

*Vermont Commission
On
Native American Affairs*

VCNAA@state.vt.us

Commission Members

Don Stevens, **Chairman**
Paul Bell
Brad Barratt
Jeanne A. Brink
Timothy Richard de la Bruere
Charles Delaney-Megeso
Judy Dow

Minutes
March 26, 2009

Members Present: Donald Stevens, Chairman; Jeanne Brink; Charles Delaney-Megeso

Staff: Diane McInerney, Executive Assistance DHP, Commission Secretary

Guests: John S. Hameline, US Census Bureau; Wanda Lyons, US Census Bureau; Helen Simon, US Census Bureau; Sigrid Lumbra, DOE; Dian Mueller, John Moody; William Whitely

This meeting was brought to order by the Chairman, Don Stevens at 1:00 pm in the National Life Records Center, Room A, Montpelier.

1. Approval of February 22, 2009 Minutes

Corrections to the minutes were noted. Since there was not a quorum, the minutes were not approved and will be slated on the April agenda.

Don noted that he had contacted April St. Francis-Merrill with an invitation to attend this meeting and discuss her letter; she did not respond. Don also sent a meeting invitation to other tribal entities to share census information, and to discuss the Commission's Vested Authority and the recognition bill; there was no response.

2. Census 2010 Guest Speakers

Guests from the Census Bureau were John Hameline, Wanda Lyons and Helen Simon. Packets of Census information was distributed to Commission members. Don noted that one of the charges of the VCNAA is to assist with Native American census information. Wanda spoke about the census data formula that is used for funding state and federal programs. It was noted that if there is an adult Indian member in the household, that this should be the name entered on the first line of the document. A standardized spelling for tribes/bands/families would facilitate the threshold for that tribe when the data is separated from personal information and used for demographic data purposes. Census results will be clear, unbiased, and accurate.

Temporary census positions are available where people live. Any individuals lacking a permanent residence will be counted by volunteers who will visit shelters and assist at mobile locations. Canvassing will begin April 13, 2009. Queries about tribes and demographics after the census is complete can be obtained from the UVM State Data Center (802) 656-0892 and the Boston Regional Census Office (617) 223-3610.

3. Old Business

a. Discussion on Vested Authority, Charles Delaney-Megeso

Charles discussed with the Commission, work he has been involved in with legislators on vested authority. Representative Ram and Senator Miller were contacted as well as the BIA.

Charles suggested working through the summer with “partners” on this legislation. Don felt that having the legislature contact tribal leaders for support and testimony would be most effective. Charles noted that Representative Consejo expressed “no desire” to move the bill for recognition through in this session. Any out-of-state tribal members who wish to testify for vested authority or recognition should do so by letter only, addressed to the legislative committee; General, Housing & Military Operations.

Don noted that all agenda items will have to be voted on at the next meeting.

b. Education – Sigrid Lumbr, Department of Education

Sigrid addressed the Commission offering assistance with information for teachers and a basic understanding for Vermont students in regard to Native American history. The Department of Education can also assist with printing and distribution of materials. Sigrid expressed an interest in what would help teachers the most and what is the information the students aren't receiving. Jeanne discussed those issues with Sigrid and the Commission. The Commission felt there is a need for basic understanding of native names, places, words, and traditions. They also agreed that this should be included in the curriculum with European history. Sigrid suggested that a website be utilized with a resource list, comprehensive materials, primary sources, and local events. It was noted that Native Americans are “equal” and their history and traditions should be treated as such.

Jeanne, Don, and Sigrid will be working together on a resource guide for distribution to all schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Diane McInerney (say-air-kee-wayn-chukws).

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