



## VCNAA MEETING MINUTES

Approved September 13, 2023

June 14, 2023

1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Koasek of Koas Tribal Garden, Braintree VT

VERMONT  
COMMISSION  
ON  
NATIVE  
AMERICAN  
AFFAIRS



[vcnaa.vermont.gov](http://vcnaa.vermont.gov)

COMMISSION  
Richard Holschuh, Chair  
Douglas Bent, Vice Chair  
Deborah Reger, Secretary  
Jeffrey Benay  
Daniel Coutu  
Patrick Lamphere  
Melody Walker Mackin  
Deanna Edwards  
Open Seat

**Members present:** Rich Holschuh, Doug Bent, Dan Coutu, Jeff Benay, Deb Reger, Deanna Edwards, Patrick Lamphere

**Absent:** Melody Mackin

**Guests:** Meghan Edwards (Nulhegan), Laddie Lushin (advisor to Koasek), Susan Rockwell (Koasek Library assistant), Fred Wiseman (scholar), Roland Bluto (Nulhegan), Chief Don Stevens (Nulhegan), Alanna Ojibway (community member, incoming Commissioner), Linda Longtoe Sheehan (Elnu Abenaki), Chief Roger Longtoe Sheehan (Elnu Abenaki), Chief Joanne Crawford (Missisquoi), Louise Lamphere (community member). President Rod Smolla (Vt Law School), Elodie Reed (Vt Public), Josh Crane (Vt Public), Kathryn Keener (Vt Law), Kate Fredrick (Stafford, Vt resident), Shirley Hook (Koasek), Jennifer Bass (VT Law)

Meeting called to order at 1:00PM

1. Sign in
2. Governor's appointment of 9th VCNAA member not made yet
3. overview of protocols
4. no changes to agenda
5. May minutes approved by consensus

### Old Business

1. Discussion about Legislative Caucus and tobacco exemption was approved in S.33 bill which allows minors to use tobacco in practice of Native Spirituality, funding support for VCNAA
2. Act 182 update from Dan Coutu says the board is studying homelessness and hiring staff to look into areas where homeless are, address state agencies, and work and collaborate work with grassroots groups
3. No update for Act 142
4. Act 154 has no report
5. No new signage for State Parks
6. Truth and Reconciliation Commission is hiring research and assistant staff persons and interviews are in process

7. Act 152 Conn. University students contacted Commission members with individuals answering
8. The Vt Health Equity Council is ongoing
9. The Seventh Generation Curriculum Committee will be meeting soon. Some discussion on consensus and feedback which is used by the committee.
10. The Mark Mitchell scholarship is ongoing and Circle of Courage has raised some funds, willing to act as fiscal agent

### **New Business**

1. Jeff Benay was presented with a Community Service Award
2. Scholarships at Vt Law and Graduate School was discussed and is in process
3. Discussion on Executive Session Protocol
4. Tribal Reports: Nulhegan; Dan talked about the education committee and showed a new coloring book that is being worked on by Amber Beach which includes Abenaki language lessons; Koasek reported that gardens have been planted!
5. Announcements: June 24 Missisquoi is having a Dick Menard honoring event, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum is hosting Abenaki Heritage Weekend June 17-18
6. no public comments
7. Meeting adjourned by consensus