

**VERMONT
COMMISSION
ON
NATIVE AMERICAN
AFFAIRS**



**VCNAA Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2011**



vcnaa.vermont.gov

CONTACT
(802) 754-2216
lukewillard@live.com

COMMISSION
Luke Willard, Chairman
Melody Walker Brook, Vice-
Chair
Charlene McManis, Secretary
Andrew Beaupre
Shirly Hook
Betty Johnson
Takara Matthews
Dave Van Deusen
Fred W. Wiseman

Members Present: Luke Willard, chair; Melody Walker Brook, vice-chair; Charlene McManis, secretary; Betty Johnson, Shirly Hook, Fred Wiseman, Dave Van Deusen, Andrew Beaupre on conference call.

Absent: Takara Matthews.

Guests: Nathan Pero, Koas Traditional Band and Carol Irons.

The meeting was brought to order by Chairman Luke Willard at 11:12pm at the Ethan Allen Room at the Vermont State House in Montpelier.

1. Approve minutes of October 18, 2011.

Charlene moved to approve the minutes at stated. Betty seconded. All agreed. Luke welcomed Nathan Pero to the meeting.

2. Committee Reports.

A. Cultural Resources

Melody gave the report. The Native American month did well and the events assembled had almost full attendance. Discussion was held. Melody gave a workshop over at Orleans. Discussion was held. It was decided to have Melody work the Department of Education regarding the Standards and Curriculum. Discussion was held regarding the VASS conference (Vermont Alliance for the Social Services) and setting up a workshop/display there. Nulhegan band has requested assistance from the commission in establishing Education Title VII. Discussion was held. Lucy Neal works for the Orleans Supervisory Union.

Andrew is working on the protocol of native artifacts and language revitalization. Will email the language survey to the commission members. Discussion was held acquiring Brent Reader to teach Abenaki language at the round table at the Flynn. Grant writing was discussed.

B. Community Services

Charlene gave the report. The committee went through the Vermont Indian Child Welfare Act. Discussion was held regarding the act. It was decided to keep the following sections: General Assembly findings (1), General Assembly declaration of policy (2), Definitions (3) and Place of Indian Children (14). Discussion was held regarding child welfare. Luke has

discussed this act with Senator Illuzzi. It was decided to have the community committee go through the amended act to make it stronger and send to off to the policy committee by email a day before the state goes into session. The other committee does not need to be involved with this act at this time.

C. . Government Policy

Luke gave the report. He updated the status of the St. Francis/Sokoki Band and Koasek Abenaki of the Koas. Both are still in the house and senate. Luke will check on the process regarding Koasek. Also passed out was the Governor's proclamation of Native American Month. Discussion was held. The goals of the committee are to see something happen with the Vermont Child Welfare Act and push through the two petitions in the state house.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Abenaki Heritage Celebration Week

Charlene passed out the mock flyer and has set the date of the rally at the state house lawn for the event, starting at 11am on Monday, May 7th. Charlene wants to contact the Sierra Club organizer of their past rally event for details to put this together. The theme for the week's event is "Keeping Abenaki Legacy Alive in me." The education workshop will be held on Friday, May 11th. It was decided to have Charlene speak with the small business and women's business regarding having workshops for Native Artisans. Melody suggested having the workshops at various areas to target all Natives. Discussion was held regarding monies for postcards, a banner and brochures for the events. Discussion was held. Luke will check into the 7th Generation grant for \$1,500.00. Charlene will be point person on this event. It was decided to provide an artisan workshop in Franklin County, Newport or St. Johnsbury and two others. Discussion was held. Charlene will speak with Giovanna regarding a credited workshop.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Koasek Traditional Band of the Sovereign Abenaki Nation

Nathan Pero passed out the hard copies of the Koasek Traditional Band of the Sovereign Abenaki Nation. Need to set up a scholar panel and a three member council review. Discussion was held regarding finding scholars for the petition. Melody asked for the requirements for scholars and the scholars' list. Bill Havilland, Fred Wiseman, John Moody, Peter Thomas, Kevin Dann, Paul Dan Borough, and Eloise Biel were suggested. Melody will email the possible scholars who would be interested in the three member review panel. Charlene will send the scholar review documentation, redacting, the four commission final reports and other information to the three new members. Policy Committee will be writing up the results of the application. All commission members will review as well. Charlene mail Takara the items passed out in this meeting. Andrew's copy will be delivered to Diane McInerney for pick-up.

2. Wind Power Project Ridge Leveling

Carol Irons spoke to the commission regarding her concern about mountaintop blasting on the Lowell Mountain Range. Nulhegan and Elnu leaders met with the Sierra Club regarding this issue. Luke spoke regarding the Abenakis getting involved with this issue. Discussion was held. Dave and Fred recuse themselves from the discussion. Nulhegan position is “we generously support any renewable energy but adamantly and venomously oppose to ridge leveling and/or large scale destruction of ridge tops and mountaintops.” Discussion was held. Luke expressed his opinion on taking a stand regarding the ridge leveling. Melody suggested placing this issue as an agenda item and inviting the Abenaki people for input. Discussion was held.

3. Language Revitalization

Andrew will bring in the information regarding this program. Melody will assist Andrew in bringing this together.

4. Meetings

January 17th 2012 will be in Montpelier over at National Life.

February 21, 2012 will be in Barton from 12noon to 3pm. Potluck will be provided. Charlene will organize the potluck.

March 20, 2012 will be in Montpelier.

April 17, 2012 will be in the southern part of the state. TBA. Potluck again.

May 15' 2012 will be in Montpelier.

June 17, 2012 will be in St. Albans area. Potluck again.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlene McManis
Secretary