



Bois Forte

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

Minutes of a special meeting of the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council held February 6, 2019 at Nett Lake, Minnesota.

Meeting called to order at 9:09 a.m.

Members Present: Cathy Chavers; David C. Morrison, Sr.; Travis Morrison; Shane Drift; Peter Boney

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Wendy Thompson; Gene Goodsky; Vicki Villebrun; Evertt Huisman; Darren Landgren; Joel Astleford; Karen Drift; Doris Isham; Heartwarrior Chosa; Jaime Burdick; Alex Mehne; Sidra Starkovich; Mark Drift Jr.; Ryan Isham; Sue Larson; Barb Brodeen; Andy Datko; Louise Isham; Steve Hertig; Stan Day; Lorna Landgren; Billie Isham; Kim Greiner; Miranda Lilya; Beverly Steel; Melissa Walls; Tara Geshick; Theresa Morrison

Invocation by Gene Goodsky.

Karen Drift said 15 years ago she has been involved with a group of elder people representing American Indian Reservations from Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Mille Lacs, Leech Lake, White Earth, Grand Portage, and Red Lake on language revitalization. They have had three meetings. At the meetings they have been trying to come up with ideas to get back the Anishinaabe language. Most that were in attendance were fluent speakers from their reservations. At those gatherings they identified various issues and barriers. American Indians have too much already. There are only a few on each reservation that are clinging to the traditional ways. To revitalize the language it will be time consuming and will cost money that they don't have. Others are mortality rates, reservations, urban life. Many from Nett Lake have moved from the reservation to the twin cities. Assimilation. Treaties, most have been repeatedly broken and rewritten. Trust, they cannot trust and will not trust. A handshake used to mean a traditional binding contract. Blood quantum. There are only a few full bloods left. Chippewa, Ojibwe, and Anishinaabe. We all should be Anishinaabe. Back then there were 14-16 fluent speakers, now there are only 7 left. There are 15 out there that can understand but they said they can't talk. No one is learning the language. Learning the language will get our culture back. Who will teach our children. What will happen to culture teachings. Karen said her biggest concern is what will happen. Will the children get any traditional teachings that they can identify with. We are not looking at the future of

our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. If we lose our language we will not get any help from the federal government. Other things talked about were suicide, fear, alcoholism, drugs, loss of identity, education, employment. There is a lot of non-Indians working. They should have training for them on how to work with Indians. There is lot of elder people out there that can teach that. They could have signs all over, the clinic, the store. The non-Indians coming into would know how to say Nett Lake but there is nothing on the road that says how to say Nett Lake. The other reservations that met only did it for a little while. There is no consistency, no working together. If we all work together I think we can get our language back. If we had teachings once a week. But we are all so divided here. We need to all work together. That is the only way we are going to get our language back. There is some new people on the council now. They could be doing some teachings. One of them could be doing the invocations at the meetings. There are 7 elders left. Ask them each to do a teaching.

Shane said after it all quiets down here, he was going to do a language class on weekends, maybe a Saturday. No stipends, no honorariums, everyone come in on their own time.

Karen said she can't understand the people from Canada but they have the same language. We have different dialects. But we have to take what we can get to teach the people.

Moved by Shane Drift; seconded by Peter Boney; to approve the agenda. Carried 4-0-0.

Moved by Peter Boney; seconded by David Morrison Sr.; to approve the minutes of a regular meeting held January 2, 2019 at the Lake Vermillion Sector of the Bois Forte Reservation, Minnesota with corrections – the vote on the third paragraph was 3-0-0 because David Morrison Sr. had not arrived at the meeting yet. And the dates on the last three pages should be January 2 not January 24. Carried 4-0-0.

During discussion on the minutes, Shane asked if a response was received on his request to find out what the "consultant fees" were on the donation made to the Virginia School Indian Education Program "Winter Indigenous Games". Chairwoman Chavers said the games here held this past weekend and we could ask them for a breakdown or report on what was done. Shane also asked about the operating expenses was for the public works buildings at Nett Lake and Vermillion. Sidra Starkovich said it was \$30,100 for the Nett Lake Public Works, but couldn't get a breakdown of the cost for the Vermillion Public Works because the facilities are shared with the social center and the clinic. Sidra is asked what the final amount was for the ICDBG applications. Sidra said about \$928,000 some and the matching was about \$236,000. Sidra will get the exact figures.

New tribal government employees: Alex Mehne is present when Mark Drift Jr. introduces himself as the new Forestry Technician and Ryan Isham introduces himself as the new Forestry Technician.

Moved by Shane Drift; seconded by Travis Morrison; to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- 1) Approved reducing the Tribal Council hours to a 32-hour work week,
- 2) Approved the Internship Agreement for John T. Gudahl to intern at the Bois Forte SUD Program from February 2019 to April 2019.

Carried 4-0-0.

Melissa Walls, Doris Isham, Stan Day, and Beverly Steel present the final report for the Maawaji' idi-oog Mino-ayaawin (Gathering for Health) five year diabetes research project. The project was completed between five reservations (Bois Forte, Lac Courte Orielles, White Earth, Lac du Flambeau, and Red Lake), and the University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth Campus. The project was a health study to investigate the nature and impact of stress on Type 2 Diabetes in American Indian adults. Melissa said they have copies of the report for grant writers in the community and will give copies to Doris for the clinic.

Melissa said they got resolutions from the tribes listed and applied for another grant and got funded for another five years and for that project they do diabetes prevention and education. It will be the same tribes and individuals that will do the project. They will go into homes where there are families with kids in adolescent years and deliver education to the parents and deliver education to the kids as a family unit – preventive with the kids and treating with the adults.

Barb Brodeen asked that the report be shared with the people that work on the strategic plan. Barb also requested that staff be able to go to the fitness centers again. Because exercise does relieve stress.

Chairwoman Chavers suggests to the council that they meet with Miranda Lilya re the fitness centers and other benefits.

David Morrison Sr. asks if the report can be made available to the Band members. Melissa said she has an electronic version and can send it to someone to put on the website. Chairwoman Chavers tells Melissa to send it to Louise Isham.

Moved by Travis Morrison; seconded by David Morrison Sr.; to adopt resolution #47-2019, Timber Harvest Plan for 2019-2020. Carried 4-0-0.

Shane Drift asks Alex Mehne if the timber harvest plan can be made available so people can see it. Alex said he has a pdf that could be posted on the website.

Doris Isham asked if the roads to get firewood are accessible. Alex said due to the recent snowfall a lot of the back roads are packed with snow and hard to get to the wood lots. Alex Mehne said he has been managing a stand for firewood. Chairwoman Chavers asks if he let people know where it is and if it is

accessible. He will print a map of it and also leave the maps at the government buildings and also give it to Louise Isham.

Theresa Morrison was on the agenda because Minnesota Housing Finance Agency needs a resolution that gives her signature authority for D7641-Bois Forte Homes III, D3127-Bois Forte Homes II, D3010-Bois Forte Tax Credit I, D6343-Nett Lake Duplexes, and D6357-New Moon AKA Oshki-Agoojin. Theresa will ask Mark Anderson to write up the resolution for the next RTC meeting.

Moved by Shane Drift; seconded by Peter Boney; to adopt resolution #49-2019, National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) strategic planning opportunity for Tribal workforce development, with adding the Human Resources Director as a point of contact also. Carried 4-0-0.

Moved by Peter Boney; seconded by Shane Drift; to approve the modification to the 2019 Christmas Club Match Rules by adding "Special Circumstances: In the case where a layoff is due to budgetary reasons with a possibility of recall, the employees would still be eligible for the match while they are still in full pay status. Employees in this special circumstance would not be penalized for missed payments during the layoff but the remaining rules still apply. (Cannot withdraw their account no late of missed payments while in non-layoff status). An employee that makes payments on their own while they are laid off will be also considered for the match. Also an employee who has been laid off can, when recalled make up the missed payment." Carried 4-0-0.

