



VCNAA MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

May 8, 2024

1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

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

VERMONT
COMMISSION
ON
NATIVE
AMERICAN
AFFAIRS



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, Dan Coutu, Jeff Benay, Doug Bent

Commissioners attending virtually: Deb Reger, Patrick Lamphere, Melody Mackin

Guests: Jess Robinson (Vermont Division for Historic Preservation); Maxwell Krieger (Council – Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development), Marshall Rich (Vermont Department for Children and Families), Lindsay Barron (Vermont Department for Children and Families), Shirly Hook (Chief – Koasek of the Koas)

Guests attending virtually: Christopher Roy

Meeting called to order at 1:09 pm

1. Commissioners and guests introduction and sign-in

The guests introduced themselves.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Max Krieger is now scheduled to make a presentation and Lindsay Barron and Marshall Rich are now scheduled to make a presentation.

3. Approval of March Minutes

The April 10, 2024 meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

4. Commissioner's annual priorities, goals, & suggestions

No comments.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Max Krieger went over State ethics policies, the need to separate personal and State business, and to be aware of “open meeting” protocols.

2. VT Legislature in session; Native Caucus participation

No comments.

3. Act 182 (2022) Land Access & Opportunity Board report (Dan Coutu)

Dan Coutu noted that a budget may be attached to the housing bill.

4. Act 142 (2022) Racial Justice Statistics Advisory Council (Stacy Gould)

No comment.

5. Act 154 (2022) Environmental Justice Advisory Council

No movement.

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

There was some discussion and suggestions by Jesse Bruchac about researching names for Button Bay and Lake Bomoseen State Parks.

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

There is now a committee of eleven members to help make plans for the listening sessions. There is also a page on the website for resources and state records that may have genealogy information.

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

No update.

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

There is a Trauma and Prevention and Resilience Development Officer for the Department of Health for your information. Once the Office of Health Equity is established there will be a distribution of grant monies. One of the group's discussions is about the lack of mental health equity in programs.

10. Act 126 (2023) Community Resilience & Biodiversity Protection - focus groups (10 min)

Focus groups are still in progress. There is little to report except differences in priorities.

11. Seventh Generation Curriculum Grant Committee report (Jeff Benay)

There may be a roll out date for this project of Indigenous Peoples Day 2024. There are a number of schools staying open.

12. Ongoing Dialogue with Education Justice Coalition of VT re: Indigenous Community Relationship

The relationship has not progressed nor has the Commission approved involvement.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Department of Children and Family Services Update

Marshall Rich and Lindsay Barron made a presentation about their work that included sending out 150 notices that placed three children with kin in Vermont and identified nine children with Federally recognized Tribes. Tribes could be more involved with DCF although there is a trust issue with some tribal members. This program is set up for the well-being of all “Indian Children”. One suggestion is to create a liaison committee that would support Tribal parents.

2. Breanna Sheehan, VCNAA Administrative Director

Breanna Sheehan introduced herself.

3. Governor Scott 2024 Proclamation of Abenaki Recognition and Heritage Week

The Abenaki Recognition and Heritage Week will take place from 5/5 – 5/11.

4. Next Meeting

The Next VCNAA meeting will take place on June 12 at the Koasek Heritage Gardens.

5. Tribal representative reports

- **Missisquoi:** The Missisquoi Heritage Weekend will take place on May 25-26.
- **Nulhegan:** annual gathering August 24-25 at the scout camp.
- **Koasek of the Koas –** Community Gardens will be operating all summer.

6. Announcements/Upcoming Events

Maritime Museum Abenaki Heritage gathering is the June 29 weekend.

Public Comment

None.

Meeting Adjourned

Motion to adjourn passed by consensus.