

DULUTH INDIGENOUS COMMISSION

Monday, March 21, 2016

City Hall, Room 303

Present: Babette Sandman, Tina Olson, Carol DeVerney, Victor St. George, Donna Newgren, Amber Stewart

Absent: Hannah Smith, Kassie Helgerson

Staff: Adam Fulton, Suzanne Kelley, Kathy Wilson

Note: Per the request of the DIC members two Ojibwe language words are used in the meeting minutes – bezhig (“one”) indicates who made the motion and niizho (“two”) indicates who seconded the motion.

1. Call to Order, Introduction

- Sandman called the meeting to order at 5:38pm. Introductions were made.

2. Approval of January meeting minutes

- DeVerney bezhig/Newgren niizho to approve the February 8, 2016 meeting minutes with the correction that DeVerney was not going to contact the Drum Group – motion passed 6:0.

3. Public Comment

- Bobby Jo Potter updated the Commission on the right to smudge at work. She told the Commission that the County employee union, AFSCME is supporting the effort. Commission members and Ricky Defoe spoke on why some locations allow for smudging and other locations do not. The Commission asked Ms. Potter to keep them updated on her efforts.
- Anne Goyle from UMD spoke on behalf of Jim Amell about the Community Needs Assessment. It was determined to meet on April 28 at Beaners in West Duluth to review the results with Jim Amell.
- Kathy Spencer from Occupy Duluth updated the Commission on the Clayton Jackson McGee gathering area. She said people are occasionally using the public plaza as a safe gathering spot, especially homeless people. She discussed the importance of having public space where people can congregate and feel safe. She hopes the new Police Chief will also value having safe public spaces.
- Commissioners discussed the hiring process for the new Police Chief. Administration had requested that a member of the Indigenous Commission participate. It was announced that Tina Olson was appointed to be on the Police Chief hiring committee.

4. New Business

- Spirit Mountain
 - Adam Fulton informed the Commission that the City has requested that the Spirit Mountain Recreation Authority (SMRA) update its master plan for Sprit Mountain. The focus of the update will be on the base of the mountain adjacent to Grand Avenue. The purpose for the update is to focus on changes in recreational activity and to consider economic opportunities for Sprit Mountain and the surrounding neighborhoods. Fulton described how there have been many changes in the area, including the Adventure slide, a mini golf course, zip line, and mountain bike trails. The 2008 Master Plan described a hotel and parking lot. Hestated that there will be more information at the next meeting, including a map of the area to be studied. He said he wanted to inform

the Commission before the planning process began and wanted the Commission's input on the plan's update. Babette Sandman said there were areas on Spirit Mountain that were used for Fasting and wanted to make sure sacred sites were preserved. Carol DeVerney also talked the importance of preserving sacred area. Fulton said that conservation of important spaces is a priority and that is why he wanted the Indigenous Commission to have an active part in the planning process. Ricky DeFoe asked if there was an Indigenous Person on the Spirit Mountain Board. Fulton said he did not know, but would report back at the next meeting. DeFoe said it is important to have native voices on the stewardship of the land. Tina Olsen asked if information about Spirit Mountain could be sent prior to the meeting. Staff will send information via email prior to the meeting. Babette Sandman mentioned that subcommittee may need to be formed for Spirit Mountain.

- Committee of the Whole
 - The meeting will be on May 9th. The Council is interested in hearing about the Ethnographic Study and the Community Needs Assessment from the Indigenous Commission. Commissioners discussed the opportunity to meet with the City Council and the process of preparing for the meeting.
- Sobriety Support
 - The Commission would like to start a monthly Sobriety Feast in Duluth to honor people who are remaining sober. Currently Fond Du Lac has Sobriety Feasts, but it is difficult for people who live in Duluth to get to Fond Du Lac. This effort would be in conjunction with Fond Du Lac.
 - **Victor St. George** will start a subcommittee to research what is needed for the Sobriety Feast and how to get it started.
- Report on Meeting with the Mayor
 - Babette, Donna, and Ricky met with the Mayor to discuss the renaming of Lake Place Park to Gitche O'de Akiing. The Mayor is interested in the project, but needs more information. Babette described how this project would increase the visibility of native culture in Duluth and for visitors to the City. It was discussed how this project is an opportunity for reconciliation and healing between the Fond Du Lac Band and the City of Duluth. Adam Fulton told the Commission that the park is likely owned by MNDOT and that the City of Duluth likely has an agreement with MNDOT for the park. He stated that this relates to the request for information about the park's design and a potential future redesign by the City and stakeholders, including the Indigenous Commission.
 - **Donna Newgren** will write a letter to MNDOT about renaming the park to Gitche O'de Akiing.
 - DeVerney bezhig/Stewart niizho to approve a motion for **Tina Olson and Babette Sandman** to write letters of support of the name change to: White Earth, Red Lake, Fond Du Lac, Grand Portage, and Thunder Bay.

5. Old Business

- Ethnographic Study
 - Bruce White told the Commission that the Ethnographic Study is being nominated for an award from the American State and Local History. Bruce will keep the Commission updated.
 - Bruce told the Commission that he is working with Fond Du Lac for a next step study. He is working with Rebecca St. George.

- Tina Olson complimented Bruce on the project, but she stated that the information in document must be protected and not misused. She also explained that it must be recognized that the document belongs to the Indigenous Commission. She said that she looked forward to collaborating with Fond Du Lac and was appreciative that Ricky DeFoe would continue to be part of the process.
- Staff will coordinate with Bruce White for a press release about the Ethnographic Study and award nomination.

- Gitche Ode Akiing.
 - Staff will provide an update at the next meeting about the progress. Staff should include an update about the meeting with Sister Cities and other entities.

6. Announcements and Comments from the Commission

- Babette Sandman told the Commission that there will be a Listening Survey in the Mayor's Office on April 1st.
- Carol DeVerney talked about a Parent Education Luncheon Workshop at the Ordean Building on April 7. There will be additional sessions in August and December – see attached noticed.
- A citizen expressed concerned about communication styles between staff and the Commission. It was determined that improvements can be made to help clarify roles.

7. Adjournment:

Olson bezhig/ St. George niizho to adjourn meeting – motion passed 6:0.
The meeting adjourned at 7:56pm.

8. Next Meeting:

Next meeting is April 18, 2016 at 5:30 PM.