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OCT 06 2017

ISABELLA COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATION

1:45pm  
JJ

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENTS TO  
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & AGENCIES OF  
ISABELLA COUNTY

Name: Sharon M. Avery Date: 10/6/17

Address: 88 Cedar Dr. Mt. Pleasant 48858  
(Street) (City) (Zip)

Email address: duchessof.sage@yahoo.com

Home phone: ( ) Cell phone: (989) 954-0120 Other: ( )

Occupation: General Counsel, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan (SCIT), Tribal Operations Commissioner's District # At-large

Please state, in order of preference, Committees or Commissions you are applying for:

1. Human Rights Committee
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Please state reason(s) for interest in above area(s):

I have a strong interest in ensuring Isabella County is a welcoming community for permanent + temporary residents, as well as guests + visitors. I am a lifelong resident of Isabella County, mother of two young men and an enrolled member of  
BACKGROUND: the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.

Education and/or training: I am a Central Michigan University graduate. I graduated law school from Michigan State University College of law with a certificate in Indian Law. I have over 15 years work experience with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.

Previous civic or governmental involvement:

I have represented a Tribal government for 8 years.

What skills, talents, and abilities will you bring to this position?

I am law trained; I have a focus towards equality for all members of society; I have a passion for justice and working towards ensuring all persons have representation.

Other information you feel would be valuable in the review of your application:

I am interested in expanding my own knowledge base and world view.

Please list THREE references who have knowledge of your work ethic, experience and ability and your resume. (Please do not use currently elected County Commissioners as references)

☐ I am an incumbent: please use references currently on file.

Name: Deborah Shoualter  
Occupation: SCIT Land Title Specialist  
Address: 11265 E. Pleasant Valley Rd.  
St. Louis, MI 48880  
Telephone Number: 989-560-0648

Name: Leslie Klein  
Occupation: Office Manager, SCIT Legal Dept.  
Address: 2357 Joseph Dr., Mt. Pleasant, MI  
48858  
Telephone Number: 989-621-7441

Name: Kristy Navarro  
Occupation: SCIT Associate General Counsel  
Address: 1518 E. Preston, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
Telephone number: 989-620-6516

**\* Applications must be complete to be considered \***

#### ISABELLA COUNTY COMMISSION PROCEDURES FOR FILLING BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

1. Announcements of openings on Boards and Commissions will be posted online at [www.isabellacounty.org](http://www.isabellacounty.org).
2. Board members may, at their choosing, contact applicants prior to the Board meeting in order to more effectively assess applicant qualification.
3. At the Board meeting applicants may be nominated by any County Commissioner.
4. If there are multiple applicants nominated for the same position, a majority vote of members of the County Commission, present and voting, is required for appointment. If no candidate received a majority on the first vote, a second vote will be held. If after the second vote no candidate receives a majority of votes, the lowest vote getter will be dropped from consideration. This procedure will continue until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.
5. Applicants must reside in Isabella County.

Return applications to the County Administrator's Office, 200 North Main Street, Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48858 or by email to [admin@isabellacounty.org](mailto:admin@isabellacounty.org). Questions please call: (989) 317-4054

## **Sharon Marie Avery**

88 Cedar Drive • Mount Pleasant, MI 48858 • (989) 954-0120 • [duchessofsage@yahoo.com](mailto:duchessofsage@yahoo.com)

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### **Education**

**Michigan State University College of Law, East Lansing, MI,  
Juris Doctorate received May, 2009**

**Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI,  
Bachelor of Science received December, 2003**

Major: History

Minor: American Indian Studies

- Cum Laude Honors

### **Professional Experience**

**Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan, Mount Pleasant, MI**

**General Counsel for Tribal Operations, October, 2016-Present**

- Manages the Tribe's Legal Department (3+ Attorneys and several support staff)
  - Recruit, hire, supervise department staff of about 9
  - Assign legal work among attorneys
  - Manage Department budget
- Provide regular updates to the Tribal Council
- Review, draft, amend and negotiate contracts including property purchase agreements, business contracts, construction contracts and gaming contracts
- Represents the Tribe in tribal and state courts in all matters including exclusion, eviction and Indian Child Welfare Act matters
- Represents all departments within the Tribal organization, as needed

**Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan, Mount Pleasant, MI**

**Senior Associate General Counsel, November, 2013- October, 2016**

- Represented various departments in the tribal government and tribal enterprises with an emphasis on: Human Resources, Entertainment & Marketing, the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Gaming Commission, Soaring Eagle Gaming, Risk Management and Per Capita
- Reviewed, drafted, amended, negotiated and terminated contracts
- Managed large venue entertainment contracts
- Reviewed Indian Child Welfare Act files
- Reviewed bankruptcy filings for debtors owing money to the Tribe
- Reviewed Minimum Internal Control Standards for the Gaming Commission
- Drafted, reviewed and amended policies and procedures for several departments
- Amended various codes, including the Tribal Gaming Code (although never formally approved)
- Represented the Tribe in Tribal and State courts
- Assisted General Counsel with court work
- Provided updates to Tribal Council as needed
- Reviewed grant applications

**Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan, Mount Pleasant, MI**

**Associate General Counsel, October, 2009-November, 2013**



- Represented various departments in the tribal government and tribal enterprises with an emphasis on: Human Resources, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Gaming Commission, Soaring Eagle Gaming, Nimkee Memorial Wellness Center, Per Capita, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College
- Reviewed, drafted, amended, negotiated and terminated contracts
- Reviewed pharmaceutical agreements
- Provided updates to Tribal Council as needed
- Worked with the Department of Justice and various Tribal departments for the Tribe's substantial compliance with the provisions of the Adam Walsh Act which included drafting the Tribe's Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act, policies and procedures manual and updated Tribal criminal code regarding sexual misconduct crimes
- Assisted Tribal departments in revising personnel policies and procedures manuals
- Drafted and amended numerous Tribal policies and Tribal codes
- Served as Presenting Officer for the Tribe in a Minor in Need of Care case
- Was responsible for fee to trust applications for 5 Tribal properties and worked with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to place these parcels into trust
- Reviewed bankruptcy filings for debtors owing money to the Tribe
- Assisted the General Counsel in drafting trial briefs and motions in Tribal and State Court
- Drafted complaints and filings and represented the Tribe in Tribal Court

**Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Mount Pleasant, MI**

**Assistant Director of Education (100+ employees), Interim, January 2004-May 2004**

- Managed department in absence of Director
- Assisted in presenting monthly updates to Tribal Council
- Integral in conducting a community-wide survey, (500+ responses)
- Presented departmental up-date at a Tribal member community meeting (300+ attendees)
- Assisted in Selection of an Architectural firm for designing Montessori school building (Pre-Kindergarten - 12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Presented quarterly updates to the financial committee
- Represented the department in a positive, and professional manner
- Oversaw re-organization of the Tribal library in order to better serve the community members, which included a Needs Assessment Survey

**Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Mount Pleasant, MI**

**Leadership Program Intern, May 2000-December 2003**

Attended University full-time, as required by Intern guidelines while working part-time (16-20+ hours/weekly), for a Tribal department

**Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Education Department, May 2003-December 2003**

- Headed a committee that organized the design and building of a showcase that highlighted educational accomplishments of members of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- Acquired memorabilia from Tribal graduates for display
- Organized an "unveiling" of the showcase that was simulcast on local access television

**Saginaw Chippewa Academy, October 2002-May 2003**

- Assisted the full-time teachers in 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms

**Ziibiwing Cultural Society, May 2000-June 2002**

- Attended design meetings for the Ziibiwing Cultural Center which opened in May 2004
- Researched government documents for the design of the Ziibiwing Cultural Center
- Assisted in obtaining copyright permission for images used in the permanent exhibit

**Panels and Presentations**

**October, 2017 (Anticipated):** Panelist, *On Conflicts, a Self-Governing Profession, and Creative Clients: Ethical Issues in Tribal Representation*, Tribal In-House Counsel Association & Michigan State University Indigenous Law & Policy Center Indigenous Law Conference, East Lansing, Michigan

**March, 2016:** Judge, National Native American Law Student Association (NNALSA) Moot Court Competition, East Lansing, Michigan

**November, 2015:** Panelist, *Ethical Issues for Tribal Members working as In-house Counsel for their Tribes*, Michigan State University Indigenous Law & Policy Center Indigenous Law Conference, East Lansing, Michigan

**April, 2014:** Panelist, NNALSA Career Panel at annual meeting, Santa Fe, New Mexico

**February, 2014:** Panelist, United States Department of Justice Substantial Implementation Panel at Adam Walsh Act Training, Columbia, South Carolina

**November, 2013:** Panelist, *Pre-allotment Era in Isabella County, Michigan*, Michigan State University Indigenous Law & Policy Center Indigenous Law Conference, East Lansing, Michigan

**August 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016:** Panelist for Michigan State University College of Law Welcome Week Alumni Panel, East Lansing, Michigan

# **Sharon M. Avery**

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## **REFERENCES**

**Sean J. Reed**  
**General Counsel**  
**The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan**  
**7070 E. Broadway**  
**Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858**  
**(989) 775-4032**  
**[sreed@sagchip.org](mailto:sreed@sagchip.org)**

**Jay W. Fields**  
**Attorney-Advisor**  
**DOI Office of the Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region**  
**805 SW Broadway, Suite 600**  
**Portland, OR 97205**  
**(503) 231-2127**  
**[jay.fields@sol.doi.gov](mailto:jay.fields@sol.doi.gov)**

**Matthew Fletcher**  
**Professor of Law & Director, Indigenous Law and Policy Center**  
**Michigan State University**  
**Law College Building**  
**648 N. Shaw Lane Room 405B**  
**East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1300**  
**(517) 432-6909**  
**[matthew.fletcher@law.msu.edu](mailto:matthew.fletcher@law.msu.edu)**

**Karrie S. Wichtman, Partner**  
**ROSETTE, LLP**  
**Michigan Office**  
**Attorneys At Law**  
**25344 Red Arrow Highway**  
**Mattawan, Michigan 49071**  
**(269) 283-5005**  
**[kwichtman@rosettela.com](mailto:kwichtman@rosettela.com)**