



AIANEA National Council Teleconference Minutes

Monday, February 22, 2016

11:00 pm Pacific, 12:00 pm Mountain, 1:00 pm Central, 2:00 pm Eastern

Respect, Harmony and Beauty

Council Members & Guests Attending:

President

Athena Pratt, New Mexico

Secretary

Melissa Sturdivant, Texas

Treasurer

Pam Crow, Texas

Bill Parrish, Pennsylvania

East Regional Representative

Cassius Spears, Rhode Island

Midwest Regional Representative

Debe Walchuk, Minnesota

Northern Plains Regional Representative

Cameron Clark, Wyoming

West Regional Representative

Susan Lopper, New Mexico

Guests Attending:

Barry Hamilton, National Tribal Liaison Officer

Past President Attending:

Steve Durgin, Washington, DC

Meeting Minutes:

- a. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm (Central) by Athena Pratt.
- b. Athena took roll call of those attending the meeting. Athena clarified what was needed to achieve a quorum. A quorum was not achieved and some business before the National Council was tabled until later during the meeting.
- c. Athena asked for additional items to the agenda. Susan Lopper requested clarification regarding reports provided by regional representatives, and Athena proposed that the regional rep reports be provided in writing ahead of time and forwarded to the National Council ahead of time so they can be reviewed.

Athena proposed that based on information from the reports and on calendar items planned within the regions, that these items can then be discussed at the National Council meeting, and how to get more involvement in the regions. Susan asked if the report was needed before this stated meeting, and Athena stated that it was not necessary for this meeting, but that she would like to receive these ahead of time in the future. Athena discussed the proposed format she is thinking of for the reports. Athena suggested to have specific topics on the agenda. In regard to the written report, Athena suggested specific guiding questions to help representatives with reaching out to the members in the respective regions. How do we reach the membership in the respective regions? Is there a more efficient way to prepare a report for things going on in the region?

Athena would like to have the reports two weeks prior to the stated National Council meeting so that there is enough time to gather information or resources to address an issue or problem needing the Council's attention.

Athena wants our time to be efficient and for us not have a long meeting.

Additional agenda item that was requested is to add Ann Perales as an Honorary Elder. Athena wants to research this and talk with Tanya Meyer-Did Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen regarding this. She will table this for right now.

Susan Lopper asked that we consider having an official NRCS employee serving on the National Council representing the Agency's interest, and representing AIAN interest and Farm Bill implementation. This would help

create a system of checks and balances. Has there ever been an employee serving on the Council? Athena commented that one thing she really wants to work to clarify is the question of employees serving in official capacities in other organizations. She feels that there are some consequences for conducting business this way and some ethical concerns. We have Barry Hamilton and Deborah Clairmont that can assist with these interpretations and how we find a balance of our employees serving as AIANEA representatives and doing their day-to-day business with NRCS.

- d. Athena asked about the status of the minutes and if these were approved previously. Melissa clarified that the December minutes were not yet approved because we did not have a meeting in January. She indicated that these were distributed in December. However, no corrections were noted.

Being no quorum present; however, approval of the minutes was tabled for right now as Athena will do this by email.

- e. Treasurer's Report.

Facilitator – *Pam Crow*

1. Pam reported the following account balances:
 - \$ 20,713.46 in Wells Fargo checking
 - \$ 123,177.53 in Frost Bank investment accounts

Athena commented that she had been in touch with Pam and asked about how to set up a payment of dues from automatic payroll deductions, and if this was an option for us to consider. Pam feels that this may be an accounting nightmare and a tedious process to try and take care of. Athena and Pam thought that until we can find a better system to track our finances, this can wait for now.

- f. President's Message.

Facilitator – *Athena Pratt*

Athena shared that she is excited about this year and serving as President. She feels that with the expertise of our members, this will be a great year. She wants to involve our members in what is going on and find a way to include them in activities. Her point was that if a member is not serving on a committee or serving on the National Council, then they may not know what is going on with AIANEA. Athena would like to see more discussion at the committee level and less discussion at the National Council level.

- g. National AIAN Special Emphasis Program Manager.

Facilitator – *Deborah Clairmont*

Deborah was not on the call, but Athena read her report to the Council. Athena indicated that Montana would be the lead for this year's AIAN Heritage Month poster process. Athena is trying to schedule a meeting with her so they can do some strategic planning and how AIANEA can assist her.

- h. National Tribal Liaison Officer Report

Facilitator – *Barry Hamilton*

Barry discussed the role of Tribal Liaisons and Barry also shared that he has an updated directory of all of the Tribal Liaisons across the nation. Barry indicated that Timothy Oakes in Mississippi assisted in putting this list together. Athena commented that Barry has asked that we look to have this reviewed in the next thirty days to help ensure its accuracy. Athena also commented that the Agency is looking to open 10 new Tribal Liaison positions in the US, and that they hope to have these posted in the near future. Athena commented that Barry is also asking for input regarding the qualifications and skill set needed for consideration for the new hires, and he is looking at developing a training for Tribal Liaisons. Barry feels that by defining a skill set will assist the State Conservationists in making selections. Athena commented that we have an opportunity to talk with our current members who are TLs, and also survey what they feel they should have known when they were first hired.

Athena feels that the regional representatives should take the lead on this and get in touch with the TLs in their respective states, and compile the information and bring it back to the Council and Barry.

Susan asked how we can effectively get the TLs to engage and be receptive. Barry responded that he feels that some of this can be clarified and worked on by our Regional Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (RTCAC).

Barry reported that the representatives have been selected for the Regional Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (RTCAC) positions for the West, East, and Central Regions. Holler Herbert and Susan Looper were selected to serve on the West RTCAC as AIANEA's Primary and Alternate Representatives, respectively. Elder Norman Lopez is the AIANEA's Elder Representative. For the Central RTCAC, Melissa Sturdivant and Dr. Carol Crouch were selected as AIANEA's Primary and Alternate Representatives, respectively, and Elders Loretta Metoxen and Ted Herrera were selected as Primary and Alternate AIANEA Elder Representatives, respectively. For the East RTCAC, David Elliott and Cassius Spears will serve as the Primary and Alternate AIANEA Representatives, respectively. AIANEA Elder Billy Smith will serve as the AIANEA Elder Representative.

Barry discussed the National Tribal Liaison Network that was in place when he took this position. He hopes to really engage this system and develop this network as a resource for the future, especially with defining the Tribal Liaison job responsibilities in the near future. He hopes that the persons involved will function as a Regional Tribal Liaison and be able to pass along this information to TLs throughout the regions.

Susan asked for clarification of Tribal members who can serve on the RTCACs, and asked if community members can serve as an option. Barry discussed this

Barry extended his appreciation to AIANEA for assisting in getting involved and getting the word out to our communities.

Barry discussed the Intertribal Ag Council's upcoming webinar about CSP and Tribes, and he will forward the link to attend. Barry suggests that all TLs should attend this webinar and it will provide a lot of good information. Discussions followed.

Barry reported that he is working to update we are in compliance with our Tribal Consultation policy which all Agencies must comply with. Barry indicated that there is a master record keeps track of consultations which occur. He wants to have a serious review of the content to make sure it is a complete resource and wants AIANEA involved in this.

Barry shared that he is also looking for input to update the Farm Bill Fact Sheet which is a one-page document. Barry wants an AIANEA committee to assist him with this review and possible re-work of these resources.

Barry referred to a webpage which he wants to work to develop and update the content.

Barry reported on development of several other items to include the addition of a new Tribal Conservation District and review of those guidelines; and an upcoming webinar training for TLs and the cultural resources division.

Action Items:

- 1) To check the accuracy of the TL listing being developed;
- 2) To provide feedback regarding the job responsibilities of TLs; and,
- 3) To ensure that we engage the tribes in each region to be involved in the RTCACs.

i. Action Items Requiring a Vote.

Facilitator – *Athena Pratt*

- 1) Expenditure of up to \$200 to purchase a Pendleton blanket and have it embroidered. Discussions followed. Steve asked about how this expenditure will be covered considering that donations are also being contributed toward the costs. Athena offered that other monies can donate to AIANEA general fund or other accounts. Millie is collecting notes to forward with the gift.
Motion to approve the expenditure: *Cassius Spears*
2nd motion: *Debe Walchuk*
All voted in favor to approve the expenditure and with no votes opposed, the motion passed and the expenditure was approved.
- 2) Athena discussed the scheduling of the monthly AIANEA National Council meeting and recommended that we select a specific day of the week and go with that. Discussions followed and most agreed to go with the third Monday of each month.
Motion to approve the third Monday of each month for the National Council meeting: *Debe Walchuk*
2nd motion: *Susan Looper*
All voted in favor to approve the stated meeting schedule and with no votes opposed, the motion passed and the meeting schedule was approved.

j. Additional Comments.

Facilitator – *Athena Pratt*

- 1) Athena requests that the Regional Representatives try to make the stated meetings each month, and if they are not able to attend, they need to arrange for someone to attend in his/her place. She commented that this is not really addressed in the Bylaws, but she think this needs to be included on the re-write, that if a Regional Rep is unable to attend the meeting that an alternate can represent and vote in that capacity. Athena added that the person standing in must be a member in good standing, of course.

Susan asked, how do we know if the person is in good standing. Athena discussed this and stated that she can get a current listing of members and make sure the Regional Rep has a listing of the people in his/her respective region so they can develop a relationship with the members and stay in touch. Discussions followed. Susan voiced some concerns with contacting people in this manner, and Athena clarified and stated that we need to be in touch with people, not solicit, necessarily. We need to be creative in telling the AIANEA

story and what is being done. Cameron further added that we need to demonstrate our value and network to others, and that is the biggest asset we have.

- 2) Athena brought up for discussion planning of a national training. She added that one item that has come to the forefront is that the National Civil Rights Advisory Committee has contacted all of the employee organizations and are trying to schedule their face-to-face in conjunction with a national training and/or conference hosted by an employee's association. Athena asked if we want to start the planning process for 2017 training. Cameron commented that a national training would be great, and that it took a long time to pull it together. We need to be able to do this as part of official travel and training, and this makes it more available for people to attend.

Susan brought up an item for discussion and feels that the communication for the Association is very outdated. Susan volunteered to work to help with the webpage and getting this current. This should be our priority before we start planning a training conference. Susan feels that it really needs to be addressed. Discussions followed. Melissa shared that the Communications Committee has met and is working on some of these things brought up. Melissa added that Gina is Chair of this committee and a business plan is in place and a lot of these items that are being brought up here are currently being approached and worked on by the Communications Committee. Melissa asked that Athena get in touch with Gina and get a complete report of where the committee is right now on some of the questions posed.

k. ACTION ITEMS

Facilitator – *Athena Pratt*

The following items are assigned:

- 1) Athena will send items Barry discussed;
- 2) Athena will work with Herb Webb regarding Ann Perales gift;
- 3) Athena reported that the next meeting will be third Monday in March;
- 4) Regional Reps will identify an alternate to attend meeting as needed;
- 5) Athena will talk with Steve regarding planning for 2017 conference;
- 6) Athena will follow-up with Gina about the communications Committee's work;
- 7) Athena will send information to committees about expectations;
- 8) Regional Reps will provide a written report two weeks prior to the next meeting so we can have discussions during the next meeting of anything needing follow-up by the National Council or the Association.

l. Closing thoughts & comments.

- 1) Athena extended her appreciation to everyone for their patience and support to make this such a successful time for him as President. This is his last official National Council meeting as President. All those attending thanked Steve for all his hard work and dedication, especially serving a second term while the leadership transitioned.
- 2) Adjourn – Being no further business, Athena adjourned the National Council meeting at 2:30 pm, Central.

2 attachments

- A. National Council 22 Feb 2016 Meeting Agenda
- B. AIANEA Regional Reports



AIANEA National Council Teleconference

Monday, February 22, 2016

11:00 am Pacific, 12:00 pm Mountains, 1:00 pm Central, and 2:00 pm Eastern

Call-in 800-844-9904

Passcode: 6690326

TIME (Eastern)	DURATION	TOPIC	PRESENTOR(S)
2:00	10 min	Welcome & roll call Request for new agenda items	Athena Pratt
2:10	5 min	Minutes & previous action items	Melissa Sturdivant
2:15	5 min	Treasurer Report	Pam Crow & Bill Parrish
2:20	10 min	President <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National SEPM Report (Deborah can't call in) - President's Message 	Athena Pratt
2:30	10 min	National Tribal Liaison Officer Report	Barry Hamilton
2:40	15 min	New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vote on expenditure for award - Regular meeting time for the year - Responsibility of Regional Reps to have an alternate call in - Start looking at 2017 conference 	Athena Pratt & National Council members
2:55	5 min	Review action item identified	Athena Pratt

AIANEA East Regional Report
Cassius Spears, Representative

ATTACHMENT B

- Members of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe establish The Native Land Conservancy, Inc
The group is dedicated to the continuation of Native American traditional life ways of the Northeast. The organization is open to non-Native members and members of other tribal groups. In Native American belief systems the human being is meant to be one with nature. One of the intentions of the trust is to foster healthy natural environments to provide safe spaces for people to re-connect with nature.

<http://www.nativelandconservancy.org/>

- Mashpee Wampanoag annual Winter Social held in February.
- First Nations Now Accepting Grant Proposals for Native Communities to Conduct Food Sovereignty Assessments
All applications are due by Tuesday, March 15, 2016, at 5 p.m. Mountain Time
- United South & Eastern Tribes (USET) Impact Week February 8-11
- 2016 Executive Council Winter Session Feb 22, 2016 - Feb 25, 2016 Washington, DC