

*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
April 23, 2009

Members Present: Don Stevens, Chairman; Jeanne Brink; Charles Delaney-Megeso, Paul Bell, Tim de la Bruere, Judy Dow

Staff: Diane McInerney, Executive Assistance DHP, Commission Secretary

Guests: William Whitney; Thomas Lichtenberger; Phyllis Donovan; Doris Seale, Richard (Skip) Bernier

This meeting was brought to order by the Chairman, Don Stevens at 1:00 pm in the AOT Board Room, 5th floor, Montpelier.

1. Approval of February 26, 2009 and March 26, 2009 Minutes

Jeanne moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting and Paul seconded. Don called for the vote and the Commission unanimously approved of the February 26, 2009 meeting minutes.

Diane noted that there was a change to the VCNAA e-mail address that Don presented to her before the meeting was brought to order in March. Jeanne moved to approve the March 26, 2009 meeting minutes and Paul seconded. Judy asked about the information Sigrid Lumbrá shared with the Commission at this meeting and there was a brief discussion. Diane said she would note the change to the e-mail address in the March minutes. Don called for the vote and the Commission unanimously approved of the March 26, 2009 minutes with the additional information.

2. Quad Update, Fred Wiseman

Fred informed the Chairman that he would not be available prior to this meeting and asked to be slated for the May agenda. Judy shared information about Quad events that will include 12 youth teens from Vermont as part of a choir group sponsored by the Council on World Affairs and St. Michael's College. Other Commission members also shared information on various Signature Events.

3. Old Business

a. Vested Authority Update, Charles Delany-Megeso

Charles discussed and presented to the Commission, the draft for vested authority that he has been working on with legislators. At this time, the draft has not been given a bill number. Representative Ram and Senator Miller suggested an informal meeting between legislative committees and all interested Native American tribes/bands/families. Any disagreements can be vetted at the Committee level. Don requested that Commission members advocate for all tribes/bands/families and create a list of contacts to present to the legislature for invitation to the meeting.

Tim and Charles suggested creating an e-mail newsletter for state wide distribution. Tim requested that there be time set aside at a monthly meeting to focus on the Commission website as a public awareness tool.

Charles noted that the meeting with tribes/bands/families and the legislature will be after the session has ended. He hopes that all Native American leaders will attend and take advantage of this opportunity. The Commission discussed the draft bill for vested authority and suggested minor changes to the language. Charles noted that H124, an act relating to recognition of tribes and bands of Native Americans by the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs, died in Committee. Commission members agreed to invite legislators to their meeting and will discuss vested authority further at the May meeting.

b. Radio Station Interview Request

The Commission discussed a request from a Connecticut radio station's program on Indigenous Policies to have Don speak about native policies. Paul moved to decline the request and Judy seconded. There was a brief discussion and Tim felt that if the Commission declined, they should invite the interviewer to one of their meetings. Paul amended his motion to "respectfully decline at this time" and Judy seconded. Commission members unanimously agreed with this decision, and Don said he would send an e-mail to the person who requested the interview.

c. Educational Materials Discussion

There was a discussion on the request from Sigrid Lumbra for educational materials to be added to the DOE Resource Guide. Judy noted that the state mandate for teaching native history is for two Indian tribes of the teacher's choice. Teachers only share Abenaki history if they are inclined too. For this reason, changing state educational standards are necessary. Tim and Judy agreed to work on a draft for changing the educational standards in the state school curriculum that will include "Abenaki" as an indigenous tribe in the history of Vermont.

Charles suggested that Sigrid return to further discuss these educational standards and resource guide. Paul moved to table the discussion about the creation of a new guide book (from Caro Thompson) until the May meeting and Charles seconded. Commission members unanimously agreed to address these issues at the next meeting.

d. Website Update

Tim asked that there be more time for this discussion at the next meeting. Paul suggested that members bring a laptop for a working session and moved to address website structure at a meeting soon. Judy seconded. Commission members agreed to spend 45 minutes at the next meeting on website structure.

4. New Business

Jeanne noted a call for entry for Native American Artists from Pamela Tarbell. The question of appropriate public access to the Odanak pow wow was discussed and Tim will be sending a letter for an open dialog with Chief O'Bomsawin. Judy noted that a certified letter was sent to Mark Mitchell, about a two day meeting on an archeological dig, from the Federal Government concerning an Air National Guard road and felt the Commission should have been notified.

Diane asked Commission members about corrected meeting minutes and members agreed to send them to all members and interested parties.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm.

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