

**SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2021**

Attendance:

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

Kris Peters called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vicki Kruger moved to approve the agenda with changes. Jeremie Walls seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vince Henry moved to approve the February 25, 2021 Minutes, March 1, phone poll, March 15, phone poll and the March 16, phone poll. Jeremie Walls seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TRAVEL REPORTS & PLANS

March 31: City of Shelton / Squaxin Meeting. Zoom. 1pm
April 2: Spring Holiday. Tribal offices closed.
April 12: Dept. of Ecology / Squaxin Meeting. Zoom. 1pm. Kris, Ray & Jeff
April 26-29: NAFOA Annual Conference. Ray. David.
May 17: Tribal Leaders Social Services Council. Zoom. 9-12
June 7: MLRC Golf Tournament
June 20-24: NCAI Mid Year Conference, virtual. Kris. Charlene suggested inviting staff to attend, since it is virtual and makes it easier.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Deschutes Visitor Center: Kris asked Charlene and Ray to share an update on the meeting they attended regarding the Deschutes Visitor Center. Charlene shared how the Deschutes River is a tribal ancestral area. The organization reached out to Doug Mah, past Olympia Mayor, and they are visioning to renovate the visitor center at the Deschutes River. The renovation will include more information about Squaxin. Charlene gave a history of the area and how it is important to

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

Squaxin. This visitor center will be grand and educational. It will talk about the culture and tradition of the tribe and the area. It will also include shops, restaurants, etc.

City of Olympia Council to Council meeting: Kris shared that Council recently met with the Olympia Council earlier this month. They will update the Accord which is outdated. They are working on a new kiosk at Percival Landing and looking to add a canoe, or something tribally significant as well as signage to the area. They discussed the West Bay restoration and looking to develop that area. Any type of development they do, will be done in a good way and will continue open conversation with the Tribe. An MOU with the City was discussed which will allow open communication with the tribe and city. Their homeless response keeps the tribe in mind. They have moved the camps and are working on keeping the homeless out of the water, and providing dumpsters and porta potties for them. They would like to create some council to council sub committees.

Port of Olympia Council Squaxin land acknowledgement discussion: Kris met with each commissioner of the Port and discussed Squaxins original land base and showed a map outlining the area; which spoke volumes. It showed a picture of who Squaxin is and where Squaxin is from. They did ask for some official verbiage for the land acknowledgement, and would like something written that they can announce before gatherings. Kris will defer that to Charlene to assist with.

Elections: Kris shared that there has been a lot of talk on the process. He shared that in January, Council made the decision to proceed with mail in ballots this year. He knows that was not a decision made lightly and was a tough decision to make knowing it is against the constitution. Kris was disappointed at the time, but knows the decision was to protect the community. He has talked with legal advisors inside and outside the tribe, and if it was to protect the membership, the decision was sound. This year, the cases were spiking with variants. Council did not know how the vaccines would work, how they would carry out, or even that it would be available. There were a lot of questions at the time. Even the experts in January, were warning people that gatherings would not be expected until fall or winter of 2021.. He at that time felt that the best decision was to do mail in ballots, in order to protect the vulnerable and elders. His intention is not to break the constitution, it was to protect the membership. He knows that the process still is breaking the constitution, and the only justification for that, per legal, is to protect tribal members. He knows there are still variants out there. There still are concerns. There still are people getting it, even though they are vaccinated. He knows the election committee still recommends moving forward with mail in, as decided. And that is where it currently stands.

Kris knows that there may be an "in between" option somewhere Council can meet with the elections committee to come up with ideas. Andy said that the decision to mail in was tough, but it's getting too close to elections to change anything.

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

Charlene would like to see more options, such as allowing tribal members the option to pick up their ballot, if requested. She has concerns with the overloaded USPS system and ballots not being delivered or received on time.

Kris suggested asking the Election Committee to provide some other options that include a ballot pick up and drop off. Kris is open to the idea of meeting with Elections to discuss options. Charlene would like to see an open meeting for all tribal members to have a discussion.

Kris has heard strong opinions on both sides, and as leaders, Council will bear the decision.

Kris asked if Council was okay with looking at the grid Elections provided last year, to discuss alternatives. Kris is open to having a talking circle, he asked if it could be virtual and in person.

Andy knows a decision is needed and there will always be people on both sides. But the Council needs to make a decision and stick to it.

Charlene would like to meet with the election committee to see what their suggestions are for alternative options.

Kris shared that he is all about safety. If there is a safe way to proceed, he supports that. If it can't be done in a safe way, then he is not supportive of it. He would like to meet with Elections tomorrow or Monday to discuss options.

Vicki would like to see a report from surrounding counties. Charlene added that the vaccination does free people up to go out. Even with surrounding counties opening up. Charlene was supportive of the mail in option, but times are getting better.

Kris added that there needs to be an alternate plan, ready to go. He has said all along that the tribe needs to plan a meeting, just in case it becomes a safe option. Kris would like to meet with the election committee tomorrow to discuss this.

Charlene asked if the election committee could announce their outline of their proposal for an in person meeting.

Kris will try to get this meeting between this afternoon and Monday at the latest.

Agenda additions: Vicki asked if Council would consider scheduling half hour each Council Meeting to allow Tribal Members to share their thoughts and concerns. She has an audit brief. She also has a request from the Constitution Committee.

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

Audit Brief: Vicki shared they recently had a good meeting with the auditor, and the tribe remains low risk and no findings. The tribe works closely with Moss Adam. COVID Funds were looked at to make sure all costs are allowable. The last report received was 2018, and looked at 2019 audit. COVID has caused the delay.

In 2019 audit Moss Adams did a short brief on General Welfare. She asked if they would meet with Council and advise on General Welfare. Charlene appreciates the work that Vicki does, and would like to see General Welfare completed. She doesn't see any issue with having Moss Adams come in to talk to Council more about it, along with Family Services, Legal and Administrative Staff.

Constitution Committee: Vicki shared that she serves on the committee and they asked if Council can discuss compensation to members. Also, some of the employees on the committee will exceed the allowable hours (per Employment Handbook, only a set number of volunteer ours are allowed each month) so they asked if they can have an exception to the rule, allowing them more time to serve on the committee. They also asked permission for an in-person meeting at the Casino for two days, funded by Council.

Charlene would like to have someone look at all the committees and commissions to see how compensation would work. She is unsure of funding food. Kris said that there needs to be a specific ask, and the Constitution Committee needs to present that to Council.

Jeremie questioned if meeting in-person is allowable right now.

Vicki is hoping the Constitution Committee can meet with Council before the next General Body Meeting.

Vicki asked about allowing tribal members to have time on the council agenda. She would like to set aside 30 minutes of every meeting to allow tribal member input.

Charlene added that she wants to ensure tribal members follow the process since there are issues Council cannot address. Kris added that he would like to know topics ahead of time, so staff can be available if needed to answer questions.

Vicki moved to allow thirty minutes of each meeting to allow tribal members access to the agenda. Andy added that he too, would like to know the topics ahead of time so they can be prepared to answer any questions that may come up.

Vicki amended her motion of adding thirty minutes to every agenda for public discussion and between now and the next meeting, public procedures will be put in place. David seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

There will be a Public Comment Period at the end of each meeting.

TRIBAL ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

COVID Update: Marvin shared that as of April 1 the checkpoints at the entrance of the reservation will be removed. The fitness center and pool will reopen to tribal members, in family groups and by appointment only. He reiterated that this is vaccinated or not since safety measures will still be taken. Staff will be allowed to return to their work stations at no more than 50% capacity in each building. Schedules will be determined by department directors. Masks will be required when outside personal offices and any time staff are in close proximity to one another. Any staff member with a positive Covid-19 test will be required to self-isolate for a minimum of ten days and until symptoms improve.

Travel outside of Washington – All staff must notify their supervisor and obtain permission before leaving the state. Upon return, they will be required to self-isolate for five days and provide a negative rapid test result before they can come back to work in-person.

