 08-103 to revitalize and restore fluency of Anishinaabemowin, the first language, the only language of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan. The ALRC’s authority to develop cohesive language programs for the community is imperative. As such, the ALRC shall pursue its goal to address and further cultural preservation and language revitalization. Further, the ALRC shall plan and implement language services for the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal community that foster fluency and fluent speakers.

**IV. PURPOSE.**

The ALRC shall provide leadership and oversight for the restoration and acquisition of Anishinaabemowin. The ALRC shall embody and establish a plan of action which includes, but is not limited to, the natural way of language acquisition.<sup>1</sup> The ALRC’s established goals and objectives will be monitored and assessed to assure follow-up. Routine reports shall be provided to

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<sup>1</sup> **Natural way of language acquisition:** As children we all have learned English by listening and slowly grasping concepts to make things comprehensible. By actions, facial expressions, tone of voice and vocalizations we learned words, phrases, sentences and eventually came to learn to speak English. We began to understand and comprehend. This is called the “natural way of learning”. The “natural way” we believe is the best way to acquire our Anishinaabemowin.

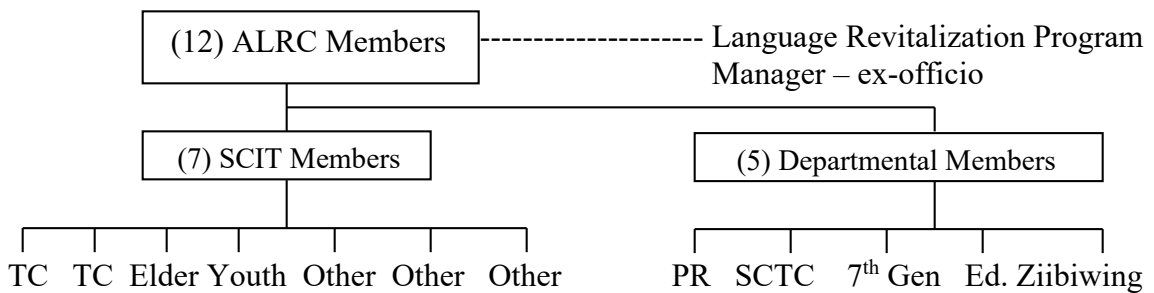
the Tribal Council, the partners of the language programs, and a quarterly report shall be provided to the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal community.

**V. MEMBERSHIP.**

Every ALRC member must operate with a true Anishinaabe philosophy to commit their spirit, heart, and mind to the work. All meetings will begin with ahnaymayawin<sup>2</sup> because we are thankful for life and for all things created.

The ALRC shall consist of twelve members, composed as follows:

- Seven Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Members:
  - Two of which shall be Tribal Council members;
  - Five of which shall be comprised of members from the Tribal community, with at least one elder representative (age 50 years and older), and one youth representative (age 18 to 25 years).
- One representative from each of the following departments with active Anishinaabemowin funding or components who shall represent their department as head spokesperson:
  - Public Relations;
  - Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College;
  - Seventh Generation;
  - Tribal Education; and
  - Ziibiwing Center.
- The Language Revitalization Program Manager shall serve as an ex-officio member of the ALRC.



ALRC membership may be provided to newly activated departments pending ALRC recommendation and Tribal Council appointment via motion.

A Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the ALRC members and shall be referred to as giigdonini or giigdoninikwe<sup>3</sup>. There shall be no Secretary or Treasurer; however, a Public Relations Officer shall be selected from the ALRC membership.

**VI. ANISHINAABE QUORUM.**

A quorum constitutes five members of the ALRC. A quorum shall be achieved by five members of

<sup>2</sup> **Ahnaymayawin:** a prayer or petition to the Creator.

<sup>3</sup> **Giigdonini or giigdoninikwe:** describes the man or woman who is the leader (spokesperson) of a group.

the ALRC who must be present either in person or by phone and/or by video-conference. In order to achieve a quorum, at least three of the five ALRC members present must be Saginaw Chippewa Tribal members.

## **VII. CONSENSUS DECISIONS.**

The ALRC By-Laws include our original Anishinaabe culture and values as our ancestors practiced throughout their lives. As prophesized by our ancestors, our generation desires to return to our traditional customs and practices for group decision making.

Traditional mtigoonsag<sup>4</sup> shall be brought to all meetings of the ALRC. All mtigoonsag must be cast and counted before the group proceeds to the next order of business. Attendance and participation at meetings is of the utmost importance.

## **VIII. ATTENDANCE.**

ALRC members must participate at every meeting to fulfill the ALRC's commitment to revitalize and secure the language for the next seven generations. Lack of attendance shall be discussed and action shall be taken as necessary by the ALRC once a member has missed three meetings in a six month period.

## **IX. ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE.**

The Tribal Council shall appoint the members of the ALRC, by motion, as vacancies become available. The ALRC shall solicit letters of interest for vacancies, and after review by the ALRC, the ALRC shall provide recommendations to Tribal Council for appointment.

An appointed ALRC member's term shall be at least two years.

## **X. MEETINGS.**

The ALRC shall meet once each month, and as needed, as determined by the giigdonini or giigdoninikwe. ALRC meetings shall be open to all Saginaw Chippewa Indian community members and fellow associates who have a desire to learn and support the Anishinaabe language revitalization efforts. The Language Revitalization Program Manager or their designee shall provide public notification of scheduled meetings.

## **XI. GIIGDONINI/GIIGDONINIKWE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILTIES.**

- Provide leadership for the ALRC meeting and lead talking circle discussion and group decision making.
- Act as a public spokesperson on behalf of the ALRC.
- Assist the Language Revitalization Program Manager to establish the meeting agenda and subcommittees as agreed upon by the ALRC members.
- Assume the duties and responsibilities of the other giigdonini/giigdoninikwe in the absence

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<sup>4</sup> **Mtigoonsag:** traditional voting sticks.

of one or the other.

- Assist the Language Revitalization Program Manager in maintaining accurate reporting and records of the ALRC meetings held, actions taken, and decisions made by consensus in the form of meeting minutes.
- Assist the Language Revitalization Program Manager in keeping the current budget available for the ALRC and to review as needed.
- Assist the Language Revitalization Program Manager and Public Relations Officer to provide communication to the Tribal Council and Tribal Observer on behalf of the ALRC.