

**SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL  
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES  
February 10, 2021**

**Attendance:**

<b>Tribal Council</b>	<b>Kristopher Peters</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
	<b>Charlene Krise</b>	<b>Vice Chair</b>
	<b>Vicki Kruger</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
	<b>Jeremie Walls</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
	<b>Andy Whitener</b>	<b>1st Council Member</b>
	<b>David Whitener, Jr.</b>	<b>2nd Council Member</b> ( <i>absent</i> )
	<b>Vince Henry, Sr.</b>	<b>3rd Council Member</b>
<b>Tribal Administrator</b>	<b>Marvin Campbell</b>	
<b>Operations Director</b>	<b>Erika Thale</b>	
<b>Tribal Liaison</b>	<b>Ray Peters</b>	
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<b>Melissa Puhn</b>	

Kris Peters called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Charlene Krise offered the opening prayer.

Kris and Council started the meeting off with a few words about the late elder, Susan Henry.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

David Whitener would like to discuss broadband. Charlene asked to add the pharmacy and dental under Tribal Administrator. Vicki Kruger moved to approve the February 10th Council Agenda. Jeremie Walls seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Vicki moved to approve the January 28, 2021 Minute. Jeremie seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**TRAVEL REPORTS AND PLANS**

February 18: Council Work Session, Virtual - topics will include Tobacco Board, LCOB and broadband/FCC licensing. Vicki wants to talk about general welfare also. Kris stated that any decisions would be brought back to the next Council Meeting.

**February 21-25:** NCAI Winter Session, Virtual. David will attend.

**February 25:** Council Meeting, Virtual

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

**Percival Landing acknowledgement:** Kris shared the language that the MLRC provided for Council consideration. This plaque will be placed downtown Olympia at Percival Landing as an educational piece for that area. Vince added that he would like to see a concrete canoe added to Percival Landing, near the "kissing couple" just to add to the Squaxin footprint. Ray stated that

## SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

its a phased project, and this acknowledgement will be in the first phase. The verbiage will be as follows:

*The Squaxin Island Tribe's habitation of what is now Olympia spans thousands of years. The ancestral families who lived and thrived here named it Steh-Chass, and occupied prosperous villages along the shores. Archeological findings of ancestral artifacts in the area suggest habitation by Squaxin ancestors since the retreat of the glaciers during the last Ice Age. Today, the Squaxin people continue stewardship of these ancestral lands, from the Deschutes watershed and what is now Budd Inlet. The Steh-Chass (Squaxin) continue to call themselves "People of the Water" because of the bounty of the region's waterways, which have sustained the people for millennia.*

Council thanked Jeremiah for the work on the beautifully written plaque. Council agreed by consensus to move forward with the above, as written.

**Cannabis funds:** Vicki brought up the Tribal Clinic, similar to what Jamestown has. She would like to see the Capital Projects list brought back up again. She also shared that when the tribe started collecting cannabis funds, 1/3 of those funds were slated for higher education. She would like to do something like that, dedicate a set amount of those funds for capital projects and building maintenance. She also shared her concern about the youth and their mental well being. She asked if some of those funds could also be set aside for the HR Summer Youth Program and also to help the homeless. She thinks that the tribe should purchase a portable laundry/ shower facility for the homeless population. Those are her three asks for the cannabis funds.

Kris stated that the budget ordinance outlines a process if there is any shortage in departments. Capital projects is something that needs to go through the budget process. He knows that the cannabis funds are funds that are controlled by Council decisions, however it requires discipline on how and what to spend it on. Kris shared the example of how those funds were used previously to build the parks on the reservation, which was a conscience Council decision. Those funds also have been used to help higher education in the past, but it is not a set cost. Kris would like to look at capital projects and funding; he would like to create a priority list and go through the proper processes.

Jeremie added that the Housing Commission has been discussing the idea of bringing all the tribal houses under the Commission. This will allow a budget to be developed for maintenance. Currently, the Commission only oversees low income housing, and they would like to include all housing.

