

APPROVED

VERMONT
COMMISSION
ON
NATIVE AMERICAN
AFFAIRS



VCNAA Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 26, 2014



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CONTACT

COMMISSION
Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair
Jeffrey Benay, Vice-Chair
Charlene McManis, Secretary
Andrew Beaupre
Walker Brook
Dave Van Deusen
Shirly Hook
Patricia Johnson
Trudy Ann Parker

Members Present: Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair; Jeff Benay, Vice-Chair; Charlene McManis, Secretary; Andrew Beaupre; Walker Brook; Dave Van Deusen; Patricia Johnson; Trudy Ann Parker.

On Phone: Shirly Hook.

Guests: John Moody, Sharon; Donald Parker, Lunenberg; Colleen Chase, Woodville, NH; Peggy Fullerton, Piermont, NH; Jim Masland; Laura Trieschmann, SHOP/DHP; Dale Azaria, DHP; Scott Dillon, DHP; Yvonne Benny Basque, DHP; Giovanna Peebles, DHP; Louise Lampman Larivee, Missisquoi; Howard Knight, Jr., Koasek Traditional Band; Nate Pero, W. Fairlee; Pat Leno, Fairlee; Paul Bunnell, Trudy Thomas, DHP. Peggy Fullerton, Koasek Band of the Koas.

The meeting was brought to order at 1:02pm by Lucy, Chair, which was turned over to Jeff for facilitation. Jim Mashland stated he would be leaving early due to other commitments. Commission members introduced themselves. The guests introduced themselves.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Abenaki Artifacts: Boucher Burial Site

Jeff stated one of the duties of the commission is to protect the Abenaki heritage per Vermont Statutes 852. The burial site is a very sensitive subject. Jeff noted that this was a Missisquoi issue. Don Stevens had stated in one of the emails "We are here to support Missisquoi." The commission is also here to support Missisquoi and felt the commission should not take the lead in this situation.

The commission discussed what (if any) next steps to take. Jeff stated the commission had spoken about having someone going point on issues when the commission is between meetings but nothing was put into motion. Dave stated it is the commission's charge to look into the broader issues of this past incident, maybe instituting state policies, to sure that this does not happen again. Jeff asked if there is a role that the commission can play on issues such as this. Jeff then spoke about the history of the Abenaki artifacts that were discovered in 1973. Artifacts were found on the Boucher's property and what transpired afterwards. After much work from the Abenaki Advisory Board, a check from a private donor was written in the amount of \$150,000.00 and the state added an additional \$150-\$175 in order to buy the property to return the items back to their original burial site. The Abenaki would be stewards to the land.

This brings back to 2014. Dwayne Merrill received 7 artifacts for sale at his auction in spring. It was discovered that UVM didn't give all the artifacts back to the Abenaki but instead have 7 items to the Boucher since it was on their property at the time. The artifacts were noticed on the internet and the story spread. Jeff spoke with Seven Days to hold on the article. Jeff attempted to work with Merrill to resolve this situation. Missisquoi had their attorney, Russell Barr, to resolve this. Merrill agreed to pull the artifacts from the auction at that time. Other solutions were discussed before the commission meeting.

Louise shared with the commission the history regarding the discovery of the burial items and stated she feels that the items should be returned. Howard Knight stated this is going to cause problems if these items are not placed back into the ground. Lucy stated negotiations are on-going. Pat spoke for the Wobenaki Board, reading a message from Jesse Lawyer, Chair.

“Thank you to all who have stepped forward to help, please know that the Wobenaki Board is working with the recognized bands in Vermont and other parties to resolve this delicate issue quietly and with dignity with the least exposure as possible. At this time the council would like everyone else to take a non-active role.”

Pat then gave more information regarding that period of time when the artifacts were discovered and feels this is an Abenaki issue. Much discussion was held regarding the next time big issues are happening. Discussion was held regarding a chain of command when issues are introduced in between meetings. Nate Pero stated his tribe will assist with anything Missisquoi might need. Discussion was held regarding inviting the press during the meeting. Lucy stated to the press that sacredness, privacy, and respect are paramount to native issues such as burials. Seven Days and Fox 44 attended this meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the larger issue of grave robbing of native artifacts. John stated New Hampshire has a law that prohibits the discretion of burial sites or the sale of these items.

Dale spoke about the current Vermont law regarding native burial sites and the Federal law. She stated that a law could be created for Vermont to forbid the selling of native artifacts. Dave moved to task our three officers of the commission to have a dialogue with the governor, the house and senate leaders as to how to create legislation prohibiting the selling of grave goods. Trudy seconded. As much discussion, the vote was Charlene – aye, Dave – aye, Shirley – aye, Andy – nay. Pat – aye, Walker – nay, Jeff – nay, Trudy – nay, Lucy – nay. The motion was denied.

Dave respects the decision and hopes this commission will return to this issue. The item will be on the next agenda. Jeff moved to break until 2:30pm.

The meeting came back to order at 2:35pm.

2. Resubmission of Koasek Traditional Band application

Peggy read a letter regarding the trade name of the Koasek Traditional Band of the Koas.

“It has been brought to the attention of the Koasek Traditional Band of the Koas Abenaki Nation, a recognized Tribe by the State of Vermont that another tribal band is in the process of applying for recognition, using a name similar to ours.

