



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

“Respect, Harmony, and Beauty”

**AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
FOR NRCS
NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE
September 8, 2006**

Those present: Steve Myers, Crystal Leonetti, David Elliott, Pat Green, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Carol Crouch, Buster Landin, Ciro LoPinto, Herb Webb, Blythe Koyiyumptewa and Millie Titla.

Not Present: Leota Burnett and Felix Nez.

Welcome and Roll Call

President, Crystal Leonetti and called the meeting to order at 11:39 am CST. She welcomed all and conducted the roll call.

Action items are noted in red. Motions are in blue.

Northern Plains Regional Representatives

Steve Myers will be filling in for Pat Broyles as the Northern Plains Regional Representatives until January, 2007.

Approval of Minutes

The July minutes were reviewed and approved with amendments by Council members.

MOTION 09082006-1: Motion was made to accept the minutes of the July meeting minutes.

Motion made by: Ciro LoPinto

Motion seconded: Buster Landin

Motion passed: Unanimously

Treasurer's Report

Tanya reviewed the Treasurer's Report that was emailed prior to the teleconference. Tanya updated the National Council members on the conference registration and membership dues. She reviewed the over all expenses of the conference to the members regarding the AIANEA conference in Alaska.

MOTION 09082006-2: Motion was made to accept the Treasurer's Report.

Motion made by: David Elliott

Motion seconded: Ciro LoPinto

Motion passed: Unanimously

Region Reports

Southeast Region – Pat Green reported the following;

- Southeast Region had seven of its ten AIANEA dues paying members to attend the AIANEA/APIO Conference in Anchorage, Alaska. Even though the Southeast Region has its own Indian work group which meets by teleconference monthly, the Alaska Conference provided the first opportunity for several of our Southeast members to meet on site personally.
- According to our members it was a great opportunity to put a name with a face with not only our Southeast members but also with membership across the country. Speaking for our membership from the south, everyone commented that it was a very informative and entertaining conference and we appreciated the Alaskan hospitality shown to us.
- In the state of Georgia, NRCS hired their first American Indian employee this past summer under the WAE program. The position has been presently extended and hopefully it will soon be permanent in the near future.

Northern Plains Region – Pat Broyles is on a leave of absence, however, Stephen Myers, Colorado, reported the following;

- The Tribal Liaison in Towaoc, Colorado has been asked to help inventory locations of plants that are used for medicinal or religious purposes. Based on plant collections, it is hoped that plant material centers can propagate plants for future revegetation work.

Constance Miller reported the following;

- She continues to work with the Ho-Chunk Nation (Winnebago), acting as a go-between for the NE Winnebago American Indian Liaison and Manhattan Plant Materials Center in Kansas. A healing garden, AiKiRuti, has been established with plant materials contributed by the Manhattan PMC.

Herb Webb reported the following;

- The Confederated Salish Kootenai tribe has updated its website. The NRCS liaison is mentioned under the Tribal Resources, Land Planning tab.

East Region – Ciro LoPinto report the following;

- NY again requested the NEDC course "Consultation with AI Governments"
- Cultural Resource consultation with NY Indian Nations has led to a more expansive request by the Onondaga for a more comprehensive Consultation Agreement with NRCSNY

West Region – Felix Nez was not present; however, Blythe

Felix Nez was not present; however, he submitted the following message/introduction to the National Council;

- "I would like to introduce the AIANEA Drum Group. The Drum Group was formed in April 2001 to promote traditional ways of teaching through songs, stories and community. Members are NRCS employees and respected Elders representing different tribes from various parts of Indian Country, each bringing with them their respective culture, customs and wisdom. Music is an integral part of American Indian culture and keeps us focused on who we are, where we came from, and where we are going. Please help me welcome and thank the Drum Group for the harmony carried through their songs, stories and beat."

Blythe Koyiyumtewa reported;

- In August, an NRCS information meeting/presentation was held for the Dilkon FO in Dilkon, AZ for the local community members. All local participants were speakers of the Navajo language. Most were bilingual, but there was at least one Elder who spoke only Navajo. Felix Nez, Dilkon District Conservationist, gave the presentation in the Navajo language and did an excellent job of facilitating the meeting.

Crystal Leonetti reported;

- Crystal Leonetti and the Bethel D.C., Andy Oxford, visited the native Village of Akiachak in Alaska to conduct an NRCS information meeting for the local people. The main topic of discussion was the formation of a Tribal Conservation District. The meeting was conducted in the Yu'pik language.

Midwest Region – Buster Landin submitted the following report;

- Submitted the AIANEA – APIO conference summary report to Indiana's Civil Rights Committee and to Indiana State Conservationist Jane Hardisty. Worked on Access Database that tracks outreach and recruiting activities for Indiana.

Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen reported;

- An RC&D in Iowa is working successfully with the Sac and Fox Tribe to conduct a floristic inventory on the settlement land, approximately 10,000 acres. This has assisted in building a trust relationship with the tribe and will likely lead to further natural resources work between the RC&D and the tribe.

South Central Region – Leota Burnett was not present, however, Carol Crouch reported the following;

- Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) re-signed an agreement with AISES to sponsored three scholarships for three students at 1,000.00 each. Students must be American Indian and pursuing a degree in science, natural resources or engineering.
- OTCAC held sponsor the Oklahoma Statewide Women in Ag Conference on August 10 and 11th with the purchase of booth space for the event. Over 175 women attended the conference with all diversity groups represented.
- OTCAC support the AIANEA conference with a poster presentation in Alaska.

NHQ/Tribal Liaison- Edith Morigeau

Edith Morigeau, NRCS National Tribal Liaison, was not able to join the teleconference.

Action item: Crystal will follow up with Edith and extend an invitation for her to join our teleconference next month.

AISES GRC Meeting

Noller Herbert joined the teleconference to discuss the Government Relations Council (GRC) meeting being held in Washington, DC, September 21, 2006. Noller outlined the GRC agenda. Carol Crouch recommended Roylene Rides at the Door and Noller Herbert be selected by the GRC to speak at the conference. Noller Herbert and Roylene Rides at the Door will attend the meeting as a representative for NRCS. Crystal opened up discussion for AIANEA to sponsor a Sequoyah Fellowship with AISES. This would enable the AIANEA a way to support AISES in developing their mission and honor an AIANEA member at the same time.

Action item: Carol Crouch will provide a summary to the National Council regarding the AIANEA possibly sponsoring a Sequoyah Fellowship each year and submit the fellowship in honor of one of our outstanding members.

2007 Conference Chair and Committee

Crystal discussed the 2007 Conference Chair Committee. Crystal recommended that the Conference Chair be Felix Nez and the Co-Chair would be David Elliott. Millie Titla has been asked to chair the SAIGE conference in 2007. Recommendation was made to keep the conference committee to eight (8) members.

Visioning Process Chair and Committee

Crystal opened discussion regarding the Visioning Process for the 2007 National Conference. A recommendation was made for a past President and Elder to be on the Visioning committee. The floor was open for volunteers. Ciro LoPinto, Buster Landin, Millie Titla and Noller Herbert volunteered for the committee. The book recommended for the Visioning process is called "Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within." It was recommended the Visioning Committee will elect Visioning Process Chair once the committee is formed.

Action Item: Ciro will look into a bulk purchasing price for the book called "Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within"

Action Item: Crystal will send an email out to all past Presidents to see if any of these past Presidents would like to participate on the Visioning Committee.

2008 Conference – Planning, Locale Proposals, SAIGE

Crystal provided an overview of the SAIGE conference. Crystal visited with the SAIGE President and advised her that AIAEAN was interested in partnering with them in 2008 and that AIANEA members were looking for a site that would meet a room capacity needs of 500 rooms. The AIANEA deadline for the proposals is October 15, 2006. It was proposed that both associations will investigate sites for the 2008 and that both parties will hold a teleconference to decide on the site location for 2008.

Action Item: Crystal will precede to set-up a teleconference with SAIGE after the proposals for site selection is completed.

Darrel Dominick, Cecil Currin Retirement Gifts

Crystal advised the National Council that there was a vote to purchase a piece of American Indian art work done by an AIANEA member, Noller Herbert, to present to Darrel Dominick as a retirement gift. Crystal advised the National Council that Carol Crouch will oversee the delivery of the gift to Darrel Dominick; along with any letters or cards that are sent to Carol for Darrel. Crystal advised the National Council that Herb Webb has agreed to make a drum to be presented to Cecil Currin's retirement gift and that the AIANEA will reimburse Herb for the materials to make the drum.

MOTION 09082006-3:

Motion was made to have Herb Webb make the drum for Cecil Currin's retirement gift and to reimburse Herb Webb for the materials.

Motion made by: David Elliott
Motion seconded: Buster Landin
Motion passed: Unanimously

Standing Committee Chairs – recommendation from the President

Crystal reviewed the standard procedure for the Standing Committee Chairs. The standard procedure has been to send an email out to the current Standing Committee Chairs to determine if the individuals would like to continue their chair responsibilities under the new President. Discussion was opened regarding Elder's Committee Chair.

Action item: David Elliott will pull together a meeting with the Elder's Committee to select an Elder's Committee Chair and discuss what re-assignments and re-lineaments need to be made to accommodate the needs of the Elders.

2007 Elections – Northern Plains, East, and South Central Regional Reps and 2nd Vice President

Crystal reminded the National Council that the Northern Plains, East and South Central regional representatives position were coming up for election.

Action item: Crystal will write an email and forward to the regional representatives regarding the nomination for the Northern Plains, East and South Central regional representative positions. Deadline will be October 11, 2006.

Welcome to the new Chief

Crystal recommended that AIANEA send a hard copy letter to the new chief welcoming him aboard and informing him about the AIANEA.

Action Item: Crystal will write the letter.

2006 Conference summary

Crystal reviewed the comments from the conference. Overall comments were excellent.

Other business

Crystal opened discussion regarding the Historian position.

Action item: Crystal will attach in the email being sent to the regional representatives regarding 2nd Vice President and the upcoming regional representative's vacancies the current Historian position that is being sent nomination for the;

Scholarship

Crystal opened the discussion regarding increasing the AIANEA scholarship amounts for American Indian Students.

Action Item: Tanya will check with Wells Fargo on a separate saving account for scholarship.

Action Item: Herb and Buster will set-up a teleconference with the scholarship committee to gather recommendation and possible ways to increase the AIANEA scholarship fund.

Poster

David Elliott provided the members with an overview regarding the progress of the poster. David provided an overview of the packet information that is being put together for the next State to utilize when preparing the next year's poster. Suggestion was made that all American Indian Heritage Posters s be posted on our website.

Action Item: David Elliott will follow up on getting all the American Indian Heritage posters on the website.

Review of Action items

Done

Adjourn and Next Meeting

The next meeting is on October 13, 2006. Same call in number.

MOTION 09082006-4: Motion was made that the September AIANEA meeting be adjourned.

Motion made by: David Elliott
Motion seconded: Buster Landin
Motion passed: Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by
Carol Vallee Crouch, Secretary