Charlene added that Council needs to really take a look at how they spend the cannabis funds, and to use the budget ordinance to spend those funds. She would like to see those funds spend enhancing services such as dental and mental health. She would like to see the pharmacy expanded to a better location, allowing for more space and a covered waiting area. She would like a day set aside for Council to discuss finances and take a look at all of the concerns brought up today. Jeremie added that the pharmacy is in the process of being expanded.

Kris stated that this is a broader topic and there is an ordinance in place that needs to be followed. Currently, if there are needs they need to go through the budget ordinance. If

## **SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING**

something does not get funded, then Council reviews the available funds, while working with Finance, to make those decisions. There is a process that needs to be followed before any program is given additional funds.

Vicki would like to talk about this at a work session. She also would like to talk about the portable bath / laundry facility. She reminded them that they have discussed for a long time the need to set funds aside for capital projects. She asked for an answer on the portable facility today. Kris stated that he likes the idea, but wants to see something in writing before a decision is made.

Marvin reminded that the funds Vicki is referring to, is actually earmarked for upgrading the HVAC at the Museum. He also would like to see a policy addressing the homeless issue, before funds get spent.

Vicki also would like to change banks, where the cannabis funds are kept. She does not like the fact that she is the sole signer on the account. She would like to have those funds kept in an account that requires at least two signers. Kris reminded that regardless, it takes a recorded Council decision before Finance allows any funds to be spent out of that account, regardless of who and how many people can sign for it.

Ray added that there may be other options to look at and explained the banking reform in regards to cannabis funds. Something might change down the road, but it might be good to talk with Salal, the current bank. Kris said that is something Council can look at.

## **TRIBAL ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE**

**COVID Update:** Marvin provided an update on the vaccination process. He added that until there is valid supporting data behind the vaccines, the tribe will play safe. He has been meeting with the appropriate staff and managers to come up with a plan to come out of this current phase, and safely resume normal operations, when the time is right.

Vicki asked when employees will get the opportunity to receive vaccinations, including IEI and LCCR. Marvin reported that currently the clinic is vaccinating all tribal members 18 and older; and they are working in zones around the community. They will be receiving 200 more doses on Monday, and have been receiving 100 doses each week. They will be able to begin to start offering vaccines to staff within the next few weeks. He added that if the new Johnson and Johnson vaccine gets approval, the clinic will start receiving that one also, which is a single dose.

Jeremie was impressed with how quickly the tribe has received and administered vaccines and wondered why. Marvin stated that the tribe had a good plan in place, and has a smaller group to focus on (compared to neighboring counties) which makes administering easier. He believes that all elders, 65 and over, who wish to be vaccinated, have been. He applauded the team who has executed this process really well.

There are currently no cases on the reservation.

## **SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING**

Marvin shared that the tiny homes have needed some upgrades, such as better hot water heaters and more insulation. Maintenance has been working on improving the homes to make them livable for the tenants.

Vince asked about vaccines for tribal members under the age of 18. Marvin stated that the Moderna Vaccine is the one that the tribe has been administering, and it is only approved for 18 and older. The Pfizer Vaccine is approved for 16 and older, but the clinic does not have the storage capacity for that one. The vaccines have only been tested on adults, which is why the age limit.

**Community Feedback:** Marvin shared that an email and link has been created for feedback from the community. Marvin, Ray and Kris receive the feedback. So far they have received about 12 submissions which Marvin has been replying to. He includes other staff as necessary, but plans to offer people answers. If the questions are council specific, they will be forwarded. It has been a good tool. If anyone has questions or comments, let him know.

**Arcadia Boat Ramp Update:** Marvin shared that he and Penni have been looking at the ramp location and assessing what needs to be done and what funding source can be used, if needed. If they cannot find funds to address any maintenance issues, he will bring it to Council. Jeremie added that initially the tribe maintained the ramp and parking area for the public use. He would like to see the tribe charge for commercial use, since that is where most of the wear comes from. Kris suggested this would be a good work session topic, to look at the entire area and come up with a plan.

**Pharmacy & Dental:** Marvin reported that the pharmacy is in the process of being renovated. Dental has had a lot of work done to accommodate the safety of patients to continue services. Marvin added that with some notice, he can prepare more of an update at another time.

Charlene thanked him and appreciated how the tribe has been forward with technology and processes. Marvin stated that COVID has forced the issue, but between that and the CARES Act Funds, a lot has progressed.

**Broadband:** David reported that Council had previously approved applying for the FCC license, which is still pending. Part of the licenses are free, however there is a build out requirement for five years, and a benchmark to meet at two years. He added that this will require hiring someone to manage the project. Marvin suggested that this would be a good work session topic.

## **TRIBAL LIAISON UPDATE**

**Fish Hatchery:** Ray provided a brief report on the Deschutes Hatchery, that initially was slated at Pioneer Park. That site does not work and was not advanced to Tumwater since the Department of Ecology would not permit it. There is an alternate site proposed, and Ray will be attending a meeting about it on Friday with the legislature. Jeff Dickison was present and he and Ray discussed the issues around this.

Ray gave an update on the Port Blakely piece that he was directed to pursue at the last Council Meeting. Ray met with the conservation group, Forterra, yesterday with Jeff. They might be

## **SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING**

able to help with the purchase price. Ray will continue discussions with them and keep Council updated.

Council approved Ray to continue moving forward and to work with Nate on drafting a purchase and sale agreement.

Ray forwarded a summary of the governors climate act.

Jeff has been working with other tribes to cement language based on promises made by the governor such as sports betting and North of Falcon.

Ray reported that the sports wagering bill died. He is working with WIGA for an initiative regarding sports wagering. It will take some funding down the road, and each tribe will be asked to chip in.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Geoduck Update:** Julie Owens, Erik Sparkman and Jake Johnson were present. Julie shared they had their second aquatics meeting last week and have been working their way through the 2021Regs. They will be setting up another committee meeting and finalizing some of the issues before its time to present to Council.

Julie shared that the committee members still have concerns with COVID and are in discussions regarding not allowing in any new divers; even though there are new divers ready to start. Knowing that there will be assistance for anyone not comfortable diving, the committee will need to do some work for the next fishery to create a true divers fishery.

The biomass has not been figured out since the State has not finished their survey. Andy added that the committee wants the council to make the decision who gets in, but in reality it's up to the boat owners who decides who gets on their boat. Jeremie added that as a previous boat owner, this is a great time for the boat owners to rebuild their crews since they lost divers. Every boat owner has the opportunity to add to their crew if they want to. If someone has vested into this fishery, they should be allowed the opportunity to dive. Julie added that its a difficult decision for everyone: safety, income, money for the boat owners, is it a business or a fishery? This will be a bigger issue for next season, but the committee is working their way there.

Jake added that most of the committee is leaning towards allowing the new divers in, as long as they can find a boat to get on. The other thing they are not in agreement on is how long can a diver stay stagnant without getting a refresher course? Julie added what that means, is after this year, 35-40 divers will need a refresher. There shouldn't be an issue if they are knowledgeable on the basic written test. Vicki added that safety should be the first consideration and concern.

Julie added that the divers are leaning towards not having a tier system and equal quotas.

Jeremie thanked everyone for their hard work to create a better fishery. Julie added that the committee needs to create a regulation that covers everybody, which has not been easy.

## **SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING**

Eric reported they are looking to contract with Jake again this year to train divers.

### **LEGAL UPDATE**

Retail sales tax compact: Nate sent most of the details in email. This is strictly on sales to Indians by non-Indians. For example, if the food court at the Casino decides to bring in a third party seller. If so, this agreement would provide sales tax slated to the state, to go to the tribe instead. David moved to approve via Resolution #21-07. Vicki seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **LITTLE CREEK CASINO UPDATE**

Ramon shared a presentation showing the Casino phased reopening plan. Business is starting to pick up with the cases going down. They are planning to extend operating hours from 10am-9am daily, starting the 21st. They are improving their outdoor smoking area with covered areas to be phased with upgrades. Adding more machines to the gaming floor. Bingo will begin February 19th. The Creekside gaming area is performing very well. Max capacity is 700, and got really close to that on NYE.

They are slightly changing the burger size at Starlight. This is in response to complaints of the patty being too large for most people. They are expanding their hours from 1pm to 11am for the Seafood Bar on Friday-Sunday starting on the 12th. They are extending the closing hours for Seafood Bar and Island Grille. Proposals are due back from their architect this coming Friday for the boardwalk venues and need to start thinking about names for the Boardwalk venues.

Electric charging stations have been installed and completed. They can charge up to eight vehicles, two for Tesla and two any type. There is no advertisement for it and people still use them. They are in the preliminary stages for pickup and drop off services for high end and paying customers. They are looking at restructuring the arcade business model, staffed vs unstaffed. Working on RFP for the hotel refresh project manager. Vicki shared she is concerned with numbers being down, but worries about all these costs and what is available for these projects. Next council work session he will go over the budget and project needs.

Spa is short staffed, once they are staffed they will increase the hours. The gift shop is moving toward more authentic tribal arts and crafts and regional items, and less sports attire. In the process of implementing an inventory management system and evaluating what is selling and what is not. Vicki shared that she recently visited the gift shop, and was told that it was going to turn into a beer and ice cream venue. Ramon stated that the beer and ice cream will be a regional local brew/made just to try out to support local businesses.

Golf club house's new carpet will be complete by the end of the week. There will be a Golf Advisory board meeting at the end of the month. New electric green mowers will be delivered at the end of the month.

Will be hosting a training on telemarketing - calling high end players to entice visits. The marketing director is working on the department being more agile. The third quarter marketing plan will be shared at the March work session.

## **SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING**

Parking garage maintenance is a high priority and working on hiring a facilities director.

Next week's work session he will share the January operating income, FY20 audit and financial statement and historical cash generation and allocation.

Kris said that he wants Ramon to be part of the LCOB discussion. Kris also was happy to hear he is reaching out to schools, since the casino is more than gaming; there are great career opportunities to be had at the casinos.

Charlene thanked Ramon for always including cultural education in his business. Also thanked for the changes made at the casino, she really likes the feel it has now. It feels classier.

Vince asked about maintaining the area around the 101 interchange and if LCCR could add that to their maintenance.

## **TRIBAL GAMING AGENCY UPDATE**

Dallas Burnett presented the updated Squaxin Gaming Ordinance which he received back from the NIGC. He went over the changes that were made. Jeremie moved to approve the revised ordinance by Resolution #21-08. Vince seconded the motion. Charlene thanked Dallas for his attention to detail regarding this. Motion carried unanimously. Council thanked Dallas for his work.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Coming out of the Executive Session, Council agreed by consensus the request for compact negotiations that was presented by Nate.

David moved to approve Resolution #21-09 which allows a sovereign immunity waiver for the PPP Loan to KTP. Vicki seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Vicki wants to schedule a time to present their appreciation gift to Kevin Lyon. She also wants to make sure that Bev and Arnold both receive their blankets for their time served on Council. She asked if instead of Pendletons, they can be gifted blankets from 7th Generation, since she likes them better.

Vicki also wants to talk about the Jamestown Clinic at an upcoming work session.

Marvin stated that Nate is coordinating with Kevin and Melissa for a time that works for everyone.

Kris agreed that Bev and Arnold need to be honored, if it doesn't happen between now and May, at least do it then. Kris is open to suggestions.

Jeremie shared that he has asked to install a memorial bench on one 14th hole at Salish Golf course, in honor of Mark Snyder. Council agreed.

**SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING**

Marvin asked permission to declare a State of Emergency for the upcoming snow storm, in order to contract de-icer on the hill and reservation. Council approved.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.