

VERMONT
COMMISSION
ON
NATIVE AMERICAN
AFFAIRS



VCNAA Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 14th, 2015



vcnaa.vermont.gov

CONTACT

Lucy Cannon-Neel
beehivel_2000@yahoo.com

COMMISSION

Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair
Jeffrey Benay, Vice-Chair
Charlene McManis, Secretary
Andrew Beaupré
Walker Brook
Shirly Hook
Patricia Johnson
Mark Mitchell
Trudy Ann Parker

Members Present: Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair, Jeffrey Benay, Vice-Chair, Charlene McManis, Secretary, Andrew Beaupré, Walker Brook, Shirly Hook (on phone), Patricia Johnson, Mark Mitchell, and Trudy Ann Parker.

Guests: Dale Azaria, VT DHP; Kathleen Blake, Koasek; Rod Blake, Koasek; chief Paul Bunnell, Koasek; Michael Descoteaux, Nulhegan; Carol Irons; Jim Masland, VT State Representative; Duncan Mathewson, CCV-Winooski; John Moody, Sharon; Cheryl O'Neil, Koasek; Donald H. Parker, Lunenburg; Chief Nate Pero, Koasek; Jess Robinson, VT DHP; Annina Seiler, VT CP&R; Frederick Wiseman, Seeds of Renewal Program.

The meeting was brought to order by Chair Lucy Cannon-Neel at 1:04 pm at 133 State Street, Room 021.

1. Public Comment

Lucy Cannon-Neel opened the meeting to public comment: there were no comments.

2. Revisions/Changes

There were no revisions or changes to the agenda.

3. Approving October 8th minutes

John Moody requested that his affiliation be changed from St. Albans to Sharon. He also requested that the Koasek Traditional Band's affiliation be revised to read Southern Orange and Northern Windsor County. Finally, John Moody requested that a superfluous "the" be removed from page two of the minutes. Andrew Beaupré moved to accept the October 8, 2014 minutes, as amended. Trudy Ann Parker seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Andrew Beaupré, Charlene McManis, Jeffrey Benay, Mark Mitchell, Patricia Johnson, Shirly Hook, Trudy Ann Parker, Walker Brook, and Lucy Cannon-Neel. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Agenda Change

After a request from the floor, Jeffrey Benay moved to postpone the consideration of the resubmission of Koasek Traditional Band application for Vermont State recognition until 2:00 pm. Patricia Johnson seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Andrew Beaupré, Charlene McManis, Jeffrey Benay, Patricia Johnson, Shirly Hook, Trudy Ann Parker, Walker Brook, and Lucy Cannon-Neel. Nays: Mark Mitchell. Motion carried.

2. Strategic Planning and Abenaki Heritage Gathering

Andrew Beaupré stated that he wished to renew his work on an archaeological notification policy and Native American scholarships. Mark Mitchell suggested that youth representatives from each recognized tribe be invited to attend VCNAA meetings to witness the process and participate in some manner. Andrew suggested that the Commission formally communicate with the relevant schools to ensure permission and credit for attendance are secured.

Commissioners considered the continuation of the Abenaki Heritage Celebration. Shirley Hook strongly recommended that the Commission's support of the celebration continue and commissioners informally agreed. Trudy Ann Parker noted the importance of improved marketing and signage for the event. Mark suggested that in addition to the Abenaki Heritage Celebration that the Commission consider an Abenaki Cultural Heritage Week to include a traveling event. John Moody noted that institutional partners such as the Flynn Theater in Burlington are receptive to these types of event and are adept at organizing, publicizing and implementing them.

Lucy Cannon-Neel noted interest in the development of some type of anti-looting law for Vermont, particularly with regard to burials and their associated grave goods. At the request of the Commission Jess Robinson, State Archaeologist noted that he would be happy to explore this issue. Walker Brook added that he would like to see the implementation of a program or presentation designed to assist and encourage Native American youth to complete applications for college and universities and to identify available scholarships and grants for which they may be eligible. Patricia Johnson recommended that the Commission pursue the prominent display of Abenaki crafts in relevant storefronts and other venues.

Lucy moved to break at 1:50pm.

The meeting reconvened at 2:05 pm.

At the conclusion of these discussions, tasks were apportioned to each of the commissioners and tentative timeframes were assigned:

Andrew – Archaeological Notification/ Scholarships (2015)

Lucy and Charlene – Youth Representation (2015)

Mark, Jeffrey and Walker – Week-long Youth Event (2015-2016)

Shirly, Charlene, and Patricia – Heritage Celebration – (2015)

Lucy and Andrew – Anti-Looting Law / Abenaki Artifact Guidelines (2015-2016)

Patricia– Storefront Arts and Crafts (2015-2016)

Walker/Charlene – Introducing Teenagers to the College Process (2015/2016)

Andrew made a motion to accept the planning, assignments, and dates as proposed and Jeff seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Andrew Beaupré, Charlene McManis, Jeffrey Benay, Mark Mitchell, Patricia Johnson, Shirley Hook, Trudy Ann Parker, Walker Brook, and Lucy Cannon-Neel. Motion carried.

3. Resubmission of Koasek Traditional Band Application

Lucy Cannon-Neel read aloud relevant application guidelines and protocols in preparation for the Commission's deliberation. Charlene McManis read aloud all of the correspondence that had been received by the Commission regarding the application since the last meeting.

Andrew Beaupré noted that the Commission had received and read the applicant's written response to the third scholar's report. The Commission then reviewed the written legal advice from Dale Azaria, Department of Housing and Community Development General Counsel. A lengthy discussion ensued. In considering Criterion 1, Commissioners noted concern regarding the percent of tribal members residing within Vermont. Additional discussion followed regarding one scholar's work to identify a historical homeland based upon river systems.

Commissioners felt that concerns regarding Criterion 2 had been satisfactorily addressed by the scholar's report. In considering Criterion 4, Charlene noted concern regarding the membership of specific clans within the larger Koasek Traditional Band's group structure. In considering Criterion 9b, Andrew noted that three of the recognized bands have given their tacit or explicit approval for the Commission to recommend state recognition of the applicant group.

Andrew Beaupré made a motion to recommend recognition of this application. Trudy Ann Parker seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Nays: Andrew Beaupré, Charlene McManis, Jeffrey Benay, Mark Mitchell, Patricia Johnson, Shirly Hook, Trudy Ann Parker, Walker Brook, and Lucy Cannon-Neel. Motion failed. The Commission agreed that Andrew Beaupré would draft a formal report to the legislature regarding the decision of the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Meeting Minutes

Jess Robinson proposed to the Commission that staff from the Division for Historic Preservation take over the responsibility of taking and posting official minutes for Commission meetings. Andrew Beaupré made a motion to remove the task of minute taking from the Commission secretary. Charlene McManis seconded. A roll call vote was taken. All agreed.

2. Frederick Wiseman - 2014 Haven Project Update

Fred Wiseman presented the Commission with a brief update on the initiatives and accomplishments of the Haven Project in 2014.

3. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on February 11th, 2015 in the Basement Room 021, 133 State Street, Montpelier.

4. Adjourn

Andrew Beaupré made a motion to adjourn and Mark Mitchell seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jess Robinson and Annina Seiler