



March 5th, 2020

An Open Letter from the Tribal Chief of the Monacan Indian Nation to Members of the Boards of Supervisors of Fluvanna and Louisa Counties

Dear Supervisors:

It has come to my attention that several of you are assuring your constituents that the Monacan Indian Nation will capitulate to the destruction of its historic capital at Rassawek on Point of Fork if the James River Water Authority “writes a big enough check to the Indians.”

I write publicly to assure you and your constituents that you are misleading them. The Tribe will not accept a financial payment, in any amount, in exchange for agreeing to the destruction of our heritage and the desecration of the burials of our ancestors at Rassawek.

We are not financially wealthy people, but we will not be bought. You will look quite foolish when you have promised otherwise and are then revealed to have vastly underestimated our resolve to win the fight to save Rassawek.

This battle will continue until your water authority is willing to choose a site that allows access to water without destroying Rassawek. Or until the last available court has rendered its verdict. Or until new members of your Boards of Supervisors are elected who have a different perspective on this issue. But let me repeat; it will not end with a payoff from JRWA to the Tribe.

We are not naïve. We understand that the 400-year record in Virginia of wanton destruction of Native American culture and history is not over. But times are changing, and we’re drawing a hard line at destruction of our historic capital and our ancestors’ resting place.

We fully expect the fight to last for years. We are ready. So, too, is the large and growing coalition of your neighbors and supportive local, state, federal, and national organizations committed to preserving American history and respecting Native rights and sacred burials.

Respectfully,

Chief Kenneth Branham
Monacan Indian Nation
Amherst, Virginia