



## VCNAA MEETING MINUTES

Approved February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024

January 10, 2024

1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Calvin Coolidge Conference Room  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor Davis Building, National Life  
Montpelier, VT  
and Virtually

VERMONT  
COMMISSION  
ON  
NATIVE  
AMERICAN  
AFFAIRS



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

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

**Members present in-person:** Rich Holschuh, Deanna Edwards

**Commissioners attending virtually:** Doug Bent, Dan Coutu, Deb Reger, Patrick Lamphere, Melody Mackin

**Absent:** Jeff Benay

**Guests:** Shirly Hook (Chief Koasek of Koas), Jess Robinson (Vermont Division for Historic Preservation); Gavin Holschuh; Roland Bluto (Nulhegan); Sean Robinson (VTDigger);

**Guests attending virtually:** Marshall Rich (Indian Child and Family Representative), Jane Barber (Abenaki Ally, Researcher), David Savoie (Canada Radio), Christopher Roy (Anthropologist), Alana Ojibway

**Meeting called to order at 1:10 pm**

### 1. Introductions

The guests introduced themselves.

### 2. Changes to the Agenda

Deb Reger suggested combining agenda items 4 and 6.

### 3. Approval of November Minutes

The November meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

### 4. Meeting Protocols & Expectations, Consensus Voting

Combined with Item 6.

### 5. VCNAA Membership Terms and Appointments

Jess Robinson gave an update on appointments and reappointments. Terms will be coordinated to end in February.

**6. Commissioners' Annual Priorities, Goals, and Suggestions**

A suggestion was made to bring the Free Her Campaign to a Commission meeting to give a presentation. Rich Holschuh stated that he will contact them.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**7. Act 182 (2022) Land Access & Opportunity Board report**

Positions have been filled and community outreach has begun.

**8. Act 142 (2022) Racial Justice Statistics Advisory Council**

No update.

**9. Act 154 (2022) Environmental Justice Advisory Council**

A facilitator has left and there are job opportunities. This is an interagency and community group.

**10. Act 174 (2020) "Vermont State Parks - Abenaki signage" status**

No update.

**11. Act 128 (2022) VT Truth & Reconciliation Commission -TRC (Melody Mackin)**

A Commissioner has left and the Commission. The remaining members and staff are working on a protocol for replacement that will amend Act 128. Meetings are now underway on the first Tuesday of every month. The TRC is working on providing anonymity and making group meetings for those who may have similar discriminations by the state of Vermont to report.

**12. Act 152 (2022) Nondiscriminatory School Branding/Mascots – Status**

Chester has voted to change their mascot.

**13. Act 33 (2021) VT Health Equity Advisory Council (HEAC) Ongoing**

Report and legislative act to finance this group's work will be submitted to the Legislature this session. There are over 20 groups that participate in this Council. This group meets monthly and has working sessions that are inclusive.

**14. Seventh Generation Curriculum Grant Committee report (Jeff Benay)**

No update. The group committee is scheduled to meet next month.

**15. Vermont Mental Health Professional Licensing Update**

No update.

**16. VCNAA Part-Time Staff Position, Job Description, Posting**

Posting will be happening soon for this paid position with the VCNAA.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**17. Guest: VT Agency of Education Martha Diess , Global Citizenship specialist**

Postponed until next meeting.

**18. Act 126 (2023) Community Resilience & Biodiversity Protection - Working Group**

There is a project called 30 x 30 that is being formed with this group to put 30% of the land in Vermont into conservation by the year 2030. A consultant has been hired.

**19. VT Dept of Health 5 year statewide health assessment – representative at Feb meeting, outreach has begun.**

A representative will be attending the February meeting. Outreach has begun.

**20. Tribal representative reports**

- Children and Family play gatherings are still happening. Contact Melody Mackin for more information.

**21. Announcements/Upcoming Events**

- Snow Snake Games will be happening at Mt Kearsarge Indian Museum Feb 3, 2024. ([indianmuseum.org](http://indianmuseum.org))
- Ongoing cultural activities with Alnobaiwi ([alnobaiwi.org](http://alnobaiwi.org))
- Game dinner with Missisquoi Jan 27
- Koasek of Koas reported the gardens are dormant and they are encouraging members to participate in state health assessment.

**22. Public Comment**

None

**Meeting Adjourned**