



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Virginia Council on Indians

P. O. Box 1475, Richmond, VA 23218

**L. Preston Bryant, Jr.**  
Secretary of Natural Resources

**Karenne Wood**  
Chair

### Virginia Council on Indians Meeting September 19, 2006

**Present:** Chair Karenne Wood (Monacan), Juanita Smith (Nansemond), Frank Adams (Upper Mattaponi), Gerald Stewart (Eastern Chickahominy), Reggie Stewart (Chickahominy), Frank Richardson (Rappahannock), Mitchell Bush (Onondaga, Indian At Large), Paige Archer (Meherrin, Indian At Large), Ben Adams (Upper Mattaponi, Indian At Large), Sherry Munford (Sappony, Indian At Large), Reggie Tupponce Sr. (Upper Mattaponi, Indian At Large), Deanna Beacham (Weapemeoc, Council Program Specialist)

**Absent:** Carole Nash (Citizen At Large), Chris Peace (Delegate), Donald McEachin (Delegate), Harvey Morgan (Delegate), Ryan McDougale (Senator)

**Attendees:** Chief Gene Adkins (Eastern Chickahominy), Dawn Lampkin (Upper Mattaponi), Pinky Smith (Cherokee/Nansemond), Roger Archer (Meherrin), Kenneth Munford, Robert Gray (Pamunkey), Archie Elliott (Nottoway), Leroy Hardy (Nottoway), Faye Adams, Jack Kotvas.

#### Call to Order:

1. The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 PM, and the prayer blessing was given by Chief Gene Adkins.

#### Administrative Business:

1. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from August 15, 2006. Minor corrections were made, and after a motion by Member Frank Adams, and a second by Member Paige Archer, the corrected minutes were approved.

2. The next order of business was a letter of intent to petition for state recognition by the Appalachian Intertribal Heritage Association, Inc., which was read by the Chair and duly entered into the record.

3. The Chair then read a letter from Joel Dunn on behalf of the Friends of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail thanking the Council for its support of the trail as proposed by the National Park Service. The Trail is currently being considered by Congress. Mr. Dunn also provided an update on the Conservation Fund's work with the Chickahominy Indian Tribe and the James River Association to establish a Chickahominy River Water Trail, which will focus on Virginia Indian history. Mr. Dunn specifically thanked Chief Stephen

Adkins of the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, Council Member Mitchell Bush, and Council Program Specialist Deanna Beacham for their assistance.

### **Old Business:**

1. The first item of old business was an implementation of the VCI 2006 goal of having information on the VCI budget. Julie Cogsdale, legislative aide to Council member Delegate Chris Peace and former coordinator for the Refuge Health Program at the Virginia Department of Health, gave the Council an explanation of the items in the budget, and distributed a handout explaining the various budget categories and how to read the budget items on the monthly statement. The Council members indicated that the explanation was very helpful. They appreciated Ms. Cogsdale's explanation and thanked her for bringing the presentation. The Chair said that the monthly budget statements would continue to be distributed to the Council members.

2. The next item on the agenda was another implementation of a VCI 2006 goal, that of support for the Virginia Indian Jamestown 2007 events. Additional information on the Virginia Indian Symposium scheduled for October 5-7, 2006 was included in the members' packets. The Chair stated that several personnel from the National Museum of the American Indian had registered. Council member Reggie Stewart reminded attendees that they could register online at [www.americas400thanniversary.com](http://www.americas400thanniversary.com). The symposium will be held at Williamsburg Lodge. Panel sessions on October 5th will cover Indian law, government policy and its impact on Indian country, and preserving history and culture. The panel sessions are free, but there is a charge for the lunch and the banquet on October 5th. On October 6 there will be a bus tour to the tribal centers and reservations, ending with a performance at the Chickahominy tribal center, and on October 7 there is a bus trip to the Monacan homecoming event.

Additionally, the Chair requested the assistance of the Council members in compiling a list of cooperative efforts between the Virginia Indians and Jamestown 2007 and other organizations planning special 2007 events. She reviewed what she had listed so far. Council members are asked to send information about such cooperative efforts to the VCI office. These could include tribal efforts and individual efforts as well as official 2007 events such as the July 21-22 Virginia Indian Intertribal Festival and participation in various community and organizational events. It was suggested that tribal powwows in 2007 and other tribal events with a 2007 component be added to the list as well. The Chair intends to create a calendar of all these events to increase awareness and attendance.

3. The next item on the agenda was also in implementation of a VCI 2006 goal. This was a request by the Department of Historic Resources Highway Marker coordinator to Council members for additional members for the Diversity Highway Marker committee. DHR funding for the previous Diversity Initiative has been extended to include another 16 markers, with funding for 8 of those intended for Native American topics. Committee members research marker topics, write marker texts, and supply references for the information contained in texts. The committee meets quarterly about a month prior to DHR board meetings. Council members interested in becoming a member of the committee should contact Francine Archer of DHR.

