

*Vermont Commission  
On  
Native American Affairs*

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**Commission Members**

Don Stevens, **Chairman**  
Brad Barratt  
Jeanne A. Brink  
Timothy Richard de la Bruere  
Charles Delaney-Megeso  
Judy Dow  
Charlene R. McManis

Minutes  
October 23, 2008

**Members Present:** Donald Stevens, Chairman; Tim de la Bruere; Judy Dow; Jeanne Brink; Charles Delaney-Megeso; Brad Barratt; Charlene McManis

**Staff:** Diane McInerney, Executive Assistance DHP, Commission Secretary; Joan Pellerin, Interpreter for Brad Barratt

**Guests:** Doris Seale, Burlington; Richard (Skip) Bernier, Coventry; Phyllis Donovan, Wheelock; Joy Madrona; Todd Herbert, Ndakinna Cultural Center; Dian Mueller, Commission Member Assistant

This meeting was brought to order by the Chairman, Don Stevens at 12:58 pm in the AOT Board Room, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, National Life Building, Montpelier.

**1. Greetings**

Don expressed his appreciation for the work that Mark Mitchell, the former chairman, and Hilary Casillas did for the Commission in the past. He welcomed the new members, Charles Delaney-Megeso and Brad Barratt to the Commission and there were introductions.

**2. Duties and Responsibilities as Board Members**

Don presented the Commission with a copy of §852 – Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs established authority. Don noted that in statute the Commission was established to protect and strengthen native heritage, culture and history; to address native needs and establish policy, programs, and actions for this purpose. The Commission has the authority to assist Native American tribal councils, organizations, and individuals to secure social services, education, employment opportunities, health care, housing, and census information. The Commission is also to assist in helping to label and permit the sale of Native American arts and crafts in compliance with federal law.

To accomplish these goals the Commission will receive assistance and support from the federal Indian Arts and Crafts Board, will become eligible for federal assistance with educational, housing, and cultural opportunities. Establish and continue programs offered through the U.S. Department of Education, and be further assisted by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. The Commission will work closely with the Division for Historic Preservation and the Department of Education for administrative support.

Don has met with Mr. Talbot, the acting Commissioner of Education and he has expressed his commitment to work with the Commission through Sigrid. Mr. Talbot has offered the services of Sigrid Lumbrá to work with the Commission by assisting with grant writing and resource kits for schools. The Division for Historic Preservation is also helping with administrative support. Don noted that the Commission will be making all their decisions and actions based on and within their established authority. Anything outside of that authority would be considered a personal position. The commission will also pursue funding to carry out the duties of the Commission.

For the benefit of the newest members Don reminded Commission members of the Governor's Code of Ethics that they signed by reading the content of the document.

The Commission discussed if the meeting should be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, an agenda item presented by the Chairman. Commission members felt that everyone should have their own voice and be able to state their position through majority rule rather than consensus as had been done in the past; a more traditional action. Tim suggested that Deb Markowitz attend the next meeting and inform the Commission about how to properly conduct a meeting according to Robert's Rules of Order. Tim moved to table the decision until the Commission is further informed of the process and Judy seconded. Commission members agreed unanimously to table the discussion until further information is presented at the next meeting.

### **3. Previous Work and Future Goals**

Don felt the Commission has been bogged down by the issues of recognition. Don's expectation, for Commission members to accomplish their goals this term, is to form committees that will spear head different projects. Meredith Stanton, head of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board has stated in regards to State Recognition Criteria that there are no Federal rules or guidelines that the state has to follow except that recognition is granted legislatively or by a legislatively vested commission with that authority. Don said the tribes that pushed last year for their own recognition outside the Commission have informed him that they will continue on their own path for recognition and may or may not ask for assistance from the Commission. The bill presented by this Commission to the Legislature last session was not passed and a new draft bill for recognition will have to be presented this year if the Commission deems necessary. At this time the Commission does not hold the authority to recognize tribes for the labeling of Indian arts and crafts. Commission members agreed to assist any native people and state agencies for drafting a new bill for recognition. Charles expressed his interest in spear heading a committee for the purpose of state recognition to native artisans for the labeling of Indian arts and crafts. Tim moved to revisit this topic at the next meeting and Judy seconded. Commission members unanimously agreed to table this discussion until the next meeting.

Tim and Judy volunteered to work with a small committee on the educational goals of the Commission. Jeanne offered to assist with information concerning language. Tim mentioned that there are teacher kits available for check-out at the VT Historical Society/Fleming Museum about Native American heritage, but they are not part of the state education standards for curriculum. Charlene suggested a survey of what local heritage teachers would be

interested in using within a teachers kit. Don requested that Commission members bring a list of goals to work on as a committee to the next meeting.

Judy noted that at the first Commission meeting members had agreed that she would be given their support to address Intervale issues concerning the Native community and Act 250 proceedings. Judy requested that this support be reflected in the current meeting minutes since it had not been recorded in the minutes from the prior year. Judy feels that the Commission needs to seek "party status" for Act 250 proceedings, and has applied for "party status" for herself. Charles motioned to give Judy permission to speak on behalf of the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs on Intervale issues and Tim seconded. The Commission agreed to support Judy as the spokesperson for Intervale issues that require information and/or Commission action; Charlene sustained.

#### **4. Other Business**

Commission members were presented with business card options and chose to use the Vermont State Logos. Jeanne suggested using the symbol she designed as a water mark on the card, and Commission members agreed. Members gave their personal information for the cards to the secretary who will create the cards on publisher and bring them to the next meeting.

Next commission meeting was scheduled for December 11<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm. All other meetings will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month there after unless it falls on a Holiday. Those meetings will be rescheduled for a different date.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Diane McNerney (say-air-kee-wayn-chukws)

