

Duluth Indigenous Commission
Monday, February 28, 2022
Virtual WebEx Meeting

Commissioners present: Babette Sandman, Lenelle Hrabik, Kassie Helgerson, Amber Lightfeather, Cayla Bellanger DeGroat, Roxanne DeLille

Commissioners absent: Carol Deverney, Moira Villiard, Phoebe Davis

Staff present: Kathy Wilson, Phillis Webb

Note: per the request of the Indigenous Commission members, Ojibwe language words are used in the meeting minutes. Bezhig (“one”) indicates who made the motion and niizho (“two”) indicates who seconded the motion. Gegit is used to indicate that the motion passed with majority support.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

- Co-chair Sandman called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM, introductions were made.

2. Approval of January 24, 2022 Meeting Minutes

- Helgerson bezhig / Lightfeather niizho to approve the January 24, 2022 minutes. **Motion passed: Gegit - All.**

3. Public Comment

- None

4. City Reports and Updates

- None

5. New Business

- Hartley Nature Center-Erica Backstrom and Tom O’Rourke Introduced themselves to the commission and stated that they have been working towards a meaningful land acknowledgement. They stated that they would like to begin the conversation & listen to ways to build relationships throughout the community. Tom stated that their mission is to inspire life long connections to nature through education, play and exploration. Co-chair Sandman stated that the commission has their own nature mission statement “The rights of nature”, and she read a portion of this document. Commissioner Helgerson stated that it would be nice to have the origin of the land and who it originally belonged to posted throughout the area. The commission welcomed the language to be posted about the nature center.
- Solidarity Run, Ride and Roll- The main focus of this event is on the missing & murdered relatives of missing women and the boarding school children. The commission would like to find a sponsor & raise money on a cold case. Also, there will be a quilt to represent the missing and murdered. Bayfront already has a previous event set on September 10th, therefore the commission will work with city staff to reschedule and find the appropriate venue.
- 2022 Meeting Calendar- City staff asked if the commission would like the meeting topics to be formalized. Commissioner Helgerson stated that it would be more appropriate to

being flexible since many topics tend to come up prior to meetings. The commission agreed.

- Photo Voice- Commissioner Helgerson stated that the project only had a few individuals show up, and that it should be imperative to get the word out about future events. Food was also given back to the community. She stated that it felt like Indigenous Peoples were not being heard. Commissioner Lightfeather stated that she also did a presentation that Jim created and it got a really positive response. Co-chair Sandman stated that if you are on the commission you need to show up to events that are put on. The commission will continue to reach out to Jim for any future events. And if he cannot attend, commissioner Lightfeather is more than happy to present his information. City staff also stated that the commission can request that information be put out into communication channels if they choose to go that route for future events.

6. Action Items

- Committee of the Whole- The Indigenous Commission will hold a Committee of the Whole with City Council in 2022, and the date is still to be decided upon. Commissioner Helgerson has most of the pictures needed for this. Co-chair Sandman would like cards made with an example of the language that should be posted in city hall. Commissioner DeLille stated that there should be an example shown to the counselors to show how easy it is to make signage. Another example the commission would like to use is multiple examples that Bemidji has done.
- Bylaws- The terms of service was discussed for it to be changed. Commissioner DeLille stated that the equity model doesn't work for each commission, and it should stand on their own merit.
- Duluth Ojibwe Language Project- Commissioner Villiard is working on signage, city staff will send Villiard the Duluth Ojibwe Language flyer to use as a reference.

7. Subcommittees

- **AIM/Opioids/Sweat Lodge/Sobriety Feast**
 - The individuals that showed up to the event felt like it had a good impact on them. Commissioner Helgerson stated that the round dance had a lot of individuals show, despite the bad weather. She is hoping to have more pow-wows and cultural events in the future with a similar turn out.
- **Art in Gichi-ode' Akiing**
 - Will get update on the project in the next meeting
- **Bylaws-** was discussed during the meeting.
- **Education-** no updates
- **Police/Racial Bias Audit Task Force-** no updates
- **Sacred Sites-**no updates
- **Spirit Mountain-**no updates

8. Old Business

- **Decolonization and Visibility Ideas**

9. Announcements

10. Next Meeting March 21, 2022

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm