

Duluth Indigenous Commission
Monday, August 19, 2024
411 W 1st St, Room 430, City Hall

Commissioners present: Moira Villiard, Rebecca Graves, Rene Ann Goodrich, Lenelle Hrabik

Commissioners absent: Phoebe Davis, Amber Lightfeather, Ryan Clark

Staff present: Kathy Wilson, 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 5:52 PM

2. Approval of May 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes

- May 20, 2024 minutes. **Motion passed: Gegit - All.**

3. Public Comment

- Commissioner introductions were made for a member of the public who was new to the area. Chair Villiard explained the purpose of the commission.

4. City Reports and Updates

- **Board/Commission Liaison Updates**
 - Duluth Citizen Review Board/Police Racial Bias Audit – no speakers
 - Duluth Public Arts Commission
 - City staff informed commission that a quote for Ojibwe language sign is in the works and they hope to have the quote by the next DPAC meeting.
 - DPAC needs an Indigenous Commissioner present at their next meeting.
 - a. Commissioners Graves and Goodrich agree to attend.
- **Other Updates/Comments from City Councilors or City Staff**
 - No updates

5. New Business

- **Smudging at Bethel**
 - Bethel does have a specific space for smudging.
 - The commissioners talked about whether or not to have a representative from Bethel at the next Indigenous Commission meeting.
 - They agreed to let City staff know what they decide before next meeting.
- **Indigenous Peoples' Day planning (October 14th)**
 - Commissioner Goodrich volunteered to help with planning.
 - The Commission agreed to work off what was done last year, as there was a large turn out in 2023, and add to it for 2024.
 - They would like to put an emphasis on getting youth leaders involved this year.

- The Commissioners will make a list of prospective speakers before the September commission meeting.
- City staff reminded commissioners that the October Indigenous Commission meeting has been moved to October 7th so that it occurs before Indigenous Peoples' Day.
- The Commission would like Indigenous Peoples' Day to uplift local Indigenous artists.
 - They would like to find a local artist to create the poster art for the event poster.
 - Commissioner Goodrich thought that Native Lives Matter may be able to help with paying the artist up to \$250.

6. Action Items

- No action items

7. Subcommittees

- **MMIWR** –
 - City of Duluth and City of Superior and law enforcement support was appreciated in 2024.
 - Commissioner Goodrich reported that the report has been finished and the link will be sent out soon.
 - A question was asked about the MMIWR license plates. Commissioner Goodrich reported that the money generated from the MMIWR plates goes into the State's reward fund.
 - Commissioner Goodrich explained that the local grassroots initiative has a small pool of their own reward fund and would like to keep it that way to avoid having to always go through the bureaucracy of the State. With funds at the local organization level, the grassroots initiative can have an immediate "boots on the ground" approach when a new case arises. Having local money available helps fill the funding gap when local cases arise.
- **Art in Gichi-ode' Akiing** –
 - Chair Villiard reported that tours have been taking place this summer.
 - In response to periodic tagging of the murals in Gichi-ode' Akiing, Chair Villiard suggested that they could plan to host a community event to get people together to paint over the tagged area of the murals sometime soon. They could potentially paint more fish along the mural to discourage future tagging.
 - Chair Villiard agreed to continue to send updates to the Commission via email after she has left.
- **Education** – No updates
- **Full Moon Ceremonies** –
 - Chair Villiard will reach out to Commissioner Davis and Roxanne about future ceremonies.
 - Babbette is currently booking her full moon ceremonies at One Roof.
- **Housing** –
 - Commissioner Hrabik reported that they are prepping for the opening of Brewery Creek apartments, potentially September 1st.

- The HRA is subsidizing a portion of the apartments (32 units) at 30% of tenant income.
 - Commissioner Hrabik also reported that the HRA is subsidizing 30 units at the future Wadena West housing development in West Duluth.
 - Commissioner Goodrich voiced that she knows of many unhoused Native people who would like to stay in Duluth and are very interested in the Brewery Creek Apartments.
- **Ojibwe Language Pronunciation Guide and Signs in City Hall –**
 - Chair Villiard reported that the sound bite still need to be edited for the pronunciation guide. She might reach out to Zeitgeist for help with the editing process.
- **Sobriety Feast –**
 - Commissioner Goodrich notes that Sobriety Feasts are a great opportunity conduct community outreach. Future feasts would be a great place to share the news about new affordable housing projects.

8. Ongoing Business

- **Decolonization and Visibility Ideas –** No updates

9. Announcements

- With this being the last meeting for Chair Villiard, the Commission discussed what should happen next as Chair elections don't officially happen until January.
 - The Commission agreed that they would like to have a rotating Commissioner serve as chair for the meetings leading up until January so that Commissions can have the chance out try out the role.

10. Meeting adjourned at 6:41 pm

August 2024- Duluth Indigenous Commission, Subcommittee Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives

Updates: Twin Ports MMIWR and Gaagige -Mikwendaagoziwag (Onigamiising)

Annual Missing and Murdered Indigenous Events - Hosted in the Twin Ports

Twin Ports community and MMIWR families gather in Duluth for the annual memorial events held on Valentine's Day 2/14 and National Day of Awareness May 5th in recognition and memorial for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Two Spirit People & Relatives to help bring support to MMIWR families, awareness, action and healing for Indigenous / Tribal peoples on Turtle Island who are impacted by violence, loss of loved ones and searching for the missing.

The City of Duluth and Superior recognize the Twin Ports annual MMIWR events with city proclamations presented by the Mayors, and Duluth Lighting Enger Tower Red for "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relative"

Duluth Police Department also provides escort on the annual marches in solidarity. Honor Fires were hosted in conjunction with the Annual MMIWR Events.