All travel for training, meetings, and conferences, etc. will require approval by Erika or Marvin on a case-by-case basis.

Effective May 1, the Child Development Center will reopen by May 1st at the latest, but possibly sooner.

Marvin shared that 323 tribal members have received their first dose of the vaccine. The clinic receives 200 doses each week and they are opening up to non-tribal families and community. The clinic has plenty of vaccines to offer the community who wants it.

Charlene asked if more information on the vaccine could be shared with the community.

Kris noted that many of the Zoom chat questions from attendees get missed, since its tough to monitor that and stay engaged in the meeting at the same time. He assured the attendees that their questions will be reviewed later.

Vicki asked about extending the vaccines to the local school teachers. Marvin shared that was discussed, and they plan to wait another week to ensure all tribal who want it, have had the opportunity to be vaccinated.

AQUATICS COMMITTEE

Jeff Dickison presented the 2021-2022 Aquatics Regulations. The fishery starts April 1. Jeff shared that last year they created some safety precautions due to covid, including boat restrictions and new diver restrictions. This year, the proposal created a pathway allowing new divers to join in the fishery. First aid, CPR, training, physical, drug test, etc. If they do, they

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

must complete a training on board (exhibit a) that they would have to go through aid tender days, harvesting as an assistant, and they would have three months to complete that. After those are filled, they would be eligible for 500 pounds plus a share of the total 5000 pounds that are divided between all new divers. There are pounds reserved for new divers, and they would be allocated out based on who completes those requirements by July 1. If they are not allocated out, they would get up to 1,250 pounds and the remainder would go to the existing divers.

The covid protocol is still in place, including boat rules, same as last year. The aquatics committee is supportive of continuing the safety protocols.

Council discussed new divers, pound allocations and medical.

The final and redline regs are included in Councils material for their review.

Vicki asked to take 100 pounds away from the current IDQ holders, and add it to the 5000 pounds to new divers. She doesn't feel the 5000 pounds is enough for the new divers.

Vicki moved to approve the recommendation with her change. After discussion, she dropped it to 50 pounds instead of 100 pounds.

Jeff shared that if 100 pounds was removed, it would be an additional 6000 pounds to the new divers, on top of the 5000 pounds. If it were 50 pounds, it would be an increase of 3000 pounds on top of the 5000 pounds.

Jeff stated that the individual pounds for the new divers, depends on how many new divers complete the requirements.

Julie Owens discussed the physical requirements.

Kris is open to a committee meeting with Council and asked if there was any more discussion on the regulations.

Vicki said if 5000 pounds is enough for new divers, she will amend her motion to leave it as is.

Council is fine with 50 additional pounds. Andy seconded Vicki's motion, to include the 50 pounds. The motion carried three (3) for, zero (0) against and two (2) abstaining. David and Jeremie abstained from voting.

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

TRIBAL LIAISON UPDATE

Ray discussed the American Relief Fund that congress just passed. He will be attending and Department of Interior Consultation regarding funding allocation.

He shared that this is the largest allocation ever made to federal Indian tribes.

Marvin explained grants that are coming to help with rental assistance, and working with SPIPA on managing that grant. More news to come.

Charlene hopes that the tribe can tap into funding for the storm and wastewater. The one that she does want to have shovel ready, is the existing water supply. She wants to see access to water.

Ray explained the allocation that goes directly to the tribe will have flexibility to move those funds as needed. As far as accessing funds from specific parts of the bill, there will be matches and requirements with those. Council discussed projects to be funded.

Skookum Creek Tobacco: Ray shared that the Board changed the bylaws to reflect the SCT General Manager is no longer on the Board, but reports to the Board instead. Ray shared that he was tasked with working with the Chairman of the IEI Board regarding the distribution center and their reporting. They will present a plan on April on the makeup of the Board and organization makeup.

LITTLE CREEK CASINO UPDATE

Ramon Nunez provided the following report:

Gaming: shared that Keno has been pushed back to April 19th. They are in the process of surveying the poker customers to see what their desires are regarding resuming poker. Bingo sold out again and had a good weekend session. They are adding six new leased games and working on game conversions.