At this time we have been advised to protect our name, which is a registered Trade name with the Secretary of the State of Vermont. Expiration date: 2019.

According to regulations: ‘Law requires anyone doing business under any name other than his or her own, must register that name with the Secretary of State.

It was also brought to our attention that in 2009, an agent, applied to use the name Koasek Traditional Band of the Sovereign Abenaki Nation and the application were rejected.

We do not ask that the commission act in any way that creates an uncomfortable situation. We would however like to be assured that this information is a matter of public record. With many thanks. Koasek Tribal Council.”

Peggy handed the secretary the official certificate and trade name registration. Jeff stated the commission has no authority in name registration. This was for information. The commission has two redacted parts of the application and is waiting for the additional parts of the application. Giovanna asked “what are the next steps.” The DHP will send the additional copies via-email and the commission will remove the original application from their files. Nate will bring the packets for the scholars. Next steps will be reviewing the revised application, have the scholars review the revised application and translate the results of the review.

Approval of February 12th 2014 minutes.

Andy moved to accept the minutes as amended. Charlene seconded. All agreed.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Action Plan

A. Explore title VII Indian Education for Inclusion in the Orleans county School system.

Phase One has been completed and is now working on Phase Two. Lucy now has 12 students or more. Lucy is almost done with this process. The Supervisory Union is on board with Title VII. Lucy thanked Jeff and the federal government for their guidance with this process.

B. Establishing Scholarships

On hold.

C. Jim Petersen plaque

The commission will present Jim Petersen’s widow with the plaque at the June’s Abenaki Heritage Festival. Shirley confirmed this.

D. Abenaki Heritage Gathering

Jeff handed out the information from Eloise for Shirley. The information listed the performers and vendors and presenters. Eloise contacted the tourism department of Vermont for Advertising. Lucy asked if the Nulhegan Youth Drummers could be part of the performers. Jeff will send this information to Eloise.

Discussion was held regarding the concerns of some tribes that the commission is now involved with this event. Jeff stated he contacted Jamie Smith, director for applying a grant in the amount of \$1,000.00 from the Hay Market Foundation for monies for this event. The grant would pay Native people would be admitted for free. Discussion was held regarding for advertising. Walker stated he worked with children and they could make hand drums for the Nulhegan drummers at a later date. Also Walker stated his kids could make the signs for this event. Discussion was held regarding keeping communication flowing with the sub-committee. Pat, Trudy, Walker and Jeff will meet with Eloise to work on this event. Jeff will find the facility for the committee to meet in Montpelier next week for either Thursday or Friday. Discussion was held regarding publicity. Charlene stated to have someone in charge of publicity for this event. This will be place on the next agenda. Nate Pero offered to have his tribe to place posters/cards in every Vermont rest areas. Charlene will send a list of press information to the committee.

E. Archeological Notification Process

Another meeting is scheduled. Andy will discuss this process with Giovanna. John Moody is still requesting the draft of the notification process.

F. Meeting with Governor Shumlin

The three members will meet with the governor by the end of April or May and formally invite him to the Heritage Gathering at the Maritime Museum. (A formal invitation will be produced by Charlene and have it signed by Lucy for the commission and Eloise from the Maritime Museum) Discussion was held. The commission will notify the tribes on this. (On behalf of the four tribes) Jeff discussed the talking points. Lucy cannot be a part of it after May 24th.

G. Establishing Vocational Dialogue with Political Leaders

Tabled until next state congress session.

H. Establishing a State-Wide Abenaki Artisan Co-op

Shirly and Mary Johnson are working with Vera regarding establishing a store.

2. Talking Point with the governor

Discussion was held. Don Stevens stated “It is the policy of the state of Vermont to work with native people on different policies and procedures and issues.” That it is important for the commission to have the Governor to speak with his department heads such as Education, Health, etc. Dave suggested that we have a copy of the memo from the governor’s office stating this process. John suggested that a liaison for native issues in some department heads. The following was decided:

- A. The three commission members will meet with the governor next month.
- B. The entire commission to meet on the fifth floor and have their meeting.
- C. Have the governor attend the Heritage Gathering in June.

Discussion was held regarding issues between natives and local law enforcement. Dave stated that natives could run for county High Bailiff which would help in these situations. The High Bailiff only job is the arrest the sheriff if he is doing anything unethical. Jeff will contact Shana Trombley to schedule meeting with governor.

NEW BUSINESS (SECOND PART)

1. Next Meeting

Next meeting will be April 9, 2014, 1pm – 4pm at 133 state building Montpelier.

- 2.** Nate stated his tribe will be working with the VA White River regarding native veterans. For further information, contact Nate Pero at 802-333-4671 at n.pero@aol.com.

3. Native Vote

Charlene discussed that the NCAI's program "Native Vote." She could be the contact person for this. Dave suggested having a questionnaire regarding native issues given to the governor candidates. Charlene will sign up with the program.

4. Looking Through Our Grandmothers' Eyes, Stories About Our People and Our Land –

Charlene passed out handouts of this event. Giovanna spoke about this event. Lucy, Don and Billy will be participating in this event.

Jeff moved to adjourned.

5. Future Items

Koasek Traditional Band application
Abenaki Heritage Gathering and publicity
Talking with the Governor
Native Vote

Respectfully,

Charlene McManis
Secretary