The annual events are hosted by: Native Lives Matter Coalition, Twin Ports No More MMIWR Great Lakes with MMIWR families, Supporting co-hosts: Duluth Indigenous Commission, Onigamiising Gaagige - Mikwendaagoziwag Reward Fund Program Committee Partners: City of Duluth, Native Lives Matter Coalition, Mending the Sacred Hoop, along Community Partners, Organizations, American Indian Community Housing Organization, Fond du Lac Social Services, CASDA, PAVSA, YWCA Duluth, Duluth YMCA, Events are supported by: City of Superior, Minnesota MMIR Office Gaagige- Mikwendaagoziwag and Wisconsin Department of Justice MMIW Taskforce.

2/14/2024 9th Annual Memorial March for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Relatives - <https://fb.me/e/2GPYjkiTY>

2/14/2024 Unity Fire MMIWg2S Recognition - Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag <https://actionnetwork.org/events/gaagige>

5/5/2024 4th Annual National Day of Awareness for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Relatives- <https://fb.me/e/3EW3AVIPU>

[Press Release Information is Shared During Annual Events](#)

Gaagige Mikwendaagoziwag Partners Announce a Statewide Reward Account 5/29/23

Updates & News: 2023, 2024

[Gaagige Mikwendaagoziwag Partners Announce a Statewide Reward Account](#)

(Press Release 5/19/2023) Expanding the local reward fund and Minnesota MMIR Office with a reward account in the state of Minnesota , an advisory board along with requests for appropriations to support the reward account and community based efforts. The Name of the Reward Account is called "Gaagige Mikwendaagoziwag

[Minnesota lawmakers establish the statewide Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag reward account during the 2022-2023 legislative session](#)

Governor approval and signature 05/19/2023

[MN MMIR Office is currently seating Gaagige Mikwendaagoziwag advisory board](#)

Meeting monthly and currently creating policy, more information on the advisory board

[Missing and murdered Indigenous relatives license plate now available](#)

Fees will fund tips and rewards for cases of missing or murdered Indigenous people

Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag Reward Account. - Funds from the reward account will bring awareness to cases, educate the public and prevent future cases. The reward fund board recently developed a policy that will consider rewards for tips that lead to a resolution with MMIR cases through an arrest, conviction or return of the individual.

[Gaagige - Mikwendaagoziwag Final Report Report 2022 - 2023](#)(Onigamiising)

[Twin Ports Community Response Model](#) Protocol for Missing Onigamiising, Duluth with community partners Native Lives Matter Coalition.

Resources & Links :

[Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag / Onigamiising Updates](#)

[Gaagige Mikwendaagoziwag Partners Announce a Statewide Reward Account](#)

Media Links: National Day of Awareness - 5/5 & 5/6/2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-xaYkGeNyQ>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=790024479894567>

2/14/2024 - 9th Annual Memorial March for MMIWR

<https://www.fox21online.com/2024/02/14/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-wo-men-and-relatives-honored-in-duluth/>

Authored & Media Contact: Rene Ann Goodrich nlmcoalition@gmail.com

CC: Gaagige - Mikwendaagoziwag Reward Fund Committee (Onigamiising)

Partners Include: City of Duluth, Native Lives Matter Coalition, Mending the Sacred Hoop and Duluth Indigenous Commission

Sharable Copy of updated 5/19/2023 Press Release

[Gaagige Mikwendaagoziwag Partners Announce a Statewide Reward Account](#)

Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag Partners Champion a Statewide Missing & Murdered Indigenous Relatives Reward Account with the State of Minnesota

We are honored to announce during this year's memorial and honoring events for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Relatives the exciting, historical news for MMIWR families and the Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag reward fund program.

The Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag “They will be remembered forever” the local homegrown, Indigenous led grassroots reward fund program. The first MMIWg2S, MMIWR reward fund in the state of Minnesota, created and established in the City of Duluth and Approved by Duluth City Council Jan, 10, 2022.

Partners collaborate with Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Relatives families, the City of Duluth, state representatives & legislators to champion a historical statewide Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives Reward Account with the State of Minnesota.

Sharing our vision of support to MMIWR families and help bring justice and healing, committee partners with now state representative Alicia Koslowski provided multiple testimony to the state over the past two years urging lawmakers support. Sharing the Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag reward fund program model, vision, and testimony to expand the local reward fund and MN MMIR Office with a reward account with the State of Minnesota, an advisory board along with the requests for appropriations to support the reward account and support community based efforts.

Testimony was provided by Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag committee partners; City of Duluth, Native Lives Matter Coalition, Mending the Sacred Hoop, Duluth Police Department, Duluth Indigenous Commission. Supporting testimony from MMIWR families, Tribal Elders, Juliet Rudie Director of the MN MMIR Office and MN State representatives and legislators sponsoring bills and propelling the passage through the state. Authors, Alicia Koslowski, Jamie Becker-Finn, Senator Mary Kunesch.

*Minnesota lawmakers establish the Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag reward account with the State during the 2022-2023 legislative session - The name of the statewide reward account is called “Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag” meaning in Ojibwe (They will be Remembered Forever)

We are honored the “Gaagige Mikwendaagoziwag” name was carried over to the statewide reward account in recognition, and to be apart of establishing this historical reward account with the state of Minnesota. The Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag Reward Account was appropriated \$250,000 to support the reward account, community led MMIR efforts and awareness. *A historical event for MMIWg2S, MMIR families and grassroots efforts.*

###

Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag Reward Fund Committee Partners:
City of Duluth, Native Lives Matter Coalition, Mending the Sacred Hoop



5/19/2023 Press Release: Announcement Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag

Updated 5/20/2024 - <https://updateandnews.wixsite.com/gaagige-mikwendaag-1>