

**SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 10, 2015**

**Attendance:**

<b>Tribal Council</b>	<b>Dave Lopeman</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
	<b>Arnold Cooper</b>	<b>Vice Chairman</b>
	<b>Vicki Kruger</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
	<b>Charlene Krise</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
	<b>Whitney Jones</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Council Member</b>
	<b>Jim Peters</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Council Member</b>
	<b>Vince Henry, Sr.</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Council Member</b>
<b>Legal Counsel</b>	<b>Kevin Lyon</b>	
<b>Tribal Administrator</b>	<b>Don Whitener</b>	
<b>Intergovernmental Liaison</b>	<b>Ray Peters</b>	
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<b>Melissa Puhn</b>	

Charlene Krise offered the opening prayer. Dave Lopeman called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Vince Henry moved to approve the Council Agenda. Arnold Cooper seconded the motion. The motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Vince moved to approve the August 13, 2015, August 20, 2015, August 27, 2015 and September 3, 2015 phone poll minutes as amended by Legal. Arnold seconded the motion. The motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

**TRAVEL REPORTS AND PLANS**

Don shared that he will be at WIGA in Sequim tomorrow.

**September 14-15: NAFOA**, Boston, MA. Whitney and Ray will attend.

**September 14-17: ATNI Fall Conference**, Kalispel. Arnold and Charlene will attend.

**September 16-17: Southeast Environmental Conference**, Juneau. Jim will be presenting.

**September 19: Water Sounds Native Art Auction**, MLRC.

**September 20: TESC Longhouse Art Dedication**, Charlene explained that this is their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

**September 23: Squaxin Island Tribe Labor and Employment Code Meeting** Don shared that the committee has been meeting with Legal for the last year. They have contracted with an attorney to assist, who will be here on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to meet with the Committee and any Council Members interested.

**September 25: WSDNR Tribal Summit**, Lummi. Arnold and Jim will attend.

**October 2-4: NW Native American Basketweavers Conference**, Warm Springs, OR.

**October 14: Centennial Accord**, Tacoma

**October 18-23: NCAI**, San Diego. Vicki, Charlene, Whitney, Jim and Ray will attend.

## SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

### CHAIRMANS UPDATE

**Basketweavers Conference drawing:** Tribal Council previously agreed to sponsor fifteen tribal members to attend the upcoming conference. More than fifteen signed up so a lottery drawing will be done, followed by a waiting list as cancellations come up. The names were drawn as follows:

1. BJ Peters
2. Wicket McFarlane
3. Steven Dorland
4. Misti Saenz-Garcia
5. Donna Baker
6. Julie Owens
7. Bianca Saenz-Garcia
8. Sally Brownfield
9. Joanne Decicio
10. Nora Coxwell
11. Lila Jacobs
12. Debbi Obi
13. JeNene Miller
14. Jonie Fox
15. Greg Lehman

#### Waiting List

16. Terri Capoeman
17. Gloria Hill
18. Paula Henry
19. Marissa Morken
20. Ila Ball
21. Emma Jean Valle
22. Alex Cooper Lewis
23. Niki Ho
24. Patti Puhn
25. Julie Goodwin
26. Tamika Green

### GUEST SPEAKER

Angela Jayo of Green America was present to present her company: Elevate. They have been licensed in the marijuana industry since September 2014. She shared a presentation explaining her company and what products they provide.

Also present was Cameron Goodwin, Richard Sweeney, Dave Johns and Nate Schriener.

### TRIBAL ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

**All Staff Appreciation Dinner:** Patti Puhn shared that HR has hosted, on behalf of Council, the Annual Employee Appreciation Dinner since 2004. She is proposing September 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. Council sponsors the meal and HR sponsors the gifts as well as arranges for door prizes.

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Charlene Krise shared that she wanted to thank Patti for her generous donation to the MLRC Annual Art Auction. She donated a beautiful cedar woven hat and a woven bottle.

