

VCNAA Minutes
March 15, 2011



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COMMISSION CHAIRMAN
Luke Willard
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COMMISSION
Charlene McManis, Secretary
Melody Walker Brook
Dawn Macie
Takara Matthews
Nathan E. Pero
Shirly Hook
David K. Vanslette
Fred W. Wiseman

Members Present: Luke Willard, Chairman; Charlene McManis, Secretary; Shirly Hook-Therrien; David Vanslette.

Absent: Melody Walker Brook; Dawn Macie; Takara Matthews; Fred W. Wiseman; Nathan Pero.

Guests: Peter Thomas, Richmond, VT; John Moody, Underhill, VT; Chief April Merrill, Swanton, VT; Patricia St. Francis, Swanton, VT; John Churchill, Swanton, VT; Mary Churchill, Alburg, VT; Jim McCahey, Williston, VT; David Skinas, Northfield, VT.

The meeting was brought to order by Chairman Luke Willard at 1:25pm at the State House in Montpelier in Room 10.

1. Approve minutes of February 15, 2011.

Chairman Luke Willard announced that there is no quorum, therefore no actions can be taken.

2. Update on current recognition legislation.

Luke brief those present on his understanding of the current bills. The Nulhegan and Elnu bills passed the House and are now with the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing & General Affairs. The Commission's recommendation of the Koasek Band of the Koas was passed to the House and Senate. No action has been taken at this time.

3. Update on Public Records Redaction Process.

The redaction of genealogical data and specific archeological locations from all current recognition related documents has been completed under the supervision of Division for Historic Preservation legal counsel.

RECESS

2:00PM – PUBLIC HEARING re: Missisquoi St. Francis/Sokoki Application

Luke welcomed all present, provided a reminder that there was no quorum, announced the purpose of the hearing, and welcomed testimony from anyone present.

Missisquoi Chief, April Merrill, was recognized. Chief Merrill thanked the Commission for its work and the opportunity to speak on behalf of Missisquoi. She spoke briefly about the significance of recognition and the history of Missisquoi's struggle for it.

Luke referenced Criterion 1 of Act 107 and asked April if he understood correctly that Missisquoi's 'specific geographic location within Vermont' is roughly Franklin and Grand Isle counties which April confirmed.

Luke asked Professor Peter Thomas, who reviewed Missisquoi's application as an expert panelist to brief the Commission on his review which he did. Referencing Criterion 1 again, Luke asked Professor Thomas what method he used to verify that a majority of Missisquoi's members reside in a specific geographic location within Vermont. Professor Thomas referenced the application's response to the criterion. Luke asked Professor Thomas if he considered the historic chief, Louis Gill (whose parents were white captives), to be Abenaki. This created much discussion.

Jim McCahey, a member of Missisquoi, was recognized and gave testimony in favor of recognition of the tribe.

John Churchill, a member of Missisquoi, was recognized and gave testimony in favor of recognition of the tribe.

David Vanslette, a member of Missisquoi, who recused himself from all Commission action in regards to Missisquoi, provided a brief testimony regarding Missisquoi.

Luke thanked everyone for attending.

The hearing ended at 3:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene McManis, Secretary