



# WHITE EARTH RESERVATION

**CHAIRMAN** Michael A. Fairbanks **SECRETARY-TREASURER** Leonard Alan Roy

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Friday, September 24, 2021

To the White Earth Membership:

On Thursday, September 23, 2021, the White Earth RBC approved a contract for Total Spectrum in the amount of \$4,884,000.00 for research and technical advice about the renewable energy industry. To me, it's unacceptable for a contract this size to be awarded to a non-native consulting firm and hand-selected tribal member-owned businesses with no open bidding and selection process. I want to support our tribal member-owned businesses, but in a way that is fair and open to all. The RBC failed to conduct a fair selection process so all tribal member owned businesses could be considered for this project.

For a \$4.9 million contract, I would expect at a minimum, a public presentation to our membership that outlines the purpose and need for this contract, as well as the qualifications and experience of the business parties. I would also expect a contract of this size to include a public comment period so all Band members could have the chance to weigh in and inform the RBC of their thoughts.

I am also concerned with utilizing general funds when there are millions earmarked for renewable energy projects coming from the federal government. It appears to me that this project was rushed through to avoid oversight by the Tribe's public utility commission, which is currently under consideration and out for public comment. Ultimately, this Total Spectrum contract was rushed through with no chance for our Band membership to understand what we are spending these funds on and why we are spending them.

I am strongly opposed to the way this contract was pushed through with so little input and so little time for feedback. While it is true the RBC has been looking at various renewable energy projects, this proposal itself wasn't presented to me until the day before the RBC meeting, and then only certain information was shared with me. I was shocked when the RBC approved the \$4.9 million contract as-is the next day.

I do not have a vote on the RBC, so I urge Band members to contact your RBC members and ask that this contract be placed back on the agenda for reconsideration at a public meeting, so we can move forward in a fair and transparent manner.

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Michael Fairbanks,  
Chairman