

# ***Shee Atika tackles issue of slates***

**by Margaret Bauman**  
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Three Shee Atika shareholders urging better management, election reforms and more jobs for shareholders are squared off against the management slate for three director seats in a May 6 election at Sitka.

The independent slate, which filed with the state's Division of

Banking and Securities March 30, includes incumbent Marietta Williams. Other independents are Francine Eddy Jones, of Juneau, and Joni Lewis, of Cube Cove.

Management candidates are incumbents Ethel Staton and Gene Bartolaba, both of Sitka.

Shee Atika, with upwards of 2,000 shareholders, is one of the largest village corporation formed under the 1971 Alaska Native

Claims Settlement Act.

The independents charged in a statement released April 4 that "Shee Atika managers have supervised the election process in order to control the discretionary vote. Discretionary votes are cast by designated proxy holders for the proxy holders' choice, rather than directed to a candidate voted on by a shareholder. The company

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has directed that management proxy holders give all discretionary votes only to the management candidates," the statement said.

"All other things being equal those votes would be cast in favor of the management candidate," said James P. Senna, a Washington State attorney who has served as chief executive officer since 1987. "That is routine."

Senna said he saw nothing unusual at all about the independent slate. "Most corporations have independent slates," Senna said in a telephone interview.

Senna also said Bertha Karras was selected as the management proxy coordinator for the May 6 election because no shareholder from the Sitka area responded to a letter from Shee Atika soliciting applicants for the post.

Several board members had

protested in a letter to board chairman Marta Ryman that the job was never advertised, as they directed.

When the new board is seated May 6, Williams will address several specific issues, including what she said were "excessive pay and benefits" for Senna, the independents said in a news release.

"I'm not being overpaid ... in terms of the success of the corporation," said Senna, a former executive with a Washington state brewery. "I'm considered to be a very highly skilled executive."

"On a scale of one-to-10 our corporation is ahead of many in the sense that our politics and management processes are fairly orderly," he said.

Senna, whose contract runs through 1999, also responded to criticism from the independent slate on his non-resident status.

"For the overwhelming majority of our shareholders that is not an issue," he said.

Independents also were critical of proposed bylaw changes that would prohibit any officers, directors or employees of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska from serving as a director of Shee Atika to avoid conflict of interest. Board member Ted Wright is the general manager of the tribal body.

The corporation's present bylaws contain a provision forbidding directors or officers of another Native corporation from serving as a director of Shee Atika.

"This is an advisory vote only," Senna said. "Shareholders petitioned the board for the change and the board decided to put the issue to the shareholders on an advisory basis only, to give the board an idea of how the shareholders view it."