

VERMONT  
COMMISSION  
ON  
NATIVE  
AMERICAN  
AFFAIRS



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Paul Fassler  
Joelen Mulvaney



VCNAA February 10, 2016  
Meeting Minutes

**Members Present:** Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair; Jeffrey Benay, Vice-Chair; Carol Irons, Walker Brook, Cheryl O'Neil, Joelen Mulvaney, Paul Fassler, and Trudy Ann Parker.

**Guests:** Rich Holschuh, Brattleboro; Donald Parker, Lunenburg; Tim Camisa, St. Albans; Andrew Beaupré, Hyde Park; Jane Spencer, Bixby Library; Kat Raynor, Bixby Library; Jess Robinson, VDHP; Dale Azaria, VDHP; Scott Dillon, VDHP; Jenni Lavoie; VDHP.

The meeting was brought to order by Chair Lucy Cannon-Neel at 1:08 pm at 133 State Street, Room 410.

### 1. Changes to the Agenda

Lucy Cannon-Neel, Chair, advised of an addition to the agenda under Public Comment. Commissioners will have a conference call with Dr. Bill Roberts, an alcohol and substance abuse doctor, who specializes in working with Native people.

### 2. Public Comment

Dr. Bill Roberts joined the meeting via conference call. He was inquiring if any Vermont Abenaki tribes would be interested in partnering with the Ojibwe nation members and other tribal councils in Wisconsin, to look at opportunities to create platforms for peer support in recovery for members of those nations who are in the process of recovering from substance abuse problems. Dr. Roberts mentioned the potential to apply for grants that could benefit both states. Commission members had an opportunity to ask questions and would speak with their associated tribes to gauge interest in the proposal.

### 3. Approve January 13, 2016 Minutes

One minor change was noted by Carol Irons and consensus was reached to approve the January 13, 2016 minutes.

### 4. Repatriation Efforts – Bixby Library

Jane Spencer provided commission members with a brief history of the library, collections owned at the library and the reasoning to create an inventory of these collections. Kat Raynor explained that the library is submitting an application for a grant, which in part would help their efforts to further identify and possibly repatriate an important cultural artifact. Commission members agreed to prepare a letter of support and communicate with their affiliated tribes to potentially do the same.

Lucy Cannon-Neel moved to break from 1:53pm – 2:11pm

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. St. Albans Bio-Digester (Tim Camisa)**

Tim Camisa clarified from the January meeting minutes, that he is not opposed to the bio-digester project, he is requesting a change in location. He expressed that he would like the commission to vote on asking Green Mountain Power to move the digester. Additionally, Tim explained his justifications for requesting a change in project location. Scott Dillon, Survey Archaeologist with the Division for Historic Preservation, was in attendance to provide the commission with an overview of the bio-digester project from a regulatory review standpoint. Commission members had an opportunity to ask Tim and Scott questions and a consensus was reached to draft a letter to the Division for Historic Preservation, indicating its concern regarding historic resources and safe access to the parcel. Joelen Mulvaney volunteered to draft the letter to the Division.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Legislative Proposals (Andy Beaupré)**

Andy Beaupré provided the history behind the Native American Scholarship Fund and Scholarship Fund Registration Plates proposed legislation and explained each piece of legislation and how they would function. Consensus was reached to move the proposed legislation forward, Lucy Cannon-Neel and Carol Irons would start communicating with local legislators to sponsor the bills.

### **2. Action Plan**

#### **a. Developing Teaching Materials**

Carol Irons advised this goal is moving forward. Materials are being gathered, lesson plans are being written and plans are in the works to create video to go with the teachings. Discussion is starting on possible grants to help with expenses.

#### **b. Dept. of Health – Native Style Treatment / Recovery Program for Alcohol and Opiate Addiction in Swanton**

Joelen Mulvaney advised the commission that the Vermont Department of Health recently announced that they are seeking to put a treatment facility in Franklin County. The committee is currently focused on research and gathering data needed to present a proposal to the Department of Health. The hope being to have the facility or satellite facility in Swanton with a focus specifically on Native American methodology.

#### **c. Statewide Title VII**

Lucy Cannon-Neel advised she is currently working on renewing the Orleans Central School application and still working with the North County Supervisory Union.

#### **d. Improve Communication with Tribes**

Lucy Cannon-Neel happily reported that progress is being made between the commission and tribes, as evidenced by email communications that have been received. Joelen Mulvaney noted that an additional component of this goal was for commissioners to actively work on communications with the tribes they represent. Discussion followed regarding different methodologies that may be used to help facilitate this goal.

#### **e. Native Traditions Conference**

Lucy Cannon-Neel stated that she has received great feedback surrounding making this goal a reality. Tribal members have already agreed to participate and a venue is in the process of being selected. Commission members discussed the time of year that would be ideal for the conference, with September 24, 2016 tentatively being selected.

### **3. Announcements**

Andy Beaupré inquired as to the level of involvement the commission was looking from him in his position as an honorary member. Commissioners advised that other than not being a voting member of the commission, they would be happy for Andy to participate in all other aspects of the commission.

Rich Holschuh updated the commission on the status of the five dams currently in the process of being re-licensed on the Connecticut River. Rich advised that the door is still open for the tribes to participate in this process. Walker Brook and Joelen Mulvaney requested that Rich send them information that could be brought back to the tribes for their consideration.

### **Adjourn**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Lavoie