



AIANEA National Council Teleconference Minutes

Monday, April 6, 2015

12:00 pm Pacific, 1:00 pm Mountain, 2:00 pm Central, 3:00 pm Eastern

Respect, Harmony and Beauty

Council Members & Guests Attending:

President

Steve Durgin, Washington DC

1st Vice President

Athena Pratt, California

2nd Vice President

Dr. Carol Crouch, Oklahoma

Secretary

Melissa Sturdivant, Texas

Treasurer

Pam Crow, Texas

Bill Parrish, Pennsylvania

East Regional Representative

Cassius Spears, Rhode Island

Midwest Regional Representative

Debe Walchuk, Minnesota

Northern Plains Regional Representative

Cameron Clark, Wyoming

West Regional Representative

Susan Looper, Nevada

Guests Attending:

None

Past Presidents

Gina Kerzman, Washington

Ciro Lo Pinto, Pennsylvania

Meeting Minutes:

- a. Meeting was called to order at 2:05 pm (Central) by Steve Durgin, President.
- b. Steve took roll call and welcomed the new members to the Association's National Council. A quorum was achieved and business of the Association was conducted. Steve indicated that he was in travel status and may need to leave the meeting, but Carol would take over at that point. The agenda was adjusted to allow Steve to provide his report so that he could continue in his travel status.
- c. President's Update.
Facilitator – *Steve Durgin*
 1. Steve expressed his sincere loss of the sudden passing of longtime member Sarah Bridges. He indicated that a memorial service is planned in Virginia and he plans to attend. Steve asked if Melissa could get that information to Yvette so that it can be distributed to the membership.
 2. Steve commented and provided additional insight to the survey recently distributed by Frederick Chang's office which revealed the findings from a recent survey of American Indian and Alaska Native employees (Department-wide). He felt that what was reported showed only a portion of the survey results, and it focused on a negative. However, Steve felt that by excluding all of the data, what was presented was not accurately reflected. Steve reported that he is not sure of the intent or what will result from this going out; however, he indicated that some positive results have occurred in that the Association along with the SEPM avenue was referenced as a potential resource to engage employees. Steve reported that he had received numerous emails from employees and was responding to them and providing the membership brochure and some background information in his response to the employee.

Discussions followed. Susan Looper voiced her concern regarding the survey. Susan indicated that she is the only employee in her state recorded as AI/AN, yet she did not receive this employee survey to participate. Therefore, she is not represented in the respective survey. Carol agreed that the numbers are not reflective and an accurate representation. Carol went on to ask Steve if he knew where this information is going to be used. Steve speculated that they are working to increase numbers of AI/AN across the Department, but he cautioned that they need to be careful disaggregating the data such as this when so much of the information revealed a neutral response. By virtue of no positive response, it appeared they assumed it was automatically a negative response, and he felt this was not correct. Steve also indicated that the analysis needs to go deeper than just one question to get a true reflection of employee's perceptions of what's going on in the Agency. Cameron added that the survey really did not take into account if the response was in response to perceptions at the national, regional or local policies and that the responses did not provide that information. Steve suggested that this might be something the Association can explore later at a greater depth.

3. At approximately 2:20 pm, Steve provided his closing comments, and turned the meeting over to Carol.
- d. Dr. Carol Crouch assumed control of the meeting. A quorum was still present and business of the Association was conducted.
- e. New agenda items: None at present.
- f. Review of action items from past meetings or those currently on the Registry.

Facilitator – *Melissa Sturdivant*

1. **ACTION ITEM:** *(carried forward from 2014)* Steve and Melissa will work to get award notifications distributed to award recipients and supervisors. *Steve reported that he is still working on this. Melissa reported that she gathered the contact information and addresses and forwarded this to Steve. Steve indicated that the notifications are still being worked on at present. Melissa added that Steve had told her that he was still working on this.*
2. **ACTION ITEM:** *(carried forward from 2014)* Steve and Melissa will research the process to determine the course of action needed to fill the East Region RTCAC position upon the retirement of John McCoy later in the year (Oct 15). *Steve reported that the Bulletin provides the guidance for this process, and also that the same process which was just completed for filling of the West Region RTCAC position and Alternate will be conducted for those positions that are coming vacant this year. Discussions followed. This item needs to be looked at to determine the status is the Central Region RTCAC representation and filling of the East Region position.*
3. **ACTION ITEM:** Steve will visit with Carol about the Bylaws review process and review what is needed to be accomplished by the Committee. *Melissa reported that Steve had indicated that he is working to schedule a meeting with Carol. While in Oklahoma on his travel, he hopes to meet with Carol and review what needs to be done. Carol added that she hopes to meet with Steve tomorrow and get the committee work started.*
4. **ACTION ITEM:** Gina and Steve will meet to discuss the effort to build and further develop the Communications Committee. *Melissa reported that Steve is working on this and Gina added that they are setting up a meeting.*

Melissa added that the Action Item Registry for 2014 has been archived, and we are now working with the 2015 Registry.

Discussions followed. Deb asked where she could get a copy of the Bylaws. Melissa reported that they are on the webpage. However, she said she would re-send them to the National Council.

ACTION ITEM: Melissa will forward to the National Council a copy of the latest Bylaws.

- g. Review and approval of minutes for the National Council meeting conducted on March 2, 2015.
Facilitator – *Melissa Sturdivant*

Motion to approve the minutes for the 3/2/2015 meeting as presented: Deb Walchuk

2nd Motion: Cassius Spears

No corrections noted. All voted in favor and with no votes opposed to the action proposed, the motion passed.

- h. Treasurer's Report.

Facilitators – *Pam Crow & Bill Parrish*

Pam reported the following account balances:

1. \$ 48,402.50 in Wells Fargo checking
\$ 106,442.29 in Frost Bank
2. Pam reported that the \$4,000 payment from Alabama NRCS was received and deposited.

Motion to approve the treasury report as presented: Susan Looper

2nd Motion: Cassius Spears

No corrections noted. All voted in favor with no votes opposed to the action proposed, and the motion passed.

i. National AIAN Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM) Report.

Facilitator – *Deborah Clairmont*

Deb was not present for the meeting and no written report was submitted to the Council.

j. Regional Representatives' Reports

Facilitators – *Carol Crouch & Regional Representatives*

1. Melissa stated that Steve had mentioned to her prior to the meeting and asked her to remind him, but he had to leave the meeting before they could get to the matter. However, she stated that Steve wants to plan training for the new Regional Representatives so that we can get a standard reporting system in place. Melissa had mentioned that Cameron had offered to help with this as well. Melissa and Cameron provided an overview of how reports were submitted in the past, to include: submission of a written report to be included as part of the minutes, and providing a brief oral report at the time of the meeting. Ciro added that the idea is that the Regional Representatives report to the National Council about what is going on in their represented states.

Cameron suggested that he could talk with Steve and figure out what additional training is needed. Ciro stated that as Melissa described, this is what was done in the past. Ciro also added that the Regional Representative would send an email to the persons they represent, to get feedback from them, and then compile a report which is submitted to the National Council. Ciro added that the Representative could pick one thing to showcase and tell the National Council about that was occurring in that part of the country. Ciro also stated that it was important when you were not able to attend the meeting that the written report could provide info when you could not. Discussions followed. Questions were asked to clarify the content of the written report. Cassius asked if we have a listserv for each region. Melissa stated that as part of the recent voting process, a member roster, by region, was updated. Cameron has a list of everyone to include SEPMs, Tribal Liaisons, and others working with tribal responsibilities. Cameron added that each list is different by each region. Cameron asked should we be looking at all people with Tribal duties or only try to reach out to Association members. Deb added that she thinks there is value in reaching out to all personnel with responsibilities, and this was a big reason why she wanted to be a part of the Association. Carol added that the minutes with the reports are available on the webpage as well.

2. Northern Plains Region, *Cameron Clark*

Cameron conveyed his appreciation for Melissa and Steve's comments, as well as Ciro's, about the structure for the reports needed from the Regional Representatives, and feels that if we can come up with a consistent reporting process, hopefully, we will get more information. If we reach out to people, and as Ciro stated, we may only get info back from a few, at least we have done our part, and we can build our outreach from there.

Cameron offered to forward to the Regional Representatives a listing of people in their respective regions. He stated that he is still working on the database, but can forward what he has to the Representatives. He is also still working to gather addresses, and feels they should be part of the information, although it is difficult to keep this information up to date, and to input the information as well.

Cameron reported that he had contacted the Wyoming AIAN SEPM and took her to several locations in the state to familiarize her with the area, the people, and the work being done. He indicated that the Tribal Liaison does not work with the SEPM and she has been pretty limited in her outreach efforts with two colleges in the region, so he has tried to assist her in meeting others who can help her be involved with the AIAN community. He said that they hope to attend a job fair in the next few weeks and develop more contacts.

ACTION ITEM: Cameron will forward a member listing to each Regional Representative and the National Council.

3. Midwest Region, *Debe Walchuk*

Debe provided an update and stated that the program for the soil conference is coming together. The Great Lakes Intertribal Food Summit is scheduled next week. She stated that she will be assisting with an outreach booth during the conference.

Debe reported that she will be presenting a session during the SAIGE Conference.