Shane Drift said that at the first meeting he was at when he got on the council, he stressed that there needs to be a healthy financial reserve built up. At one time, he thinks in 2004, there was a \$10 million reserve so he knows the Band can do it. There should be a resolution on the reserve. And there needs to be safeguards for what the reserve can be used for and not used for. All five council members need to agree when it is accessed and let the Band members know. If there was another government shutdown that could be used instead of sending employees home. Chairwoman Chavers said periodic reports on the reserve need to be made so the Band members know, on a monthly or quarterly basis when money is put in and where it came from. Shane said also what interest it earns. And no borrowing against it. And no using it and replacing it later. And also if Fortune Bay has extra money, put some of that money in the reserve. Kim Greiner said over the years it has been discussed setting up a reserve but all the right people were not in the room when that was discussed and decisions are made. When the reserve is discussed there needs to be all the right people in the room – all the council and Fortune Bay. Kim said she had also requested a reserve for the health department. Chairwoman Chavers said a meeting will be set up to discuss the reserve. Kim is to give suggestions on who should be present at that meeting.

Shane Drift said there needs to be a resolution in regard to creating/building a new business or buying an existing business that it be put before the people first. The past businesses like Powerain, WELY, Tim

Hortons, and the Lube Center, the money that was lost in past business failures was 7 million, that money could have been used now.

Chairwoman Chavers said if someone comes forward with a business proposal, that it be put to the tribal members because it is their money.

Lorna Landgren said before taking money from Fortune Bay, look at how the programs are running – the salaries. Lorna said Shane talked about wage scales, some salaries were too high and some were too low. The council raised the ones that were low. Lorna asks if anything done for the ones that were too high. The Council's unemployment fund, do something similar like the Christmas Matching Fund and the council members contribute to it and when they retire that is matched. For the executive director position, can some of the responsibilities be allocated to the council or the planner or something. Pare back some of the responsibilities and decrease that salary.

Shane said start putting the resolutions on the website so people can see them and download them. Chairwoman Chavers said the website development has been put on hold because of the government shutdown, but when it is developed the resolutions, ordinances, and policies will be put on it. Chairwoman Chavers said Mark Anderson will be asked to draft the resolutions for the next meeting. Chairwoman Chavers said the main goal for Accounting right now is working on the drawdowns. The year-end report will be done.

Shane Drift said to put stuff in the financial end of year report to the Band members - Powerain, WELY, Tim Hortons, The Y-Express Lube and how much money was used to buy/build those and how much money was put in each business to keep it afloat. And how much Fortune Bay sent to the tribe over the past 15 years, how much cash the Band has on hand, and how many loans the Band has.

Moved by Peter Boney; seconded by Travis Morrison; to approve the agreement with Benjamin Pachito from The Jacobson Law Group for Tribal Prosecutor services. Carried 3-1-0. Shane Drift against.

Lorna Landgren asks about the Code of Ethics revision. Tara Geshick said there was an ethics committee that consisted of her, George Strong, Wendy Drift, Doris Isham, and Lance Hill that made revisions to the Code of Ethics and the draft was sent to Mark Anderson for review and recommendations and that is where it is at now. Tara said they would rather meet face to face with Mark Anderson instead of conference calling and emailing back and forth to finalize it. Lorna asks if it is possible for the public to have any input on the draft. Tara said it will go out for a 30-day comment period. Chairwoman Chavers said a day will be scheduled for Mark Anderson come up to Vermilion.

Lorna Landgren asks about the Land Buy-Back Program. Barb Brodeen said last week she received an MOA (Memorandum of Understanding) from the Land Buy Back people. They have been working

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back on forth on it because there were questions on the legality of some of it. A draft was received that was satisfactory which Chairwoman Chavers signed last week and Barb sent it back. She will call the National Team next week and a time will be set up for the National Team to come up and train. The OST and the National Team will handle the majority of Bois Forte's part because there is only one person – Barb, in the Bois Forte Realty program. Barb sent the OST a list of events and a list of the deadlines for the newspaper for the events that her and staff will be reaching out to people.

Moved by Peter Boney; seconded by Shane Drift; to adjourn the meeting at 11:06 a.m. Carried 4-0-0.