

DULUTH INDIGENOUS COMMISSION
Monday, August 21, 2017
City Hall, Room 303

Present: Carol DeVerney, Larry Heady, Babette Sandman, Amber Lightfeather

Absent: Tina Olson, Mary Owen, Kassie Helgerson, Donna Newgren-Isaacson

Staff: Adam Fulton, Suzanne Kelley

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 5:42 pm. Introductions were made.

2. Approval of meeting minutes

- DeVerney bezhig/ Lightfeather niizho to approve the July 17, 2017 meeting minutes. **Motion passed 4:0**

3. Public Comment

- Cruz Mendoza of the Human Rights Commission informed the Indigenous Commission that there would be visioning session at a future date and that he would provide them updates.

4. New Business

- Feast & Forum Planning - Discussion topics include providing an update on Gitchi o’de Akiing, the sobriety feasts, working with Red Lake and White Earth on the Natives Against Heroin initiative, and having sweat lodges at the Central Hillside Community Center.
- Local Designated of Sacred Sites – Members discussed how there are sacred sites everywhere, some with known locations and but some are not known. The Commission discussed how there was a process in place to prevent the disaster at Mission Creek but that the process was not followed. The Commission feels a stronger process is needed to protect the ancestors and sacred sites.
 - DeVerney bezhig: “To create a Resolution to allow the Duluth Indigenous Commission to designate sacred sites by accumulation from the Indigenous Community.” Lightfeather niizho. **Motion passed 4:0.** Larry Heady will work on the resolution.
- Pipeline Presentation- Members of the Community spoke about concerns with the pipeline, including:
 - Are the correct environmental protection processes being followed (including the Environmental Impact Statement)?
 - Are all the proper permits/processes being followed?
 - How will the process impact sacred lands?
 - How will the process impact sensitive lands, such as the areas for rice beds and turnips?
 - How will the water be protected?
 - How come concerns expressed by native people and tribes are not being listen to?

The Indigenous Commission listened to the presentation and agreed that this is a serious issue and would look into it.

- Nettleton Garden Project-Millie Richard presented her idea of transforming the old Nettleton school site into a garden housing project that will be a self-sufficient site where people could grow their own food while living there. The Commission thought the project was an exciting idea.
- Ojibwe Language Sites- Staff person Fulton discussed the Bemidji project and members discussed how that could be implemented in Duluth.

5. Action Items

- Duluth Public Arts Commission (DPAC) – Nothing new to discuss.
- Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) – This topic was discussed during New Business.
- Subcommittees
 - Education – Lightfeather and Owen met with The American Indian Parent Advisory Committee and it is recognized that there are missing benchmarks and recognize that improvements are needed at Denfeld and East Duluth. Evie is helping with outreach at Denfeld.
 - Police- Nothing new to discuss.
 - Opioids – DeVerney met with Jeff Kazel, the Commander of the Drug Free Task Force. The Task Force has 22 people on staff and they work with other agencies. They have written a grant to help First Responders with purchasing Narcan (a nasal spray that can be administered when a person is having an overdose). The Task Force is working in the schools because adolescents are becoming addicted. The opiate/drug abuse has been increasing over the past 4 years. Duluth has the highest death rate 13.4 per capita as opposed to 8.4 capita in Hennepin County. Within one week there were 18 overdoses in Duluth alone. The Drug Task Force’s goal is to lower death rates by lowering the demand (putting addicts in area in treatment) by providing on-the-spot Rule 25 Assessment and providing a Stop-Gap Measure, which is setting up a 6 bed unit at the CADT facility which deals specifically with opioids. This 6 bed unit will house addicts who want to quit until they can get into an inpatient treatment facility.
 - Leadership – Discussed the different leadership hierarchy. Traditional native leadership has people at the top of the decision making triangle unlike the current government system where the leaders are at the top making triangle.
- Photo Voice – Nothing new to discuss.
- American Lung Association Tobacco Campaign- Nothing new to discussion.
- Cultural Liaison Resolutions-. Changes were made.

6. Old Business

- Indigenous Council Seat- it was discussed that the emphasis should be on filling the vacant seats of the Indigenous Commission.
- Sobriety Feast – In progress.
- Gitchi o’de Akiing – Work is still being done.

7. Announcements/Adjournment:

- Heady bezhig/DeVerney niizho to adjourn meeting. **Motion passed 4:0**. The meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.

8. Next Meeting:

Next meeting is September 18, 2017 at 5:30 PM.