

White Earth Reservation Business Committee

Quarterly Meeting

April 26, 2024

Mahnomen, MN

Chairman Michael A. Fairbanks called the meeting to order at 9:31 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 ~ Teams

Absent:

Others Present: Laurie York, Executive Director
Curtis Rogers, Deputy Director
Tracy Lhotka, Chief Finance Officer
Andrea Kingbird, General Counsel
Maria Bevins, Recorder

Agenda Approval

Additions:

- **Shooting Star Casino Elder Coupon ~ New Business**
- **ENP Sites ~ New Business**
- **Natural Resources Proposal ~ New Business**
- **Human Services ~ Executive Session**
- **New Program License for Phase II Men's Acute Care ~ New Business**
- **ICW MOU with St. Louis County and University of Minnesota Duluth ~ New Business**
- **Tribal Psychologist License renewal ~ New Business**
- **Contract Amendments ~ Executive Session**
- **Minnesota Meeting ~ Executive Session**
- **Letter to Governor ~ Executive Session**
- **THPO discussion ~ Executive Session**
- **Tamarac Update ~ Executive Session**

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

RBC Meeting Minutes

No Meeting Minutes

Michael Fairbanks, Chairman provided a brief report.

Last quarter has been very busy with legislation and meetings in St. Paul, MN. Attended the NCAI meetings and regional conferences. Main focus was on the DNR. The legislation is still going on. One bill in Minnesota and agreements with the Federal Government on US Fish and Wildlife. Very positive actions, proud of our elders and leaders who have stepped up to the plate. The challenges that were with the state bill and listening with the leaders in St. Paul, MN. White Earth is making good headway. The whole team was working diligently on the state bill.

Our neighbors turned on us and the Tribal Council learned many lessons during this time. The vision and our teachings help us through these times. The Tribal Council is still moving forward. More information will be coming forward with the Tamarac National Refuge and State Forest and will have a clearer update for everyone.

The Tribal Council has been working hard for all our directors, programs, listening and empower them. They are doing the best they can. There are many things that the Tribal Council is doing and moving forward with. Good news will come into the meeting today that will improve many areas. The Tribal Council has made a lot of progress in the last five years.

Michael LaRoque, Secretary/Treasurer provided a brief report.

In the last quarter: Attended the Tribal Interior Budget Committee (TIBC) and an alternate in our region. Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque provided a brief overview of TIBC and how to increase funding. Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque placed in his monthly article last month on the TIBC conference and the FY26 that TIBC is submitting a \$27 billion dollar budget to the President. Tribes brought forward concerns on the budget. A brief overview was provided of Public Law 280. They want the tribes to rely on gaming. The Secretary/Treasurer has been going over budgets and keeping our divisions within their budgets.

State of the Nation was well attended, and Representations were well attended. Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque's Quarterly Report will be published in the paper. Brief updates on the Powwows that are coming up and Urban powwow. Indian Center will be opening May 1, 2024.

Motion made by Henry Fox to approve Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque's Quarterly Report; second by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Henry Fox, District I Representative provided a brief report.

- In the process of the 10 homeless homes being completed.
- Rice Lake has community cleanup this week with coordination with White Earth Housing Authority, Natural Resources, and Rice Lake Community Council.
- Powwow Grounds groundwork was completed.
- New Playground Equipment with the old equipment going to Pine Bend.
- Home Repairs for our elderly, with the need and not want.
- Lake Blessing in June.

Eugene Sommers, District II Representative provided a brief report.

February

- Attended the James Fairbanks Ship Naming Ceremony in Washington, D.C.
- Attended the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI).
 - Supported our rights to regulate and safeguard our Natural Resources.

- Working with the Department of Transportation on an increase in train traffic in the city of Mahnommen.
 - Plans for the future of a potential overpass. \$5.5 million for this overpass.
- Meeting with Betty McCollum for the land back legislation.

March

- Attended the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes in Washington, D.C. for the ground water ordinance discussion and supported. Had the opportunity to meet with some White House staff.
- Fishing Derby was held in the Shooting Star Casino Event center due to ice conditions.

April

- Land Back Legislation was very busy for the Tribal Council. Met with surrounding partners on misinformation that was going out to the public.
- Consultation with Amy Klobuchar on STEM Funding for the WETCC.
 - Trades building proposal

March

- Attended the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Legislative Dinner.

April

- Attended the Becker County Commissioners meeting.
 - Addressed three main issues, one issue was land access and economic impacts.
 - Tribal - State Relations Training to be mandated for counties and local governments.
- Mahnommen American Indian Senior Banquet was very well attended. The Mahnommen class is in the mid 80% of students who are graduating.
- Attended the UND to meet on Trauma Resilience Research. They talked about White Earth's Research Review Boards and how important for these case studies that do research in Indian Country.
- April 20 Waabigwan Mashkiki Cannabis Dispensary update and opening in Mahnommen.
- During the Becker County Commissioners meeting they invited the Tribal Council to their Natural Resources Management Committee meeting. Representative Sommers attended the first meeting and provided a brief overview of this meeting.
 - Collaboration with their Sanitation
- Attended the Native American In Philanthropy this past week.
- White Earth Boxing Club, the boys have some fights coming up. The gym will be opened up more. Working with White Earth Housing Authority on funding.
- The TEC Meeting was held in Grand Portage. Representative Sommers attended by Zoom.
 - Health and Human Services Subcommittee meeting. Discussion held on a couple of license updates and grant approvals.
 - Indian Education

Playgrounds will be completed this spring. The Naytahwaush Food Shelf will be coming back, and an elder's village will be coming into District II.