Food & Beverage: The Boardwalk Project Design is 80% Complete.

Golf Course: Receiving quotes for a new golf cart fleet. Cart pathways near the bridges are receiving maintenance.

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

Facilities: Working on marketing office space. Send out an RFP for the parking garage upgrades last week.

Human Resources: They begun a compensation study last week in phases. They will be doing job analysis and position ranking, creating classifications, market wage study, implementation and budget impact analysis and will update job descriptions as necessary. Ramon shared the current openings and new hires. They are doing a referral bonus and a signing bonus program to help recruit staff. They will be hosting a customer service training April 19-22.

Ramon will provide a financial report at the next Council Work Session.

GUEST: Commissioner Carolina Mejia

Ray introduced Carolina Mejia who is newly elected member of the Olympia City Council. She thanked Council and wanted to talk with Council to see how she can help.

Ray shared how council meets with the commissioners quarterly in order to maintain communication. He emphasized the importance of upholding water. He also shared how he wants to be a resource for her as a commissioner.

Council discussed the Squaxin footprint in downtown Olympia. Commissioner Mejia would like to include a plaque at the courthouse acknowledging the location of indigenous land. She would like to be formal and discussed inviting art and history of each of the tribes, showing history, on different areas of the campus. She added that the Nisqually Tribe would like to install one of their totem poles at the entrance. Kris shared a map showing Squaxin traditional land, and how Olympia is Squaxin, and not Nisqually.

Jeremie offered the letter that Charlene and her staff have put together explaining the Squaxin area. The education is important and like to share it.

ISLAND ENTERPRISES UPDATE

Mike Peters, Dave Johns and Diane Deyette were present. Mike shared an update on what the board is up to and how they have helped and met with the directors. Diane added that the board has approved the bylaws, and IEI will present for review soon. Whitney shared that they are excited about the creation of the board and meet with Council periodically.

Vicki shared that they will have a meeting with a shellfish broker soon. She wants to have the board look at that. Mike shared that he asks Council to not meet one on one with a broker. It will set miscommunications with an individual. Currently, they have a person who buys fish and shellfish from the Tribe. He asked Council to please allow IEI to handle that. Vicki would

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

like to have the presentation to the board and Council at the same time. Mike says that again, he'd like to have IEI to handle that without Council. Kris asked Dave and the board to set up the meeting with the broker. However, Mike added that currently the board is focused on the current businesses, and will look at the broker in the future.

Dave Johns provided a quick operations update.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE – PCD

Penni Restivo provided an overview of what PCD has been working on. Dumpsters and metal recycling will be on reservation next month. This is strictly for residents. Kris asked about communication and security plan. Penni shared that they will fence and monitor the dumpsters, which worked really well last year. Jeremie asked about off reservation rentals and if they can use the dumpsters. Penni will find out.

Housing is attending an online training today. They are planning the maintenance classes, mother's day baskets and spring cleanup. They are offering tax services again this year.

The home ownership program has 14 new homeowners, and three more pending.

Planning has submitted two grants last week. Currently working on editing for the NWITC guidance report. EPA state revolving fund opens next week. Seeking funds for the Taylor well project, snow removal and the Arcadia ramp.

Penni shared that the bus driver, Robin, retired in January. The transit has reported fewer passengers this year due to the pandemic.

Richard Gouin was present and gave a recap of their construction projects including the daycare.

Kris brought up the idea of having a list of services available on the website, where each director can work with DIS to have all services listed on the website. Marvin will reach out to DIS about this possibility.

David brought up the need for fiber internet at the Collier House. PUD is offering "fiberhoods" based on need. This will require individual neighborhoods putting in a request. Council agreed by consensus for the Tribe to make the request for the Collier House, as the property owner.

Council will be following up with the Elections Committee to set up a meeting.

SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING

Vicki moved to adjourn the meeting, and go into Executive Session. Vince Henry seconded the meeting. Motion carried. The public meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m. and Council went in to Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action.