Candidate Statement

Lila Lawson Azbill
Candidate for Secretary
Manchester Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians

To the Community Council of the Manchester Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians:

My name is Lila Lawson Azbill, and I am seeking the position of Secretary. I am the great-granddaughter of Arthur Lawson and Helen Pinola Lawson, granddaughter of Howard "John" Lawson, and daughter of John "Bud" Lawson. My family and our community are an important part of who I am, and my desire to serve comes from wanting to contribute to the well-being of our people and the generations who will follow us.

I believe our strength as a Tribe comes from our relationships with one another, our cultural identity, and our willingness to work together even when we have different perspectives. We will not always agree, but disagreement should never prevent us from listening, treating one another with respect, or working toward what is best for our community.

I want to see our elders receive the support, recognition, and opportunities for connection they deserve. Our elders carry knowledge, experiences, and traditions that are essential to who we are as a people. I believe we should create more opportunities for our elders and youth to come together, strengthen relationships, and share the cultural knowledge that connects our generations.

I am equally committed to supporting our children and families. Our youth deserve educational support, mentorship, cultural experiences, and opportunities that allow them to explore their potential while remaining connected to their identity and community. I believe we must continue developing resources that address the challenges our families face, including housing instability, mental health, addiction, and access to essential services.

I have always believed that our reservation represents home, whether a Tribal member lives there or not. Every member of our Tribe deserves to feel connected, welcomed, and valued. I want to help strengthen that connection while working toward greater stability and self-sufficiency for our people. It is difficult to focus on healing, growth, and opportunity when individuals and families are struggling simply to survive.

I also believe transparency, communication, and accountability are essential to effective Tribal government. Our people deserve to understand the decisions being made, have opportunities to express their concerns, and know their voices are being considered. Leadership should be approachable, willing to answer difficult questions, and committed to following through.

Fairness does not always mean that everyone needs the same support. It means recognizing individual circumstances, approaching people without favoritism, and working toward equitable opportunities and solutions. I believe every Tribal member deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of personal relationships, disagreements, or where they live.

If elected, I will bring a willingness to listen, ask questions, communicate directly, and work collaboratively to develop meaningful initiatives for our community. I understand that leadership is not about having the final word or expecting everyone to agree. It is about representing our people with integrity, respecting our governing processes, and remaining committed to the work even when challenges arise.

My commitment is to serve with respect, consistency, and genuine care for the well-being of the Manchester Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians, today and for the generations who will follow us.

Respectfully,

Lila Lawson Azbill