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**American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS**

*“Respect, Harmony, and Beauty”*

**AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION  
FOR NRCS  
NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE  
January 14, 2005**

**Those present:** Ivan Dozier, David Elliott, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Crystal Leonetti, Felix Nez, Ciro LoPinto, Larry Coburn, Yvette Dulle, Herb Webb, Leota Burnett, Pat Broyles, Glenn Lamberg, Noller Herbert, Julia Hinders.

President, Ivan Dozier called the meeting to order at 11:10 am CST. He welcomed all.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the October 2004 National Council teleconference were reviewed. Pat Broyles moved to approve the minutes. Crystal Leonetti seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The October minutes could not be approved during the November teleconference as there was not a quorum. The November teleconference will not have minutes posted on the website.

**Past and Present Presidents' Letters**

Both of these letters are posted on the website. Ivan gave David Elliott an opportunity to introduce himself on the website if he would like. David will send something to Tanya.

**Treasury**

Ivan introduced Julia Hinders as the new Treasurer, although she was not able to join the teleconference yet. Tanya reviewed several banking issues that need to be discussed and resolved. One is the requirement for the minutes of this teleconference to reflect Julia's authorization to access the account.

It is stated officially that: Julia Hinders is the current Treasurer and is authorized to access the bank account(s). Ciro LoPinto made a motion to confirm Julia Hinders' appointment as Treasurer. Crystal Leonetti seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion regarding the fact that Wells Fargo has one branch in Ohio that is 2 hours from Julia, although it is near her hometown. Pat recommended that Julia identify national banks that are convenient to her and that are found in most states and provide a report back to the National Council in February. It was also recommended that Julia report back regarding the convenience of the Wells Fargo branch in Van Wert, OH and the frequency of her travel there.

In order to give Julia access to the account at Wells Fargo, Tanya will need to go to her local branch and sign approval for Julia to sign a signature card, show the minutes of this teleconference, and the tax ID number. Tanya will contact Millie Titla to access the tax ID number.

There was discussion whether the AIANEA should retain accounts with Wells Fargo considering logistics. Deposits may be the main issue. Herb suggested that we could have accounts at two different banks, Wells Fargo and another bank near Julia. This decision would be up to Julia. Also, Julia could FedEx deposits to

Van Wert using the AIANEA FedEx account for security and speed. The Council is not opposed to closing the Wells Fargo account nor to opening an additional account at another bank.

There was discussion about authorized names on the account. Pat suggested that for security purposes (which is normal) that all treasury correspondence go to Julia Hinders. Herb offered that it could be a good idea to have three names on the account, especially for the conference. It was agreed that the third authorized person should be someone on the National Council that is part of the monthly teleconferences.

Julia joined the teleconference.

Ciro LoPinto made the motion that the American Indian / Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS have a maximum of three signatories on the Association bank account. The three authorized individuals must always include: Treasurer, Secretary, and one of the three officers, either 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, or President. Leota Burnett seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ciro LoPinto made the motion that David Elliott, current 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, be the third signatory for the bank account, in addition to the Treasurer and Secretary. Glenn Lamberg seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Currently, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen is the Secretary of the AIANEA.

Discussion continued with Julia regarding which bank to use. She suggested maybe we could keep the CDs with Wells Fargo and have an active account with another bank. Ivan discussed the need to go with a nationally known bank for ease in banking at the conferences. Julia discussed the possibility of Bank One.

The Council is open to doing all the banking at one bank or separate banks. Herb pointed out that not only writing checks but making deposits at the conference can be an issue. Herb reported that in Polson, MT, site of the 2005 conference, there are Wells Fargo branches 1 hour away in Missoula and in Kallispell. The banks in Polson are very local. Julia reported that Wells Fargo wants to open more branches in Ohio but that will be well into the future.

Herb reported that all the current investments are CDs with low return rates and 90-day turnarounds. No major problem staying with Wells Fargo for now or even for 2005. Julia will research banks in the Columbus, OH area regarding CDs and checking accounts and report back to Ivan in two weeks with her findings. Ivan will get the options out to the Council prior to the Feb. teleconference.

Herb also reported that Wells Fargo is the only nationally known bank in Missoula, MT. He also offered that the general fund money could be in a separate bank than the conference fund money. Right now, these are two separate funds under the same account. We could have Wells Fargo for the conference fund so better access for the conference locations and have another bank for the general treasury. Tanya could handle the deposits for the conference at the local Wells Fargo branch in Iowa.

Discussion regarding transition of the treasury to Julia Hinders was tabled until after the NHQ Update.

### **NHQ Update**

Noller Herbert reported that there was a National Leadership Team meeting in DC this week. The Tribal Scholars Program will have a kickoff on January 23, 2005. The AIANEA can assist by posting the application on the website. Noller will send the application to Ivan.

There will be another WINS (Washington Internships for Native Students) program this year although a budget has not yet been received. There were 5 interns in 2004 at National Headquarters and he hopes there will be in 2005. In November, the AISES conference in Alaska was utilized for recruitment. A report will be coming out soon from Human Resources. The 2005 conference is in Charlotte, NC.

Regarding the AIANEA conference in June, letters were hand carried by Noller. The Council has not gotten a response yet. Noller suggested Ivan send another letter inviting the Chief. Ann Perales provided letters in 2004 for the Chief and Dwight Holman.

Larry asked Noller what the projected funding request was from NHQ for the 2005 American Indian Month poster. The request was for \$10,000 and it depends on what the Division gets this year for a budget. The Southeast is having a teleconference on this topic next week and Noller will participate.

### **Treasury**

Discussion returned to the treasury. Tanya and Herb discussed the need for a policy for purchasing special items for unique situations such as retirements or funerals. If the timing fits with a scheduled teleconference, approval or denial will be given at that time. For events that take place in between teleconferences, a policy is needed.

Herb reported that there are certain ongoing bills that the Treasurer pays but unique situations arise that need to be voted on and approval prior to purchase. Just sending the bill to the Treasurer for reimbursement is unacceptable. The Treasurer needs to know what bills are approved to pay.

Some situations will require an email vote. Pat suggested approving \$25 or less including shipping and handling, if a majority responds favorably by email in these situations (for NRCS employees). The \$25 limit is not applicable for retirees or non-NRCS employees.

All reimbursements need to be approved by the National Council. The Council needs an email discussion to be recorded in the minutes. A quorum is not always possible in a given timeframe. The email discussion/request needs to be well clarified as to the budget (NTE) or a specific item.

A policy needs to be developed. Herb will draft a policy for later discussion and a decision during the Feb. teleconference.

### **Reimbursements-**

Herb purchased a buffalo plaque, had it engraved and colored for Mike Somerville's retirement and shipped it using the AIANEA FedEx account. Herb's cost is \$37.95. Felix Nez bought a beaded hat band for \$37.00 for Mike Somerville. All of this was presented to Mike on Dec. 1, 2004. Mike appreciated the gifts. The reimbursement total is \$74.95.

Ciro LoPinto made a motion to accept and pay the \$37.95 to Herb and \$37.00 to Felix to reimburse their costs. Larry Coburn seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Felix abstained. Herb and Felix will send their bills to Julia. Julia will not be able to reimburse until she is officially on the account.

### **Introductions**

Since we have three new Council members, it was suggested that all Council members introduce themselves. All members did for the benefit of new Council members David Elliott, Leota Burnett, and Julia Hinders.

### **Audit Report**

Julia has not received the past treasury paperwork yet. She has had email discussions with the past Treasurer and they will need to find some time to have a telephone conversation from home. No audit report has been received for 2004.

Tanya will request all 2004 statements from Wells Fargo be sent to Julia and will set up online banking. Ivan will contact the past Treasurer by phone and send a letter to request all AIANEA treasury paperwork be forwarded to Julia.

Noller reminded the Council that the IRS paperwork is due by May 1 and the documents are due to the Arizona Commission by April 1. We have not received confirmation that the IRS paperwork was filed for 2003. Julia will make contact with IRS to introduce herself as the Treasurer and check on the status.

### **Regional Reports**

**East** – Ciro reported that NY is strongly considering hosting the NEDC training Consultation with American Indian Governments. Ciro will be presenting the idea to the Civil Rights Committee. He shared that there are issues regarding the Oneida purchasing back land and sovereignty. It is in Supreme Court now. Also, a concern about the national SEPM training in March and how it may affect attendance at employee association meetings.

**Southeast** – Larry reported he contacted the SE American Indian Work Group regarding the American Indian Month poster, to identify a tribe and state. There are 2 states that have responded so far. He hopes to determine which state will host the poster during a Jan. 19 teleconference.

The SE Program Delivery Initiative planned at the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Reservation will be rescheduled due to hurricane damage. David Elliott reported that it is being rescheduled to the first week of May with a proposal to have it begin on Sunday and run through half the day on Wed. They are awaiting the Alabama State Conservationist approval.

**Midwest** – Glenn reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Indigenous Farming Conference will take place Jan. 20-22 in Mt. Pleasant, MI. NRCS and Plant Materials Center support this. Glenn is working on getting one of the Tribal Colleges in MI in a Center of Excellence. Glenn also suggested we encourage retirees to continue their membership with AIANEA.

**Northern Plains** – Pat reported that in December, he emailed members in the Northern Plains regarding the new look of the website, dues reminder, and the election results. He also asked for reports on accomplishments. Kim Stine reported that there is work being done with the Pottawatami in Kansas on new EQIP contracts. Pat will send another email in January.

**West** – Felix reported that the Tribal Advisory Council had a meeting in Phoenix in which the gifts were presented to Mike Somerville. Mike will be assisting with INCA. There were 250-300 attendees at the Tribal Soil and Water Conservation District conference in Las Vegas in December. A lot of networking took place. Brian Patterson spoke at the conference. There were a lot of photos taken. Glenn has photos on a CD.

Felix thanked Yvette Dulle for her work on the website and shared that there have been positive remarks from members in Arizona.

**South Central** – Leota reported that she sent emails out about Indian heroes and got a good response. The information from Millie Titla has been appreciated. Leota is on the Scholarship Committee and has been sending information to Tribal Colleges.

### **Website**

Yvette reported that anyone can provide suggestions or ideas to her.

### **AIANEA Post Office Box**

Tanya will set up a P O box in Williamsburg, IA especially for receiving conference registrations. Julia will set up a P O box in Columbus, OH for receiving treasury items. This will take place in January.

### **2005 Conference**

Pat reported that the budget and agenda was emailed to the Council.

Ivan shared a proposal from Louie Dick sent through Roylene Rides at the Door. Louie would like to do a traditional giveaway at the conference. It takes 4 hours and must be done during daylight. It is a unique opportunity to experience the culture. Roylene will provide details on the ceremony. It cannot be done on Friday. Ciro suggested one day we end a bit early and go into the evening for the ceremony. Sunset in MT in June is 10:30 pm.

Herb reported that we do have time on the agenda to do this. A traditional dinner is part of the giveaway ceremony. We could possibly substitute it for the awards banquet. It would have to be done away from the resort, which is not a problem. It is possible to do the ceremony from a time and logistics perspective.

The Council is receptive to including the traditional giveaway and dinner in the conference. The Council feels it is very appropriate to include it.

Time, logistics and expense are all considerations. More details will be coming and a report from the planning committee in Feb. Herb reported that the expense consideration does not need to be a problem. He proposed that we switch the awards banquet and use the portion of the registration fee designated to the awards banquet to offset the giveaway and traditional dinner expense. We will need to check with Louie to see if awards could be presented in conjunction or if we should do awards during a luncheon, at the business meeting or other options.

### **Other Items**

Yvette wondered if a higher registration fee can be charged to non-members. Herb explained that there is nothing keeping that from happening now. In the past, we have charged the same rate so as to support NRCS employees. Ciro suggested that maybe for non-members, we could allow them to join during the conference at a reduced rate for the remainder of the year.

Noller suggested we get a supply of the AIANEA pins and use as a recruitment tool. We could place a pin on a card that has the website address on it. Ann Perales has the information as to where to order the pins from. Ivan will contact Ann regarding the supplier and what the cost would be to get a new supply.

### **Next Teleconference**

The next teleconference will take place on February 11, 2005 at 11:00 Central Time. The call-in number and passcode may be the same. Ivan will get information out.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Secretary