

VERMONT
COMMISSION
ON
NATIVE
AMERICAN
| AFFAIRS



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COMMISSION

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**VCNAA January 13, 2016
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair; Jeffrey Benay, Vice-Chair; Carol Irons, Walker Brook, Cheryl O'Neill, Paul Fassler, and Trudy Ann Parker.

Members Absent: Joelen Mulvaney

Guests: Rich Holschuh, Brattleboro; Donald Parker, Lunenburg; Charlie Delaney-Megeso; Nulhegan-Coosuk; Dr. Fred Wiseman, Tim Camisa, St. Albans; Deb Reger, Jess Robinson, VDHP; Dale Azaria, VDHP; Scott Dillon, VDHP; Jenni Lavoie; VDHP.

The meeting was brought to order by Chair Lucy Cannon-Neel at 1:05 pm at 133 State Street, Room 410.

1. Changes to the Agenda

Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair, advised of an addition to the agenda under Old Business, #2. Native Cultural Conference, Charlie Delaney-Megeso.

2. Public Comment

Lucy Cannon-Neel opened the floor to public comments, there were no comments.

3. Approve November 10, 2015 Minutes

No changes were noted and consensus was reached to approve the November 10, 2015 minutes.

4. Fred Wiseman

Professor Fred Wiseman presented commission members with his annual report of items that he and his colleagues have been working on for the past year. Highlights included the Seeds of Renewal Project, numerous speaking engagements, a Native cultural cuisine trip to Arizona and Native fashion show.

Lucy Cannon-Neel moved to break from 2:05pm – 2:15pm

OLD BUSINESS

1. Website Update

Rich Holschuh advised commission members that the VCNAA Facebook page is gradually gaining followers. He stated the website is going well, there were no issues or problems to

report, and he is happy to continue as the administrator. Commission members appreciated the feedback, Rich's hard work and did not express any reservations about the continuance of the website.

2. Native Cultural Conference

As discussed at the November meeting, Charlie Delaney-Megeso provided commission members with a condensed and streamlined proposal for a Native Cultural Conference. The goal would be to either have an annual or bi-annual conference. Initially the idea would be to focus on communication between tribes and sharing traditional and cultural practices. As the conference gains more traction, other topics could be introduced such as the environment and others. Commission members took a great interest in the proposal and formed a committee to put the idea into motion.

NEW BUSINESS

1. St. Albans Bio-Digester (Tim Camisa)

Tim Camisa of St. Albans distributed information to commission members regarding a proposed bio-digester in St. Albans. Mr. Camisa expressed his opposition to the project due to environmental concerns and concerns about the location of the project. He indicated that time was of the essence and would like the commission to become involved. Commission members indicated they would need to research the information he provided to them and would add the topic to the February meeting agenda for further discussion.

2. Action Plan

a. Train the Trainer

Jeff Benay indicated he would like to move forward with this goal, but would like to gauge the need and interest from the tribes.

b. Developing Teaching Materials

Carol Irons advised this goal is moving forward very well. She has received great feedback and interest from two of the tribes. Additional components are being integrated, such as creating video, familial stories and participation across tribal lines.

c. Dept. of Health – Native Style Treatment / Recovery Program for Alcohol and Opiate Addiction in Swanton

Joelen Mulvaney submitted a written update on this goal to commission members in her absence. Updates include; identifying stakeholders, communication with Canadian native communities already running treatments centers, and the location of an Abenaki substance abuse counselor who will share his experiences with the committee.

d. Higher Education Scholarships

Walker Brook advised this is a goal he worked on in 2015. Unfortunately, interest and feedback from the tribes on this topic does not appear to be high. Discussion focused on disseminating the information the commission currently has and if interest increases, bringing this topic back to the table.

e. Statewide Title VII

Lucy Cannon-Neel reported she is still working with Orleans County as discussed in the November meeting. Her work is on-going and she is making great strides on getting Title VII into each school in Orleans County.

f. Improve Communication with Tribes

Jenni Lavoie advised that VCNAA agendas and approved meeting minutes are being sent out to each tribe. Communication is increasing and commission members also indicated they have noticed an increase in communication through the other goals currently being worked on as well.

3. Announcements

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, February 10, 2016 at 133 State Street, Montpelier in room 410.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:52pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Lavoie