



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Council on Indians

P. O. Box 1475, Richmond, VA 23218

L. Preston Bryant, Jr.
Secretary of Natural Resources

William P. Miles
Chair

Virginia Council on Indians Meeting September 16, 2008

Present: Chief Bill Miles (Pamunkey); Assistant Chief Earl Bass (Nansemond); Sharon Bryant (Monacan), Chief Ken Adams (Upper Mattaponi), Chief Stephen Adkins (Chickahominy), Sherry Munford (Indian at large, Sappony), Deanna Beacham (Council staff, Weapemeoc)

Absent: Chief Anne Richardson (Rappahannock), Joanne Howard (Chickahominy Eastern Division), Mitchell Bush (Indian at large, Onondaga), Chief Carl Custalow (Mattaponi)

Attendees: Gerald Epps (Sappony), Pam Talbott (Monacan), Lynette Allston (Nottoway of Virginia), Allard Alston, Leroy Hardy (Nottoway of Virginia), Beth Roach (Nottoway of Virginia), Ken Munford, Helen Rountree, Eric Gregory, Beverly El (Cheroenhaka Nottoway).

Call to Order:

1. The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:30 PM by Chief Bill Miles, Chair, and the invocation was given by Chief Steve Adkins. Chair Miles then asked all those present to introduce themselves.

Administrative Business:

1. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the August 19, 2008 meeting. Chief Miles indicated that a request had been received from Mr. Walt Brown to add his public comment to the minutes. The VCI office had not received a copy of this public comment prior to the meeting, but one was provided by Mr. Eric Gregory of the Office of the Attorney General. A motion to accept the minutes as amended with the additional public comment was made by Chief Adkins and seconded by Chief Adams, and passed unanimously.

2. The next item on the agenda was the VCI financial report for July 2008, the first month of the new fiscal year. A copy of the report was distributed to the members. Chief Adkins moved that the report be accepted as presented, and Ms. Bryant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

Old Business:

1. The first item of old business was the report being produced by the recognition committee for the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia. Chief Miles clarified his suggestion that each member record in writing how he voted on each criterion and his reasons for each vote and that all the members' written reports be combined. The recognition committee could then convene and discuss and vote on their recommendation to the Council, and that recommendation also included in the final report to be shared with the Council. Assistant Chief Bass stated that this process was already in motion, with the current and previous committee members having been asked to record their votes and reasons in electronic form and send them to him to compile. The current and previous committee members who do not use a computer will send their reports to the VCI staff to be recorded electronically for the committee report. Upon compiling the committee members' contributions to the committee report, the Assistant Chief Bass will convene a committee meeting which will be posted and announced, for the committee to hold its discussion and vote on its final recommendation to the Council. The committee will review and consider previous members' votes on Criteria 2 and 4, but will not need to vote again on those criteria.

2. As requested at the last meeting, the Chair wrote a letter to the Governor's office requesting a procedure for reviewing the recommendations made by the VCI to the Governor and General Assembly. Copies of that letter were distributed to the VCI members.

3. The next item of old business was a discussion concerning what to do about the VCI annual conference, given the budget constraints for this fiscal year. Several considered suggestions were made, which included raising extra funds to support having the same type of conference held in the past, and foregoing the conference entirely. The point was made by multiple Council members that if the VCI were to hold a conference they would want programs of substance, with information the tribes could use as deliverables from the conference, and assignments regarding following up on these deliverables to ensure the tribes were gaining benefit from the programs. Programs suggested included economic development, such as what member Bryant has done with Monacan Enterprises, and small business guidance from the Small Business Administration; tribal administration; and engaging young people in higher education efforts, by having visits from colleges. It was agreed that a one-day conference could be held at a tribal center with programs in the morning and afternoon, and a box lunch, thus

keeping costs to a minimum. Chief Adkins offered the use of the Chickahominy Tribal Center for a low rental fee. Chief Miles said the day should be scheduled for March or April, in keeping with past VCI conferences. It was agreed that the Advisory Committee would be contacted and asked to work up a program for a conference with two topics and a one-day schedule, assuming the use of the tribal center with a catered lunch. The preferred program topics were education and economic/small business development.

New Business:

1. The first item of new business was a Section 106 request concerning a grant request by a group known as the Wolf Creek Cherokee Tribe, Inc., located in Patrick County. They are asking the US Department of Agriculture for a grant to help build a museum and organization center in Stuart, Virginia. The members of the VCI were of the opinion that they did not know enough about this situation to make comments, so the staff was instructed to write to the group declining to participate in the Section 106 process.

2. The VCI received the annual notice about the Governors' Indian Interstate Council conference, so the next item of new business was determining whether or not to send a representative this year. Member Mitchell Bush had expressed willingness to attend this year's conference, which is scheduled for October 12-16 in South Dakota. After some discussion, the VCI members collectively agreed that given the current budget constraints and the state's request regarding limiting travel, it would not be advisable to send a representative this year.

3. Chief Miles then introduced a suggestion that the Council consider meeting quarterly or bi-monthly rather than every month. The current Council by-laws state that the Council will meet monthly or as requested by a majority of the Council members, so this would require a change of the by-laws. After some discussion regarding the history of the frequency of Council meetings, the Chair asked that the topic be added as an agenda item for the next VCI meeting.

4. Chief Adams asked about the procedure by which all the historic highway markers with American Indian content were sent to the VCI members for review before being sent to the Board of Historic Resources for approval. A review document has not been coming to the Council regularly every quarter, and at least one marker which originated with the Virginia Indian Heritage Program and was approved in June was not reviewed by Council members. Chief Miles agreed to contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to ensure that this review takes place.

5. Chief Adams then asked about a more organized procedure for reviewing the textbook content on Virginia Indians that had been sent to all the VCI members by one textbook company. It was agreed that the VCI staff would collect member responses to the latest version distributed and send them in to the publisher collectively. As the publisher had not given an exact deadline, the members agreed to get responses to the VCI office by the end of the calendar year 2008.

Announcements

1. The next VCI meeting will be October 28, 2008, at 6:30 PM in room 5 West of the General Assembly Building.
2. September 19 – The Virginia Indian Heritage Program is sponsoring a highway marker dedication ceremony (The Great Indian Road) at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA at 11 AM. For more information, contact Karenne Wood.
3. September 20 – Opening ceremony for Beyond Jamestown Virginia Indians Past and Present exhibit at James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA 9 AM - 4 PM. For more information contact Karenne Wood or ask the VCI office for a flyer.
4. September 27-28 – Chickahominy 57th Annual Powwow at Chickahominy Tribal Grounds.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55 PM.