

**The Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2022 | 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

Members Present	Members Absent
Susan Arkeketa	Vanessa Adams Harris
Daniel Carter	Elizabeth Battiest
Cheryl Cohenour	Teresa Runnels
Joe Deere	Winnie Perdue
Sammy Haynes	Shari (Channa) Williams
Stacey Laskey	
Winnie Perdue	
Pat Powell	
Matt Roberts	
Kim Teehee	
Dorcas Williams	

- I. Call to Order and Introductions**
 - a. Meeting called to order at 6:04pm by commissioner Deere.
- II. Land Acknowledgment**
 - a. Land Acknowledgment ready by Lachelle King, Secretary for MORE.
- III. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Commissioner Deere requests a motion for approval of the January meeting minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Arkeketa motions to approve
 - ii. Commissioner Cohenour seconds
 - 1. All in unanimous favor
- IV. Discussion regarding support letter to Congress requesting Kim Teehee be seated as Cherokee Nation’s delegate, sponsored by Sammy Haynes**
 - a. Commissioner Haynes briefs the Commission on the significance of requesting that commissioner Teehee be seated.
 - i. While the resolution specifically calls for Commissioner Teehee’s seating on behalf of the Cherokee Nation, Commissioner Haynes considers this to be a win for all natives and native culture. Currently, the Choctaw and Cherokee tribes are the only two tribes that have seats, but no representation.
 - b. Commissioner Cohenour reminds everyone that this commission doesn’t have the authority to create a resolution, and a letter of support would be most appropriate.
 - i. Commissioner Cohenour suggest that the commission also includes a separate letter that describes the uniqueness and significance as a

- i. Commissioner Laskey seconds
 - ii. All commissioners in unanimous favor.
 - d. Commissioner Teehee makes a motion that the bylaws suggestions be referred to the bylaws committee for review and additional change.
 - i. Commissioner Cohenour seconds
 - ii. All in unanimous favor.

VI. Committee Reports

- i. Commissioner Deere prefaces the committee reports by reminding the commission of the importance of joining a committee. He requests that everyone signs up for at least one.
 - ii. Commissioner Deere also thanks the commission for the efficient meeting so far, as chairman for his first commission meeting.

b. Native American Day Committee

- i. Commissioner Cohenour reports that the committee hasn't had a meeting yet, but she has begun conversations with important stakeholders, including Indian Healthcare Resources.

c. Dream Keepers Committee

- i. Commissioner Roberts encourages commissioners to nominate any nominees that weren't selected in for the 2021 Dreamkeepers ceremony. Commissioner Roberts reports that the committee will have the award descriptions prepared in time for next month's commission meeting.
 1. Commissioner Laskey asks for clarity on what the nominating process consists of.
 - a. Commissioner Roberts requests a biography, written in third person, and a photo. The nominating person is responsible for checking in with the person they're nominating and ensuring that they're able and willing to be nominated.
 2. Commissioner Laskey asks if there's a record of past nominees available for reference.
 - a. Commissioner Cohenour says yes and offers to send the list to Lachelle for circulation to the commission.
 - ii. Commissioner Cohenour reflects that for the last couple of years, the commission has primarily focused on organizing the commissions operations. She suggests that the committee consider evaluating the dreamkeepers awards for any outdated or redundant criteria.
 1. Commissioner Powell agrees, and asks for review of subjective points such as criteria for age.
 2. Commissioner Cohenour agrees and continues that relaxing certain restrictions, such as age limit – would significantly diversify and enhance the pool of potential nominees for younger community members who are doing great work that deserves recognition.

- a. Commissioner Teehee agrees and asks to be added to the dreamkeepers committee. She also suggests that the committee streamline a few of the awards to reduce the number of awards given, and intentionally add categories for students, and young professionals. She also suggests reevaluating the namesakes of the awards for branding purposes.
3. Commissioner Haynes reflects that when the Dreamkeepers Awards began, the entire commission voted on recipients. It was later delegated to the Dreamkeepers committee members. However, he thinks that returning to an all commission vote would be a good way to keep the commission engaged and invested with the Dreamkeeper’s recipients especially considering that this is the commissions largest awards ceremony, and a headliner event.
- iii. Commissioner Cohenour asks if the commission should make a motion to approve.
 1. Commissioner Teehee suggests that the commission take these notes, have a Dreamkeepers committee meeting, and bring the recommendations back to the commission for a vote.
- iv. Commissioner Arkeketa offers a final reflection, that folks have had concerns with who could be nominated for any of the Dreamkeepers Awards if they didn’t reside in the “Greater Tulsa Area”.

d. Education Committee

- i. Commissioner Roberts reports that he’s emailed all school area districts and partnered with the Indian Education Depart to begin extending invitations for the Native American Day celebration in October. The committee is also exploring ways to get school districts to engage in the celebration.
 1. Union Public schools will be hosting a Heritage Day on Saturday, April 23rd. Owasso Public Schools will also be hosting a Heritage Day on Saturday, March 5th from 10am – 2pm.
- ii. The committee will have information at the next commission meeting regarding nominees and tentative dates for the Tulsa Public Schools excellence awards in March where graduating seniors from Tulsa Public Schools will be honored.

e. Public Relations Committee

- i. Commissioner Haynes reports that the committee did not meet. He asks for clarity on who is formally serving on the committee.
 1. Commissioner Haynes & Laskey confirm that they’d like to serve on the committee.
- ii. Commissioner Haynes informs the commission that the committee will continually send out relevant emails and flyers to the community for the commission Gmail account.

f. Bylaws Committee

- i. No report
- ii. Commissioner Carter volunteers to formally join the committee.

g. Cultural Committee

- i. Commissioner Williams reports that the committee has not met but asks the commission what they consider the purpose of this committee to be. The bylaws state that the committee brings fourth information to the City of Tulsa regarding the Indian activities and events like powwows, onion dinners, and stomp dances. However, commissioner Williams expresses that she feels that social media already does that, and in a much more effective manner. She also states that she doesn't feel that the committee is bringing anything to the mayor and the city because he's already aware and has access to the knowledge of events.
 1. Commissioner Roberts replies that he enjoys commissioner Williams event briefs. He also believes that the opportunity to be unique is there. And although this mayor is aware of the community ongoing, it'll be important for this committee to be available for future administrations to be equally equipped.
- ii. Commissioner Roberts reminds the commission that the cultural committee has always provided the drummers, singers, and princess's for Native American Day – which is no small feat.
- iii. Commissioner Williams also reports on organizations visiting ahead of upcoming elections in Oklahoma. She informs the commission on how important it is for the community to be prepared and willing to vote.
 1. Commissioner Cohenour agrees and believes the commission should be taking more active efforts surrounding voting within the commissions area of influence.
 2. Commissioner Deere informs the commission that the organization “Rock the Native Vote” is doing a lot of work to get native folks registered and prepared to vote. He suggests inviting them to a future commission meeting to update the commission on their progress and how the commission could potentially be of assistance.
 - a. Commissioner Arkeketa informs the commission that “Rock the Native Vote” and David Wilson from United Union Methodist Church will be hosting voter information event on February 24th, and the commission can volunteer.
- iv. Commissioner Teehee thinks that using the Native American Day Facebook account to distribute non-partisan information would be a good move. She recommends inviting folks from the tribes to discuss the actions they're taking to encourage their communities to vote.



- h. Parks Committee**
 - i. Commissioner Cohenour reports that the committee is working with the parks department to put together an RFP for the Dreamkeepers Park sculpture.
- VII. Bylaws Review**
 - a. No report
- VIII. Old Business**
 - a. None
- IX. New Business**
 - a. Commissioner Cohenour asks Krystal Reyes if it'd be appropriate to design and distribute an independent logo or brand on behalf of the commission.
 - i. Krystal offers to arrange a call with communications and explore the idea.
- X. Announcements / Public Comments**
 - a. None
- XI. Adjournment**
 - a. **Commissioner Deere calls for a motion to adjourn**
 - i. Commissioner Cohenour approves the motion
 - ii. Commissioner Roberts seconds the motion
 - iii. All in unanimous favor
 - iv. The meeting adjourns at 7:02 pm