

**BOARD OF NATIVE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting:**

**Thursday:**

**April 7, 2016:**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Native American Commissioners of the City of Fargo, North Dakota, was held in the City Commission Room at City Hall at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 7, 2016.

The Native American Commissioners present or absent were as follows:

Present: Connie Longie, Sharon White Bear, John Strand, Guy Fox, Clinton Alexander, Crystal Gonzales, Maylyn Warne

Also Present: Dan Mahli (City of Fargo), Cristie Jacobsen (Fargo Police Liaison), Tanya RedRoad (Human Relations Commission Liaison)

**Item 1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Alexander welcomed Members to the meeting and introductions were made.

**Item 2. Approve Order of Agenda**

Mr. Fox moved the Order of Agenda be approved with the addition of discussion of liaison roles and Comedian Ralphie May to Item 6. Second by Ms. Longie. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

**Item 3. Minutes: Regular Meeting of March 3, 2016**

Ms. Gonzales moved the minutes of the March 3 , 2016 Native American Commission meeting be approved as presented. Second by Mr. Fox. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

**Item 4. Announcements**

The inaugural Crossroads Powwow will take place on May 13-15 at the Scheels Arena, the committee is still fundraising and donations can be made at <https://www.gofundme.com/Fargopowwow>.

Ms. White Bear stated she is continuing to work with the Fargo Marathon Committee to determine the location for the Native American Commission's marathon potluck and drum performance. She added more details will be provided as they are made available.

**Item 5. Committee Updates**

**Education** The education committee will meet with Melanie Stabner, Fargo Indian Education Coordinator, on Tuesday, April 12, 2016 regarding goals and objectives in local American Indian education for the upcoming year. A meeting with Dr. Schatz, Superintendent of Fargo Public Schools, will be set once the objectives are finalized. The committee continues to work to establish regular meetings and develop community outreach strategies.

**Health & Wellness** Dr. Donald Warne will be presenting on the Indian American Health Study, on Saturday, May 7, 2016 at the Carlson Fargo Public Library, beginning at 1 p.m. The presentation is open to the community and will include discussion of how the study and its results can be used for community improvements in health outcomes.

**Sweats** The Sweat Lodge Committee continues to regularly schedule sweats through Mr. Fox. Construction of the parking lot; a shed for wood rocks and tools; and changing areas are planned for this spring. Boy Scout Troop 229 built six cedar benches for the sweat lodge as an Eagle Scout project, one will be dedicated at the next sweat meeting.

**Public Relations** The Board is continuing to look for individuals interested in advocating for dental health access or sharing their stories regarding dental disparities in North Dakota. More information is available through Gretchen Dobervich, Public Health Policy Manager for the American Indian Public Health Resource Center, at [gretchen.dobervich@ndsu.edu](mailto:gretchen.dobervich@ndsu.edu). Members reviewed drafts of request letters to tribal leaders and community members for Indigenous Peoples' Day. For more information, contact Crystal Gonzales at [cdg2019@gmail.com](mailto:cdg2019@gmail.com) or feel free to attend an Indigenous Peoples' Day planning meeting, held on the last Thursday of each month at the Main Fargo Public Library.

#### **Item 6. Other Business & Announcements**

The Native American Commission was nominated by the City of Fargo for the U.S. Conference of Mayors Community Livability Award and has moved on to the second round. A call for pictures, videos and supplementary materials displaying the Native American Commission's work was made and more information will be provided to the commissioners.

Discussion was held regarding the liaisons' roles and placement of liaisons at the table to better inform the commission on issues during deliberation. Mr. Fox requested the issue be deferred to the Executive Committee for further discussion and creation of an action plan. Mr. Strand moved the Native American Commission vet, study, analyze and structure an implementation plan if that is the desire. Second by Mr. Fox. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

Ruth Anna Buffalo, Petra Reyna One Hawk and Sianna Conko led a conversation regarding comedian Ralphie May's offensive material on Native Americans, his upcoming show at the Fargo Theatre, and plans for a peaceful demonstration.

Mr. Strand moved the Native American Commission issue a proclamation as follows:

WHEREAS, The Native American Commission challenges Ralphie May, the comedian; Jade Presents, the promoter; and others to heighten their sensitivity and awareness to curb and/or stem the damage or harm that can result from intentionally demeaning, marginalizing and destructive humor and blatant disregard and disrespect for Native American people, dignity, culture and status in our society.

The motion failed for lack of second.

The commission agreed to continue conversation after the meeting and develop a statement or proclamation to be circulated Friday, April 8, 2016.

**Item 7. Public Comment**

Ruth Anna Buffalo announced a training opportunity regarding the American Indian educational experience and perspective. The event is titled “Echoes of the Past Voices of Today—A Courageous Conversation About Making the Invisible Visible in Education” to be held in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota on April 28-29 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Vanessa Timmons from the Indian Education Committee (IEC) announced the IEC will be hosting a taco sale on Friday, April 8 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Agassiz Building, 1305 9 Avenue South. All proceeds go to the Indian Education Committee.

Mr. Strand asked that Fargo Police Liaison Cristie Jacobsen speak with regards to peaceful protests, conduct and expectations. Officer Jacobsen discussed ordinances required by public demonstrations that will be provided to the Ralphie May demonstration planners.

The annual harm reduction seminar will take place on May 11 and 12 at Shooting Star Casino, free and open to the community with breakfast and lunch included. Opportunities will be available for Naloxone certification.

At 7:05 p.m. Mr. Strand moved the Board adjourn for a recess to further discuss a public statement regarding Ralphie May. The Native American Commission is to re-adjourn if there is any recommendation from the Board.

After recess: All Members present. Chair Alexander presiding.

The Native American Commission’s official statement on Comedian Ralphie May and his anticipated performance at the Fargo Theater was read as follows:

The Fargo Native American Commission, in the spirit of healing and reconciliation, challenges Comedian Ralphie May and others to heighten their sensitivity and awareness.

The damage from historical trauma and unresolved grief is compounded by demeaning, marginalizing, and destructive “humor”.

We ask our community to continue to aspire to higher standards to protect the human right of dignity and respect.

The Native American Commission’s mission works to strengthen the Native American community to promote understanding, recognition and respect for cultures to enrich the community as a whole.

*Questions can be directed to City of Fargo Liaison, Kristina Kaupa at [kkaupa@cityoffargo.com](mailto:kkaupa@cityoffargo.com).*

Ms. White Bear moved to approve the public statement for circulation on Friday, April 8, 2016 as presented. Second by Ms. Gonzales. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

**Item 8. Adjourn**

The time at adjournment was 8:06 p.m.