

DULUTH INDIGENOUS COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 24, 2014

Present: Ricky DeFoe, Babette Sandman, Tina Olson, Carol DeVerney, Terry Goodsky, Jaron Smallwood

Absent: No Absences

Staff: Michael Palermo

1. Call to Order and Introductions

DeFoe called the meeting to order at 5:25 PM.
Introductions were made.

2. Updates

A. Native Alliance – Tony Hernandez presented the Native Alliance update. The Native Alliance slowed down a bit this month. They continue to do mobile case management and are coming along on receiving non-profit status. They missed training because of the winter weather but hopefully will be able to attend a make-up training. They also will be hosting a forum with police on excessive force on March 12 at Grant Recreation Center. This Thursday they will be honoring their youth at the Unity School.

3. Public Comment

The Commission invited the police to attend the next meeting for community updates.

4. New Business

A. Staff Update

1. Housing Indicator Report – Michael Palermo gave an overview of the Community Development Housing Indicator Report. He gave information regarding the City of Duluth apartment vacancy rate, average rent, average and median home value, and affordability of rent or home ownership for a variety of income ranges. Sandman commented that even a two bedroom apartment is very expensive for community members.

2. Public Input for Consolidated Plan – Palermo explained that as the Community Development Division finalizes its strategy for public input they will solicit input from the Indigenous Commission regarding funding priorities as well as give direction as to ways to receive input from the Indigenous Community in Duluth.

3. State of the City Address – Palermo informed the commission about the State of the City Address by the Mayor at the Spirit Mountain Chalet on March 3

at 5 PM. Terry Goodsky discussed his drumming groups involvement and shared with the Commission the program for the event.

4. Commission Appointments –

- Palermo brought to the Commission's attention that several Commission members' appointments will be up in March and asked if they have interest in reappointment. There was confusion as to why Smallwood, a new member, was up for reappointment. Palermo explained that Smallwood had been fulfilling the final year of another Commission members term.
- Smallwood, Sandman, and Goodsky all expressed interest in reappointment.

5. Old Business

A. Needs Assessment with UMD – Dr. Jim Amell

1. Assistant Professor Amell from the University of Minnesota Duluth spoke with the Commission about the Needs Assessment he is completing for the Commission. The assessment is a model called Strength Based Assessment and Mobilizing Assets. It focuses not only on identifying gaps but on identifying strengths in the community. The result being, using the strengths to meet the needs/gaps. Professor Amell passed out a slide show outlining the needs assessment model. He also passed out questions that will be asked to the community and asked the Commission to give input. Professor Amell has been in consultation with John Day another professor in the UMD Department of Social Work. John Day was an original member of the Commission. Assistant Professor Amell also invited the Commission to his class.

DeVerney asked about what kind of needs were going to be assessed. Assistant Professor Amell explained that the assessment will be broad and look at strengths and weaknesses in the community but it also uses those contacted to help move forward agenda items rather than being merely an assessment. Part of engaging the community is having the support of the commission with a letter explaining the project. Assistant Professor Amell handed out a draft letter that he hoped the Commission could support. DeVerney also wanted to reiterate that drug abuse continues to be as struggle in the community and should be addressed in this assessment.

Hernandez from the audience asked how the class was going to connect with the community and who where they going to focus on. Assistant Professor Amell explained that they commission would provide a list key informants for the class to contact. Once the persons are contacted and agree to be interviewed they would ask the participant who they should interview next. This allows for greater penetration than only asking one source. DeFoe wanted to make sure that the entire community is represented. Assistant Professor Amell assured him that with the commission's help a wide variety of people will be contact. Hernandez offered his assistance in connecting with the community members that he services.

DeVerney asked how will the assessment help advance the Indigenous community and commented that many assessments are completed and forgotten. Assistant Professor Amell explained that the assessment not only works to identify

needs but to engage key informants on issues and devise ways to continue strong programs and help support weak programs.

Assistant Professor Amell explained that John Day assisted with the framing of one of the questions asking how to go about bringing harmony back to the indigenous community. The commission had concerns with the word "Harmony." They felt it was vague and could be construed in too many different ways.

Defoe explained that there were 4 different types of Indigenous persons ranging from very traditional to very progressive and each has a different view on Harmony. Olson agreed and explained that Harmony could mean between people and people, between people and earth, between government and people. She felt it might be too broad a question.

It was determined that some of the commission will attend the class on Thursday while others will attend the conflicting event.

Keith Hamre approached the commission and discussed requesting a Council of the Whole meeting to discuss the Ethnographic Study Grant and Needs Assessment. The Commission agreed and asked Hamre to schedule the meeting.

Goodsky asked Hamre if he would call the Duluth Superior Foundation to help push along a grant they were hoping to receive for the Feast and Forum. Hamre said he would give them a call to check on the progress.

B. Ethnographic Study Grant Application Update- CD Staff

Palermo explained that there was a Request for Proposal written for the Ethnographic Study and that Charles Froseth would be reviewing and finishing up the request. He said it would probably be finalized in the next few weeks and then goes out to the public for a time period. The people who will sit on the RFP steering committee will be contacted for when they will meet and review applications.

C. Feast and Forum

Palermo told the commission that they have reserved the Washington Center Gym for April 28th.

D. Spirit Mountain- None

6. Announcements, Upcoming Events and Comments from Commission

Sandman brought up that Maggie Fink from Peace church has been in contact with Kathy Bergen the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Duluth about renaming Lake Place Park. Sandman was forwarded emails to help get the Indigenous Commission involved in the process. The meeting is scheduled the first week of March. It was agreed that Smallwood would be in contact with Kathy Bergen to see if an Indigenous Commission member could be a part of the process and provide input on names that would be representative of the Indigenous community.

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative will be hosting an event at the Unity School to honor youth in the Indigenous Community who have achieved academic success on Thursday 2/27/14 at 1 pm.

7. Next Meeting: March 17, 2014

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm.