



# AIANEA National Council Teleconference Minutes

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

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*Respect, Harmony and Beauty*

## **Council Members & Guests Attending:**

### **President**

Dr. Carol, Crouch, Oklahoma

### **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

Kirt Peterson, Colorado

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

Cameron Clark, Wyoming

### **Secretary**

Melissa Sturdivant, Texas

### **Treasurer**

Bill Parrish, Pennsylvania

### **Southeast Region Representative**

Melissa Allen, Virginia

### **Central Region Representative**

Derek Kelso, Oklahoma

### **Northeast Region Representative**

Cassius Spears, Rhode Island

### **West Region Representative**

Susan Looper, Nevada

### **Guests Attending**

None

### **Past Presidents Attending**

None

## **Meeting Minutes:**

- a. Meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm (Central) by Dr. Carol Crouch, President. Carol extended her appreciation to all of those who attended the meeting, and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.
- b. Welcome, introductions & roll call  
A roll call of those in attendance was taken by Carol and Melissa. A quorum was achieved, so business before the Council was conducted.
- c. Treasurer Report  
The treasurer's report was emailed to the Council. Bill provided additional information about the financials and clarified that the balance in the Wells Fargo account is \$ 22,152.82 and has a misprint on page one of the handout.

*Motion to accept the treasurer's report as submitted:* Susan Looper

*2<sup>nd</sup> Motion:* Derek Kelso

*With no opposition, the treasurer's report was approved as submitted by affirmation, and is recorded.*

- d. Minutes for Review

The minutes for the last meeting were forwarded by email to the Council.

*Motion to accept the minutes as submitted:* Kirt Peterson

*2<sup>nd</sup> Motion:* Cassius Spears

*With no opposition, the minutes for the November National Council meeting were approved as submitted by affirmation, and are recorded.*

- e. National AIAN SEPM Report  
Facilitator: Deborah Clairmont, NAIANSEPM

Deborah was not able to be on the call.

- f. National Tribal Liaison Report  
Facilitator: Barry Hamilton

Barry was not able to be on the call. Carol mentioned that Barry had forwarded information about the Farm Bill and Carol forwarded this to the Council.

- g. Regional Representatives' Reports  
Facilitator: Dr. Carol Crouch & Regional Representatives

1. South Central Region Representative, Derek Kelso

The following information was provided related to events planned in Oklahoma:

**Tribal Outreach**

- IAC Youth
- 67 Outreach meetings to evaluate the awareness of technical and program assistance to get conservation on the ground
  - Training
  - Workshops
  - Conservation Days
  - Traditional Festival & Homecomings
- Climate Change Workshops
  - Oklahoma Tribes
  - Second Tribal College Workshop
- RCPP projects
  - Training session - OKC
    - (2) applications
    - (1) Tribe
- Soil Health Training for Tribes
  - Nineteen (19) workshops
  - (5) Tribal Educational Days
  - (6) festivals
- Specialty Workshops with Tribes and local producers
  - (32) Conservation Client Gateway
  - (13) Seasonal High Tunnel
  - (4) Prescribed Burning
  - (16) Cedar Removal
  - (16) Solar Pump
  - (15) Feral Hogs )
  - (4) Climate Change
  - (5) Eligibility Workshop
  - (5) EQIP Application Process
  - (2) Record Keeping
- WEWAIT Training for NRCS Employees
  - November 2017

<b>Recruitment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (3) High School Pathway Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ American Indian Students</li> <li>○ INCA partnership with NRCS (NHQ)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• National Recruitment event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ AISES National Conference - MN</li> <li>○ AISES Regional Conference – OK</li> <li>○ AISES National Conference - CO</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Partnership with Oklahoma Tribes – Youth, Recruitment &amp; Veterans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Choctaw Nation &amp; Veteran Career Fair</li> <li>○ NRCS National High School Pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (3) students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– American Indian students</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Consultation 7 Listening Sessions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-Face Meetings with Tribal Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ (4) at their Tribal headquarters</li> <li>○ (19) Tribes at Nation to Nation Consultation Meeting</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Working Effectively with American Indian Tribes (WEWAIT) NEDC Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Employees from NRCS Oklahoma and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oklahoma</li> <li>▪ Conservation District</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Face to Face meetings with Tribes, tribal members and producers having barriers on getting conservation on the ground <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ (21) Tribes</li> <li>○ (3) Colleges</li> <li>○ (6) Black Historical Towns</li> <li>○ (67) Rural Communities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conservation Districts, NRCS and Tribal conservation district listening session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ (5) Meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Landmark Agreements</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success Farm Tours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ (7) Tours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tribal</li> <li>▪ Rural Communities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Two Landmark Soil Health Demonstration Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cheyenne &amp; Arapaho Tribe and Choctaw Nation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstration site</li> <li>▪ (3) Soil health training workshops</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• First People’s Garden on Tribal land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Citizen Potawatomi Nation agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Successful implemented</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• To promote Tribal Monarch Initiatives on tribal lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ (9) workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 22 Tribes</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ (7) Tribes planted pollinator gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 400,000 milk weed plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Upcoming Events</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choctaw Career &amp; Veterans Expo</li> <li>• WEWAIT Training for NRCS Employees</li> </ul>	<p>FEB 2018</p> <p>APR 9, 2018</p>

2. Northeast Region Representative, Cassius Spears  
Cassius stated he had no report at this time.

3. West Region Representative, Susan Looper  
Susan reported that Nevada celebrated American Indian-Alaska Native Heritage Month by hosting a statewide Lunch-n-learn with native food sampling. She partnered with the Nevada AIAN SEPM and a tribal rep from the West RTCAC.

Susan reported that Nevada was selected to lead the annual poster contest for NRCS' American Indian Heritage Month of 2018. Susan will serve on the committee and assist Patti Novak, who serves as Nevada's AIAN SEPM.

#### h. Committee Updates

Facilitator: Dr. Carol Crouch & Committee Chairs

1. *Elders Committee* – Tanya Dideriksen

Tanya submitted a written report. See her comments noted below.

The Elders Committee and Elders Book Committee have continued working on the Elders in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century book in 2017. We've held teleconferences/meetings more than quarterly, approximately every 2-3 months to discuss the book project and get update reports from committee members. Our last teleconference was on November 8. Progress has been slow on the book project, although a lot is being completed behind the scenes and we expect the book to begin to really come together in 2018.

In 2017, the Elders Committee developed and submitted a recommendation to the AIANEA National Council for reimbursement for AIANEA and NRCS work that the Elders do above and beyond their normal work such as conferences. The National Council approved the recommendation, which also included the process to be followed to request the funds.

Additionally, in 2017, Tanya and Melissa have been communicating with the Leopold DiCaprio Foundation regarding potential funding to assist with the book project. They are very interested in the project and offered some suggestions, which the Elders have determined do not meet their vision for the book. The LDF did suggest thinking about a change in book format to increase readership interest, so the Elders are very open to considering that once we have made more progress on the book. The LDF will have a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the summer 2018. If this is a good fit for the book project, we may consider submitting a proposal for funding.

2. *Scholarship Committee* – Susan Looper & Melissa Sturdivant

Melissa announced the 2017 AIANEA Scholarship recipients:

***AIANEA Natural Resources Management Scholarship Award***

*Kasey Jo Blevins, Oklahoma*

***AIANEA Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) Scholarship Awards:***

*Meeya Yazzie, Utah*

*Terrance Mitchell, Georgia*

***AIANEA Harold Bryant Scholarship Award***

*Terra Brauhn, Montana*

Melissa indicated that we had 8 submissions from across the country. Four were selected and will receive a \$500 scholarship. Melissa added that Pam is ready to go with issuing the checks. Melissa drafted letters and is sending them to the students today, if approved by the National Council. The letters will be mailed with the check by Pam, but Melissa is notifying them by email as well.

*Motion to accept the nominees as selected by the Scholarship Committee and award scholarships as identified: Derek Kelso*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Motion: Cassius Spears*

*With no opposition, the 2017 AIANEA Scholarships are awarded as announced, and are recorded.*

Susan and Melissa prepared a report to the National Council and it is provided below, and Melissa added that the matrix tool helped with an objective evaluation.

### **2017 Scholarship Committee Report**

Committee Co-Chairs: Susan Looper and Melissa Sturdivant

Committee Members: Pam Crow, Noller Herbert, Felix Nez, David Elliot, Cameron Clark (AD-HOC)

The 2017 AIANEA Scholarship Awards were announced publicly on the AIANEA website on November 1, 2017, and regionally announced by AIANEA National Council Members and Representatives, and by AIANEA members, supporters and NRCS employees throughout our connected tribal communities.

Applications for the scholarship awards were accepted electronically until mid-night December 1, 2017 at [aianeascholarship@gmail.com](mailto:aianeascholarship@gmail.com) email address.

On November 22, 2017 it was discovered that the AIANEA website was down or access denied. Over a period of about a week it was discovered that the aianea.org site had been shut down because payment for the bill was past due.

A total of (8) applications were received, including one applicant for the Harold Bryant Award, two applicants for the Natural Resource Management Award, and five applicants for a STEM Award. Most of the applicant packets were submitted by the checklist requirements.

We had to utilize an AD-HOC Committee Member, Cameron Clark, to serve the Scholarship Committee through the scholarship evaluation period because a past committee member did not respond to the committee about serving on the committee.

Melissa Sturdivant developed an Evaluation Matrix Tool used to evaluate the scholarship application packets. Through the development of the Evaluation Matrix Tool and the process of accepting student applications and taking questions from folks interested in the scholarship program, we gained some valuable insights to better the application form and process, including the application announcement period and award. We anticipate changes to the program in the future.

During the Scholarship Committee teleconference on November 22, 2017, attended by Susan, Melissa, Noller and Felix; we discussed some of the challenges of the Application Form and the Evaluation Matrix Tool form.

#### **i. Old Business.**

##### **1. *Status of Regional Rep & VP Positions.***

Carol stated that the response to the elections has been very positive and she's received a lot of responses. The deadline is December 1 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> VP position.

Carol reached out to an AIANEA member in Montana to serve as the *Northern Plains Regional Rep* and this employee is speaking with their supervisor to get approval for working in this position.

Carol will get with Cameron and Kirt as she transitions with the end of her term.

##### **2. *2019 National Training.*** Cameron reported that the planning committee met recently. They are working on the final time frame and where the training will be conducted. They are looking at April, May and August of 2019. Carol added that she spoke with Roylene during the Intertribal Ag Council, and suggests that we rely on Roylene as a resource to help facilitate this. Four associations are involved in the conference planning. Discussions followed.

##### **3. *CPA.*** Carol talked with Pam, and Pam is okay with Melissa trying to find a CPA to assist the Association. Melissa verified that she will try to work on this. She continued and stated that she had reached out to someone locally in her area asking questions of what is needed for us to transition to Texas, and that she is waiting to hear back from her.

3. *Bylaws.* Melissa reported that the bylaws are still being worked on and edited. She removed the information about the poster as suggested by Deborah. She is waiting for feedback from the CPA on the language needed.
  4. *Articles of Incorporation.* Carol and Melissa reported that they have not been able to get through to the Texas Comptroller yet to make this transition.
- j. New Business.
1. *Election Results*  
Carol announced and congratulated Melissa on her election to 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President for AIANEA. Carol thanked Cassius for his service and agreeing to continue to serve as the Northeast Regional Representative.  
  
Carol announced that Derek Kelso will continue as the South Central Regional Rep. He ran unopposed in the recent election.
  2. *Open National Council Positions*  
*Carol commented that we need to seek a replacement for Melissa's position as Secretary.*
  3. *Intertribal Ag Council.*  
Carol and Melissa reported that the IAC meeting was conducted in early December. The travel was difficult, and a lot of people were not able to attend. A Tribal Liaison meeting was held as part of the IAC, pre-meeting prior to the IAC. Melissa commented that the meeting for the Liaisons was really very valuable and it was good to hear perspectives from other states. Melissa added that they are hoping to do this same type of training during future IAC meetings. There were some discussions that this be coordinated with NEDC and have a training for Tribal Liaisons.
  4. *Central Region's Regional Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (RTCAC).* *Melissa reported that prior to the IAC, Melissa attended a RTCAC meeting. Melissa reported that the Council met separately. She shared that training and knowledge transfer needs to be a priority for NRCS, A lot of questions about the effectiveness of the RTCAC was brought up by tribes. The tribes asked what is being accomplished. Tribes are requesting set-aside funds for tribal conservation work. The tribes are requesting that the STAC be more inclusive and involve tribes. Tribes want the RTCAC to mean something. A spreadsheet and action items were assigned.*
  5. Carol shared that she is working with Pam to make sure we have the annual webpage renewal on the calendar.
  6. Everyone extended their appreciation to Carol for all her work and service this past year.
  7. Carol extended her appreciation to those Council members attending and with no further business, the Council meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm, Central.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Melissa Sturdivant, AIANEA National Council Secretary. Please respond to [melissa.sturdivant@tx.usda.gov](mailto:melissa.sturdivant@tx.usda.gov) with questions or comments.