



Kahnawà:ke Ratitsénhaiens

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Tsi Nahóten Karihwanákere No'nenk News Release

Consensus reached on definition of 'Common Law' at *Membership Law* meeting

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 15, Tsothohrkó:wa/January 2014) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke would like to inform the community that consensus was reached last evening on the definition of 'Common Law.'

Twenty-one community members turned out for the 17th Community Consultation on proposed amendments to the *Kahnawà:ke Membership Law*, which took place at the Golden Age Club.

It was agreed that the length of time to define a live-in conjugal relationship between two people ('Common Law') would be **five years**, regardless of whether the union resulted in children. The Membership Department had proposed options of one year for a union with a child and five years for unions without children.

A clear definition of Common Law is needed, as the term appears in certain sections of the *Kahnawà:ke Membership Law*.

"Those present felt that community members would be better assured of people's commitment to their relationships by using five years as a defining number," said Membership Portfolio Chief Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer. "Those in attendance were really engaged in the discussion, and it resulted in a very clear consensus."

The Membership Department will next propose a revision to the suspension of a Member due to marriage or common-law relationship with a non-Indigenous person, and offer options on the length of time. No date has yet been announced for the next Community Consultation, which will be the 18th since the hearings began on amendments to the *Kahnawà:ke Membership Law* on 24, Tsothohrkó:wa/January 2013.

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