**Tuition Assistance:** Gordon James was present. Charlene shared how a tribal member requested some time ago for a tuition increase. Gordon asked if the issue is the length of eligibility or the amount received per quarter/semester. Gordon handed out the information on scholarships and the amounts provided. He explained how the amount is structured for different amounts based on two or four year colleges and semester or quarter systems. The amount provided is designed to cover tuition, books and fees. Earlier in the year, TLC reached out to students to see how many students are still paying out of pocket. It was found that most students are still paying from \$250 - \$800 per semester for required fees. The Education Commission will be discussing those students who are attending a two year college and still not receiving enough funding.

Charlene added that she hopes the Education Commission has enough funds to accommodate all of the costs. She also would like them to consider gas stipends for students as well. Jim added that funds for FY16 are already determined, but likes that idea. He also added that lab fees can really add up and it's not an equal cost for everyone. Jim is supportive of paying for all of the requirements, but there will need to be a difference with each level of education.

Jeremiah George was present. He was invited to attend the upcoming Education Commission Meeting tomorrow at 2:00.

Gordon stated that currently their funding is set up to pay for fifteen quarters or ten semesters regardless of if the student is attending full time or part time. If someone is attending school part time, they are at a disadvantage since it will take them more quarters to finish their degree.

Charlene would like to see those who cannot attend full time, still be encouraged to finish.

Jim asked about students who receive other financial aids since there are grants and scholarships out there that is not tied to tuition. He asked if staff assist students in finding other money. Gordon said that yes, they encourage students to apply for other resources and they are aware that some are receiving additional scholarships. Mandy Valley is available to assist. Currently they are working on a comprehensive listing online of available scholarships.

Jeremiah thanked Council for the opportunity to even have financial resources for higher education. He believes that it's operating off an old system though and wondered if the dollar amount matches the increase in tuition costs. He also thinks that as the tribe and the tribes resources grow, the amount available should also grow, especially since the student base has grown. He would like to see an additional staff person added to TLC to help Mandy with the higher education students. It's a lot of work for one person to track and handle. This additional staff member could help track grants, scholarships, enrollments, books, etc.

Jeremiah also stated that he is a full time employee and a parent which only allows him to be a part time student. He will fall short of tuition assistance since he will not complete his degree in the required fifteen quarters. He also asked about the Education Commission paying for classes that are required for some students before they take college level classes (e.g. pre-101 level courses). These preliminary classes are required for some students before they are eligible for college level courses. He thanked Council for the funding and thanked Gordon and his department for the work they do for students. He would like to see a Higher Education Liaison position added.

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Don added that there is now a scholarship for graduate students.

Vicki added that she is always trying to recruit tribal members into tribal jobs. She asked Gordon if she can get a list of tribal graduates and what degree they have. She would like to reach out to those tribal members and work on recruiting them for jobs at Squaxin, especially if there are jobs held by employees who plan to retire in the next few years. Gordon will put a list together of the information he has.

Vicki asked about the time period between Summer Rec and school starting. She knows that many TLC staff take much deserved annual leave between that time, leaving the department deserted of staff. She doesn't like seeing activities stopping. Gordon stated that their current practice is to have a primary and backup person in place at all times. They cross train adequately so they can cover when someone is gone.

### **LITTLE CREEK CASINO**

Mark West and Sean Sadeghi were present. Sean provided the financial update for the period ending August 2015.

Vicki asked about salary equity across the board and making sure there is equal pay regardless of who the person is. Salary range with positions and a cap, regardless of history and tribal affiliation. Mark stated that currently there is no salary cap, which is one thing he has been lobbying for. He will keep Council posted.

Sean continued with the report and shared their operating expenses are down and the EBITDA is up.

Mark asked for approval to move forward with the IGT Advantage Contract, which includes a limited waiver of sovereign immunity. Council approved. Mark will work with Legal. He also will be working on quotes for new machines with a company called Blueberry.

Arnold asked about replacing the rug in Island Grille. Mark stated they will be working on that this fall. He will be meeting with a professional to look at the HVAC system to see about changing the air flow into the hotel to help with the smell of smoke. Otherwise they will look at installing doors between the hotel and the casino floor. Their most common complaint is the smell of smoke in the hotel.

Charlene appreciated the financial report, but she asked if he can provide a report with more detail. She also would like to know how the Seafood Bar is doing and if it will be expanded out. She would like to see more Squaxin products served there including traditional (seasonal) foods. Sean stated that he will provide a more detailed report at the next Council Meeting.

### **ISLAND ENTERPRISES**

Travis Nabahe, Dave Johns, Richard Sweeney and Cameron Goodwin were present.

Travis thanked Council for the opportunity to join Squaxin Island Enterprises. He is looking forward to working here.

Travis shared that he will continue following the same process as before in regards to reporting.

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Richard is handed out the financial report and reported on the month of August. Fuel sales, in-store sales, tax revenue, aquaculture and KTP fuel sales are doing really well.

Dave Johns gave an update on the new retail construction. They are doing the interior finish work and currently sorting out the applicants. They will be doing interviews next week.

Dave gave a fish report. There are a lot of small Coho, but that's about it. The Chinook season was small.

Dave reported on the Skookum Shellfish property which is still for sale. Taylors put in an offer. He is still watching the property.

Travis reported that the management team gave him an update on the westside station, which he gave a brief update on.

Dave shared that geoduck is going well. He will be offering a tour tomorrow for anyone wanting to go. Meeting at 10am at the Collier Dock.

Cameron gave a quick Skookum Creek Tobacco report. They did well this month. Machines are running and employees are busy. They met last week with the FDA. Cameron gave them a tour and he feels confident that all went well. They will provide a report within 90 days.

Cameron brought up the "additive free" labeling that came up at the last meeting. He stated that SCT volunteered to remove the slogan and will present that cost to Council once he knows it.

Cameron gave a carton sales report and the profit / loss statement.

Cameron reported they are looking to hire someone for their marketing and have gone out to non-tribal applicants. No tribal applicant qualified. Jenni is scheduling interviews for three candidates.

The Chairman brought up a shellfish donation request from Skokomish. Council agreed to donate.

### TRIBAL LIAISON UPDATE

**Elann Update:** Ray thanked Council for asking Don to get him, Cameron, Dave, Richard Travis and Deb together. Ray shared that as the group read through the proposal model and discussed the newness of the business and the fact that its expertise and experience driven. It was determined that there is a high risk in getting in to this at an early stage. The proposal will allow an evaluation of the business to get involved later on. One of the concerns of the group was does the tribe have \$5 million to potentially lose? IEI could evaluate this later on down the road.

Vicki asked about a lower amount, such as a \$1 million investment. Ray stated that they did, and the real factor was the expertise and the lack of. Travis shared that they discussed a lower amount, there would be a minority position with that small of an investment. There also would be no active approval in what's being invested. The door is not closed, it's still something that can be looked at down the road.

The Chairman asked Nate to draft a letter to Elann saying "thanks but maybe later." Dave Johns offered to host Elann so they can get more insight on questions that were not addressed in his proposal. Keep the door open. Council asked Don to send him an email.

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Whitney would like to see David come in again and meet with this same group, including Travis. She and Vicki are both interested in this. Ray and Travis will both call David Burnett (Elann Group) and schedule a follow up meeting (*This meeting was scheduled for Friday, September 11*).

### FINANCE DEPARTMENT

**FY 2016 Draft budget presentation:** Deb Stoehr presented the FY16 budget and explained the factors that make the budget tighter and tighter each year. Deb will prepare the final budget and resolution for the next meeting. Council approved the draft budget to continue moving forward.

Council would like to discuss the NAHASDA Houses with Deb at the next Council meeting.

Deb stated that she was able to listen to a webinar today regarding Tribal Council pay. She sees no reason why Council cannot participate on the tribe's retirement plan. She knows that since all of Council is 50% tax exempt, so they would follow the same rules as other tax exempt employees. If Council wishes to participate in the retirement plan, October 1 is a good time to start. Yes, Council would like to participate.

### TRIBAL LIAISON UPDATE

**McDonald Land Trust Update:** Ray shared that he still is in the process and he and Kevin are meeting weekly. Next week Kevin will reach out to McDonald pending Council direction. Ray has an email that outlines the cost for the appraisal which will cost from \$16,000 - \$22,000. He added that he will receive the appraisal mid-December. Vicki asked him how the tribe would be able to afford this property. Ray stated that the tribe is in a purchase sale agreement with delivery dates. The point of no return is December 31. At that time Council will need to decide if they want to move forward or walk away. In regards for a strategy for payment the plan is to recoup some of the costs with timber sales from harvesting some of the timber on the properties as well as getting a loan or using some of the permanent trust monies. Unless directed otherwise, he will continue engaging in this proposal.

**Centennial Accord Hosting:** Ray shared that the Centennial Accord was going to be held in Tacoma this year. There will be a WIGA Meeting held at LCCR the day before Centennial Accord, so they have asked if Centennial Accord could also be held at LCCR since many of the attendees will already be here. Council approved, pending availability of the space. Ray stated that the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs will cover the cost of the space and in the past, WIGA has donated the dinner and other tribes also donate food. There will be some cost to hosting, but the benefit will be having the tribal leaders on property. Ray will coordinate and work with the Casino.

Vicki asked if the tribe could pull the drummers together. Ray stated that yes, they will be included on the agenda.

**2016 Canoe Journey:** Ray stated that Steve Hall has contacted him seeking the tribe's position with allowing Nisqually to land at the Port of Olympia. Dave reminded Council that the allowing Nisqually to land at the Port, which is Squaxin area, was a handshake agreement. He doesn't want to go back on our word. He wants Squaxin to show how they can stick to their word. Council will still allow Nisqually to land in Olympia. Kevin has drafted a letter to Nisqually and a separate letter to the Port of Olympia.

### LEGAL

Kevin provided a settlement report which was a good result.

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Kevin presented the State of Washington hunting proposal for co-managing. The Medicine Creek Tribes were in negotiation with the State of Washington. Kevin was seeking approval for the co-management agreement, which matches the agreement that Treaty of Point Elliot got approved. This agreement requires a written agreement from private land owners, allowing for tribal hunting on their property. Kevin stated that his direction was to get this in place before hunting started. In order to do that, Council will need to agree to this agreement, then Kevin will work with Green Diamond tomorrow. The alternative is to reject the agreement, but then tribal hunters will be subject to state prosecution for trespassing on private lands. He stated that if Council agrees to sign, it can still be withdrawn by Council at any time and can negotiate different terms. Arnold added that Council should agree to sign just to protect the tribal hunters. Kevin added that once Council agrees to sign, he still will need to get the private property owners agreement; both parts are needed, agreement with the state and an agreement with the landowner. Council discussed their options. Arnold added that he is not supportive if the agreement, but is willing to sign it as long as it doesn't hurt the hunting case at all; he would just like to get the hunters out there safely. Arnold moved to sign the agreement under duress. Jim seconded the motion. The motion passed all in favor with opposition from Chairman Lopeman.

Kevin will prepare a letter to the State.

Charlene asked about the tribe's emergency preparedness plan. She hopes the tribe is prepared for natural disasters and would like to see the community trained more. Don stated that Kris has an action plan and will give a report at the next Council Meeting.

Council went into executive session with Legal and adjourned after.

### **Action Items:**

1. List of graduates and their degree, Gordon James (page 4)
2. NAHASDA Discussion at next Council with Deb and Rich (page 6)
3. Council to participate in tribe's 401k retirement program (page 6)
4. Centennial Accord planning, Ray Peters (page 6)
5. Green Diamond Hunting agreement, Kevin Lyon (page 7)