Upcoming Events:

- Indian Center Grand Opening May 1st.
- Boys & Girls Club Mahnommen Grand Opening May 5
- Brief overview of an Indigenous Food restaurant purchasing 300 pounds of wild rice.

Representative Sommers brought forward concerns with Mahnomen County, Commissioners, City Council and County Attorney's, and Sheriff's office regarding tribal members being ticketed for accessing public waters. Representative Sommers recommendation is to not be in good standing with them due to how they are treating us and to have a meeting with them to collaborate more by working together. Important to get out and vote, do not vote for them if they do not want to work with us. Need more participation.

Chairman Fairbanks commented on the County Commissioners Position and wanting good neighbors to work with White Earth.

Cheryl "Annie" Jackson, District III Representative will be excused from reporting due to being sick and will report next month.

Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque provided a brief update of the TEC meeting regarding the Secretary Election 3215. We are hindered by the BIA and the 30% of votes and what defines the 30%. Is it 30% of registered voters or 30% of eligible voters? this is a high number and not attainable. To pass the Secretary Election they will need 30% of votes and speaking to the BIA there is a waiver process. 3215 which was recognizing all other Chippewa blood in the United States. There was another motion introduced to eliminate the Secretary Election. There was discussion on how to pass a motion. 1855 Authority meeting was held on April 25, 2024. TEC meeting will be held in July. The resolution will be going to their table for discussion.

White Earth Council of Elders

Tim Rindahl is present and provided brief updates (Please see attached report).

Sam Crowell is present and provided brief updates. They have been very busy in Pine Point assisting the elderly. Food shelf update:

- Serving 35 people every week and families.
- Service Homeless
- Food prices have increased.
- Open 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Community picnic date changed. White Earth Housing Authority and homelessness concerns brought forward.

Bingos:

- Two Bingos were held over the winter.
- Fundraising

Transportation:

- Huge issue for homebound elders

Recommendation to have meetings with Directors regarding concerns with programs. All concerns can be brought to Laurie York and Curtis Rogers on these issues. Recommendation to set up meetings with the White Earth Council of Elders on these issues.

Brief discussion held on communication. White Earth Housing Authority meetings are held every Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. Brief discussion held on White Earth Housing concerns. Representative Sommers stated that they are working hard on changes and will be moving forward.

Meeting recessed at 11:06 a.m.

Meeting reconvened at 11:55 a.m.

Colleen Blattenbauer is present and provided brief updates on the White Earth Council of Elders budget.

Elders Commission (Please see attached report)

Sheldon Hank is present and provided brief updates. Working with Veronica Newcomer on the bylaws and their elections. Chris Haverkamp will be assisting with the election process. They have been meeting with various programs and have been meeting in different communities each month. Three commissioners attended the TEC meeting. Two commissioners that are active veterans and willing to work with families of veterans. The elders commission can also reach out to Gary Fraser for any recommendations regarding elections.

Program Updates

White Earth Housing Authority

Michael Heisler, White Earth Housing Authority Director is present and provided brief updates.

- Funding to move families into new units.
- State of Directors meeting was held in Hinkley, MN.
 - Grants for single families with new construction available. Working with Pam Keezer.
- Single Housing Relief Program for the State
 - News Paper and moving forward.
- Healthy Homes Grant
 - Environmental Review
- Indian Housing Plan
 - Grant to work with Youth.
- Tax Credit Company
 - Tax credit dollars for WEHA units.
- Community Cleanup
 - Facebook Page for dates
 - Elder pickup, they will take elder homeowner phone calls.
- Housing Data System (HDS) System
 - Help filter work orders.
- Indian Housing Plan
 - Fair to be held in August on crime prevention and safety.
- Pine Point Work Force Center
 - Construction Activity Skills on Units
- Staff Trainings
- Homeownership Program
- Electric / Weatherization Funds
- Goal to have a Social Worker within WEHA
 - Working with members
 - Communication
- Elders Program
- Tenant Recertification Class

White Earth Indian Health Service (Please see attached report):

Raimy Ronning White Earth Indian Health Service CEO is present and provided brief updates.

Naytahwaush:

Jodi Sunderland is the new CEO and providing great feedback. Michael Bishop who is a Physician Assistant will be a permanent staff member and receiving great feedback.

Throughout the summer they will have a contract for a Nurse Practitioner. Working on getting dental more consistent out in Naytahwaush. Clinic hours are 8 to 4:30 p.m.

Pine Point:

Clinic is open Tuesday's and Thursday's. They have a Nurse Practitioner and a new Chief Dentist, Dr. Cumba has started. The community will have dentistry starting once a month due to staff shortage.