4. Following the above items on implementation of the VCI goals for 2006 there was a general discussion on the goals which culminated in a motion, made by Council member Richardson and seconded by Council member Ben Adams, to extend the vision and mission statements and goals for 2006 through the 2007-2008 biennium, which ends June 30, 2008. This motion passed unanimously.

5. The next item of business included updates on several previous agenda items. The chair stated she had not yet sent the agreed-upon letter to the County of Henrico regarding its public relations video on Virginia Indians that was produced without consultation with the Virginia tribes. However, Council member Delegate Chris Peace had written a letter expressing his disappointment in the way the project was handled, and Ms. Cogsdale distributed that letter and its response from Henrico County. The Chair has not yet sent the letter of education about the Virginia Council on Indians to other nearby local governments, or the letter to the Princess Pocahontas Foundation. The Jamestown Settlement passes for VCI members had been sent and several members had already received theirs. Also, VCI members were invited to attend the preview of the new Jamestown Settlement museum on September 20. The museum has its grand opening in mid-October. Council members were encouraged to use their passes and share their opinions on the evolution of Jamestown Settlement for 2007.

6. The next agenda item was a consideration of the revised document intended as a guide for journalists and others writing about Virginia Indians and American Indians. Council member Reggie Tupponce had done revision on the document to couch it in more positive terms; Chair Karenne Wood had contributed an additional suggestion, and an explanatory opening statement was added. The journalists' guide document was accepted by the entire Council by consensus. It was suggested that contact information on the tribes as well as the capsules about the Virginia tribes developed by the Virginia Indian Advisory Board for Jamestown 2007 also be shared. Suggestions were made by the Chair and Council members that the guide should be sent to other state agencies and organizations involved in 2007 and to the tribes also. Julie Cogsdale said she had found the guide to be very helpful and suggested it also be sent to all General Assembly members. The accepted Journalists' Guide is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

7. Next the Chair gave a brief update on the Virginia Indian Heritage Program. She and Sheryl Hayes of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities met with Secretary of Natural Resources Preston Bryant and Delegate Chris Peace to confirm support for the program. The Chair and David Bearinger met with tribal leaders from several tribes, and have plans to meet with the other tribal leaders about the future of the program and to discuss any concerns and suggestions. The first phase of the overall program, the Virginia Indian Heritage Trail, is on track, with the goal being to have the Trail booklet ready by early 2007. Council member Munford asked for background material on the Trail, and the Chair agreed to send it to her.

### **New Business:**

1. The first item of new business was the proposed creation of a document outlining procedures relating to VCI business meetings. This was a suggestion from Council member Frank Adams. Council member Frank Adams explained his concerns regarding guidelines for when items could be added to the agenda, a public comment period with time limits and other standard operating procedures for meetings. His suggestion was that a committee be formed to work on bylaws or a guidelines document and bring the committee would then bring their suggestions back to the Council. Counsel Jack Kotvas pointed out that bylaws could be limited in scope, and could easily be amended when the Council wanted them changed or expanded. In response to questions, he said that bylaws or a procedural document were essentially the same thing, and the Council could decide what to call such a document. The Chair asked for volunteers for such a subcommittee, and Council members Tupponce, Richardson and Archer agreed to work on this project. Jack Kotvas pointed out that this ad hoc committee was subject to the Freedom of Information Act, so that individual communication should be made only to the chair and the committee's meetings should be established ahead of time and listed on the VCI website and state calendar.

2. The final item of business addressed by the Chair was the need for planning to begin for the VCI annual conference, scheduled for March 16-17, 2007. The Chair says that she can help with the Friday night dinner, but asked for a committee with a committee chair to volunteer to plan the Saturday afternoon session. Members who agreed to participate were Reggie Stewart, Paige Archer, Frank Richardson, Sherry Munford, and Reggie Tupponce. It was agreed to send out a collective email to all the VCI members and tribal leaders asking for them to suggest potential topics. Council member Juanita Smith volunteered to staff the registration table, and some general discussion on the conference among the Council.

### **Announcements:**

1. The next business meeting will be October 17, 2006 at 6:00 PM in room 7 West of the GAB.

2. The Chickahominy Indian Tribe's 55th Annual powwow will be September 23-24, 2006 at the tribal grounds in Charles City County.

3. First Virginia Indian signature event for Jamestown 2007: October 5-7, 2006: 400 Years of Survival: Virginia Indian Symposium.

4. The Rappahannock powwow will be held October 14 (rain date October 15) 2006 at the tribal grounds in Indian Neck.

5. Chief Gene Adkins announced that the Fall Festival previously scheduled by the Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division for October 21 would not be held.

