

VERMONT
COMMISSION
ON
NATIVE
AMERICAN
AFFAIRS



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COMMISSION

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Carol McGranaghan
Eugene Rich



VCNAA May 10, 2017
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair; Melody Brook, Vice-Chair; Carol Irons, Paul Fassler, Cheryl O'Neill, Joelen Mulvaney, Rich Holschuh, Carol McGranaghan, and Eugene Rich.

Guests: John Moody, Sharon; Deb Reger, Jess Robinson, VDHP; Jenni Lavoie, VDHP. Ms. Lavoie records the minutes at the request of the commission.

The meeting was brought to order by Lucy Cannon-Neel at 1:02 pm at 1 National Life Drive, Montpelier, in the Montpelier conference room.

1. Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

2. Public Comment

Deb Reger notified commission members of an upcoming radio program she will be hosting on Native youth and identity. She also stated she will assist Carol Irons with a radio spot promoting the Abenaki Cultural Regeneration Project (ACRP).

3. Approve April 12, 2017 Minutes

Consensus was reached to approve the April 12, 2017 meeting minutes with no changes noted.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Action Plan

a. Developing Teaching Materials / Abenaki Cultural Regeneration Project (ACRP)

Carol Irons reported that she has received six applications from people interested in attending the week-long Abenaki Cultural Regeneration Project Camp. She is facing challenges securing funding for the event, however. Many potential grantors have responded positively to the proposal, but ultimately cannot extend grant funds to a Vermont State Commission. The commission suggested several potential remedies and possible funding sources.

b. Joelen Mulvaney

Joelen Mulvaney stated that planning for an anti-tobacco themed dance at Missisquoi Middle School is going very well. Several students within the local student government have embraced the project and are being assisted by the Missisquoi women's circle. The students will also attend an upcoming Missisquoi tribal meeting to give a report on the dance's preparations.

c. Improve Communication with Tribes

Rich Holschuh reported that the commission's Facebook page is getting more traffic with regular "likes" to the page. Eugene Rich stated that the Missisquoi tribe is still developing a shared calendar and email system using Google's free tools. Mr. Rich stated that as the project progresses, there may be an opportunity to expand the resource to others in the native community. He stated that he will keep the commission informed about the initiative as it moves forward.

d. Native Traditions Conference

Lucy Cannon-Neel reported that an agenda has been established for this year's Native Traditions Conference. Mrs. Cannon-Neel stated that the most immediate challenge at this point is finding a funding source. The Lake Champlain Basin Program, which provided grant funding for the 2016 conference, advised Mrs. Cannon-Neel that they cannot award any grants this year due to proposed federal budget cuts.

e. CT River Hydro Re-Licensing

Rich Holschuh stated that even though TransCanada recently sold their Connecticut River dams to Great River Hydro, the re-licensing schedule is continuing without interruption. The same staff remain. Nevertheless, there has been no additional movement on the Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP) report since the last Commission meeting.

John Moody reported that the Connecticut River Watershed Council has undertaken an effort to get Great River Hydro to address the erosion issues on the river. Mr. Moody also advised the Commission that FirstLight, which owns two dams in Massachusetts, also recently changed ownership. The FirstLight name is remaining in place, however.

Deb Reger asked Rich Holschuh about the Elnu tribe's involvement with the decommissioning process for the shuttered Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon. Mr. Holschuh stated that he entered a Motion to Intervene with the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB) on behalf of the Elnu tribe and Eugene Rich entered a Motion to Intervene on behalf of the Missisquoi tribe. The projection is that the decommissioning deliberation process will be completed by the end of 2018.

- f. Indigenous Peoples Day**
Rich Holschuh reported that at their April meeting, the Brattleboro Select board adopted a resolution to observe Indigenous Peoples Day as a replacement for Columbus Day. Joelen Mulvaney stated she currently has a petition circulating throughout Barre requesting that they do the same. John Moody reported that the town of Hartford is still deliberating a similar proposal in their town.
 - g. Legislation for Native Scholarships to be funded by Native License Plates**
While the Commission is still in full support of this bill, it has been tabled by the legislature until the second year of the legislative biennium. Therefore, it was resolved that this action item will be tabled until the September 2017 Commission meeting.
 - h. Statewide Title VII**
Lucy Cannon-Neel reported that North Country Supervisory Union contacted her and agreed to support Title VII within their supervisory union. They also asked for her to submit the application on their behalf.
 - i. Native Student Recognition**
Melody Brook stated that no Native Student essays have been received by the commission to date. Mrs. Brook and Deb Reger had planned a radio program to promote the essay submittals, but they will instead use the opportunity to discuss Native identity and further promote the essay program.
- 2. Update on Potential Meeting with Charlie Delaney & Associates**
Rich Holschuh reported that he has not had any additional communication with Mr. Delaney as of the meeting date. Lucy Cannon-Neel and Carol Irons reported they will assist in establishing communications with Mr. Delaney and his associates.
 - 3. Meeting with New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs (NHCNAA)**
Eugene Rich and Melody Brook, on behalf of the commission, continue to pursue a joint meeting with their New Hampshire counterparts.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Announcements

Jenni Lavoie advised commissioners that the 2017 / 2018 commission meeting schedule will be posted on the state VCNAA website soon and she will also prepare a list of the dates as a handout at the June meeting.

Jess Robinson stated that applications are still being accepted for Lucy Cannon-Neel's seat, who will have completed two consecutive terms on the commission.

Joelen Mulvaney reported that a gathering of ecumenical pastors will bless the Brunswick Springs sacred site on June 10, 2017.

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Jess Robinson stated that September is Vermont Archaeology month. Dr. Robinson stated that if any tribe would like to partner for an event or lecture, he would be happy to work with them.

Adjourn 2:42 p.m.