

**SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – Collier House
April 30, 2020**

Attendance:

Tribal Council	Arnold Cooper	Chairman
	Charlene Krise	Vice Chair
	Vicki Kruger	Treasurer
	Jeremie Walls	Secretary
	Bev Hawks	1st Council Member
	David Whitener, Jr.	2nd Council Member
	Vince Henry, Sr.	3rd Council Member
Tribal Administrator	Marvin Campbell	
Operations Director	Erika Thale	
Recording Secretary	Melissa Puhn	

Arnold shared his appreciation to Marvin and his staff for all the work that has been done to ensure the Community stays safe and cared for.

Marvin shared that he is glad to have the support that Council has provided and allowed him, John Taylor and the Clinic staff to move forward with necessary tasks. Marvin shared how he sent out an email earlier this week to all staff explaining what is going on regarding the tribal budget and decisions that have been made. He had staff inquiring which told him that they were not being informed, so he felt the all staff email was necessary. He appreciated Council for setting an example by taking a pay cut in their salary; followed by Directors of tribal government as well as Island Enterprises and the Casino.

Elections: Marvin shared that Kevin Lyon is working on elections and will be providing him with an outline of what the tribe can and cannot do. He will then share that information with the Elections Committee to get their recommendation on how to proceed with elections this year. Marvin reached out to James Mills regarding the laws of election procedures. His suggestion was that this is a pandemic, therefore get what needs to be done, done in whatever way possible. The pandemic removes some constraints of the constitution such as the timeline and in-person versus mail in ballots. Marvin will present that information along with Kevin's suggestions, to the committee. Marvin believes elections can still take place in the Event Center, and only allow voting members. It would be elections only and no reports or presentations. Marvin will get the information to the elections committee and have them make a recommendation.

Health Insurance: Erika shared an analysis of the benefits provided to employees. There are two different options moving forward: one option is to offer the Kaiser HMO Plan (instead of the current PPO Plan which costs \$866.99 per member per month). The HMO Plan would allow use of Kaiser Facilities only, and out of network providers would be charged the out of network cost. This option is \$734.91 per member per month. The other option is to offer a self-insured plan (this option is \$673.00 per member per month). Moving to a self-insured plan would be a large estimated annual savings to the Tribe of, possibly \$800k in premiums if our employment numbers increase again. That savings will increase as more people move to the self-insured plan. The tribe has the opportunity to offer Medicare-like rates to medical costs for tribal member employees.

Given the pandemic, the tribe has the flexibility to change insurance plans mid-year. The initial idea is to transfer all tribal member employees to the self-insured plan immediately; and allow the non-tribal member employees remain with Kaiser HMO Plan until the end of this year. The thought is, since Medicare rates apply to tribal member employees those savings will be immediate and most tribal members utilize the Squaxin Clinic. Therefore, they may not see any changes in their care. Non-tribal member employees, will still use the Kaiser Facilities. They would have until the end of the year to change their providers with a transition of care plan as the plan would. Then by January 2021, all employees would be in the self-insured plan. The other tribal businesses would follow suit. The medical plans are compared apples to apples, meaning same deductible, and other health offerings. By offering more options this one will

Jeremie Walls moved to approve Erika's recommendation. Bev Hawks seconded the motion. David asked about dependents and if the employee costs would increase. Erika stated they will look at that in December, but is hoping to lower the dependent cost to employees due to the amount saved. The motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

Summer youth programs: Marvin shared that the Summer Youth and Stepping Stones Programs last year cost \$220k out of tribal funds. He has started looking into that program for this year to see what would be realistic to offer, which might include hiring Squaxin members only. As far as Summer Rec, he feels that program will be especially important to maintain this year. He is still looking into options and wanted Council to know that a decision will have to be made soon.

TERO: Marvin shared that there are aspects of the new ordinance created that are working well. If the tribe is to move forward with the plan that was voted on, a TERO Officer will need to be hired. Marvin shared that he feels that would be expensive and tough right now,

since many employees were recently furloughed. He asked Council if they are willing to forgo the TERO officer for now, and work off the ordinance.

Jeremie stated that he would like to get all committees and commissions up to date once everyone is back to work. Jeremie shared his support of Marvin's recommendation.

Charlene brought up the struggle that lays ahead and the economic pandemic that is about to begin. She would like the tribe to be lean and streamlined by doing a lot with little. She would like to see frugal and smart decisions made.

Bev shared her appreciation for all the hard work she has seen and reiterated the importance of cross training staff. She feels that staff will need to start wearing multiple hats with the cutback that have been and need to be made.

Jeremie moved to approve the recommendation to leave the TERO Ordinance the way it is for now. As the tribe moves forward it will be re-evaluated. Marvin will continue overseeing the program. Vince seconded the motion. The motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

Fireworks Season: Marvin would like to see a fireworks safety plan. He shared that the Fireworks Committee met, and their recommendation is to continue with the fireworks sales. Council discussed the risks of allowing fireworks sales to happen this year with the current state of the economy as well as the unseasonably dry weather. However, Council also discussed whether or not that was a decision they should make right now. After much debate and discussion, Vicki moved to suspend the sales of fireworks this year due to the pandemic, economy and fire danger. Bev seconded the motion. Bev asked about putting on a fireworks show on the ballfield for the community. Arnold added they could host a BBQ, etc. After much discussion, the motion carried four (4) in favor and two (2) against. ***This vote was later rescinded by a vote of five (5) in favor to allow the stand owners to make their own decision on whether they sell fireworks this year, instead of Council banning it for them.*

Council Chambers: Marvin shared that Public Safety has received a grant to upgrade the Audio Visual (AV) equipment in Council Chamber, for court. Before much work is started, Marvin wanted to ensure that the setup worked well for both court and Council, therefore seeking Council's thoughts. The new setup will allow for recorded meetings and will include microphones and soundboards for the walls to help fix the acoustics. Council stated that as long as the AV works for both Council Meetings and Court, they are fine with it.

Reopen and recovery of tribal government: Marvin reported that on the reservation, he would like the government to reopen slowly. The opening will be based on the Casino

reopening. Tribal staff with a compromised immune system and elderly will be the last to return. He will require facemasks in the buildings. Two weeks after the government offices open, he would like to start allowing residents to gather with others outside of their household. He will ask staff to refrain from traveling to King County. If everything continues to improve, after about a month he would like to reopen the reservation to non-residence.

There are certain funds that discontinue once the EOC is deactivated. Marvin would like the EOC to remain enacted since Squaxin will remain in a “response state” instead of recovery. “Recovery” means the “event” is over; the pandemic will be a threat for a long time, and will be far from over any time soon. The EOC will remain in an “extended response and continued recovery” state. Marvin will be part of a phone conference on Monday to discuss filing the paperwork with FEMA.

Marvin shared that Mason County is already discussing recovering and deactivating their EOC. Marvin added that the tribe will be using FEMA funds to prepare for a second wave and buying needed supplies to prepare for that.

Vicki asked about tribal members having the opportunity to buy supplies through KTP. Marvin stated that IEI is already looking into that; using their distributors then selling the items back to the community for a small cost.

Charlene asked about tribal treaty harvesters and looking into disaster relief opportunities for them, since they are considered their own businesses. She knows some of them have applied through the IRS. Charlene would like to make sure this time, that if there are disaster relief funds, those funds go to the harvesters. Ray stated that they included all fisheries in the disaster relief package that was submitted to NOAA.

Sick Leave: Marvin provided an update on the sick leave benefit. He did some research asking a third party what is allowed legally, in regards to the tribes obligation to excessive sick leave accrual. The feedback he was given was that those who have accumulated sick leave, be grandfathered in with whatever they have saved, since the Tribe is financially liable for the previous policy. Then, moving forward, the new policy would be followed. Those with excessive sick leave would have the option to cash it out at a ratio of 4:1. The preference for now is to leave the sick leave on the books, and not cash out now. He has been researching PTO (Paid Time Off) instead of offering sick leave and annual leave. He also added that when the pandemic is over, there will be an automatic timekeeping system.

Charlene shared her concern of a disparity between departments with accumulating and spending leave. Vicki added that she would like to see a cap on hours, and would like to discourage from cashing people out.

He would like to see all entities have the same leave policy. He will work with Deb on the policy and a recommendation.

Council asked Marvin to continue to look into the automated timekeeping system and report at his earliest convenience cost and where the funding would initially come from. Also, they asked him to further look into the audit committee and the feasibility of one HR Department for all the entities.

Marvin shared that NR is looking to get a regulation out to allow hunting.

Council approved the following resolutions:

Resolution #20-13 authorizes the Pacific Salmon Treaty grant submission for FY20

Resolution #20-14 authorizes a limited waiver of sovereign immunity on a contract with the City of Shelton wastewater.

The following resolutions were approved for the Paycheck Protection Program for Skookum Creek Tobacco, Island Enterprises, KTP and the Museum.

Resolution #20-15, Resolution #20-16, Resolution #20-17, Resolution #20-18.