6. The 18th Annual Meherrin powwow will be held October 27-29, 2006 at the tribal grounds in Winton, NC.

7. October is Archaeology Month, sponsored by the Department of Historic Resources. The theme for 2006 is First People of Virginia. Archaeology Month posters will be available for each of the tribes. More information on Archaeology Month events from the DHR website is included in the member packets.

### *Executive session and return to public session:*

Following the announcements, the Chair convened an executive session to discuss administrative and personnel concerns. The Council's attorney Jack Kotvas was asked to attend. Upon return to public session, the Council certified by roll call that only the specified items had been discussed.

### **Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.



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### Journalists' Guide to Virginia Indians and American Indians

Approved by the Virginia Council on Indians - September 19, 2006

As 2007 approaches, journalists are more frequently called upon to write about Virginia's tribes and American Indians. In the spirit of mutual benefit for journalists and the Virginia Indian communities, the Virginia Council on Indians offers the following helpful suggestions to writers:

1. Take care when using the phrase American Indian, Native American or Virginia Indian "culture." There were numerous Indian cultures in Virginia, and hundreds in North America. Unless you are referring to only one tribe, this word should be plural.
2. Avoid using plurals of names of nations when referring to their people as a group, as in "The Chickahominies shared a reservation with the Mattaponis in the 17<sup>th</sup> century." When referring to a tribe as a group by their tribal name, the name should always be singular: "The Monacan were recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1989."
3. Avoid referring to Indian songs as "chants" and to Indian powwow drums with overly dramatic adjectives such as "throbbing." Use the term "regalia" rather than "costumes" for American Indian clothing worn for powwows or ceremonial events.
4. Use discretion when using the word "village" to describe any historic Indian community. Even the 17<sup>th</sup> century English usually called our communities "towns", as distinguished from temporary "camps" used in seasonal visits for hunting, fishing, and harvesting oysters or various plants for food, medicine and life functions. Terms like "village" and "hamlet" consistently applied to Native American communities imply that our towns were primitive or quaint.
5. Use caution when describing elements of Native cultures in terms that simplify or marginalize, such as "gardening" for "agriculture," "myths" or "legends" for "history," or "woodlands survival skills" for "science."
6. Avoid referring to the paramount chief Powhatan as "Chief Powhatan" as if he were an ordinary chief, or by his informal name Wahunsunacock, when writing about him as a leader. It is appropriate to refer to him as Powhatan, the name (and name of hometown) that he took when he became paramount chief, before the English came to Virginia. This is what other Indian nations called him. The English terms "king", "emperor" and "ruler" are also inappropriate, as they are imperfect English translations used by the colonists who did not understand the nature of his political organization.
7. Powhatan's tributaries (the tribes that paid tribute to him) are best referred to as a "paramount chiefdom" or by using generic terms such as "the Powhatan tribes", when referring to these tribes at the time of English contact. They did not constitute a "confederacy" or a "nation." They were not sub-tribes, but individual nations that paid tribute to the same paramount chief. The only "Powhatan nation" was the

tribe located to the east of Richmond on the James River, where the paramount chief came from originally.

8. Virginia Algonquian cultures (indeed, most North American Indian cultures) were matrilineal. A child's status (i.e., being eligible for leadership) was determined by the mother's status, not by the father. Powhatan's high status wives were known to the English colonists by name, but the mother of Pocahontas was never identified. Therefore avoid referring to Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas, as a "princess."

9. Use caution when referring to Pocahontas, her age, and the events of her life. It is important to note that opinions differ on the alleged "rescue" incident at Werowocomoco in 1607. Some think it happened much as Smith described it in his 1624 writings, although he did not mention the incident at all in his earlier writing of his time at Werowocomoco. Others think it never happened, and still others believe the event occurred, but was an "adoption" ritual that was misunderstood by Smith.

10. Avoid misinformation about Virginia Indian history, such as incorrect population estimates, referring to the Virginia Algonquians as "Algonquins", or to the Siouan speaking tribes of the piedmont as "Sioux", misspelling the names of tribes, the misrepresentation of events, and using inappropriate language, such as describing periods of intensified English/Indian conflict as "wars."

11. Avoid using only non-Indian "experts" as sources of information about Virginia Indians, whether historical or contemporary. This often results in errors in both historical and modern information, and in the use of inappropriate words, as shown in some of the examples above.

12. Check the facts and use multiple, reliable sources. The Virginia Council on Indians office can supply background information, suggestions for resource material, and referrals to the appropriate tribal leaders as sources for interviews and quotes. The office can be reached via email at [vci@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:vci@governor.virginia.gov), or at telephone number 804-225-2084.