

From: [Michelle Crocker](#)
To: [Laurel Evans](#)
Subject: FW: Public Comment for Commissions's Meeting
Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:16:25 AM

For the Regular Session 12/15/2020 Upload.

From: John O'Neill <johnoneillbackup@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 13, 2020 4:18 PM
To: Michelle Crocker <mcrocker@leelanau.gov>; Jennifer Zywicki <jzywicki@leelanau.gov>; Lynn Drzewiecki <ldrzewiecki@leelanau.gov>
Subject: Public Comment for Commissions's Meeting

Dear Michelle, Jen, and Lyn,

Please read the following into the record at the beginning of the County Commissioners' meeting, Dec. 15. It's one page, less than 3 minutes.

Thanks & stay safe:

John O'Neill, P. O. Box 33, Cedar, MI 49621

December 14, 2020

Dear Members of the County Commission,

I'd like to offer a different perspective on the tribes' efforts to receive compensation for land lost following the 1855 treaty of Detroit.

Though in many cases our government is immune from lawsuit, the constitution clearly recognizes our right to seek a redress of grievances. Cases are brought to force the government to recognize religious liberties, address civil rights issues, challenge election results, correct government errors and overreaches, etc..

I am of Irish heritage. Perhaps you remember that the English invaded Ireland and held it in subjugation for 700 years. We were held in bondage, our faith was suppressed, and we suffered from poverty and famine. The people were displaced in their own land; many fled, including to our beloved America.

I once worked for the GT Band and saw many parallels between our histories. This history is not a simple story of good guys and bad guys, but without a doubt the land was often unfairly taken from the original people. They lost their land, their language, their form of worship. Too often they suffered grievously from poverty and new diseases such as smallpox, alcoholism, and diabetes.

We are not responsible for the misdeeds of the past but in many ways we benefit from them. Though Linda and I worked hard to purchase our home, we know that in a certain sense there is a cloud over our title. While History cannot be rewritten Indians continue to suffer the effects of the loss of their homeland.

You do not need to agree that a cash settlement is an appropriate way for the Native Americans to be compensated for past wrongs. That would be for the courts to decide. I am asking you to recognize that as Americans and as humans, the Grand Traverse Band members have a right to seek a redress of grievances from our government. This is one of our shared blessings of liberty.

Very truly yours ,

John O'Neill