

Duluth Indigenous Commission
Monday, May 20, 2024
411 W 1st St, Room 430, City Hall

Commissioners present: Moira Villiard, Phoebe Davis, Amber Lightfeather, Lenelle Hrabik

Commissioners absent: Rebecca Graves, Rene Ann Goodrich

Interim Commissioners: Ryan Clark

Staff present: Hannah Figgins, Lenna Johnson

Note: per the request of the Indigenous Commission members, Ojibwe language words are used in the meeting minutes. Gegit is used to indicate that the Commission has come to a consensus in support of the motion.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

- Chair Villiard called the meeting to order at 5:46 PM, Ryan Clark said the opening prayer, and introductions were made.

2. Approval of April 17, 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes

- April 17, 2024 minutes. **Motion passed: Gegit - All.**

3. Public Comment

- No comments

4. City Reports and Updates

- **Board/Commission Liaison Updates**
 - Duluth Citizen Review Board/Police Racial Bias Audit – no speakers
 - Duluth Public Arts Commission – DPAC representative provided updates on the latest happenings
 - She asked about the Powwow timeline, and reported DPAC is looking in to ways they could assist financially.
- **Other Updates/Comments from City Councilors or City Staff**
 - Indigenous Commission page on the City website has been updated to include two new pages: Indigenous Commission Projects, and Duluth Ojibwe Language Pronunciation Guide.
 - Sound bites for the language pronunciation guide will be added once complete

5. New Business

- **Smudging at Bethel**
 - Fire Department representative will come to a meeting sometime in the future. When the Fire Chief last visited, they said smudging isn't banned in the city.

6. Action Items

- **June 12th Powwow planning**
 - Commissioners discussed the budget line items and whether the allotted payment for each is fair.

- Ryan has a connection at the Boys and Girls Club, and may be able to get chairs for elders. He will send Moira an update later this week.
 - Elders will also have dedicated parking.
- Garbage details are listed on the permit, which requests the permit holders pick up specific trash bags from the Parks department prior to the event to use for all garbage.
 - Ryan offered to get the bags from Parks.
- Sound systems are covered, and the company is well-known for good work.
- Ryan will request the host drum play an Honor Song for the 2024 High School Graduates. Amber can get the list of graduate names, and will let the graduates know they are invited to be honored at the event.
- The Powwow flyer Ryan made got published on social media before he was able to get approval from the commission. Sponsors still need to be finalized, and they would like those to be on the official flyer.
 - The DPAC rep. offered to share the official flyer with their network once it's finalized.
 - Flier should include the Graduate Honor Ceremony
- Lincoln Park: extra vendors can be in the other space in the park, for art, clothes, etc. asking for \$25 fee for parks permit, and then are welcome to come set up a booth.
 - Vendors that make beads, medicines, etc.
 - There is a questionnaire for the applying vendors to get an idea of what they do/sell
 - Food trucks/vendors: Commissioners need to send invites to potential vendors
- Food: Fond du Lac Food Stand, 200 Indian Tacos and about 100 plates of goulash.
- Commissioners discussed inviting local nonprofits such as Harm Reduction Sisters – Moira or Ryan will send invites with the application Ryan has created, with a deadline of June 3rd.
- Photo and Video: Tribal college likely has a lot of people that might come out for free
- Budget: communication is on-going
- Contact: Commission okay'ed Ryan as the primary contact.
- Mobile bathrooms need to be paid a week in advance, \$550. All other help expect to be paid day of the event.
- Paying dancers: the first \$150 dancers will get about \$35-40, the children will make about \$10 each.
- Volunteers needed? Commissioners can help with serving food, honor commissioners, etc.
- Water: Ryan will call Walmart or Super One to request donated water bottles
- Still need a schedule to print and provide to guests
- **Vote to approve final Powwow budget – Gegit – All**
 - Ryan will send Moira the Google doc
 - Ryan will send updated flier to city staff, who will then share it widely, including through DPAC.
- **Vote to approve PowWow flyer with amendments: Gegit – All**

7. Subcommittees

- **Art in Gichi-ode' Akiing** – Chair Villiard expects to do annual maintenance soon
- **Education** – Lightfeather reported the vote was passed to start a specialized school within the public school for Indigenous students. A pilot program will begin with 9th graders, and will imitate immersion schools.
 - Indigenous high school graduates are invited to attend the APAC Graduation Ceremony.
 - Essentia continues to work on hiring a Cultural Resource Specialist. Also continuing to push for Ojibwe language signs throughout Essentia hospitals and clinics.
- **Full Moon Ceremonies** – Villiard said there is one this Friday sponsored by AICHO, hosted by Roxanne. Babette will be hosting ceremonies at One Roof on the Sundays nearest the Full Moon.
- **Housing** – no updates
- **MMIWR** – no updates
- **Ojibwe Language Pronunciation Guide and Signs in City Hall** – no updates
- **Sobriety Feast** – no updates

8. Ongoing Business

- **Decolonization and Visibility Ideas** – no updates
- **City website to showcase Indigenous Commission projects and Ojibwe language** – Recently updated with two new pages: Ojibwe Language translations (sound bites to be added soon), and a Commission Projects page, highlighting their work.

9. Announcements

- Clark spoke with Babette about sweat lodges, they would like begin hosting these soon. The fire permits for One Roof were drawn up for the sweat lodge. The next item is determining where and how they could build the lodge.
 - Contact a group who started a sweat lodge in another city, ask them about obstacles they encountered. The Commission may start a sub-committee for this project.
 - Indigenous Peoples should have a place they can go to pray, just like everyone else in the city of Duluth.
 - There is ceremony grounds in Hermantown, in a secluded and forested area. The gate has a metal Medicine Wheel. This could be a space to look in to.
- Moira may be moving at some point in the next year due to an exciting opportunity, potentially leaving in August.
 - Recruitment to the Commission will be crucial at the PowWow.

10. Meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm