



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

"Respect, Harmony, and Beauty"

AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION FOR NRCS NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE

December 20, 2007

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Those present: David Elliott, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Millie Tittla, Dave Wise, Leota Burnett, Gina Kerzman, Buster Landin, Felix Nez , Carlos Suarez w/ NOPHNRCSE and Astrid Martinez w/ NOPHNRCSE

Not Present: Levi Montoya, Carol Crouch, Pat Green, Ciro LoPinto, Crystal Leonetti, Edie Morigeau and Phillip Dixon.

President, David Elliott called the meeting to order at approximately **11:45 am CST.**

Tanya was given Dave Wise's voting right as he has to get off by 12:00 p.m. his time. Dave Wise exited the conference at 11:59 a.m. Gina Kerzman exited the conference at 12:00 noon.

Approval of Minutes

The November minutes were reviewed and approved by the National Council members.

MOTION: 12202007-1:

Motion was made to accept the November minutes.

Motion made by: Felix Nez

Motion seconded: Leota Burnett

Motion passed: Unanimously

Treasurer's Report

Tanya reviewed the Treasurer's Report for November.

Buster asked if members are utilizing the AIANEA Scholarship direct deposit account to contribute to the fund. Tanya noted that only 5 members are currently contributing in this way. There is about \$65.00 a month coming in from these member contributions. Tanya thinks we need to re advertise/promote it and give more information on how it works, in order to increase contributions.

The P.O. Box for the AIANEA expires in January and is in the town where Tanya works through January 4, 2008. Tanya needs to know what to do about it since there is going to be a new treasurer in the future. She thought maybe it could be discussed and decided on during the January teleconference if it is held within the first couple of weeks. National Council will decide on it then.

Millie brought up the teleconference call in number and lines. Earlier in the year, Edie Morigeau had said she fully supports our organization and that we would be able to keep the call in number and lines for the

next year. David and Millie have both talked with Edie Morigeau since then and had the same responses. Recently, David emailed Edie to confirm the use of the call in number for our teleconferences. He has not heard back from her yet but feels we can still use these same numbers. He will get in touch with Edie and transfer the information to Millie once he gets the okay.

Action Item: David will contact Edie Morigeau to confirm use of the same Teleconference call in number for 2008. He will contact Millie when it is confirmed and transfer them over to her.

MOTION: 12202007-2:

Motion was made to approve, as presented, the AIANEA November Treasurer's Report for November 8, 2007 AIANEA monthly teleconference.

Motion made by: Buster Landin

Motion seconded: Felix Nez

Motion passed: Unanimously

Region Reports

East Region – Ciro LoPinto reported the following;

Northern Plains Region – Levi Montoya reported the following;

Southeast Region – Pat Green reported the following;

West Region – Felix Nez reported the following;

Midwest Region – Buster Landin reported the following;

South Central Region – Leota Burnett reported the following: Leota has been sending out emails to tribes and South Central members on grant opportunities and other interesting tribal information. She delivered 50 American Indian Heritage Month posters to 4 tribal offices in her area per their request for them.

NHQ/Tribal Liaison: Edith Morigeau –

Edith not available.

2008 Conference

David opened this up for discussion and to let us know that we will have more proposals to consider. The only official proposal we have received so far is from the NOPHNRCSSE.

David gave us a list of meeting dates for the other Employee Organization Association's meetings for 2008 that could help us in our planning process. These dates are:

NOPHNRCSSE - July 7-11, 2008 in Madison Wisconsin

APIO - August 11-15, 2008 in Spokane, Washington

Black Organization (NOPBNRCSSE) - Dec. 10-14, 2007 (Already done – this is their 2008 Conference)

Proposal 1

Carlos Suarez and Astrid Martinez joined the teleconference and thanked us for having them on and for listening to their proposal. AIANEA National Council discussed the NOPHNRCSSE proposal to have a joint training conference in Madison, Wisconsin from July 7 to July 11, 2008 at the Madison Concourse Hotel and Governors Club. David asked the council members if they had questions for them regarding the conference. They understand that we may not make a decision today as we are waiting on other proposals.

NOPHNRCSSE has left open spaces on their tentative agenda for us to be included if we vote to join them in Madison. They have some training and speakers they are trying to accommodate and they are also working the agenda so we can join them. They have checked on room availability for our members too. We can have a separate block of 125 rooms available if we join them and separate meeting spaces for our needs. Flights in and out of Madison are readily available, convenient and probably less expensive. Having the

meeting jointly can help both organizations out and will give us an opportunity to get to know both organizations better.

David discussed some things that we do at our conferences. Carlos told us that Wisconsin has a good tradition of working with the tribes and they will accommodate us with the tours and we may be able to visit some of the mounds that are fairly close to Madison. Astrid said it is a nice area and there is a lot to do there that is close by.

They want and are willing to work out details for the meeting so it fits both organizations' agendas and so it will benefit both organizations. He thought we might have more leadership present if we join the NOPHNCSE for the 2008 conference. Carlos will support whatever decision we make.

Tanya asked Carlos if he was aware that one of the big reasons we may receive a proposal from Oneida is that we have an AIANEA Elder who is a tribal member there. This Elder is also on the Oneida Nation staff. Carlos said he was not aware of that and restated the fact that they would support whatever decision we made.

Carlos asked when our next meeting is and if we will have a decision by then. David said he did not know as Millie will be setting it up as incoming president and we don't know if we can have the decision that soon. Carlos wanted us to know there were some deadlines for them to confirm the meeting and need some time so they can plan accordingly. Millie thought we could have an answer for them by the end of January, 2008.

Buster suggested Millie contact the hotels in Wisconsin involved and see what dates are available so we can get a little ahead in the footwork. Time is already getting short.

Proposal 2

Another proposal coming is from the state of Wisconsin. They want us to meet at the Oneida Nation in north eastern Wisconsin. Tony Bush had sent an email out saying they do not have dates in August or September at the hotel in Oneida for our conference.

Pat Leavenworth will support whatever kind of activities we want to do relating to the meetings whether we decide to have the meeting with the NOPHNCSE or at the Oneida Nation.

Carlos and Astrid exited the conference at 11:55 p.m.

Proposal 3

Pooh told David he and Carol Crouch are putting a proposal together for AIANEA to join with the APIO again. Pooh confirmed that APIO welcomes AIANEA and the hotel has confirmed hotel rooms available.

Proposal 4 (unlikely)

Ivan Dozier had a proposal for the 2007 conference and Tanya asked if he had been contacted about the 2008 conference. David had emailed Ivan. Ivan has not answered David back so we don't know if it is still a possibility.

Earlier, David sent a letter to Pat Broyles, SAIGE President, letting him know AIANEA accepted Sage's termination of a joint conference for 2007. The letter was carbon copied to AIANEA National Council members and it was posted on our web site.

David called the woman at the Grand Traverse Resort to make sure they knew the AIANEA was not going to be having a conference with the SAIGE organization and to make sure we were not committed to any agreements with the hotel. He has not received a call back from her. He did get to speak with another

person and let them know the above information. David said we did not sign any contract or other paper work with the resort and he thinks we are okay with them.

Tanya was asked to be the chair for the Conference Planning Committee for the meeting in 2008. Millie and David discussed it before this teleconference and Millie is in agreement with the request. Millie had asked Tanya earlier and asked her again during this teleconference. Tanya is leaning toward not doing it since she is taking on more responsibilities at work and with AIANEA. She is concerned with being overwhelmed and unable to do the task well.

Action Item: Millie will contact the APIO, Wisconsin choices, Roel Herrera and Roylene on the conference needs for 2008.

AIANEA Elections

2008 Elections: West, Southeast, Midwest, and 2nd Vice President

David reported the following election results: Congratulation letters were sent out by David to the elected officials for 2008.

2nd Vice President

- **Tanya Meyer Dideriksen**

Southeast Regional Representative

- **Phillip Dixon**

Midwest Regional Representative

- **Niles Landin**

West Regional Representative

- **Gina Kerzman**

Action Item: David will send out percentages of voting members for the positions that were open.

AIANEA Lifetime Member Jackets

David reported on Herb Webb's report regarding the following:

Caryl Butcher said there is no ethics issue with having our logo on the jackets. Herb was contacted by the vendor and informed that the setup fee is now a \$350.00 (one time fee) and we need to have a 9" image of our logo. It would cost \$250.00 logo set up without the animals. Herb suggested the possibility of having it silk screened on.

David feels we should bite the bullet and go for the detailed logo with the animals. If we do this, we need a better image of the logo. Tanya brought up that we had re-done the logo for last year's conference and maybe we can use it to get this done. It was decided that last year's logo would not work. Buster brought up the AIANEA banner which has a big color logo on it. It may be usable. David said the tribe he works with just got a new scanner/printer and that he would ask them if they can scan it in and print us out a copy of it.

Action Item: David will look in the boxes to see if he has the AIANEA banner and if so, he will see if the tribe will scan it in and give us a scanned image which can be shipped to Herb. Herb can get it to the vendor for set up.

MOTION: 11082007-6:

Motion was made to approve the set up fee for the AIANEA logo for the jacket and pay the fee.

Motion made by: Buster Landin
Motion seconded: Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen
Motion passed: Unanimously

AIANEA Newsletter

Buster has been busy with school and is also working on the newsletter. He is not getting a lot of feedback for articles from the members for the newsletter. Tanya asked if she had sent him information on the Elders. She said she has something ready for him and will be sure to get it to Buster ASAP for the newsletter. It was suggested we do the newsletter as a winter issue. We need to get more participation and support for Buster to have articles for it. Buster may be able to put in scholarship information, dues, and other association information in it.

AIANEA Elders Committee Report

Tanya reviewed the progress being made by the Elder's Committee. She said one of the biggest issues has been trying to determine what the maximum number of association Elders should be. The Elder's Committee has worked extensively on resolving this dilemma and has come up with a proposal. Tanya developed a draft document that outlines the role of the AIANEA Elder, based on results of the committee's October teleconference. The Elders Committee & Elders tentatively decided that AIANEA will have 9 Elders.

Several committee members were also concerned about excluding other Elders. It was decided that the AIANEA National Council will have the option to increase the number of Elders if we need other regions represented. There were other concerns about including the local Elders (in conference locations) as a means to include additional Elders without increasing the number of AIANEA Elders. It was suggested that they can be invited as honored guests and can be at the conference. Progress has been made and this is a major step.

Once the draft proposals are accepted by the Elder's Committee members, it will be presented to National Council for final approval. We are going to stick with the same process we have been using when selecting new Elders for the AIANEA. That process is outlined in the document Tanya developed. David commented on Tanya's good leadership on the Committee. He thinks we will see some very positive things coming from that committee. He thanked Tanya for her efforts.

Tanya wants to thank Carol Crouch for putting the proposal together which got something on paper and got the Elders and the Elders Committee to move on this perplexing issue.

AIANEA Scholarship Committee: Tracking Report

The Scholarship Committee is looking at ways to track recipients of AIANEA scholarships.

Other Business

The Joint Employees Association Teleconference with other Association Presidents & Vice Presidents of those Organizations present was held November 30, 2007 in regards to the 2009 Joint Association Conference Chief Lancaster wants to see happen. David was asked to chair the meeting was the lead person in getting everyone together to address Chief Lancaster's request for a joint Association meeting being held in one location. The Chief wanted this proposal presented to him by December 11, 2007. David was also supposed to have a list of all the Pro's and Con's from all of the Employee Organizations of what could happen if an all employee organization meeting was to be held in one location to Chief Lancaster by December 31. The APIO was the only Employee organization that responded to David. Carlos Suarez volunteered to send a letter to the Chief requesting an extension to the end of January for the proposal and Pro's and Con's list. He was granted that request.

Attendees of the teleconference went over some of the Pros and Cons of having a joint meeting with all of the associations under one roof. There are several concerns that were brought up. One of the bigger concerns is having so many employees gone from each state at the same time. For instance, one state sent 50 employees to one of the Association meetings held. If every state sent that many to the Joint conference, then it could pose a workforce problem for the state(s). Concern of having a joint meeting was that attendance might be down because employees normally allowed to go might not be able to due to volume of absences at one time.

Another concern was how this would affect the Planning Committee members trying to put agendas, tours, activities, speakers, etc. together so all of the Associations could be represented with individuality. Dana York attended the Black Employees Organizational meeting and she said the chief is looking at a joint meeting at a joint location. This is not what we were told and has become an issue. David told us we need to get clarification from the Chief as to what he really wants to see happen at the proposed Joint Employee Association meeting for 2009.

Also if we do it once, do we have to do it every year from now on? What is expected from the chief? The council needs to develop a list of the Pro's and Con's to having a joint meeting. We have looked at the AIANEA being the lead in this joint meeting. The chief lead us to believe it to be something we may do every 3 – 5 years, not yearly.

Action Item: Millie will send an email to the National Council members and to the new Council members to get responses for Pro's and Con's for having a joint conference with the other employee organizations in the year 2009. Responses need to be back by January 9, 2008.

Review of Action items

Items marked in red.

Next meeting – January 9, 2008

Millie will send an email to National council with the changed meeting date.

Adjourn and Next Meeting

The next meeting is on **Wednesday, January 9, 2008 at 11:00 am MST**. Call in information will be provided.

MOTION 12202007-

Motion made that the December 2007 AIANEA meeting be adjourned at 1: 32 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Leota Burnett for Carol Vallee Crouch, Secretary