

Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs
Friday, June 10, 2022
Quarterly Board Meeting

Attendance:

Commissioners Present

Susan Baker, *Ponca Tribe* (joined Zoom at 10:40am)
Gabriel Bruguier, *City of Lincoln Rep.*
Rudi Mitchell, *City of Omaha Rep.*
Gwendolyn Porter, *Omaha Tribe* (joined Zoom at 10:25am)
Kyle Taylor, *Ponca Tribe*
Darren Wolfe, *Omaha Tribe (Tribal Rep.)*

Commissioners Absent

Kenny Mallory, *Winnebago Tribe*
Sidney Tuttle, *Santee Sioux Nation*
Kirby Williams, *City of Omaha Rep (Urban Rep.)*

Ex-Officio Present

Commission Staff Present

Judi M. gaiashkibos, *Executive Director*
Scott Shafer, *Administrative Programs Officer*
Alicia Rodrigues, *Office Specialist*

Commission Staff Absent

A. Call to Order:

1. The June 10, 2022 quarterly meeting of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs at the University of Nebraska State Museum - Morrill Hall in Lincoln, Nebraska was called to order by Commissioner Wolfe, acting Chairman, at 10:11a.m. CST. Notice of this meeting was published on the NCIA website on Wednesday, June 1, in the Lincoln Journal Star on Friday, June 3, and on the State's Public Meeting Calendar on Thursday, June 9.
2. The invocation was given by Commissioner Bruguier.
3. Roll call indicated that four of nine current commissioners were in attendance. A quorum was established at 10:25am after Commissioner Porter joined.
4. **Motion #1** Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve the June 10, 2022 agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruguier.

For: Bruguier Mitchell Taylor Wolfe

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion carried by roll-call vote.

Commissioner Wolfe, acting Chairman, introduced and welcomed pending NCIA commissioner Kameron Runnels, Vice-Chairman of the Santee Sioux Nation.

B. Old Business:

1. Motion #2 Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the March 18, 2022 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Taylor.

For: Bruguier Mitchell Taylor Wolfe

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion carried by roll-call vote.

2. Motion #3 Commissioner Bruguier motioned to approve the General Ledger Detail Report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell.

For: Bruguier Mitchell Taylor Wolfe

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion carried by roll-call vote.

3. Budget Status Report

a. NCIA Administrative Programs Officer Scott Shafer reported that NCIA is roughly 91.70% through the current fiscal year (ending June 30, 2022) and slightly under projections of budgeted expenditures. A vast majority of these expenses are payroll, insurance benefits, and miscellaneous travel.

C. New Business:

1. Agency Strategic Plan & Two-Year Budget [Judi gaiashkibos & Scott Shafer]

a. NCIA is entering the 2nd year of the biennium and is now looking to submit next biennium's request.

b. Director gaiashkibos shared that she recently had a meeting with Senator John Stinner, former chair of the Nebraska's legislature's Appropriations Committee, regarding possibilities to increase agency funding and effectiveness.

b1. Last year, NCIA Administrative Programs Officer Scott Shafer received an outside job offer but the agency was able to retain him with an In Grade salary increase funded through a budget deficit request. Additionally, NCIA Office Specialist Alicia Rodrigues currently has an outside job offer that is being worked on.

b3. Senator Stinner suggested that NCIA include a request for a 15% increase to their budget in order to retain employees moving forward. NCIA would then testify at the agency's appropriations hearing.

c. Senator Mike McDonnell may be the next chair of appropriations, so Director gaiashkibos is working to set up a meeting with him as well.

Motion #4 Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the submission of a request for a 15% increase to agency appropriations in the agency's next biennium budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Taylor.

For: Bruguier Mitchell Porter Taylor Wolfe

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion carried by roll-call vote.

2. Approve Executive Director's 3% Pay Raise

a. Mr. Shafer explained the memo (included in the meeting packet) from DAS Personnel.

a1. On July 1, 2022, union employees will receive a 2% pay rate increase with an optional increase 1% based on performance. The Executive Director does not fall under state union contracts, so a motion from the board is needed.

b. Commissioner Bruguier asked how the previous motion for a 15% increase for agency salaries and this 3% pay raise for the Director are related.

b1. Director gaiashkibos explained that the 3% increase would take effect beginning July 1, 2022 and the 15% would take effect next spring after the agency's appropriations hearing.

Motion #5 Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the Executive Director's 3% pay increase to take effect July 1, 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Porter.

For: Bruguier Mitchell Porter Taylor Wolfe

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion carried by roll-call vote.

3. Director's Report & Project Status Report [Judi gaiashkibos]

a. Director gaiashkibos gave a brief update and referred Commissioners to the Executive Director's Report, letter to the Lincoln Mayor, Project Status Update, and photos included in the meeting packet for more information.

b. Other specific topics of discussion included the Niskithe Prayer Camp, Return of various out-of-state tribes, [Dr. Susan Documentary](#),

b1. Commissioner Mitchell explained that he attended the welcome dinner to honor the Otoe in Lincoln and the tribe would like land in Lincoln.

b2. Commissioner Wolfe suggested that board members share this topic with tribal leaders and come to the next meeting with potential ideas and more dialogue.

c. Mr. Kameron Runnels, vice-chair of the Santee Sioux Nation, shared that the Tribal Council sent letters to Neleigh, Oakdale, Crofton, and Ponca asking schools to remove their native mascots. Crofton responded to the letter and invited Mr. Runnels to speak at a school board meeting. They may do the right thing, but others have not responded.

c1. He would also like to commit to a strong follow-up on the State's denial of water bill LB for Tribe. He felt humiliated after speaking to the state committee and

c1i. Judi suggested that Mr. Runnels ask for meetings with candidates running for Governor to discuss this matter further.

d. Commissioner Mitchell asked if Thurston County could be renamed to "Blackbird County".

Motion #6 Commissioner Bruguier motioned to approve Executive Director's Report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell.

For: Baker Bruguier Mitchell Porter Taylor Tuttle Wolfe

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion carried by roll-call vote.

4. Morningstar Counseling's Final Report & Recommendations [Judi gaiashkibos]

a. A 76-page report on Native American Educational Disparities was given to NCIA by Morningstar Counseling. This report has been forwarded to all NCIA Commissioners.

5. DHHS Introductions + Brief Q&A [Dr. Gary Anthone & Charity Menefee]

a. [Dr. Gary Anthone](#), Chief Medical Officer and Director, Public Health

a1. The COVID situation in NE is very stable. In November of 2020, there were 987 patients statewide in a hospital with COVID. In comparison, there are currently 127 patients statewide in a hospital with COVID. Cases in Nebraska are on the rise, but those cases are not translating into hospital stays.

a2. Dr. Anthone will reach out to the Santee Tribal Council soon to schedule a meeting to discuss water concerns further.

b. [Charity Menefee](#), Director of Operations - Public Health at DHHS

b1. DHHS' Administrator - Office of Health Disparities and Health Equity position, previously filled by Josie Rodriguez, is currently open due to her recent departure. The job announcement can be found [here](#). DHHS plans to have representation from the tribes, along with other stakeholders, in their final interview panels for the position.

b2. Commissioner Wolfe suggested that DHHS work with tribal liaisons regarding COVID.

b3. He also expressed concerns with Thurston County jurisdictional overlap in regards to emergency issues and the relationships between DHHS and tribal emergency services.

b3i. Ms. Menefee explained that those concerns are more in line with the scope of work for the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, so Dr. Anthone will be reaching out to them to ask them to contact the tribes for more information and to discuss further.

c. Director gaiashkibos requested that a report of all grants and/or funds to the tribes (from DHSS) be put together and sent to NCIA and the respective tribes.

c1. Ms. Menefee assured the group that she would look into this matter further and follow-up once she knew more.

6. Chief Standing Bear Prize for Courage Update

a. Director gaiashkibos gave a brief update and referred Commissioners to the Project Status Update included in the meeting packet for more information.

b. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

7. Sovereign Native Youth STEM Leadership Academy Update [Dr. Gabriel Bruguier]

a. 51 students have signed up for this year's camp (June 26th - July 1st) themed around Native Youth for the 7th Generation.

b. Partnerships include Innovation Campus, The Bay, Spring Creek Audubon Center, Joslyn, Great Plains, Johnny Carson Center, Worlds of Connection, UNL Indigenous Food Sovereignty Program, UNMC through their School of Public Health, Collette Yellowrobe, plus about 10 teachers and student advisors

8. Chief Standing Bear Scholarship Update [Scott Shafer]

a. NCIA Administrative Programs Officer Scott Shafer reminded the group of the funding sources (Native license plates and at LCF) for these scholarships.

b. Alexander Mallory is the chair of the selection committee. Commissioner Bruguier also serves on that committee.

9. UNL Native Tuition Waiver Update

a. July or August would be the next meeting regarding any possible waiver.

D. Adjourn:

1. Commissioner Wolfe proposed October 14th to be the tentative date of the next Board Meeting. A meeting location TBD.

NOTE: Director gaiashkibos relayed that the group was welcome to attend a brief meeting with [Dana Gluckstein](#), the photographer of Morrill Hall's new [exhibit](#) (opening the same evening) Dignity: Tribes in Transition.

2. Motion #7 Commissioner Bruguier motioned to adjourn meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Porter.

For: Baker Bruguier Mitchell Porter Taylor Wolfe

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion carried by roll-call vote.

**The Quarterly Meeting of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs adjourned
Friday, June 10, 2022 at 11:54p.m. CST.**