



news

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BOIS FORTE BAND REMOVES MARK DRIFT FROM TRIBAL COUNCIL

Band Members Petitioned for Drift's Ouster After Credit Card Misuse Was Revealed

TOWER, Minn. – The Bois Forte Band's Reservation Tribal Council (RTC) today voted to remove District 1 Representative Mark Drift, Sr. from office.

The vote followed a hearing at which Drift responded to charges that he improperly used a tribal government credit card on 16 occasions. The hearing was prompted by a petition generated by Band Elder Mavis Drift calling for Mark Drift's removal. More than 20 percent of resident voting members of the Bois Forte Reservation signed the petition, in accordance with the Band's policies.

The hearing, which was open only to Band members, was attended by over 90 people. Tribal Court Judge Margaret Treuer presided at the hearing. Mark Drift presented his case on the charges of using a tribal government credit card to obtain cash at other casinos for personal reasons, and that he failed to reimburse the Band for unauthorized expenditures. After hearing Drift's statement and reviewing the documents, the RTC voted to remove him from office.

"Mark Drift's actions were unacceptable," said Band Chairman Kevin Leecy. "In addition to knowingly misusing Band funds and failing in his duty to serve his constituents, Drift also deliberately spread false information about tribal government employees and Band-owned businesses in an effort to draw attention away from his misconduct."

Leecy said the RTC may seek further charges against Drift for releasing confidential Band information and for slandering the reputations of some community members. The Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Law Enforcement Services is also investigating Drift and may file criminal charges against him under tribal and federal laws.

“Now that we have responded to the Bois Forte people’s call for Mark Drift’s removal, the RTC plans to schedule a special election in June to fill the District 1 Representative seat,” Leecy said. “We can and will move ahead on the path our Band members have chosen: one that fosters economic, social and cultural health.”

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