

Meeting Minutes from October 26, 2006



Vermont Commission On Native American Affairs

Mark Mitchell, Chairman
vcnaa@earthlink.net

Commission Members

Jeanne A. Brink
Timothy Richard de la Bruere
Judy Dow
Charlene R. McManis
Donald W. Stevens

Present were: Chairman- Mark Mitchell, Don Stevens, Charlene McManis, Judy Dow, Donald Stevens, and Jeanne Brink. Absent was Tim De le Bruere.

Also present were: Louise Lampman Larivee- UVM-DCF Partnership program, Lisa Lampman Rollo, Brent Reader- Abenaki Language Speaker, Donna Moody, John Moody, Jeff Benay- Former Chair of Governor's Commission on Native American Affairs, Fernando Ona-VDH/AHS, Pam McCarthy- AHS, Wanda Stone, Ellen Maxon- Human Rights Commission, Chief Lester Lampman, Douglas Lloyd Buckley and Heidi Britch-Valenta - Board Secretary.

1) CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was brought to order at 1:00pm by Chairman Mark Mitchell at the Title VII Indian Education Office 49 Church St., Swanton, Vermont. Mitchell asked if Commission members had reviewed meeting minutes from September 28, 2006. The Commission gave consensus for approval of the minutes.

Mitchell went on to discuss the official resignation of Howard Lyons from the Commission. Jeanne Brink questioned the procedure for finding a replacement for the Commission. Mitchell replied that the search would begin with the applications already on file from the original search. Mitchell will meet with the Governor to review current applications to seek acceptable candidate. If they are not successful with this exercise they will reopen the search to new applicants.

2) UPDATE ON INTERVALE

Mitchell moved on to the topic of the Intervale walk through with Chris Wagner from Vermont Solid Waste District. Judy Dow and Don Stevens gave a synopsis of their meeting with representatives from Intervale, and Chris Wagner, VT Solid Waste District. Again they noted the positive tone of the meeting and were pleased with the representation from the groups involved. They felt Wagner was satisfied with what he had seen within the Intervale site but noted all future permit would take into consideration the archeological site. Dow brought up the considerable requirements of Act 78 as it could potentially effects this location. He further added that Wagner had offered to attend a Commission meeting to explain the details of this Act.

Dow noticed a pond that had been dug in the no-digging site. She recounted conversations with the Mike Adams, Army Corp of Engineers, and Peter Kival, ACT250, on this issue and explained that they were



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looking into the issue to ascertain zoning restrictions for this business. She explained that the question of a problem with this work would be dependent upon the type of Zoning of the business.

Dow added that the Kit Perkins, of Intervale Co. was in the process of asking the City of Burlington to amend the unmarked burial protocol. The next step would be to apply for Sacred and traditional site evaluation. John Moody pointed out that under National Preservation Law, even if the property is not recognized as an archeological site it can still be recognized as sacred for Native Americans and could be a part of the sensitivity study.

Land sale is virtually complete. Intervale would like to participate in talks with neighboring property owners, Commission members, and Winooski parks representatives. Dow will bring a copy of the unmarked burial law and bring to the next meeting.

3. UPDATE ON ABENAKI-UVM-DCF PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

Louise Lampman-Larivee-Abenaki-UVM-DCF partnership program, Pam McCarthy- Agency of Human Services, Gary Widrick- UVM, and Fernando Ona - Vermont Department of Health/ Agency of Human Services, were present to discuss the innovative new project for family group counseling.

Lampman-Larivee explained the history of the concept, modeled after a New Zealand program, which was designed to abate the trend of Native American children being displaced into non-native homes resulting in a disconnect from their cultural heritage. She described the first year of the project which served as a prototype, and involved Abenaki Department of Families and Children services, Missisquoi Valley Union High School, Swanton Town, and the Northeastern Family Institute working together to address the high number of Native American children being taken into State custody. Program actions included a Parent Advisory Committee, in-depth training courses for foster parents, and health care workers. 2.1/2 day training includes community panel, genealogy, video on eugenics, homeland tour (sacred site, wildlife refuge, grandma Lampman site), and Abenaki Book Marks.

Gary Widrick- Chair of UVM's Social Work Department gave credit to Lampman Larivee and the Native American community for the success of this program and sited his commitment to connecting Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Native American. He noted the project



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was made possible through a Title 3E grant as a way of helping children and families. UVM has created and adopted as a permanent class, *Working with Indigenous Families*, into its social work department as a result of the program.

Don Stevens asked for clarification if this program would prevent Native American children from accessing the other programs available to displaced children. Pam McCarthy assured Stevens that this program serves as a supplement to other services and would not replace or limit access to any other programs. McCarthy added that the Agency of Human Services' (AHS) goal is to safeguard the wellbeing of the children and not to segregate them or limit their treatment options. Dow inquired into the formula for establishing if a family is thriving and if that formula took into account the chasm between the widely accepted norm and the Native American lifestyle. McCarthy and Lampman both stressed that this program puts the power into the Native American Community through the Parent Advisory Committee and through family members' consultation and utilization in creating a solution.

Widrick explained that UVM will not maintain its ownership of this program as they are educators not service providers. The group explained the vision for the future of the program and a director will be appointed who has a social services background as well as a Native American connection.

Mitchell commended the group on this important step forward in addressing the human services crisis.

4. DISCUSSION ON NATIVE AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS

Stevens explained his progress on researching the restrictions and requirements of the creation, display, and sale of Native American arts and crafts. Mitchell spoke to the Attorney General office to clarify commission authority and Stevens spoke with the Indian Arts Commission, and the Tennessee Commission on Native American Affairs to get information that will be helpful when establishing a statute for the sale of arts and crafts in Vermont. Stevens explained that the Commission needed guidelines to be able to enforce laws protecting misrepresentation. He further added that the challenge would be in creating a statute that was inclusive of a diverse pool of Native American artisans but would prevent misuse of the label. Stevens shared the wording of the Tennessee law on the same topic and asked the Commission for input to address this very sensitive issue. Many options were discussed and in the interest of time, Mitchell asked the Commission to review the text and formulate an opinion for later discussion. Mitchell stated that just because a person claims to be an Abenaki from Vermont does not mean that particular



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individual is a state recognized Indian person or is an American Indian craftsperson as defined by the FACL.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A.) Mitchell reminded the Commission of the scheduled meeting with Sigrid Lumbra, Department of Education, Social Studies on November 1st on Bailey Ave, VT State Employees Credit Union, in Montpelier.

B.) Mitchell reminded the Commission of the next regular meeting scheduled for November 30th and shared the schedule for the rest of the year. Mitchell then reminded the Commission that in January the meetings will be taking place in Montpelier in the Authority of Transportation board room on the 5th floor.

C.) Mitchell also reminded the Commission of the scheduled meeting with John Hall on October 31 to begin the process of understanding the unmarked burial law.

Mitchell asked for consensus to adjourn the meeting. The Commission agreed to adjourn the meeting at 3:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Heidi Britch-Valenta
Secretary