

**LOUISIANA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
NATIVE AMERICAN COMMISSION**

June 24, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Shirell Parfait-Dardar at 9:39 am.

Chief August Creppell said the opening prayer.

The following individuals attended the meeting: Chief Randy Verdun, Bayou Lafourche Biloxi C Chitimacha Choctaw; Chief August Creppell, United Houma Nation; Geneva LeBeouf, Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe; Chairman Thomas Rivers, Choctaw-Apache Tribe; Brian Neal, Clifton Choctaw Tribe; Len Wiggins, Four Winds Cherokee Tribe; Chief Shirell Parfait-Dardar, Grand Caillou Dulac Biloxi Chitimacha Choctaw; Mary DeHart, Isle de Jean Charles Biloxi Chitimacha Choctaw; Rebecca Britt, Louisiana Band of Choctaw; Shirley May, Natchitoches Tribe of Louisiana; Pat Arnould, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs; Holley Talley, Department of Veteran Affairs; Chip McGimsey, State Archaeologist; Chaunda Mitchell, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs; Secretary Joey Strickland, Department of Veterans Affairs.

Minutes

Pat Arnould read the minutes from the March 18, 2019 meeting. August Creppell motioned to accept the minutes, Randy Verdun seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

- Otis Lambis from the Four Winds Cherokee addressed the Commission concerning his mother's lack of sufficient medical care. He requested assistance that the Commission investigate her death as a civil rights issue because of discrimination due to her being Native American. August Creppell made a motion to review the proposal for legislation to investigate abuse of the infirm by medical doctors and requirement to investigate complaints of discrimination. Seconded by Geneva LeBeouf. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

- State recognition criteria
 - Pat Arnould advised that Southern university law students are willing to help with state recognition criteria. They are willing to draft a proposed template to be considered by the commission. She also advised that Southern University law students have formed a group to assist Native Americans with legal research or other legal matters.

- Chief Troy from Apalachee reported on his Tribe's negative experience of attempting to obtain state recognition. He noted his concerns with the process.
- Thomas Rivers made a motion to ask Tulane, Southern, and Loyola law students to assist in developing state recognition criteria; seconded by Rebecca Britt. The motion passed unanimously.
- Scholarship applications
 - The commission discussed the Louisiana Indian scholarship review process. August Creppell made a motion to table the scholarship discussion to hear a Presentation from Dr. Peterson with the Louisiana Department of Health. Seconded by Geneva LeBeouf.
- Opioid Crisis
 - Dr. Peterson discussed the state opioid response project. Dr. Peterson offered to present the information to individual tribes.
 - Dr. Judith Rose of LSU presented information about opioid suicides.
- Scholarships
 - The Commission determined that they would attend a review meeting with the Louisiana Indian Education Advocacy Committee. Geneva made a motion that both the Commission and LIEAC meet together to discuss scholarship review and process; seconded by Rebecca Britt. Motion passed unanimously.
 - The Commission will be briefed on the scholarship review process and both groups will come together to determine the scholarship recipients at a date to be determined.
- Bylaws
 - Mr. Rivers made a motion to add bylaws to the agenda. Seconded by Geneva LeBoeuf. Passed unanimously.
 - A discussion was had regarding whether Tribes can appoint an alternate in the event the appointed tribal member cannot attend.
 - It was decided that all Tribes will receive a copy of the bylaws before the meeting to adopt them.

Other

- Census maps
 - Randy Verdun discussed potential challenges in tribal statistical areas due to overlapping, which the census does not allow. August Creppell agreed to meet with Randy Verdun to address mapping.
- Eagle Feather Petition
 - Mr. Rivers shared that a petition was filed by Robert Soto of the Lipan Apache Tribe, a State recognized Tribe in Texas. Mr Soto was charged criminally for

possessing eagle feathers. A settlement was entered allowing him to use eagle feathers for religious purposes. The petition seeks to expand eagle feather use to all state recognized tribes.

- Indian Child Welfare Act
 - A discussion was Held regarding the importance of the Indian Child Welfare Act for federally recognized tribes. The Louisiana Legislature has adopted the Act, though the Attorney General is challenging the constitutionality of the Act in federal court.

Adjourn

- Motion by Mr. Rivers to adjourn, seconded by Katie Dehart.
- Next meeting will be September 16 at 9:30 am.