4. East Region, *Cassius Spears*

Cassius provided the following written report, and spoke on these items during the meeting:

a) Tribal Communities:

- **Narragansett Tribal Food Sovereignty Initiative** – Is in the process of establishing a people's garden with the Tribal Elders Center and Elders Meal Site.
- **Wabanaki Center's WaYS (Wabanaki Youth Science) Program** – Will be helping tribal households establish and maintain heirloom gardens through the support a *SOW IT FORWARD* grant.
- **Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe** – Private landowners, conservation groups, a tribe and government agencies

have joined forces to restore New England Cottontail habitat throughout New England. In Mashpee, Mass., on Cape Cod, habitat restoration work at three sites is yielding results. A total of nearly 100 acres of habitat is being restored on land owned, respectively, by The Trustees of Reservations land trust, Orenda Wildlife Land Trust and Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe. Because the three sites border each other, the conservation benefits are even greater as they provide a larger footprint for habitat. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, (NRCS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (USFWS), provided financial and technical help through the departments' Working Lands for Wildlife partnership. The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife also provided technical assistance. NRCS and the Cape Cod Conservation District helped the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe with a 32-acre New England cottontail habitat project on tribal land. The project holds historic, as well as environmental, significance for the tribe.

b) Upcoming Powwows/Events:

- April 18th, Annual UMASS Powwow Curry Hicks Cage Amherst MA
- April 25th, NAB Spring Thaw Powwow, Pizzitola Sports Center, Brown University
- April 24-25, MCNAA Spring Planting Moon Pow-Wow Marshfield Fairgrounds, Marshfield, MA
- April 26, URI/NASO Annual Spring Powwow University of Rhode Island
- May 3rd, Harvard University Native American Program Pow-wow., Cambridge, MA
- May 3rd, Keepers of the Peace Powwow; United States Military Academy, West Point, NY

c) Carol reported that she will be traveling to this region and conducting a Working Effectively with American Indians (WEWAI) training.

5. West Region, *Susan Looper*

Susan Looper introduced herself to the National Council, and conveyed her appreciation and excitement as she steps into this new role as the Regional Representative.

Susan asked if this is the normal schedule for the National Council meetings, and discussions followed. Ciro and Melissa commented that Steve's schedule has been a little more hectic than normal, and he has not been able to get a schedule out for the year as he typically did in the past. Melissa added that he usually schedules it on a Monday or Tuesday the first part of the month.

6. South Central Region, *Patra Ghergich*

Patra was not present for the meeting and no report was submitted.

Carol reported that Dr. Gregory Parham was in Oklahoma and they conducted a tour for him. A *Bridge the Gap* Conference was conducted with about 67 tribes represented. Oklahoma was also recently named as StrikeForce state.

k. National Tribal Liaison Officer Report

Facilitator – *Barry Hamilton*

Barry was not present for the meeting nor was a written report submitted to the Council.

l. Committee Reports

Facilitator – *Carol Crouch & Committee Chairs/Representatives*

The following committee reports were provided:

1. Elders' Committee, *Gina Kerzman*

Gina reported on the status of the *Elders in the 21st Century* book project, and indicated that she, Tanya and Melissa met to review the project goals and to strategize a course of action to get things accomplished. Tanya sent an email to all members requesting for volunteers to help with the book project. Primarily, there is a need to help with transcribing information, research and interviewing the Elders.

2. Awards Committee.

Ciro commented that he had received the basket and appreciated it very much; however, he has yet to receive the write-up for the award. Gina reported that she thought she had sent the information to Steve for a public service announcement. Ciro said he had gotten an email asking for an address. Melissa stated that she had gathered the addresses and POC information and provided this to Steve, but he is working to complete this.

3. Cookbook Committee, *Melissa Sturdivant*

Melissa indicated that there is nothing to report at this time.

4. Scholarship Committee, *Carol Crouch*

Carol reported that Melissa had created a fillable form for the scholarship. Carol also indicated that she will be working with the committee to get this information together in order to disseminate later this year. They will also be discussing procedures for receiving applications from graduating high school seniors.

m. New business:

No new business.

n. Review of Action Items from current meeting:

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4. **ACTION ITEM:** Gina and Steve will meet to discuss the effort to build and further develop the Communications Committee. *Melissa reported that Steve is working on this, and Gina added that they are setting up a meeting.*
5. **ACTION ITEM:** Melissa will make sure the notice regarding Sarah Bridges is distributed.
6. **ACTION ITEM:** Melissa will forward to the National Council a copy of the latest Bylaws.
7. **ACTION ITEM:** Cameron will forward a member listing to each Regional Representative and the National Council.

o. Closing thoughts & comments. None.

p. Adjourn – Carol extended her appreciation to those members and committee chairs attending, and with no further business, Carol adjourned the Council meeting at 3:05 pm, Central.

2 attachments

- A. 2015 Action Item Registry
- B. National Council 4 6 15 Meeting Agenda

Minutes respectfully submitted by Melissa Sturdivant, AIANEA National Council Secretary. Please respond to melissa.sturdivant@tx.usda.gov with comments or corrections.



2015 AIANEA National Council *ACTION ITEM* Registry

Date: April 20, 2015

Respect, Harmony and Beauty

Date Initiated	Action Item Description	Person(s) Responsible	Disposition Date	Reference Document
ACTION ITEMS – PENDING				
4/6/2015	Melissa will make sure the notice regarding Sarah Bridges is distributed.	M. Sturdivant & Y. Dulle		
4/6/2015	Melissa will forward to the National Council a copy of the latest Bylaws.	M. Sturdivant		
4/6/2015	Cameron will forward a member listing to each Regional Representative and the National Council.	C. Clark		
3/2/2015	Gina and Steve will meet to discuss the effort to build and further develop the Communications Committee.	S. Durgin & G. Kerzman		
3/2/2015	Steve will visit with Carol about the Bylaws review process and review what is needed to be accomplished by the Committee. <i>Melissa reported that Steve had indicated that he is working to schedule a meeting with Carol. While in Oklahoma on his travel, he hopes to meet with Carol and review what needs to be done. Carol added that she hopes to meet with Steve tomorrow and get the committee work started.</i>	S. Durgin & C. Crouch		
2/3/2015	Steve and Melissa will research the process to determine the course of action needed to fill the East Region RTCAC position upon the retirement of John McCoy later in the year (Oct 15). 3.2.15– <i>Steve reported that the Bulletin provides the guidance for this process, and also that the same process which was just completed for filling of the West Region RTCAC position and Alternate will be conducted for those positions that are coming vacant this year. This item needs to be looked at to determine the status is the Central Region RTCAC representation and filling of the East Region position.</i> CARRIED FORWARD FROM 2014 REGISTRY	S. Durgin & M. Sturdivant		
1/20/2015	<i>Steve and Melissa will work to get award notifications distributed to award recipients and supervisors.</i> 2.3.15– <i>Melissa reported that she gathered the contact information and addresses and forwarded this to Steve.</i> 3.2.15– <i>Steve reported that he is still working on this.</i> CARRIED FORWARD FROM 2014 REGISTRY	S. Durgin & M. Sturdivant		



2015 AIANEA National Council ***ACTION ITEM*** Registry

Respect, Harmony and Beauty

Date Initiated	Action Item Description	Person(s) Responsible	Disposition Date	Reference Document
ACTION ITEMS – COMPLETED				

REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

- “AIANEA” indicates emails which were forwarded from the AIANEA Membership email account maintained by Y. Dulle.
- “Nat’l Council Mtg Minutes” for the respective month when disposition was reported/recorded.

Initials indicate the principal individual.

- GK – Gina Kerzman
- CC – Dr. Carol Crouch
- SD – Steve Durgin
- SD1 – Samantha Dinger
- TM/TMD – Tanya Meyer- Dideriksen
- YD – Yvette Dulle
- GS – Garry Stephens
- MS – Melissa Sturdivant
- HW – Herb Webb

For information regarding the registry and/or its content, contact Melissa Sturdivant, AIANEA Secretary, at melissa.sturdivant@tx.usda.gov.



AIANEA National Council Teleconference

Monday, April 6, 2015

12:00 pm Pacific, 1:00 pm Mountain, 2:00 pm Central, 3:00 pm Eastern

This meeting will take place by teleconference.

Call-in number: 888-844-9904

Passcode: 5203411

April 6, 2015			
Time (PST)	Duration	Topic	Presenter
12:00	10 min	Welcome and Introductions -Review agenda and ask for new agenda items	Steve Durgin
12:10	10 min	Review action items from previous minutes	Melissa Sturdivant & Council
12:20	5 min	Review/Approval of March Meeting Minutes	Melissa Sturdivant & Council
12:25	5 min	Treasurer's Report	Pam Crow & Bill Parrish
12:30	10 min	President's update: - employee survey	Steve Durgin
12:40	10 min	National AI/AN SEPM Report	Deborah Clairmont
12:50	10 min	Regional Representative Reports	Regional Reps
1:00	10 min	National Tribal Liaison Report	Barry Hamilton

1:10	10 min	Committee updates - Elders Committee - Awards Committee - Ad Hoc - Cookbook Committee - Ad Hoc - AIAN Contact Database Committee	Committee Chairs
1:20	10 min	New Business	Steve Durgin
1:30	10 min	New agenda items	All
1:40	10 min	Review of Action Items from current meeting	All
1:50	10 min	Closing thoughts and comments	All
2:00		Adjourn	

Additional items: