

# Reflections by Cedric Cromwell

**Wuneekeesuq Numusees kah Neechayak...** (Good Day my sisters and brothers)... Thank you all for taking the time to read my communication for all members of our tribe. In particular, I would like to thank my family for their continued love and support.

Today we are challenged with a very bad economy and tough economic times. Tribal members are faced with all kinds of personal challenges from financial woes, education, employment, health issues and other personal issues. Sound financial management of Tribe resources is critical for us to survive these challenging times.

In February 2009, the tribal leadership has the opportunity to change significantly. It is important that as a leader of this tribe, I promise to build unity among all tribal members, define goals for our Tribe's future, continue to hold all Council members accountable for their actions, keep all tribal members well informed of our Tribal financial decisions, and seek to ensure that we protect the welfare of all tribal members.



Our Tribal Constitution stipulates that the Council is vested with all executive and legislative powers of the Tribe.

That being said, it's the current Council members who have the responsibility to discuss and approve all actions for the Tribe.

Our Constitution requires that the Council is responsible for the approval or disapproval of allocations or disbursements of Tribal funds.

**We need your help** to step up and ask questions on the millions of dollars in tribal funds / grants which go unmanaged.

We need to acknowledge and learn from our mistakes and use the knowledge to not repeat the past misjudgments.

We are a Tribe that does have an opportunity to create and control our destiny for the benefit and welfare of all tribal members now and for future generations to come.

**"I am running for Chairman of our Tribe and believe that I can lead our tribe to a more open, responsive government."**

Confronting these challenges has never been easy, but the failure to do so will affect not only our current tribal membership but also our future generations. We should not and cannot accept the continual **degrading of respect** for the well being of all tribal members.

Our tribe was founded on the belief in the inherent dignity to preserve our culture through shared respect and shared responsibility. As Chairman, I promise to serve all the members of this wonderful tribe and lead the executive administration to serve causes that are not of self-interest.

The decision facing each Tribal member in this upcoming election couldn't be more important to the future security and prosperity of our families. This is, indeed, needs to be a change election. No matter who wins this election, the direction of this Tribe is going to change dramatically. But, the choice is

**between the right leadership** -vs- the wrong leadership

**between going forward** -vs- going backward

**between protecting best interest of tribe** -vs- protecting self interest

**between sound financial management** -vs- financial mismanagement

Our Tribe has seen tough times before. We've always known how to get through them by working together and looking out for each other. I have always believed our best days are ahead of us. I believe that still. But we must rise to the occasion and change what must be changed; learn from our past mistakes and implement controls & practices to ensure a successful future for the Tribe.

*Kutuputash,*

*Cedric Cromwell*

*Qaqeemasq ( Running Bear )*



## Together we can make a difference!



**Family Matters...** The last few months have been an amazing journey for me and my family. Every year the summer months are filled with enjoyable travel time for us to share precious moments with family, friends and relatives throughout the various tribal communities. This year, I experienced several additional reasons for celebration, reflection and respect for my Mashpee Wampanoag heritage.

Starting with our Pow Wow in July, I had the honorable distinction to again oversee this year's Pow Wow arena serving as Arena Director. The higher spirits provided us with three outstanding days to celebrate our culture with friends, family and the community. This year's tribal event had significant meaning for me having been the first year I was unable to share this important traditional event without the presence of my father, James Cromwell.



My brother and I have spent our lifetime being raised under the proud Native spirituality and guidance of our mom (Connie Tobey Cromwell). Our mom has always taught us the importance of respect for our Mashpee Wampanoag heritage and our people. In my travels this summer I did share several special moments with my mom and with a number of tribal members who were able to travel with me to respectfully represent our tribe at these gatherings.



- \* Brown University: Represented MWT & sang with Eastern Sons invited drum.
- \* Marshfield MCNAA Pow-Wow: Represented MWT & sang with Eastern Sons invited drum.
- \* MW Youth Sobriety Pow-Wow: Master of Ceremony & drumming with Eastern Sons drum.
- \* Mashpee Wampanoag Pow-Wow 2008: Honored and pleasure being Arena Director.
- \* Narragansett "August Meeting": Represented MWT & sang with Eastern Sons invited drum.
- \* Mohegan Pow-Wow: Represented MWT & shared precious moments with tribal members.
- \* Mashantucket Pequot Schemitzun: Represented MWT in the Pow-Wow royalty section.
- \* Seekonk Wampanoag Pow-Wow: Represented MWT & sang with Eastern Sons Host Drum.
- \* Aquinnah Wampanoag Pow-Wow: Represented MWT & sang with Eastern Sons drum.
- \* North American Indian Center of Boston Pow-Wow: Sang with Eastern Sons Host Drum.
- \* Mashpee Wampanoag Harvest Pow-Wow celebration: Sang with Eastern Sons Host Drum.
- \* Springfield, Mass Museum Pow-Wow: Scheduled to sing with Eastern Sons Host Drum.

This year's **Red Road Pow-Wow trail** was a true honor to connect with fellow Mashpee Wampanoag's & Eastern Indian nations regarding our common cultural & spiritual interests.

Building friendships and life long relationships was the main outcome. To all you that I danced, drummed, laughed, prayed and convened our families....I say to you

"May the creator look out for you and ensure that your health, loved one's and Tribe prosper!"



My Traditional core values and upbringing have allowed me to fully understand the importance of cultural preservation, and how without the proper tribal teachings, the traditions and languages of our Tribe could be lost forever. I take pride in my heritage and seek to constantly work to ensure those influential ties are not broken or compromised. I am committed to ensure that through my leadership we can move the tribe in a positive direction for prosperity for all tribal family members.

If you're ready to put people first, join our cause. I believe we can make a difference!

**“Protecting Our Families,  
Protecting Our Future!”**

Thank You  
Cedric



## No more secrets... no more lies...

**No more secrets... no more lies...** No more secret deals, secret companies, secret associations or secret commitments! We need to protect the welfare of all Tribal members. We need to establish a **code of conduct** which serves to protect the health, peace, morals, education, political integrity, economic security and general welfare of the Tribe and all of its members.

I need your help to become an **active participant** in shaping our Tribal future. I need your help! Get involved by just participating and asking questions. Remember a little bit from a lot of people goes much farther, last so much longer, and has more meaning than a lot of effort from a few.

Be apart of something "Amazing" by getting involved. There are multiple ways to help ensure we have a future for generations to come;

- ◆ **Review the below sample listing of questions. Send me your questions that need to get answered!**
- ◆ **Attend a Council meeting or the Second Sunday of the Month meeting. Ask questions to better understand!**
- ◆ **Read the attached articles on needed practices & procedures to ensure we secure our Tribal financial future.**
- ◆ **Contact me and provide some of your feedback on the changes you would like to see in our leadership.**
- ◆ **Review the Tribal website for news, meeting dates, and latest information.**
- ◆ **Send me an email ([cedric\\_cromwell@verizon.net](mailto:cedric_cromwell@verizon.net)) on how we can improve our services to you.**
- ◆ **Talk to each of our Tribal Council members. Ask questions, require accountability and stand up for a better tribe.**



### Process & Procedures

When will the Council place vendors, contracts and hiring practices on the agenda for all to approve?

What is the judicial process for all tribal members to follow to present issues to the new Tribal Judge?

What are the future plans for the horse farm? Where is the money coming from to support keeping it open?

Would the Tribal Council support implementing a Freedom of Information Act like the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head/Aquinnah have in place for their tribe?

### Meeting House

Where was the \$345,000 (Wolman Group 2006), \$200,000 (State), the undisclosed thousands from HUD, and the \$325,000 (Mashpee Community Preservation Funds) spent on the Meeting House? Where has all of this allocated money gone?

Where is the C.H Newton vendor accounts payable report for all invoices for the Meeting House?

*"No one can be happy who has been thrust outside the pale of truth. And there are two ways that one can be removed from this realm: by lying, or by being lied to."*

— Seneca



### Financial Management

What are the budget vs expenses to date for 2008?

Why did Tribal Council sign a new Development Services Agreement ( DSA)? Is it true that the new DSA is in the millions? What is each line item costing the Tribe?

Why hasn't the Tribal Membership been given the specifics around these new DSA obligations?

What was the 2008 monthly (Jan to Aug) expense for our tribal payroll and tribal vendors / consultants?

### Enrollment

Why hasn't the Tribal Council held the Enrollment Committee accountable for its outlined duties in our Constitution?

Why are several prominent tribal elders still listed as pending status?

To date, how many pending applications have been processed?

How many pending applications are being actively worked on right now?

## *Tribe First....Respect, Listen and Lead*



**I am running because...** It is time for the tribal council to serve the people. If elected, I promise to put the **people** and their needs **first**.

It is time to feel united within our tribe, set aside all of our differences and work together as one. It is time to create an atmosphere of openness. It is time to make a change.

What I hope to accomplish... When elected, I would like to change the atmosphere and perception of the tribal council. I would like to see a day when people can speak freely without fear, and let each individual voice be heard. The tribal members are the most important element of our tribe and it is time they were recognized.

Seeking to preserve and promote our culture and traditions needs to become a priority. Under my leadership, I will continue to promote our traditional values as one of the core principles that are followed. As with any culture, traditions and tribal organizations our traditional values serve to connect us to our history, our spiritual life and each other.

**We cannot allow our traditional values to be compromised.**

**We cannot continue to violate our Constitutional laws to cover up, forget about or just not deal with issues that need to be resolved.**

**We need to bring our tribal community together through communication, understanding, fairness and working to resolve our conflicts.**

We need to keep our traditional values as one of the most important attributes for all of us to preserve. We are not focusing our resources on this preservation. One example: There are hundreds of thousands of dollars on activities which have never been discussed or approved by the Tribal membership. Instead we find funding requests like our preservation of Tribal Language and our Education programs are met with non equitable financial support.

I am committed to continual ask questions of the Council executive leadership about all of these non tribal approved activities. I am committed that as Chairperson, I will ensure that we do not continue to violate our Constitutional order and waste money on activities that are not in the best interest of all tribal members.

I requested on several occasion the need to review all contracts, programs and services to determine whether funds are approved by Council and are being expended as cost-effectively as possible. Over the years there has been some irresponsible and unrestrained spending with no accountability or oversight. This irresponsible conduct and action has got to STOP!

Council's executive leadership has not honored the number of requests which I have presented to place various items on upcoming meeting agendas so that as a Tribe we can understand the financial burden that has been undertaken. Please contact me if you would be willing to sign a petition to get these important subjects addressed.



Those who preserve their **integrity** remain unshaken by the storms of daily life.

They do not stir like leaves on a tree or follow the herd where it runs.

In their minds remains the ideal attitude and conduct of living.

This is not something given to them by others.

It is their roots ... it is a **strength** that exists deep within them.

- Anonymous Native American