White Earth:

- Adult Weight Management Overview
- Management Clinic with Pediatric Clinic and IPA contractors
 - Pediatrician Courtney Chanson is taking expertise training to incorporate weight management into pediatrics.
- Dr. Cumba – Changes in Dental and customer service
- Medical
 - Adding staff
- PRC
 - Making Progress
 - Being Responsive / Continue to bring in bills.

Incident with Employee at I.H.S:

Apologies from the Indian Health Service regarding the remark that was made in the letter. This employee is no longer with the Indian Health Services. Recommendation Cultural Sensitivity training will be held for employees at the Indian Health Service.

White Earth Tribal & Community College ~ Not Present

White Earth Constitution Reform:

Mykee is present and provided brief updates. They listen to community members to receive their input and to educate our members on the Constitution Reform. They are requesting more community members and elders' input on these important issues before they make their decisions.

- May 15, 2024, meeting will be held at the Shooting Star Casino at 5 p.m.
 - Everyone is welcome and share this information.
- May 16, 2024, an all MCT Delegate meeting
- July the TEC meeting will be held.

Patty Straub is present and provided a brief update on the Secretarial Election. Brief discussion held on the White Earth Delegation. TEC meeting will be held July 8th & 9th.

Community Council Updates

Callaway – No Active Community Council

Elbow Lake – Not Present

Iron Range:

Louie Johannsen is present and provided brief updates.

- Major issues with logging and concerns were brought forward. A company from Texas had come in and clearcut 3,500 hundred acres. Requesting the Tribal Council to write a letter regarding the loggers. Recommendation to meet with Laurie and Legal for the letter of support.
- Banquet for the Indian Education Seniors and donating.
- Their next meeting will be held May 2, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Mahnomen – Not Present (Please See attached report)

Representative Sommers referenced the Mahnomen Tribal Community Council quarterly report.

Naytahwaush – Not Present

Northeast White Earth Cass Lake – Not Present (Please See attached report)

Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque referenced the NEWE – Cass Lake quarterly report.

Pine Point – Not Present

Rice Lake:

Shawn Goodwin is present and provided updates.

February Events:

- Valentines Drawing and Dinner

March Events:

- Easter party and Dinner great turn out
- Powwow grounds update.
- Basketball Park update.
- Planning ditch cleanup and collaborating with Boys & Girls Club
- Hosting the CSO picnic Thursday, May 24th.

Waubun:

Sheldan Hanks is present and provided updates.

February event the community council hosted a cake walk. The community council has been meeting regularly and will have their summer event at Waubun days that is scheduled July 13th. At this event they have several activities. The Waubun Community Councils meets at the Sundown Saloon. They need a community building. They meet on the third Wednesday of each month.

White Earth – Not Present (Please see attached report)

Curtis Rogers, Deputy Director referenced the White Earth Community Council quarterly report.

Urban – Not Present (Please see attached report)

Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque's referenced the White Earth Urban Community Council quarterly report.

The White Earth Urban Community Council provided a powwow budget for RBC review and approval.

Brief discussion held on increasing powwow budgets. Eugene commented on the urban powwow and would remain silent and recommended approving \$15,000 with his concerns and thoughts.

Resolution; Administration Funding and Contract approval for White Earth Urban Community Council Powwow for \$35,000:

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to approve Resolution No. 001-24-045; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 3 for, 0 against. Eugene is silent.

Old Business ~ No Old Business

New Business

National Tribal Child Support Association Conference Sponsorship; Level 1: \$5,000:

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

2024 Mother's Day Powwow, May 11-12, 2024, request to waive casino costs for the Event Center and Food:

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

Request to allow Food Vendors in Parking Lot: Tabled

Shooting Star Casino Monthly Elder Coupon Increase; \$25 for food Coupons & \$50 for play:

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

Funeral Assistance:

Secretary/Treasurer LaRoque provided a brief overview of funeral costs. Funeral assistance is currently at \$2,000 and recommendation to increase to \$3,000. Resolution: Human Services Increase in Funeral Assistance:

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to approve Resolution No. 064-24-065; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Natural Resources Proposal:

Mindy Iverson, Jessica Tolifson, and Monica Hedstrom are present. Mindy provided a brief overview of the proposal for the Department of Natural Resources. When a division goes through the process of evaluating itself, the division goes through the process of assessing its current state. This involves performances, resources, capabilities of services and how this relates to their strategic planning. There are types of market analysis that can support those changes and can be beneficial to the division and to the RBC. Especially for growth and development needs. No title changes at this time; however, may occur in the future. Wage analysis is something Human Resources does regularly. The division is looking at growth/expansion within Natural Resources Department. Jessica provided a brief overview of the FY24 budget and FY25 budget with changes moving forward. Documents were provided to the RBC for review on budgets, and organizational chart.

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

Elderly Nutrition Program:

Representative Fox commented on services that the ENP provides. Brief discussion held on keeping the sites open for elderly for socialization. Recommendation for Laurie and Curt to have a meeting with Kathy Thompson regarding the sites staying open for socialization and food. Recommendation for the White Earth Council of Elders to submit a letter to the Executive Director on concerns and it can be addressed.

Tribal License for Phase II Men's Acute Care – New Program Licenses:

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

Tribal and State Partnership Memorandum of Understanding:

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

Tribal Licensed Psychologist Renewal Application 2024, Molly Ryan:

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

Consent Agenda / Signatory Requests and Ratifications for January 26, 2024:

- **I.H.S Letter ~ Ratification**

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

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to go into Executive Session at 1:49 p.m.; second by Henry Fox.

Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Meeting recessed at 1:49 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 2:29 p.m.

Land

Megan Bakken and Sarah LaFriniere are present and provided brief updates.

Homesites; District I – 1 site and District III – 1 site:

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

Lakeshore; District II – 2 sites and District III – 2 sites:

Motion made by Cheryl “Annie” Jackson to approve; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 3 for, 0 against, Eugene recused himself.

Business; WE Parks & Rec and WE Police Department:

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

Agriculture; District II – 1 site, District III – 1 site, and Ryan Henry Medure Property – Pennsylvania:

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

Other Land Topics:

- Geray Property – General Fund
- Geray Property – WELSA Fund

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

- JL Beers Property – General Fund

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

Legal

Brief discussion held on each of the following Signatory Requests.

[REDACTED]

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

Andrea provided a brief update on the Minnesota meeting. A meeting will be held on May 2, 2024, between 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The meeting will be between Legal, DNR, Laura Lee.

Brief discussion held on the Tamarac letter. Recommendation to receive a copy of the MOU for Tribal Council to review. Andrea references the letter to the RBC. Directing the DNR to work with White Earth.

Motion made by Michael LaRoque approve the letter as drafted, process and MOU; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried, 3 for, Eugene opposed.

BIA Trust Fund

Tracy provided a brief update on the BIA Trust Fund. Recommendation to draft a Resolution to pay them out.

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

Tabled Signatory Requests

MN American Indian Mental Health Advisory Council: Table

MN American Indian Substance Abuse Advisory Council: Table

Peebles Kidder LLP Agreement:

RBC in consensus to remove from tabled items.

Red Circle Contract:

Table more discussion needed.

Andrea provided a brief update on the Tamarac.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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

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

Executive Session ended at 3:22 p.m.

Motion made by Michael LaRoque to adjourn meeting at 3:22 p.m.; second by Eugene Sommers. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Michael LaRoque, Secretary/Treasurer

White Earth Tribal Council Quarterly Report

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Photo

Secretary/Treasurer

Michael LaRoque

Aanin Boozhoo

Greeting White Earth Members, I have the honor of being elected as the Secretary/Treasurer position for the White Earth Tribal Council and this is my 2nd Quarter report ending March 31, 2024. Our Fiscal year runs from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024.

Fiscal Year 2024 Budget

Due to the fiscal year dates, the RBC must have a general fund budget in place by September 30, 2023. This budget was approved by the Tribal Council and adopted by resolution on September 30, 2023. The budget adopted accounts for revenues in the amount of 15.96 million which consists of State of MN Tax revenue and expenditures in the amount of 22.46 million. These expenditures are incurred for departments that operate more for the good of the band members than to make a profit. These include education, public safety, general government, human services, public works, economic development, and culture among others. This allows for a budget deficit of 6.34 million which will be funded by distributions from the Shooting Star Casino. This deficit includes all capital expenses.

Fiscal Year 2024 2nd Quarter

General Fund

Correction: the FY24 1st Quarter numbers for government activities ending December 31st, 2023, is \$22.4 million with expenses of \$3,299,990.35 with a remainder of \$19.1 million.

This quarters FY24 budget for governmental activities ending March 31, 2023, is at \$22.4 million with expenses at \$7.9 million with a balance of \$14.5 million.

Gaming

Consolidated revenue for Mahnomen, Bagley, and all other gaming revenue for the 2nd Fiscal Quarter of FY2024, ending March 31, 2024, was \$28.2 million. The consolidated expenses for the Quarter were \$21.9 million. Consolidated net income for the quarter was \$6.2 million; Mahnomen is at \$5.4 million, and Bagley is at \$806k.

The budget through the 2nd Fiscal Quarter was \$51.6 million of revenue and \$47.4 million in expenses for a budgeted net income of \$4.2 million for the first half of FY2024. YTD Revenue was \$5.2 million higher than the budget while expenses were \$2.6 million lower than budget resulting in net income being \$7.8 million higher than budget.

The Bagley Casino for 2nd quarter ending March 31, 2023, earned \$2.9 million in revenue with expenditures of \$2.1 million. Bagley Casino has a net income for the quarter of \$806K.

Shooting Star Casino cash on hand on March 31, 2023, was \$79.3 million. The cash on hand at the close of the last fiscal year, September 30, 2023, was \$77.2 million. After Shooting Star Casino capital improvement spending and distributions to the White Earth RBC, cash has increased by \$2.1 million during the first half of the fiscal 2024.

The Unaudited preliminary numbers are subject to change as the numbers are finalized.

ARPA (Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund)

The White Earth RBC received \$6.0 million allocation of LATCF funds for FY23. The FY23 funds were used to cover annual funding for the Tribal Utilities Commission. The FY23 funds will also be used to cover gaps in Government activities approved by the White Earth RBC.

Other Grant Funds

In this quarter of FY2024, we have recorded \$53.22 million dollars in other grant funding while recording \$35.74 million in expenditures. The other grant funds consist of grants from Federal, State, and local funding agencies. The funds are meant for a specific program, service, or activity and must be budgeted as such.

Behavioral Health

In this quarter of FY2024, we have accounted for \$20.45 million in revenue while recording \$17.30 million in expenditures. This leaves us with 3.5 million. The ending cash balance in Behavioral Health funds is 34.10 million in addition there is an investment account of 15.0 million.

Youth and Elder Funds

The casino purchased twelve AGS machines, one-sixth of the gaming revenue from those machines provide the funding for the Youth and Elder Fund. Six of those machines are in the casino on the back wall near the Smoke Restaurant. The remaining six machines are in the middle of the northern portion of the floor. All AGS machines on the casino gaming floor earn guest rewards points when playing with their player card. (This is not the case with AGS machines offsites.) The funding in this program is designed to help assist with costs associated with group activities supporting enrolled youth and elder members of White Earth Nation. These donations are authorized by the Tribal Council.

In this quarter of FY24, we have \$396,514 in revenue while recording \$142,877 in expenditures. This leaves us with a cash balance of \$253,637.

I would also like to invite any White Earth Tribal Member who has a questions are concerns about the Tribal Finances on the Government side to reach out by putting a request in writing to myself at mike.laroque@whiteearth-nsn.gov or call me at 218-849-1140.

In closing I want to thank the members of the White Earth Nation for giving me this opportunity to serve as the Secretary/Treasurer for this great nation. I look forward to moving forward with great progress and optimism and I hope we can work together for a brighter future. Miigwech!

Michael J. LaRoque

Secretary-Treasurer

WECOE REPORT for the RBC QUARTLEY MEETING

June 27th Elders Picnic at the Rediscovery Center

New Sound System

Grand Portage

April Pine Point Meeting went well with a good turnout.

Building an elderly repair group, send out donation letters, can we set up a 501 c3 fund for this or what would be our options?

Working on calendar that we can post on the White Earth Facebook page and who do we talk to about posting information?

Working on float maybe a Garden Float?

Would like to have access to TV's in ENP sites for viewing TEC meetings and RBC meetings.

Would like to plan another big event as we only have the summer picnic & Christmas party.

Maybe the September event would be covered by fund raising.

Working on a medical release form to travel to events.

Still working on updating our by-laws

Would like to ask Mike LaRoque about the Elder's Stand at the pow wow I know we talked about having a stand that we would be able to tear down and set up at the other pow wows in the communities could we use our money to buy the materials needed to accomplish this?

Next meeting in Rice Lake is 5:30 pm working out?

White Earth Council of Elders

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Present:

Chairperson; Tim Rindal

Vice chair; Sam Crowell

Treasurer; Colleen Blattenbauer

Secretary; Monica Perrault

Called to order by Tim.

Financial Report: given by Colleen Blattenbauer, bank statements from January and February 2024 were passed out. \$15,000 has been in a small business checking account that has not been used so it's been transferred to the savings account.

\$220.76 was spent on candy for the valentine's party and \$750.00 was spent purchasing gift cards. There are gift cards yet available for a future party (possibly Easter).

Discussion on sound system for use during meetings. Motion was made by Sam to purchase the system and 2nd by Monica. Motion carried.

Meet the candidates forum was discussed. Motion by Sam to check with Teddy Busse on Thursday for an available date during the elder conference. 2nd by Colleen. Motion carried.

White Earth Reservation Council of Elders monthly meeting dates for 2024 has been updated. Motion to accept by Colleen. 2nd by Sam. Motion carried.

Grand Portage TEC meeting discussed at length. Conclusion determined the bus is not operational at this time.

Motion to adjourn by Sam. 2nd by Colleen. Motion carried.

**ELDER
COMMISSION
UPDATES**

QUARTERLY REPORT FOR WE TRIBAL COUNCIL – APRIL 2024 MEETING

February – April 2024

At the February 5th meeting, our main discussion centered on which positions were up for reelection. We have had an ongoing debate on this issue since October 2023. We were confused by the bylaws which indicated it was by position. The bylaws also stated the importance of having a balance of 2 commissioners per district and one at-large person. This discussion was tabled for clarification from the tribal attorney, Vernica Newcomer.

There has been much confusion as to what the two Elder groups do. At the Elders Commission meetings, we often refer to Page 2 of our bylaws which states **“the Elders Commission is established by White Earth Reservation Business Committee to provide advice and recommendations to the RBC concerning Tribal elder programming which would be available through the White Earth Tribal Government divisions and departments.”**

We do our best to follow Roberts Rules of Order for meetings.

We requested and received a copy of the bylaws of the White Earth Council of Elders. Our intent is to review the WECO bylaws to establish a working relationship for WE Elders that complements both organizations. We are off to a good start in 2024. Not all of us attend the WECO meetings, nor do they all attend ours. We are making headway.

Commissioners’ Reports for Feb-Apr:

Robin Ankeny joined the Rice Lake Community Council as an at-large member. A training at Northern Lights with invite by Earline Buffalohead, not enough detail. Wisdom Steps Program – how to participate. Pine Bend to get a playground, helpful for Elders who take care of children, in process of getting set up. Transportation and housing rehab issues in Pine Bend. The church needs to be demolished, replaced with meeting/community center, she will get on agenda for RBC meeting to discuss this. Robin wants to attend the weeklong NIHB conference in May in Rapid City. The Elders Commission did not budget for this prior to the start of FY 2024. Suggest she ask for a scholarship to attend like we did last year.

Francine Day provides transportation for Pine Bend elders, also helped Elder getting furnace repaired. Reminded the Commissioner to update the programs on this aid so the programs can assess and document the need. Financial report basically stipend and mileage, no other expenses to date.

Rebecca McCradie to attend the NTW Comm Council. Attended the St. Paul Legislature meeting to discuss the land transfer issue, also shared personal story of her great grandfather’s reservation land. Rebecca also met with Duluth cohort and sought more information on the Wisdom steps program. Lucille Silk is the local contact person.

Toni Vizenor to attend the Pine Point CC meetings.

Emily Annette spoke on the CLI grant and childcare for grandchildren. Mahnomen Homeless shelter to open in May.

Sherold Hank helped veteran with ride to DL because no other transportation available. Mr. Hanks is an MCT Election board member and reminded us that as of March early voting was open at the Election Board office. Mr. Hanks commented on poor voter turnout.

Pam Aspinwall asked for a special meeting with Veronica Newcomer and Curtis Rogers to settle election questions. Pam to attend the Mahnomen CC meetings.

Basic forms distributed to members for documenting contact information from programs and services provided to Elders. SafeTALK information, funeral services and assistance program information provided. Good resources. Colleen of WECOE and Pam organized the Candidate forum.

SPECIAL meeting on Feb 20 with Veronica Newcomer, tribal attorney, and Curtis Rogers, Deputy Director. Five Commissioners attended – Pamela, SJ, Emily, Robin, and Toni. At issue was what positions would be up for election in 2024.

After much discussion, we agreed that elections would be based on districts and as such, two D2 commissioners and one at-large position would be up for election. A candidate must live in D2 to run for that position, or a candidate can run for the At-large position which is reservation wide. A candidate may run for one open position only. Eligible voters must live ON RESERVATION.

In 2026, D1 and 3 would be on the slate.

Because of the confusion in the bylaws, we sent changes to the tribal attorney to refine the terminology of bylaws based on our decision and send these changes to the Tribal Council.

Suggested changes to the Bylaws:

1. **RESIDENCY ELIGIBILITY** (page 3 of 10) currently states must live within 25 miles of nearest reservation boundary. **REMOVE THIS.**
2. **ADD:** the disputed townships of D1 to be considered within reservation boundary.
3. **FOR THE 2024 ELECTION** (page 4 of 10) two D2 commissioners and one at-large commissioner shall be on the ballot for a 4-year term.
4. **FOR THE 2026 ELECTION** (page 4 of 10) two D1 and two D2 commissioners shall be on the ballot for 4-year terms.
5. Per the by-laws, **the tribal council shall appoint a 3-person panel of Elders** (page 4 of 10) to review any challenges, certification or non-certification of candidates and make a ruling which is final and not appealable.
6. These suggested changes to the bylaws were sent to the tribal attorney on March 15 for review and accuracy as to our agreement at the special meeting. We respectfully ask the tribal council to approve these changes.

Emily Annette, Commission Secretary, to set up a special meeting with the Commission Election committee to follow up with suggested changes, to delegate election tasks and decide staffing needs. Election committee members are Emily, Toni Vizenor, Francine Day, and Robin Ankeny.

Guests at the March 5th meeting in Mahnomen Vets Center:

Christie Haverkamp attended the March meeting to offer suggestions on holding the 2024 WE Commission election. She suggested an SOP for elections, would be willing to help with filing process as the filing agent and administer background needs.

Colleen Blattenbauer, WECOEO Treasurer:

- Discussed the MCT meeting at Fond du Lac in April 24 & 25, 2024. (Wrong location, wrong dates, corrected as of now.)
- The Elder tour bus needs to be certified for disabled and needs Elder logo on side for this trip. Limit of 15 passengers. This trip is on the agenda for the Council of Elders Executive meeting tomorrow. Colleen will contact Pam when she knows more.
- WECOEO Chair Tim Rindahl shared a proposal on the use of the bus. Driver qualifications, who can use the bus, etc.
- WECOEO is hosting a Candidate Forum at SSC. They asked for volunteers to help with this event. Commission Chair Pam collaborated with Colleen to put this together. It was a success, all candidates attended. Good turnout and great questions.

April 10th meeting guests included Sam Crowell, Tim Rindahl, Missy Fairbanks, Charles Thompson, Larry Roberts, Ann Brown, Jean Bakka and Colleen Blattenbauer. The objective of the WECOEO member in attendance was to discuss shared plans for the MCT-TEC meeting at Grand Portage

Sam Crowell had issues with the general election based on transportation of Elders and an issue of requiring voters to have proper ID. Because we have a member who is employed with the Election Board, we will suggest they work together on any general tribal election issues. Suggest publicizing the easy process for Elders to get tribal IDs.

With all due respect,

Pamela Aspinwall
White Earth Elders Commission, Chairperson

Agency Priorities Update

White Earth Service Unit – 2nd Qtr. FY24

Our Mission: *To raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.*

White Earth's Purpose Statement: *Healthy Generations of Anishinaabeg.*

IHS Strategic Goals

IHS Strategic Plan Goal 1: To ensure that comprehensive, culturally appropriate personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people.

White Earth IHS meets bi-monthly with our Tribal partners and Tribal Health Division. The Tribal Behavioral Health program provides culturally based individual and group therapy as well as a successful substance abuse treatment. This is a very robust program that has remained a consistent service to our patients. In collaboration with IHS medical and pharmacy staff and Behavior Health, we are working to streamline and fulfill STI diagnosis and treatment. The collaboration between partners has been a great success.

IHS Strategic Plan Goal 2: To promote excellence and quality through innovation of the Indian health system into an optimally performing organization.

WESU has 100% completion to all required training for new employees and annual trainings. To offer the opportunity for staff to be able to fulfill these requirements, ELT planned scheduled administrative time weekly. This promotes time management, which does not interfere with direct patient care and activities. Investing in our staff increases knowledge, competency, and skills, which results in the best pathway to carry our excellence and quality to our patients. WESU is accredited by AAAHC. We follow Medical and Dental Home Models aligning with the five pillars: 1. Understanding and Collaboration, 2. Accessibility, 3. Comprehensiveness of Care, 4. Continuity of Care, and 5. Quality. Recent re-developing of medical and dental teams has supported a more in depth ability to improve overall access and improved healthcare.

We are better gauging the quality of patient experiences using one standardized patient experience survey. This survey is electronic and is based on the IHS national survey. Unlike previous surveys, this one includes two specific access questions to inform management of system-wide access issues.

IHS Strategic Plan Goal 3: To strengthen IHS program management and operations.

White Earth Service Unit continues to set a bar high with quality and innovations seen throughout daily operations. WESU has taken a deeper look at overall operations, starting when the patient enters our facility until the patient is discharged from their primary care visit.

Managers/supervisors present a monthly operations report, which is meant for department managers to focus on accreditation and revenue generation measures specific to their departments. For Medical and Dental, Medical/Dental Home is the ideal avenue for quality improvement activities. Non-clinical departments address methods to lessen or eliminate the 8 wastes in healthcare. We ensure that HHS, Surgeon General, and IHS strategic goals are identified in projects as objectives cascade from the Agency projects reporting them monthly to leadership.

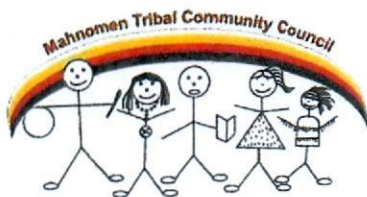
The WESU Executive Leadership Team continues to utilize a Quality Management approach that emphasizes a focus on sustainability as key to achieving healthcare excellence. One of WESU's primary improvement projects has been improved access to medical and dental appointments. The innovation of ELT and the Area office implemented several contracts to ensure improved access to primary care, internal medicine, weight management, pediatrics weight management, and dental care. Extending provider schedules out to 3 months has had a very positive impact on overall access and same day availability. A new Chief Dentist, Dr. Cumba, has started. He brings over 20 years of private practice experience along with dedication and high standards of quality dental care to our service unit. He provides new ideas for improved access for the patients that we serve.

Every patient and employee is a vital asset of our sustainability model!

What WE do matters.....Commitment to quality and improvement allows us to focus on what is important – ***the patient!***

Raimy Ronning, RN, BSN, CEO
Chief Executive Officer
White Earth Service Unit
40520 County Highway 34
Ogema, MN 56569
218-983-6214

**Community
Council
Updates**



"Bringing families together to ensure our future"

PO Box 373 • Mahnomen, MN 56557

4/22/24

Boozhoo,

In the recent quarter, the Mahnomen Tribal Community Council (MTCC) achieved significant milestones in our ongoing commitment to serving and enhancing our community. Here are some highlights from January through March 2024:

In February, MTCC demonstrated its support for community events by contributing \$500 to the annual White Earth Fishing Derby and \$900 to the annual Health and Wellness Round Dance. These contributions reflect our dedication to promoting cultural activities and well-being within our community.

March brought another successful event as we hosted our annual Easter celebration. The event featured a delightful brunch, Easter baskets, face painting, and opportunities for pictures with the Easter bunny, providing joy and festive spirit for all who attended.

Looking ahead, we have exciting plans for the upcoming months:

In May, MTCC will actively participate in MMIWP (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Peoples) Day, raising awareness and honoring the lives of Indigenous women/peoples who have gone missing or been murdered. This event holds profound significance for our community, and we are committed to supporting it fully. We are looking at partnering with DOVE and WEBH on an event this year. Details to come.

Additionally, MTCC will continue our tradition of giving back to the community by donating \$500 towards our annual scholarship for a Mahnomen community senior. This contribution aims to support the educational aspirations of our youth and invest in the future of our community.

Furthermore, MTCC is respectfully requesting the use of the entire back of the old Shopko building as a community center with the office space designated for MTCC as well. With the Mahnomen Boys and Girls Club moving to the front part of the building on May 10th, 2024, repurposing the back space would provide a valuable resource for our community members to gather, engage in activities, and foster connections, and would allow MTCC to finally have a space to call home and host events.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in our shared mission to build a stronger and more vibrant community.

Respectfully,

Joshua Zornes, Chair

NORTH EAST WHITE EARTH (NEWE)

Community Council – Cass Lake

Quarterly Report

Monthly meetings were held on the 1st Wednesday of each month at the White Earth Building. The attendance of community members varies.

Our focus for the winter season has been the elders. We provided weatherization and small handy-man maintenance.

We did not provide any distributions in the last quarter.

The use of the building has been very consistent. These events range from Community Education classes by Leech Lake Tribal College, U.S. Forestry, Meet & Greet with Chairman Candidates for White Earth Tribal Elections, Meet and Greet for Leech Lake Candidates, Family events and Funeral/Wakes.

The upcoming events are a community picnic.

We are grateful for the support by the White Earth Tribal Council...Mii gwech!

Rick Haaland, Chairperson

Date: April 23rd, 2024

To: White Earth RBC

From: White Earth Community Council

Paula Smith, Sue Hanks, Shannon Heisler,
Candice Smith

Re: Quarterly Report

The White Earth Community Council is currently working on the 1st Annual Sturgeon Moon Powwow, which will be held July 26 – 28th, 2024. Save the Date Poster has been sent out. We will also have a 3 on 3 BB Tourney along with a Bean Bag Tourney.

We will be hosting Bingo for our elders and will set up at Biimad and Congragate on May 15th, after they have their dinner. We will also be holding a bingo at the WECC June, for 18 +.

WECC Will be co-hosting the community picnic July 23rd from 4:00 – 6:30, Held at the WECC.

WECC will be installing a new Picnic Shelter, which will be put up by the playground, there will be picnic tables, grills that people can use for events. The Frisbee Golf will also be redone and missing baskets will be replaced.

WECC Held their annual Easter Party on March 28th, we had approximately 250+ in attendance. We also did a book giveaway, which went over very well.

The White Earth Community Center gym has been booked for several events, January, February and March and usually fills up quick, (wakes and Funerals always come first)

Open Gym - Just about each weekday
Weekend

WHITE EARTH URBAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO RBC

April 25, 2024

Boozhoo, Aanii

Miigwech to the RBC for your on-going support to the White Earth urban Community Council.

January, 2024 was devoted to working on the yearly Planning/budget for 2024 which lead into **February**. WEUCC continued to do extensive Planning and Budget drafting to make certain WEUCC worked on Health and Wellness Events for the White Earth Urban Community.

In February, WEUCC held an Elders' Valentine's Party with balloon decorations, bags of goodies and boxes of Heart chocolates. Drawings were held for gift cards and lunch was provided. There was a dance contest held with elders showing their style and moves with Karaoke/music by Matthew Shun (book of Matthew Entertainment). Everyone in attendance enjoyed an afternoon of fun.

March, WEUCC hosted the monthly Elders' Luncheon/Bingo which is held the third Saturday of the month. Lunch is generally Pot Luck and Bingo winners receive either a gift or a gift card. Guest Speaker was Dr. Hilden from Hennepin Health Care. Elders were receptive to the information given by Dr. Hilden on Health and Wellness. The doctor stayed to call the Bingo game.

Bingo will not be available during the summer months of June, July or August because of increased activities during the summer months.

Due to the unpredictable weather conditions, WEUCC was unable to host the Primary Election Candidate Forum. We will however schedule a Candidate Forum for the General Election.

April: WEUCC hosted a bus Trip to Mahnommen Shooting Star Hotel for the State of the Band Address. White Earth Urban Members that registered to go to the event, were provided a room at Shooting Star Hotel, and were given a dinner

coupon. Members that had not had the opportunity to attend the State of the Band Address were very appreciative, as were the others that attended, to have been able to attend in person. Thank you to the RBC and staff that supported the event and provided the funding, WEUCC and Urban Members say Chii-Miigwech!

**January, February, March and April, WEUCC has been hard at work planning the 1st Annual Traditional Urban Pow Wow in the Metro for Urban Members and to be inclusive of all Communities.

**May 18, 2024 WEUCCC 1st Annual Traditional Urban Pow Wow

**July, WEUCC will be hosting the Annual Picnic at Wabun Park at Minnehaha Park.

Respectfully submitted by Char Lee, Secretary

White Earth Urban Community Council

Al Paulson, Interim Chair

Sherri Loken, Interim Vice-Chair

Annette Christensen, Interim Treasurer

Che Lee, Secretary

Alison Dakota, Community At Large Board Member