

**SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBAL COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
April 15, 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	

Chairman Peters called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Approval of April 15, 2021 Council Agenda. Motion moved by Jeremie Walls and motion seconded by Vicki Kruger. Motion carried unanimously six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

Approval of Minutes

March 29th Special Meeting minutes were tabled until everyone had a chance to review.

Travel Reports & Plans

April 21:	Capitol Land Trust Breakfast
April 22:	Council Work Session
April 26-29:	NAFOA Annual Conference. Ray. David.
May 1:	Zoom General Body Meeting
May 17:	Tribal Leaders Social Services Council.
June 7:	MLRC Golf Tournament
June 20-24:	NCAI Mid Year Conference, virtual
August 13:	Billy Frank Jr Classic -sponsor request

Council Discussion

Vicki Kruger shared that today is her last meeting as Council Treasurer and she would like to close a couple of issues:

Constitution Committee has requested stipends. She shared a draft amendment to the Employee Volunteer Policy that states every tribal member who participates in a Committee and/or Commission Meeting receives \$50 for four hours or less and \$100 for four hours or more. The draft also provides the Tribal Administrator the authority to allow employees to exceed the current 8 hour cap per quarter, of volunteer hours (the policy currently states that employees are only allowed 8 hours per quarter for volunteer duties, including serving on a committee or commission). She would like stipends to be paid out of the Salal Account. Kris shared his concern with a blanket policy. Vicki understood the concerns but emphasized that she does not want to see this decision delayed. Charlene emphasized the importance of committee and commission members understanding their bylaws and ethics; stipends are great but more importantly they need to fully understand what it is they are to do. Marvin would like to look in to this a little more and gather more information before a decision is made. Vicki asked for a decision by the next Council Meeting.

Vicki's second request is to provide a portable restroom and laundry facility for the homeless tribal members. She proposed spending \$68,000 out of the Salal Account to accomplish this. The system she suggested is on a trailer, and can be moved to where it's needed. Jeremie agreed that this is an issue, but not sure if this is the correct way to address it. Kris would like to see a budget, where it will be housed, who will be responsible for it and who will maintain it. He would like to see a policy and budget in place before this is moved forward.

Vicki is getting questions about the rental assistance grant, she would like an update on that. She also asked for an update on the tiny homes. She is also getting complaints about childcare and denying tribal families who are considered over income.

Kris would like to discuss the tiny homes under Marvin's COVID Update. Jeremie asked about the possibility of having one or two of the homes converted to be ADA Compliant. Vicki thanked Council for the last six years of service.

Charlene asked about moving the homeless RV's from their current location. They are near a park where children play, and she feels there could be a better location that possibly could accommodate them better. Jeremie suggested allowing them to park near the tiny homes. Marvin stated that before the tiny home area is expanded to include RV's and laundry/shower facilities, he would like input from the community to ensure that is what they want. Kris would like to set up a community forum or sort, to allow that input. Vince asked if a shower/laundry facility was added, he would like to know who will be responsible for maintaining them.

Charlene asked for an update from ICW soon. She and David recently attended a NICWA Conference and was pleased to hear about advancements with how cases are being handled. She would like to meet with the ICW Team soon to see how Squaxin can better serve tribal families. ICW will be on the next Council agenda.

Jeremie asked about the Early Childhood Grant and how some tribal families are now being denied at the Child Development Center. Kris would like to include CDC staff with this discussion at the next Council Work Session.

Tribal Administrator Update

COVID Update: Marvin shared that the COVID Team has started offering vaccines to the School Districts and opened up to the greater community. 946 first doses have been administered and 781 second doses have been administered. Everyone in the tribal community who want to be vaccinated, have received the vaccination. Marvin will continue working with the Clinic to ensure it is available and offered to anyone who is interested. They have paused the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Currently offering the Moderna vaccine to those 18+.

The reservation has been open for 15 days now, with no adverse effects.

Marvin shared the current guidelines that the tribe and enterprises are following, which is a little more conservative than the Center for Disease Control recommends. Five days of self isolation is required for returning to work, after traveling out of state. In order to maintain consistency and privacy, this is applicable to all staff, regardless of being vaccinated or not. Marvin will reach out to the other entities to ensure their policy is the same.

Marvin shared that the clinic is receiving more vitamin D and vitamin C to distribute to the community. He would like to start a campaign of being healthy and promoting outside activities since they are finding that is the best defense against COVID.

Vicki thanked Marvin for his caution and Squaxin is fortunate to not have any COVID related deaths this past year.

Three counties reverted back to Phase 2; however with cases rising, the death toll is decreasing.

Committee & Commission Appointments

Council made the following appointments:

Aquatics Committee: Todd Hagman and Steve Sigo as members; Aleta Poste and Jessica Cruz as alternates.

Budget Commission: Julie Owens and Pam Hillstrom as members; Rhonda Foster and Vicki Kruger as alternates.

Education Commission: Chazmin Peters as member.

Fish Committee: Patrick Braese, David Peters Sr., and Cameron Henry as members.

Housing Commission: Monica Nerney, Jaime Queen and Vicki Kruger as members; Trelace Sigo and Janita Raham as alternates.

Hunting Committee: Nick Cooper, Patrick Braese and Cameron as members.

MLRC Board: Jeremie Walls as Council Rep.

Motion: Motion to appoint the above mentioned committee members.

Motion moved by Vicki Kruger and motion seconded by Jeremie Walls. Motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

Public Law 280: Marvin would like to discuss PL280 and the agreement with Mason County Sherriff at the upcoming work session. He stated that the Sherriffs Office does a really good job in honoring the agreement with the tribe in allowing prosecution of natives to remain in tribal court, however there currently is nothing legally binding that allowance. Most tribes have adopted a varying degree of PL280. He would like to discuss the current MOA in depth.

Kris assured that the tribe has a good relationship with the Sherriff's Office, however it is up to the prosecuting attorney on who handles tribal cases. There has been a couple of issues recently that has caused this discussion. Charlene thanked Marvin and Kris for keeping an eye on the relationship and looks forward to the discussion.

Marvin shared that he recently met with someone who work on independent and assisted living facilities. She will be providing a list of data she needs so she can start looking in to ways to help the tribe possibly accomplish some type of facility. They are looking at both full care versus partial care that is Medicaid eligible. He will have more information to share later.

General Body Meeting, May 1: Marvin will have an agenda to share soon. Ramon and Dave will both be available for LCCR and IEI updates. Erika will provide an update from the government. This will be similar to the Winter General Body Meeting, using the Zoom platform. He plans to have the questions asked during the Winter General Body Meeting ready for review next week. The meeting will include the usual presentations, annual reports, door prizes and honoring outgoing and past (2020) Council members.

Tribal Liaison Update

Initiative: Ray provided an update on the legislative session. The governor recently signed a bill that replaces the Marcus Witman statue in Washington DC, with a Billy Frank Jr. statue. The fundraising for transporting the statues will need to occur.

Property Update: Ray provided an update on two potential parcels that may be of interest to the Tribe. Council asked him to continue conversations with the landowners and the keep Council updated.

Andy brought up the Rock Church and the lien that is on the property. He feels it would be prudent to get the lien removed while the matriarch of the family (Grace Simmons) is still alive. Council agreed and asked Ray to work with Nate to meet with her.

WIGA Update: Ray discussed sports wagering and the potential impact if that bill passes. WIGA is working to set up a fund to campaign opposition to that bill. Ray shared the amounts that other tribes have contributed so far and suggested that Squaxin commit

\$25,000-\$50,000 to the fund. Kris reiterated the importance of this and would like to further discuss at an upcoming work session.

PUD 1: Ray shared that Council will need to decide and designate a designee for the litigation conversation with them. He will be meeting with them on April 22nd. Council suggested and designated Andy to be the designee since he is familiar with the case.

Natural Resources

Motion: to approve Resolution #21-12 that authorizes the funding proposal to the BIA for Tribal Climate Resilience Funds. Motion moved by Vince Henry Sr. and motion seconded by Vicki Kruger. Motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

WRIA 12, 13, 14 & 15: Jeff Dickison was back to seek a final decision on the WRIAs. Council has already been briefed on the subject, but Jeff did a recap of the process and their discussions. Jeff requested that Council finalize the directions to all watershed, which is reflected in the resolution being presented. Sharon Haensly elaborated on the plans for WRIA 12 & 13; and once approved, will take some time to implement those plans. Sharon included in the resolution, a reservation of rights of the tribe.

Motion: To approve WRIA 12 & 13 and disapprove WRIA 14 & 15. Motion moved by David Whitener Jr. and motion seconded by Vicki Kruger. Motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

Little Creek Casino

Ramon Nunez shared that the nice weather has caused a slow week at the Casino. Revenue for March was really good, one of the best months they've had, and those statements were finalized last week.

Operational efficiency, they are running lean and F&B is posting profits. He will share financials at the work session next week.

Vicki thanked Ramon for the beautiful service and food at the funeral yesterday for Pete Kruger Sr.

Ramon shared his presentation:

Gaming: Keno is reopening on Monday on a trial basis. They conducted a poker survey, and players are ready to come back so they are looking to bring that back end of May/early June. Looking to hire a poker manager. Bingo next session is next weekend. Past two months have done really well. Have six new games, called The Vault. They have been really busy and well liked.

Food & Beverage: They received the proposed layout for the boardwalk, and they are in the modification phase of the plan.

Golf Course: Received have two quotes for golf cart fleets, and waiting for one last quote.

Facilities: RFP went out for the parking garage. Tower one sign is being replaced; Ramon asked Council what should be done with the old sign. He is working on updating the signs to the current design. Ramon suggested putting it on the warehouse. He will keep Council updated on what is done with it.

IT: Working on replacing their old data server and defining the scope of work within the contract. The cost of the new data center will exceed his approval threshold so he will have that information to Council shortly.

HR: working on hiring positions. They hired a new HR staff recruiter. Hired the Facilities Director. Starting within the next 2 weeks. New IT Director starts Monday.

They will be having a Strategy Formulation Session at the end of April. This will include focus groups for a compensation study. Their consultant has been meeting with frontline staff to do the study which has been a good experience for all. He is glad that the consultation has been working directly with staff. Customer service training starts next week.

Vicki asked about the ID requirements for entering, specifically military ID. Ramon will check in with Dallas regarding the ID requirements and their process for allowing people into the casino at this time. Ray added that TGA has been looking at what other casinos have been doing, but the ID issue is more with masks and identifying people. Ray would propose that Council meet with Dallas at the next meeting.

Summer youth program: He will be having a team meeting next week to outline the program and will confer with TGA on restrictions for the youth. As part of the program, Ramon will be teaching a class session the first couple of days as an introduction to business and the industry language they use, to get them interested in the business. Charlene loved the idea and asked if his class could be recorded and available to tribal members who also are interested.

Motion: To commemorate a memorial plaque for Pete Kruger, in the hotel at "Pete's Corner," where he used to sit. Motion moved by Jeremie Walls and motion seconded by Vince Henry. The motion carried six (6) in favor and zero (0) against.

Legal Update

Archives Building Update: Dave Babcock provided an update on the Archives Building. The building will not be sold, however, there still is the issue of the building is not adequate for storage and a new place will need to be found soon. Kris thanked David and asked him to keep an eye on the issue.

Brackeen Case: David shared an update on the Brackeen Case, which is the ICW Case currently in the 5th Circuit. This is federal legislation that involves state cases of tribal youth. The ICW has no influence of what happens in tribal court, but intended for state court involving tribal youth. ICW has been challenged a number of times, and this case originated in Texas. The initial ruling was overturned in the 5th Circuit, and the result is a tie. Some of what the district court said, will stand, but since its a tie, it has no value in any other case. One positive is that outside Texas this case means nothing. The decision does not affect Washington State. David will continue monitoring the case.

Council adjourned and went in to Executive Session.