

Senecas to turn over records

The Seneca Nation of Indians President Maurice John Sr. said Friday the nation will respond to a subpoena from the National Indian Gaming Commission that is seeking records about how gambling revenues are spent.

The records were subpoenaed as part of an investigation that involves the Seneca Nation of Indians and the "use of gambling revenues," said Shawn Pensoneau, a spokesman for the commission.

Pensoneau declined to detail what the commission is investigating, but said the scope of the probe is beyond routine audits the federal agency typically conducts.

John released a written statement Friday afternoon stating that he had reached an agreement with the commission over the scope of the documents to be released. He said the nation had sought clarification of the request and the commission's authority under the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act to request records "that did not appear to be related to gambling."

John said the Nation and the commission had come "to an agreement on the scope of the remainder of the review." Both the Seneca Nation and the Seneca Gaming Corp., which operates the Seneca Niagara Casino, are now collecting the remaining documents to show auditors when they return within a few weeks.

"As nation president, my job is to enforce nation law and to protect the best interest of the nation and its people," John wrote. "We believed that the scope of the initial document request went beyond the jurisdictional authority of the NIGC and are satisfied that the completion of the review, as clarified by the subpoena and our discussions yesterday, can move forward now."

The commission is a federal regulatory agency that has the power to investigate Indian gaming facilities and issue violations.