

White Earth Reservation Business Committee

Regular Meeting

November 29, 2023

Mahnomen, MN

Chairman Michael A. Fairbanks called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., roll call was taken with a quorum present.

Present: Michael A. Fairbanks, Chairman
Michael LaRoque, Secretary/Treasurer
Henry Fox, District I Representative
Eugene Sommers, District II Representative
Cheryl "Annie" Jackson, District III Representative

Absent:

Others Present: Laurie York, Executive Director
Curtis Rogers, Deputy Director
Tracy Lhotka, Chief Financial Officer
Andrea Kingbird, General Counsel
Ayecia Kemp, Executive Administrative Assistant
Maria Bevins, Recorder

Agenda Approval

Additions:

- **Cemeteries – Executive Session**
- **Resolution Division of Natural Resources – Co-management of White Earth State Forest – New Business**
- **Resolution Division of Natural Resources – Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge Co-management – New Business**
- **638 Indian Health Service – Executive Session**
- **Personnel Indian Health Services – Executive Session**
- **New Circle Contract and Chris Burt Contract – Consent Agenda**
- **Cyndy Rastedt – The Role of Tribal Public Health & Highlights from the Tribal Community Health Assessment**
- **Northwest MN Foundation – Executive Session**
- **Elder Homeowner Fund – New Business**
- **LCCMR and JN – Executive Session**

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to approve with additions: second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

RBC Meeting Minutes (10/31/23)

Motion made by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson to approve; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Old Business

- No Old Business

New Business

White Earth Fire Department Request. A brief discussion was held on using the Impact Aide funding to cover the cost of the Fire Departments. Brief discussion held on the budget. White Earth and Twin Lakes split the cost of \$51,000. Last couple years they received \$25,831.00. Recommendation to pull the equipment replacement reserve for the Impact Aide funding. Table until further review. Recommendation to meet Kenneth Bevins Sr. and Ed Snetsinger. Bring to the next meeting.

Resolution Division of Natural Resources – Co-management of White Earth State Forest and letter. White Earth has been in discussions with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to begin the process of returning the lands of White Earth State Forest back to the White Earth Reservation. Motion made by Michael LaRoque to approve Resolution No. 057-24-005; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Resolution Division of Natural Resources - Tamarack National Wildlife Refuge Co-management: Motion made by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson to approve Resolution No. 057-24-004; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

I.H.S 638 Letter of Intent. White Earth is looking at 638 of our health and starting the process. The White Earth Tribal Council is exploring contracting or compacting the White Earth Indian Health Services Units:

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve Resolution No. 064-24-014; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Cyndy Rastedt and Gina Boudreau. are present to update their Public Health Accreditation. They are going through their accreditation standards for the local and the state governments here on the White Earth Reservation. A brief overview of the Role of Tribal Public Health & Highlights from the Tribal Community Health Assessment.

- White Earth Nation Tribal Public Health focuses on population health with an aim of understanding and improving the health of our entire community, rather than focusing on individual health issues.
- The mission of White Earth Nation Tribal Public Health is to promote "wiikwazom" wellness, prevent "gibichichige" disease, and protect "ganawendan" health in a way that honors our Anishinaabe culture.
- We work toward improving the health of our community in partnerships with many tribal, state, and federal partners.

The Chairman commented on the hard work of the White Earth Nation Tribal Public Health and team.

Elders Homeowners Repair:

The Secretary/Treasurer, Michael LaRoque stated the Tribal Council placed \$1million dollars into the elder home repair fund. \$700,00 for major repairs and \$300,000 for minor repairs. The RBC has been working diligently for the last couple of years. The Tribal Council has been assisting the elderly who need emergency fixes on their homes first. The proposal for today is they have ARPA funding to put towards the elderly home repairs and can make an amendment to the budget. \$500,000 will be added to this existing program. White Earth Builders did the assessments on each home and contractors will complete the jobs; however, RBC would like to hire one person to lead this program.

Brief discussion held on who will run this program. This will be for homeowners. Brief discussion held on when the ARPA funds will end. They would start with the elderly who are in need. This is for emergency situations.

Elder Homeowners Repair Fund Budget Amendment:

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve; second by Cheryl "Annie" Jakson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Elders Commission

Pam Aspinwall is present and provided a brief overview of their November 15 meeting. The Council of Elders were invited to this meeting. Francine Day, Treasurer and Pam met with Don Dalve to help assist them with their budget. Recommendation was to have Ayecia facilitate this for them.

New Business: A budget that they have approved in their commission meeting did not get in for FY24.

Tasks: One of their tasks is to be in contact with programs that serve the elderly. Defined within their Bylaws is to choose 2 different Programs that serves the elderly specifically and to offer their support. Pam will be involved in the Elder Nutrition Program and will support.

Public comment on issues and concerns brought forward regarding the Elders Commission's membership. The Council of Elders bylaws were referenced to the RBC regarding membership. Comments on the membership form brought forward and concerns. NICOA trip concerns brought forward.

NICOA: Members should attend the meetings to be able to attend this conference. The Elders Commission holds meetings in each community for elders to attend. They have limited funding and bring forward requests to the RBC when they have limited funding. They also hold fund raisers for this event. They do what they can with their limited funding. Recommendation to attend at least four meetings a year to be eligible to attend the NICOA conference.

They work for the elders of the White Earth Reservation and have been doing this for 20 years. They do not have a budget. The commission receives \$5,000 a quarter, \$20,000 a year.

Concerns brought forward regarding voting.

The Secretary/Treasurer, Michael LaRoque, stated they have established their bylaws. Elders can review bylaws and they need to follow these. They also can request for changes. This is a recommendation. Teedo stated working for one purpose is working for the elders of the White Earth of Reservation.

Elders Council

Lucile "Teedo" is present and provided briefs updates. Teedo referenced a letter to the RBC regarding the Elderly Nutrition Sites.

The Secretary/Treasurer, Michael LaRoque, commented on a proposal brought forward by Kathy Thompson. A meeting will be held with the Tribal Council, Council of Elders and Elders Commission on this proposal. They are making the Naytahwaush and White Earth ENP sites the hubs. A brief overview on how the hubs and sites will work. Kathy Thompson will be having the meeting to move forward. The kitchens are closed; however, the sites are open.

Teedo commented on these sites being a place for elders to gather.

Curtis stated the goal is to keep the cost down and to keep the sites open.

District III Representative, Cheryl commented for clarification on the hours the ENP sites are open and work. Brief discussion held on the meal's delivery for the elders. Brief discussion held on the grant funding. Recommendation to hear from Kathy Thompson and staff for both sides to be heard.

WE R Furr Letter for donation will be brought into the Donations Committee.

Sam commented on placing plastic on elders' windows.

Consent Agenda/Signatory Requests & Ratifications for November 29, 2023:

- **New Circle Contract**

Motion made by Henry Fox to approve with additions: second by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to go into Executive Session at 11:02 a.m.; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Meeting Recessed at 11:02 p.m.

Meeting Reconvened at 12:05 p.m.

Lucille "Teedo" Silk, Member of the Cemetery Committees of St. Columba & St. Benedict in White Earth is present to request for Financial Assistance with Extraordinary Repair and Maintenance Expense. Recommendation is to have this come from the pool tab funding.

A brief discussion was held on burial during the winter months. A brief discussion was held on traditional burials. Recommendation to include the District Representatives and the Cultural Program and move forward with another meeting.

Based on expenses, they are respectfully requesting assistance for the following cemeteries:

- \$15,000 Calvary (St. Benedicts) in White Earth
- \$15,000 St. Columba's in White Earth
- \$5,000 St. Theodore's in Pine Point
- \$5,000 Breck Memorial in Pine Point.

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to approve; second by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Land

Megan Bakken and Sarah LaFriniere are present and provided updates.

Homesites:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Homesite; District III – 1 site:

Motion made by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson to approve; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Lakeshore; District III – 1 site:

Motion made by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson to approve; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Agriculture; District III – 1 site: Table

Service Line Agreement; District I – 1 site and District II – 1 site:

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Business; Norris Cultural Site, White Earth Tribal Behavioral Health, Manito Mall and White Earth Roads Department:

Motion made by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson to approve; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Trail Permits; Sno-Drifters, Nightriders, Hardwood Trailblazer's, and Northwood Trail Reapers:

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve; second by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Other Land Topics; Stony Ridge – Bemidji Apartments: Table

Bill Haas Contract - Table

Letter to I.H.S Bemidji Area Office requesting action to facilitate changes at White Earth to Bemidji Area Office:

Motion made by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson to approve; second by Michael LaRoque. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Anton Treuer Contract and John Nieber Contract:

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to approve; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Cheryl "Annie" Jackson left meeting at 12:49 p.m.

Peebles Kidder LLP Agreement – Table

Michael Nuesser, Northwest Minnesota Foundation is present and provided a brief update on MACP Programming.

- Community Center Funding: \$3 million funding for our region, focused on community centers that meet the goals of health, work, and education components.
- \$4.6 million for native youth mental health and wellness. They promised \$3 million dollars to fund: Red Lake, Cass Lake, and White Earth each will receive \$1 million.
- Children and Families Program. \$50,000 was provided to the White Earth Brain Conference.

B&G club centers for each community. Combined with Behavioral Health. Cultural center for our sacred items home and having them protected and the history of our people. Cultural centers for each community and they have this space. What direction to take?

What is MACP able to focus on. MACP is not into capital projects. They are into programming. They are using the MN foundation in order to disburse these funds due to knowing these areas best.

A brief discussion held on funding these areas is provided. MMCDC and Northwest Foundation. A discussion on an area specifically for youth and cultural centers. Can the Tribe go after funding from both foundations?

Looking at projects for the foundation to go after. Culture, wellness, and healing.

White Earth Culture and Healing Center:

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve; second by Michael LaRoque. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Recommendation to work with Jamie Arsenault and Tara Mason.

The Secretary/Treasurer, Michael LaRoque commented on having 5 large communities. The Chairman commented on the feasibility studies being done.

A brief discussion was held on the Cultural Heritage Center. How to integrate this into mental health and health. How do we self-sustain this center and what is it going to cost.

Minnesota foundation and will be expanding outside of Minnesota for funding. A brief discussion held on youth.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ayecia Kemp took over recording of meeting minutes.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tabled Signatory Request:

- MN American Indian Mental Health Advisory Council: Tabled
- MN American Indian Substance Abuse Advisory Council: Tabled

Brief discussion held on LLCMR for Drea. Jamie would take over that roll until Drea comes on.

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to adjourn meeting at 1:56 p.m., second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 3 for, 0 against.

Michael LaRoque, Secretary/Treasurer