



The Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2022 | 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Members Present	Members Absent
Vanessa Adams Harris	Teresa Runnels
Susan Arkeketa	Elizabeth Battiest
Daniel Carter	Susan Arkeketa
Cheryl Cohenour	Winnie Perdue
Joe Deere	
Sammy Haynes	
Stacey Laskey	
Winnie Perdue	
Matt Roberts	
Kim Teehee	
Dorcas Williams	
Shari (Channa) Williams	

- I. Call to order**
 - a. Meeting called to order at 6:02 pm by Chairwoman Cohenour.
- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - a. Commissioner Cohenour calls for a motion to approve the November Meeting Minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Deere makes a motion to approve
 - ii. Commissioner Roberts seconds the motion
 - b. All commissioners are in unanimous favor – the motion carries.
- III. Land Acknowledgement**
 - a. Read by commissioner Cohenour
- IV. Chair’s Report**
 - a. TPS has decided to put the mascot committee on hold temporarily but Superintendent Dr. Deborah Gist called and personally assured the commission that this is important and they by no means are attempting to ignore this. There are pressing matters to address, but she will be working to have this back in motion by next year
 - i. Commissioner Cohenour reminds the commission that TPS has had a great relationship w GTAIAC these last few years, and there is a feeling of true partnership.
 - b. TPS Indian Education is holding an event in April at Dreamkeepers Park – and GTAIAC will be cohosting in partnership
 - c. Commissioner Cohenour is working with the parks department and arts council by putting together an RFP for a monument to be placed in the dreamkeepers park. The commission does have the permission to make improvements in conjunction with the parks department, and the committee is wanting to work with the arts council to get an

RFP like what they did with the murals beneath some of the Tulsa underpasses. They could light the area – since it isn't a residential area and it would look nice.

Commissioner Cohenour comments that the Irish Choctaw monument is a cluster of stainless-steel feathers that form a circle and is lighted at night – and that concept is what she'd like to investigate for Dreamkeepers Park. Fundraising will be very important for these efforts. The committee is also discussing bronze plaques for the dreamkeepers awards winners.

- d. This year's Native American Day will be at dreamkeepers park this time for the very first time – October 10th this year.
- e. After the November special meeting, Commissioner Cohenour reached out to all Title V Commissions and enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with the commissions to support GTAIAC. The Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women didn't feel it was their place to support as a commission, which she respects and understands. But the other commissions have made it very clear they'd like to work together with a little more – and I want to make that a priority moving forward.
- f. Commissioner Cohenour Prepared the annual report completed every year for the Mayor.
- g. The mayor mentioned that there's the legislature in motion right now for virtual meetings to take place instead of in person. Hopefully, that'll move through quickly – and hopefully, we'll something within a month or 2.
- h. Commissioner Laskey asks if the RFP is sent out will be sent out via parks and recreation. Commissioner Cohenour thinks that it likely will, and it would primarily be marketed to artist communities, where a winner can be selected via votes on the commission's Facebook page. Commissioner Cohenour states that she's still working on getting together some guidelines. It'll likely take the commission the better part of this year to solicit the RFP, with a top 5 for the commission to ultimately select from. Commissioner Cohenour reminds the commission, that the RFP process will be conducted as formally as possible to maintain professionalism.
 - i. Commissioner Teehee announces that Tia Juby, chair of the Human Rights Commission, has offered to assist with the RFP process for the commission. She regularly completes RFP's for her work.
 1. The commission expresses gratitude and excitement for the assistance.

V. Review and Discuss Bylaw changes from 2020

- a. Commissioner Cohenour transitions the meeting to the review and discussion of the bylaw changes from October 2020. Commissioner Cohenour remarks that it has taken an entire year to get the bylaws an entire year put together in a format due to a variety of obstacles.
 - i. Commissioner Haynes requested a review and discussion of the changes to the bylaws, and his efforts as chairman of the bylaws committee have been appreciated.
 - ii. Commissioner Cohenour reminds everyone that these changes to the bylaws were made by Robbie Anquoe, who served as chairman of the commission at the time. She offers to go item by item, and briefly discuss the changes that were made.
 1. The first item of change was under article 3 and dealt with who could be a member of the GTAIAC. Previously, a simple membership request was the only requirement. However, the bylaw now requires proof of tribal card and Indian blood– we had a simple membership request, previously.

2. The second change expanded the commission from a 13 member to a 15-member organization.
 - a. 10 of those seats are appointed by Mayor
 - b. 5 of those seats are appointed by county commissioners
 3. The third change included updates to term limits, attendance expectations, method of election, chair responsibilities, vice-chair responsibilities, and standing committees.
- b. Commissioner Cohenour then presents a list of bylaw recommendations from the city's legal department.
- i. Commissioner Teehee states that the rest of the commission had not had a chance to review the recommended changes from legal and suggests that the commissioners be given time to review and vote in time for the February commission meeting.
 1. Commissioner Cohenour agrees to do so but reassures the commission that she feels the recommendations contain no substantial changes to the commissions' bylaws or business outside of potentially changing the date of the nominating committee's presentation of their slate of officers.

VI. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day

- i. Commissioner Cohenour states that the commission did not meet, but they've solidified the date for October 10th.

b. Dream Keepers Committee

- i. No report for this year's Dreamkeeper's Ceremony, but Commissioner Adams – Harris reports the influx of positive feedback from the recipients, community members, and all who had a chance to participate in the 2021 Dreamkeeper's ceremony.

c. Education Committee

- i. Commissioner Roberts reports the challenging times as far as students who have been afflicted and faculty/staff members afflicted by COVID-19.
 1. He reminds the commission that they will need to begin thinking about the TPS Indian Education outstanding senior recipients. He recognizes that while the commission may not be able to do the ceremony they've done in the past, the commission can still meaningfully honor these students.
- ii. Commissioner Williams shares that the TPS Indian Education program is working to plan a culturally significant activity for the community. The event will be held outside, and organizers are looking at ways to provide transportation for tribes farther out an opportunity to come to the city for dance/song. The activities will include Pawnee singers, stickball, Native craft vendors, and food trucks. The event will go from 10 am-4 pm.
 1. TPS Indian Ed will also utilize the opportunity to offer enrollment services for students in the Indian Education Program. The committees will be asking for tribes with mobile units to assist by allowing the units to be used for those services during the event which is tentatively planned for April 23rd. Community members can also enroll students in the Indian Program at school, or the TPS enrollment center.

d. Public Relations Committee

- i. Commissioner Haynes reports that the committee hasn't met recently, but he has granted each commission member access to the commission's Gmail account.
- ii. Commissioner Haynes reports that the committee continues to provide information on events and newsworthy items. They're currently working to gather interest pieces of former commission members who've gone on to do great things.

e. Nominating Committee

- i. No report

f. Bylaws Committee

- i. See section V

g. Cultural Committee

- i. Commissioner Williams reports that the committee hasn't met, nor have any reports of significant community events due to COVID.
 - 1. Commissioner Deere reports a significant community member who is working to get kids into Cherokee Summer, which will focus on outdoor activity, and teaching culturally significant cooking items like frybread, grape dumplings, and sweet corn.

h. Parks Committee

- i. See section IV, paragraph c

VII. Election of Officers for 2022/2023

- a. Commissioner Cohenour begins by stating how much she's enjoyed serving as chair during this time, and thanks to everyone for allowing her the opportunity.
 - i. A private ballot for each commissioner is provided to each commissioner, and Lachelle will pick them up from each commissioner and tally the results.
- b. Commissioner Cohenour remarks that there is only one nominee for vice-chair – and asks if anyone would like to nominate someone from the floor.
 - i. Commissioner Teehee suggests that the commission should move forward with the election of the chair, which may inform any additional considerations for vice-chair.
 - ii. The Commission collectively agrees on the proposal/
- c. Commissioner Deere is voted as chair of the commission.
 - i. Commissioner Deere then nominates Commissioners Adams-Harris and Cohenour as Vice-Chair.
 - ii. Commissioner Cohenour rejects the motion and defers to Commissioner Adams Harris as Vice-Chair.
 - iii. Commissioner Haynes makes a motion to approve Commissioner Chair and Vice-Chair.
 - 1. The motion carries unanimously
 - iv. The commission expresses appreciation and thanks Commissioner Cohenour for her service, and leadership these past two years.

VIII. Old Business

- a. None

IX. New Business

- a. None

X. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Commissioner Williams requests an explanation of the recent updates on the Mcgirt case.
 - i. Commissioner Teehee summarizes that the passage of time doesn't invalidate treaty rights – the supreme court upheld treaty rights.
 - ii. Commissioner Cohenour agrees and remarks that the problem the community has had with the state and city, is the capacity of their work with the Muscogee light horse
 1. Commissioner Cohenour also announces that David Emilia, Tulsa's City attorney has officially retired, and his post will be filling soon. She reminds the commission that these are details the commission needs to be vigilant about, and she'd like the commission to be prepared to send approval or disapproval of the person selected to fill the role to the city council because the city council must approve that appointee.

XI. Adjournment

- a. Commissioner Cohenour requests a motion to adjourn
 - i. Commissioner Teehee calls for a motion
 - ii. Commissioner Deere seconds
 - iii. All in favor
 - iv. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm