

VERMONT
COMMISSION
ON
NATIVE AMERICAN
AFFAIRS



VCNAA Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 9, 2015

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

Guests: John Moody, Sharon; Rich Holschuh, Brattleboro; Donald Parker, Lunenburg; Deb Reger, Community Radio; Jess Robinson, VT VDHP; Jennifer Lavoie, VT VDHP.

The meeting was brought to order by Chair Lucy Cannon-Neel at 1:10 pm at 133 State Street, Room 410.

1. Revisions / Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes or revisions to the agenda.

2. Public Comment

Rich Holschuh inquired if the commission is still drafting laws on anti-looting. The recent discovery of an underwater petroglyph in Brattleboro and the media surrounding the discovery, has raised concerns about protecting the locations of discoveries such as this.

John Moody also commented on preserving the location of the petroglyph and drew comparisons to a pot that was removed from the water at the Chimney Point State Historic Site, while the Champlain Bridge was under construction. He indicated there are strong feelings amongst the Native community about how these artifacts are treated after being discovered.

Trudy Ann Parker commented that while feeling strongly about the repatriation of bones, finding and displaying a native pot provides some historical context and helps to show that Native Americans were indeed here.

3. Approve June 9, 2015 Minutes

Jeff Benay made a motion to accept the June 9, 2015 minutes. Walker Brook seconded. Motion carried.

4. Introduction of New and Returning Commission Members

All new and returning commission members introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting.



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COMMISSION

Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair
Jeffrey Benay, Vice-Chair
Walker Brook
Mark Mitchell
Trudy Ann Parker
Carol Irons
Cheryl O'Neil

Jeff Benay discussed that the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation has not heard yet about the appointment of new commission members for the two open seats. He advised that Laura Trieschmann, State Historic Preservation Officer, would be following up with the Governor's office. Commission members discussed the possibility of drafting a letter to the Governor encouraging the appointment of the new members.

Lucy Cannon-Neel and Jeff Benay spoke to the commission members regarding the format in which the meetings are run, specifically the use of Robert's Rules of Order. In the past, meetings were run on a consensus basis and that model worked well. In the event that there is not a consensus, a formal vote would be taken. After discussion, commission members agreed to the change and a consensus was reached.

Walker Brook brought back up the topic of writing a letter to the Governor regarding the open commission seats. A consensus was reached that Jeff Benay would draft a letter to the Governor.

Jeffrey moved to break at 2:10 pm. The meeting reconvened at 2:25 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Election of New Officers

Topic was tabled until next month

2. Goal Setting

Commission members outlined the process and brainstormed ideas for goal setting. Ultimately, it was decided that new goal setting would be tabled until October, when the new members would be in attendance. The following goals from years prior would be continued.

- Indian Education Programs, Title VII
- Higher Education Scholarships

Jeff Benay read an email from Charlie Delaney regarding his idea of a Cultural Environmental Conference. Carol Irons agreed to contact Charlie and report back with more information about what he would like to accomplish.

Deb Reger commented on her experience documenting the Wabanaki Conference through video and audio recording.

Lucy Cannon-Neel spoke that she would like to send formal thank you letters to those individuals who worked so hard to make the Abenaki Heritage Gathering a success. Discussion was held and commission members were selected to write the letters.

Carol Irons submitted a proposal to commission members for her desire to create a curriculum that teaches native youth various cultural skills. After brief discussion, a committee of Carol, Trudy and Walker was tentatively selected to start work on the proposal.

3. Action Planning

Topic was tabled until next month.

4. Announcements

There were no announcements.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Lavoie