**Meeting Minutes**

**Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission (INAIAC)**

June 17, 2020, 1:00

Video/Teleconference call

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Call to Order: 1:05 PM – Vice Chair, Sally Tuttle

Invocation:

Roll Call: Director Lisa Welch

Voting Members Present:

Felica Ahasteen Bryant, Antoniette Holt, Anthony Jones, Gabrielle Koenig, David Liebel, Pete Magnant, Dorene Red Cloud, Sean Tierney, Vice Chair Sally Tuttle, J. Matthew Walsh

Voting Members Regrets:

Secretary Paul Strack (Secretary Strack experience technical issues which prevented him from joining the virtual meeting space).

Voting Members Absent:

John Adams, Cam Clarke

Non-Voting Members Present:

Senator Greg Walker

Non-Voting Members Absent:

Representative Daniel Leonard

Guests: Debra Haza

A quorum was declared with ten (10) voting members present via video/teleconference in accordance with Executive Order 20-09 issued by Governor Eric J. Holcomb.

**Old Business**

1. **Approval of Agenda,** Motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda for the 6/17/20 meeting. Agenda were unanimously approved via roll call vote.
2. **Approval of Minutes,** Request for corrections for the 4/15/20 meeting. No corrections were submitted. Minutes were unanimously approved via roll call vote.
3. **Approval of Financial Reports,** Motion was made and seconded to approve commission financial reports for April 2020. Reports were unanimously approved via roll call vote.
4. **Director’s Report,** Director Lisa Welch submitted the director’s report, updating the commission on changes happening due to the coronavirus pandemic and the status of ongoing initiatives, including planning for Native American Heritage Month in November, and the CAIRNS Grant program.
5. **New Castle Correctional Facilities,** Chair Scott Brewer was unable to attend the day’s meeting, so this item will be moved to the next meeting’s agenda.
6. **Annual Report,** Requests for feedback were given on the annual report. General feedback included questions about listing student scholarship recipients and adding schools. Commissioner Ahasteen Bryant and Vice Chair Tuttle asked to include a release on the scholarship application and Director Welch would follow up with ICRC Deputy Director on the requested inclusions.

**New Business**

1. **Education Subcommittee,** Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant shared that the education subcommittee reviewed the applications for the summer semester and one application for the fall semester. The applications were all recommended for approval by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded to approve the applications. The motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.
2. **Scholarship Application,** Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant shared that the application deadline needed to be moved from August 15 to July 15. Director Welch will meet with students once per semester, either in person, but considering current circumstances these meetings could take place by phone or virtually. A motion was made and seconded to approve the change in deadline and the scholarship applications. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Additional discussion took place around an additional conference call at the end of July to vote on the scholarship applications.
3. **COVID-19 Response,** Vice Chair Tuttle provided background information which led to the creation of the Coronavirus American Indian Response Network Support CAIRNS) grant program. Director Welch explained the rationale behind the plan with regard to financial feasibility, justification and need, and what organizations would be eligible for funding. Vice Chair asked who the approving bodies would be, Director Welch explained they would be the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA), the State Budget Authority (SBA), and the Office of the Attorney General (IAG). Commissioner Holt asked if the Civil Rights Commission could offer support, and Director Welch indicated that this was a possibility.Vice Chair Tuttle asked if Senator Walker could offer support, and Director Welch added that the Senator Walker has given a letter of support. Senator Walker explained that the State’s concern with the license plate funds and accountability which is why these requirements are needed. Sen. Walker added that there isn’t anything indicated by this initiative that would create an issue, and that he would inquire of the Governor’s office if there can be additional support for expediting this initiative. Because the funds are non-reverting funds, Senator Walker would ask for that support. Vice Chair Tuttle was concerned that the crisis may be abating and the INAIAC did not have a program in place. Senator Walker offered that it was probable that the need and the opportunity to offer assistance would extend into the next year, to which Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant agreed. Commissioner Walsh offered that the IDOE could be of support in the office of Social Emotional Learning. Director Welch explained that the issues of health and mental health care were a priority before the pandemic and this would be a good place of intersection. Vice Chair Tuttle called for a motion to approve the program. Motion was made and seconded, and unanimously approved via roll call vote.

**Discussion**

1. **Minority Health Disparities Task Force,** Commissioner Antoniette Holt gave an update on the task force as a response to the pandemic at the request of the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus. The task force is charged with creating a report on how to improve the COVID-19 response for minority groups, as well as those who are currently incarcerated or in the juvenile justice system. The report will be due at the end of June. Commissioner Holt explained that the partners came together to fulfill this request with inclusion in mind, and that Commissioner Strack, Vice Chair Tuttle, and Director Welch were participating in groups addressing the needs of specific vulnerable populations which include uninsured/underinsured, immigrant, migrant, and undocumented groups. After the report is submitted, the task force is expected to continue work. Vice Chair Tuttle explained the subgroup participation with Commissioners sitting in on those workgroups. Director Welch updated the Commission on her participation in the communication and front line worker groups, and how better to share information with a better focus on representation and inclusion, clarifying information regarding contact tracing, technology access, and overcoming barriers. Commissioner Walsh asked about the inclusion of LGBTQ+ and homeless populations, and Commissioner Holt said that those groups were being considered in the discussions in the subgroups. Vice Chair Tuttle added that other groups were also included such as the Burmese population.
2. **Native American Heritage Month,** Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant offered an up date on the discussions regarding November events for Native American Heritage Month. In light of current circumstances, it was not recommended that the events taking place with students at the Indiana State Museum move forward. The event hosting Joy Harjo in partnership with the Eiteljorg Museum that was scheduled for September 2020, has been moved to September 2021. The Veterans celebration in West Lafayette was well received in 2019, but there needed to be a discussion as to how to safely celebrate Veterans. Discussion around specific programs is underway, and bringing in speakers for a virtual space, in live events or online town hall forums. Commissioner Red Cloud offered the idea of town halls on Heritage Month and its history, and the need for ideas on platforms and partners. Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant asked for the programs happening at the Eiteljorg. Commissioner Red Cloud said the artists in residence would normally go into schools to present, but that was a possibility for a virtual event. Vice Chair Tuttle asked about inviting a Tribal Chief for a forum, or designers, to answer questions, and educators would be able to participate with their students as well as the public. Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant suggested the Woodland Sky Dance Company, and the need for culturally competent content for education. Commissioner Walsh brought up the issue of well-intentioned but lacking some activities around education about Native Americans, and perhaps this was an opportunity to bring teachers together and have a facilitated discussion about lessons that are informative and culturally sensitive. Commissioner Red Cloud added that because lessons may likely continue online, there was an opportunity to provide resources for educators, who often inquire about them at the Eiteljorg. Commissioner Ahasteen Bryant mentioned using IDOE’s civil rights and ethnic education resource page as a tool to promote, and expressed interest in holding a session with educators, as well as working with partners at Purdue about scholarship students talking about Halloween stereotypes as potential programs.

**Public Comment:** Debra Haza expressed support for Senator Walker and her frustration that the process to access the grant funding was lengthy, as well as support for funds for gift cards. She suggested the Commission produce a PSA for COVID prevention (hand-washing, masks) and support for moving to virtual programs for students. Diane Hunter offered comment supporting online events and suggested bringing in Tribal representatives to participate. Vice Chair Tuttle suggested she collaborate with the events subcommittee to give input.

**Announcements:** Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant updated that the education subcommittee suggested a research project targeting Indiana educators to better understand how to provide educational resources, and that she could present more about that at the next commission meeting. Director Welch mentioned opportunities for online events which would address Ms. Haza’s concern. Ms. Haza added that there could also be an effort to encourage Native Americans to access their local health departments. Commissioner Ahasteen-Bryant discussed the need to develop a land acknowledgment. Director Welch announced congratulations to Vice Chair Tuttle on the upcoming marriage of her grand daughter.

**Adjournment –** Motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm