CITY OF TULSA
CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | January 28, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Susan Arkeketa, Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohnenour, Joe Deere, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Patsy Powell, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee, Erica Waeltz-Carter, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: David Bible, Stacy Laskey, Warren Queton, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Dorcas Williams

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.
II. **Roll Call**
III. **Land Acknowledgment**
IV. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve November meeting minutes.
      i. Commissioner Powell made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.
         1. Aye: 12
      ii. Motion carried, November meeting minutes approved.
V. **Commissioner Oath of Office**
   a. Lexi passed around a document for commissioners to sign the oath of office. All commissioners present signed.
VI. **Chair / Vice Chair Report**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour reflected on recent national changes, beginning of a new year, and new city administration.
      i. Last Friday, the Title V Commissions Chairs and Vice Chairs met with Mayor Nichols.
      ii. Vacant position representing GTAIAC on the HRC, Kim is so busy she has rolled off. If you are interested in serving, reach out to Chairwoman Cohenour.
   b. Chairwoman Cohenour passed around a paper with 2024 committee assignments. Commissioners were prompted to indicate if they would like to change or continue their committee assignments.

c. Vice Chair Carter: In the last meeting (November 2024), the consent agenda included letter to the City of Tulsa in support of transferring the Council Oak & Stickball Park land to the Muscogee Creek Nation. This is a huge milestone for City of Tulsa tribal relations and Muscogee Creek Nation, first time a park has been transferred to a nation. Very symbolic of what the relationship between tribes and City can be. The Commission played a role and should be proud.
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour highlighted Daniel's role in setting up meetings between Muscogee Creek Nation and City of Tulsa. Acknowledgement of active role in conversations and penning the letter.
d. Vice Chair Carter acknowledged Krystal as the incoming Deputy Mayor. Krystal, in turn, noted that the new Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships, Amanda Swope, starts tomorrow (1/29).
e. Vice Chair Carter also spoke to the recent federal executive orders and potential affects on tribes. The scope of the freeze on federal grants is unclear, but tribes receive many grants so it's important to understand what the freeze means. Stay informed as citizens and awareness of impacts to tribes.
    i. Commissioner Teehee: Tribal Delegates are working on a national level to minimize impact to their communities.
    ii. Commissioner Deere: NCAI met drafted letter to White House related to DEI. They seek to educate government officials on their obligation to tribes.
f. Amanda Swope joined the meeting as a guest and introduced herself to the Commission. Previously worked for Muscogee Creek Nation in self-governance, sovereignty, juvenile justice. Has also served as an Oklahoma State Representative. In her new role, she will support with conversations between tribes and City, work with tribes on key issues (ie: housing and public safety), and act as an ambassador on behalf of Mayor Nichols in Native spaces.
    i. Vice Chair Carter: It is wonderful that Mayor Nichols recognizes the need for this position.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee
    i. Next Native American Day on Monday, October 13 will be 9th annual.
    ii. First committee meeting will be February 20th.
    iii. All commissioners serve on this committee and help from everyone is appreciated as the event is a lot of work.
b. Dream Keepers Committee
    i. Commissioner Matt Roberts sent update via email.
    ii. Taking nominations for Dream Keepers Awards on a continuous basis.
c. Education Committee
    i. Commissioner Matt Roberts sent update via email.
    ii. Attended cross-commission education meeting and discussed the question: What education outcomes is your commission trying to impact? Shared about

GTAIAC's work to increase student access to culturally-relevant programming, Students of Excellence awards, and student involvement in Native American Day.

iii. Lexi extended an invite to everyone on the education committee to attend the next cross-commission education meeting. Email Lexi if you would like to attend.

d. Public Relations Committee
   i. Commissioner Laskey sent report prior to the meeting.
   ii. Working on more PR on social media.
e. Cultural Committee – no report
f. Parks Committee
   i. Chairwoman Cohenour met with Tulsa Parks Department in December to determine next steps in the Dream Keepers Park renovation process. Currently out for bid for street study.
   ii. Next meeting: Thursday (1/30) at 3pm at Parks Department (1028 E 6th St) to inform local businesses on the process.
   iii. Would love to have something happen at the park before the next Native American Day.
   iv. Secured funding for Cherokee Garden. Chairwoman Cohenour is going next week to the Osage Nation to request funding for their garden. Will go to Muscogee Creek Nation next.
   v. After architecture firm is selected, can start working on the monument. Will collaborate with the Arts Commission.
g. Bylaws Committee
   i. Vice Chair Carter shared that the committee discussed the purpose behind reviewing amendments to City Ordinance and Commission Bylaws to ensure everyone is on the same page. It was a great discussion, nothing to present at this meeting.
   ii. If you want to be involved, sign up for the Bylaws Committee. Reach out to Vice Chair Carter or anyone on the Bylaws Committee to share feedback

VIII. Old Business – no old business

IX. New Business

a. Commissioner Teehee spoke about the Human Rights Commission vacancy for a GTAIAC liaison.
   i. Meetings are on Mondays, the day before GTAIAC.
   ii. Suggested adding space for HRC report in committee reports.
   iii. A lot of good people who serve on that commission, find commonality amongst other commissions and broad network of individuals.
b. Chairwoman Cohenour prompted Commissioner Teehee to talk about the United Keetoowah Band decision and implications for tribal sovereignty for Cherokee Nation.
   i. Commissioner Teehee: On the last day of previous presidential administration, they issued a legal opinion that gave UKB the ability to have land on the Cherokee Nation taken into a trust, will have jurisdiction over 76 acres of land taken from

Cherokee Nation. Decision made without regard to any federal court case or congressional act. Cherokee Nation believes the opinion is wrong, could set precedent for challenges to tribal sovereignty in the future.

ii. Nothing has been implemented, so currently nothing has changed.
iii. Cherokee Nation is seeking a withdraw.
iv. Commissioner Deere: Hope the review will find there is no jurisdiction to follow through on this decision.
v. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter: Has this happened before?
    1. Commissioner Teehee: Yes, though not often, and have seen disastrous results when it has happened in the past.

X. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Tulsa City Council Native American Affairs Committee on February 3.
b. Tulsa Public Schools student social dance on April 12. Commissioner Shari Williams will send a save the date when available.
c. Lexi shared information about two upcoming City of Tulsa events:
    i. 2SLGBTQIA+ Know Your Rights Forum (January 30) hosted by the Human Rights Commission's 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee. At Centennial Center in Veteran's Park from 6 – 7:30 pm.
    ii. Lunar New Year (February 1) hosted by the Asian Affairs Commission. At 101 Archer from 6 – 9 pm. This is AAC's first community-wide event, and they look to Native American Day as a model of what a cultural event can be.
d. Tulsa City County Library Breakfast (Saturday, March 1): Award ceremony not open to the public. Commissioner Runnels will share invite with the commission when ready.
e. Tulsa Community College Heritage Day (Friday, January 31): Starting at 9am at TCC's Northeast Campus. Shared by Commissioner Deere.

XI. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn.
    i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Waeltz-Carter seconded.
        1. Aye: 12
    ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

CITY OF TULSA
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Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Special Meeting | February 25, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: David Bible, Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Joe Deere, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Patsy Powell, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Mark Vancuren, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: Susan Arkeketa, Stacy Laskey, Warren Queton, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee, Erica Waeltz-Carter

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.
II. **Roll Call**
   a. Chairwoman introduced Mark Vancuren, a new commissioner appointed by Tulsa County.
III. **Land Acknowledgment**
IV. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve January meeting minutes.
      i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Powel seconded.
         1. Aye: 13, Nay: 0
      ii. Motion carried, January meeting minutes approved.
V. **Chair / Vice Chair Report**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour visited Mohawk Park with the Parks Department to a tour. Park staff are interested in reactivating the park and refurbish the powwow grounds so the Native American community can host powwows at the park. They also have a facility that's used for STEM programs that will be moved to another park, could be a satellite cultural center but not the best location for a main cultural center. Looking forward to the commission working with them on this.
   b. Vice Chair Carter followed up on last month's discussion on federal grant freezes. Tribal nations have put forward an enormous effort to educate the new presidential administration on treaty obligations and the impacts of potential freezes. Difference in services to federally recognized tribes and other "DEI" programs. Already been progress

and encouraging statements from government leaders to protect funding to tribes. Still been layoffs and hiring freezes in positions that affect tribal programs.

i. Chairwoman added there has been progress on health access and climate change initiatives to move forward with certain efforts.

ii. Commissioner Deere: NCAI is confident with the message they delivered when they were in DC two weeks ago.

VI. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee

i. First meeting is this Thursday, February 27, in person and on Zoom. Need a theme and featured artist. Theme could relate to the 100th anniversary of tribal citizens being USA citizens.

ii. Chairwoman Cohenour shared this will likely be the last NAD at Dream Keepers Park before construction starts, will need to plan for a different location for a few years.

b. Dream Keepers Committee

i. Commissioner Matt Roberts passed out copies of the Dream Keepers award descriptions and a list of past awardees.

ii. Always taking nominations, the entire commission will vote on the awardees in September to recognize them in October (NAD) and November (commission meeting award ceremony).

c. Education Committee

i. Commissioner Matt Roberts shared about the first ever cross-commission education meeting with other Title V Commissions. With GTAIAC being the oldest commission, Commissioner Roberts was able to offer insights on what has worked well regarding recognizing students, involving students in Native American culture, and partnering with TPS.

1. Chairwoman Cohenour reiterated the opportunity for collaboration with other Title V Commissions. Noted that GTAIAC's Human Rights Commission (HRC) seat is still open, need someone who is able to commit to attending those meetings. Want to maintain that seat and participate as much as possible.

a. Lexi shared information about HRC.

b. Daniel proposed that interested folks email Cheryl and the commission can vote on who will represent next month.

d. Public Relations Committee – no report

e. Cultural Committee – no report

f. Parks Committee

i. Chairwoman Cohenour is presenting to the Osage Nation tomorrow (2/26) regarding funding for their garden at Dream Keepers Park.

ii. The Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations are interested in being part of the flag monument.

iii. Out for bid, many architects and engineering companies are interested. Will narrow down to 3 – 5 options, then the Tulsa Parks Department & GTAIAC Parks Committee will come together to hear presentations.
    1. Commissioner Dorcas Williams: Will bidders be from Oklahoma or out of state? Chairwoman: Both.

iv. Will need to fundraise for the monument and interpretive signage for tribal gardens, which were not included in the grant.

v. Commissioners will be called upon to help facilitate conversations with tribal leaders for garden designs.

g. Bylaws Committee
    i. Next committee meeting will be important and will be at 5pm before the March commission meeting. All commissioners are invited to join, Vice Chair Carter will circulate proposed changes to the ordinance and bylaws.

h. If you want to change committees or join a new committee, let Chairwoman Cohenour know.

VII. Old Business – no old business

VIII. New Business – no new business

IX. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Mayor Nichols stopped by during the committee reports section of the meeting and briefly spoke about how there is not a more important time to serve on commissions than right now. The Mayor's Office is actively working with tribal partners.

b. Tulsa Public Schools Indian Education's Social Dance (April 12 from 2 – 10 pm) at Will Rogers High School Gym. Acknowledging Native students. There are volunteer opportunities, Commissioner Shari Williams passed out a flyer.

c. Commissioner Shari Williams: Can have students selected by April for students of excellence, can be hard to get them here in May when they are graduating.
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour proposes doing the recognition in April. Commissioner Matt Roberts agrees it's a nice recognition, long-time partnership and tradition.

d. Tulsa City Count Library's 2025 American Indian Festival of Words is this Saturday, March 1. The breakfast begins at 9am and the ceremony begins at 10:30am.

e. Owasso Cherokee Heritage Festival on Saturday, March 1 from 10 – 2.

f. University of Tulsa Law Students are hosting their 2nd Annual Powwow on March 29.

g. Cheryl recognized Jaymie Collum (Community Engagement Coordinator at Tulsa Municipal Courts) in the audience, who introduced herself.

X. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn.
    i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Powell seconded.
        1. Aye: 12
            a. Commissioner Leaf Bolin left the meeting prior to the motion.
    ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm.

CITY OF TULSA
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Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | March 18, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Joe Deere, Stacy Laskey, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Patsy Powell, Warren Queton, Joyce Roberts, Teresa Runnels, Mark Vancuren, Erica Waeltz-Carter, Dorcas Williams

Commissioners Absent: Susan Arkeketa, David Bible, Cheryl Cohenour, Matt Roberts, Kim Teehee, Shari Williams

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**
   a. Vice Chair Carter called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.
II. **Roll Call**
III. **Land Acknowledgment**
IV. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
   a. Vice Chair Carter entertained a motion to approve February meeting minutes.
      i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Queton seconded.
         1. Aye: 13, Nay: 0
      ii. Motion carried, February meeting minutes approved.
V. **Chair / Vice Chair Report**
   a. Vice Chair Carter mentioned the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's litigation against the City of Tulsa. Since McGirt, City has largely ignored the jurisdiction of tribal nations when it comes to smaller violations such as traffic violations. Muscogee (Creek) Nation filed lawsuit to adjoin City from arresting tribal citizens. Mayor Nichols stayed the case to enter negotiations; then, Governor Stitt filed a motion to take over the lawsuit. The perception is that since the Mayor is now trying to resolve the issue and come to a cooperative agreement, the Governor wants to intervene. Continued litigation causes uncertainty, coming to an agreement will benefit the community.
   b. Vice Chair Carter shared that there wasn't much related to tribal relations in recent City Council agendas and minutes. There were three artifacts that tribes (not local) requested repatriation, which appears to have been approved.

i. Now that Amanda's position is part of the Mayor's Office, would like to have her help elevate items relevant to tribal nations.

c. Vice Chair Carter asked Amanda Swope to give an update on the City Council's Tribal Relations Committee meeting from February. Amanda reported that the committee has struggled to get quorum, before February the last time they met was March 2024. Will move the committee to a work group, making it less of a requirement for council members. Will meet quarterly moving forward. First work area will be budgeting.

VI. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee
   i. Vice Chair Carter shared a report emailed from Commissioner Matt Roberts, who was unable to attend.
   ii. Finalized this year's theme, almost selected a parade marshal and artist.
      1. Commissioner Queton talked to the artist, they will be checking their calendar before confirming.
   iii. Reminder that all commissioners serve on the Native American Day Committee.
   iv. Native American Day is on October 13 this year.

b. Dream Keepers Committee
   i. Commissioner Deere shared the committee has received three nominations so far.

c. Education Committee
   i. Commissioner Deere reported that TPS Indian Education Senior Celebration is on May 1, 2025 at 6 pm at Booker T. Washington High School.
   ii. Vice Chair Carter shared about the TPS Indian Education Social Dance (April 12 from 2 – 10 pm at Will Rogers High School Gym) and the American Indian Resource Center's spring break programming taking place this week. Commissioner Runnels shared more details about the events.
      1. Stickball making next week at Zarrow Library. Then, there will be a stickball game at Zarrow Library on Saturday, March 29.
   iii. Commissioner Deere: Cherokee Nation will meet with school Superintendents on March 25 (closed meeting).
   iv. Vice Chair Carter noted how positive it is to hear about tribes supporting public education, especially in the face of federal funding cuts. Federal government has treaty obligations to tribal citizens. If you hear of local schools cutting Indian education programs, be positioned to educate on treaty obligations.
   v. Commissioner Queton: Tulsa Public Schools Indian Education day on April 3 from 8 – 2:30 at Remington Elementary School.

d. Public Relations Committee
    i. Commissioner Laskey introduced Elizabeth Caldwell, a Public Radio Tulsa reporter. Vice Chair Carter shared gratitude that Public Radio Tulsa continues to show up and report on Native American issues despite being short staffed.
    ii. The committee will meet with Amanda to discuss City supports.
e. Cultural Committee
    i. No committee report.
    ii. Commissioner Dorcas Williams shared an incident related to Bureau of Indian Affairs. There is a need for folks to stay educated and updated on the services and appointments offered at that office, as she experienced an appointment being canceled due to federal changes.
    iii. Vice Chair Carter noted that the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) has recently shared materials to educate on the difference between treaty obligations with tribal nations and DEI programs.
f. Parks Committee
    i. Commissioner Laskey shared that Osage Casinos will vote on park request in March.
g. Bylaws Committee
    i. Vice Chair Carter shared that the Bylaws Committee had a productive meeting during which they reviewed a discussion draft of proposed changes to the City Ordinance the establishes GTAIAC. Will need to have City of Tulsa's legal review, welcome everyone's participation and input.

VII. Old Business

a. Appointment of a commissioner to Human Rights Commission: Vice Chair had talked to some commissioners to gauge interest.
    i. Vice Chair Carter nominated Commissioner Joyce Roberts to represent GTAIAC on the Human Rights Commission.
        1. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter seconded.
        2. Vice Chair Carter opened the floor for nominations.
        3. Commissioner Vote
            a. Aye: 13, Nay: 0
        4. Commissioner Joyce Roberts was selected to represent GTAIAC on HRC.

VIII. New Business

a. Amanda shared that she spoke to Cheryl about her giving a brief report on her work each month. Has been working on lawsuits, working on consent decree with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, discussions have gone well and will be working on specific language. In discussion with tribes on how to collaboratively address housing in the city.
    i. Vice Chair Carter raised that federal lands may be opened to tribal housing.

ii. Osage Nation said they don't have properties, but if the City identifies property, they would be supportive of that initiative.
iii. The Mayor's Office wants tribal representation on the newly-established Sustainability Task Force. Amanda has reached out to tribes and open to suggestions from commissioners as well.

b. Commissioner Deere: NCAI has learned that the federal government is restricting IHS and BIA payments. Encourages commissioners to look into their tribes programs to see what the current status of programs are.
   i. NCAI event in June in Pequot lands.
   ii. Indian Gaming Association consultations coming up, expecting low attendance.

IX. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes quarterly meeting is April 9 – 11 at WinStar World Casino.
b. University of Tulsa School of Law symposium on March 28 at 9am, followed by a powwow.

X. Adjournment

a. Vice Chair Carter entertained a motion to adjourn.
   i. Commissioner Laskey made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.
      1. Aye: 13
   ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

CITY OF TULSA
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Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | April 15, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Linda Leaf Bolin, Cheryl Cohenour, Warren Harjo, Winnie Guess Perdue, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Mark Vancuren, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: David Bible, Daniel Carter, Joe Deere, Stacy Laskey, Waynetta Lawrie, Patsy Powell, Warren Queton, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee, Erica Waeltz-Carter

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm. A quorum was not present.
II. **Roll Call**
III. **Land Acknowledgment**
IV. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
   a. A quorum was not present in the meeting, so March meeting minutes were not approved.
V. **Chair / Vice Chair Report**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour reported that work for Dream Keepers Park has been very active, down to five architecture firms. Also working on presentations to Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations.
   b. Started Native American Day preparations, next meeting is tomorrow at 6 pm at 916 W 23rd.
      i. Theme: From Trails to Triumph.
      ii. 100th anniversary of Native Americans becoming citizens.
      iii. Commissioner Guess Purdue is the parade marshal.
   c. Today was the Tulsa Chamber's State of the Tribal Nations, which Amanda Swope attended.
   d. Chairwoman Cohenour turned the meeting over to Amanda Swope to give her monthly report.
      i. Quarterly meeting with three tribal chiefs. Original focus was public safety, conversation has now expanded to other areas including economic

development, GTAIAC, City Council Tribal Relations Committee, health, and housing.

ii. Meeting about Eucha Damn and Spavinaw Creek. Working to remediate creek bed.

iii. City Council Approved creation of the 3 TIF districts, working with Muscogee Nation on one of them. Still in conversation, have some pieces already agreed upon. SW area of River Spirit Casino near Southwood Nursery.

iv. City Council Tribal Relations Committee discussed funding impacts on nations.

1. Next meeting is May 5 at 11am in 10 North.
2. Focused on children, youth, and family.
3. Deputy Mayor Reyes will be a guest speaker and nations will share what services they provide.

v. Public Safety: Settlement conversation continues with Muscogee Nation. Will likely be settled by next month, barring any major events. Cherokee Nation is interested in having an MOU with the City so there is an understanding. Creating a task force to bring folks together and be part of this conversation.

vi. Council Oak & Stickball Parks Land Transfer: Utility review is the last step before completing legal process. Discussed potential connection from Council Oak to Dream Keepers (ie: running path, history markers).

e. Cheryl welcomed Commissioner Warren Harjo, representing the American Indian Chamber of Commerce.

VI. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee

i. Chairwoman Cohenour covered most updates in her Chair's Report.

ii. Working with a new City staff person to help with City communications.

iii. Planning to grow student ambassadors, will have a local influencer joining the committee to help with communications and teach students.

iv. Expanding committee, working to solidify processes. Will assign chairs to different areas of responsibility in tomorrow's meeting.

b. Dream Keepers Committee

i. Commissioner Matt Roberts passed out one pagers with award descriptions and previous winners. Reminded the commission they recognize Dream Keepers on Native American Day and at an awards ceremony in November.

ii. Send nominations to Commissioner Matt Roberts. Looking for recipients who have made life-long impact in the Tulsa area in one or multiple categories.

c. Education Committee

i. Students of Excellence Awards will be given on May 1st at the Tulsa Public Schools Indian Education Senior Celebration at Booker T. Washington High School.
ii. Commissioner Shari Williams shared that for several years, the Students of Excellence awards ceremony has been held at City Hall. Prior to that, commissioners would go to an awards ceremony at a Tulsa Public Schools venue. Timing and location of the ceremony has caused attendance to drop over the years, and the parent committee is in favor of doing the ceremony the way it was previously done.
    1. Chairwoman Cohenour agrees this change makes sense.
iii. Commissioner Matt Roberts shared he will send the first Native American Day email to Indian education coordinators at schools prior to summer break so they have initial information and date.

d. Public Relations Committee – no report
e. Cultural Committee
    i. Commissioner Dorcas Williams shared the committee didn't meet, but she communicates with the two other committee members (Commissioners Powel and Waeltz-Carter) via email. Commissioners may reach out to her if they have anything to share.
    ii. Commissioner Dorcas Williams asked about a general commission email, Chairwoman noted a former commissioner used to manage it so a new person needs to be assigned.
f. Parks Committee
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour covered most updates in her Chair's Report.
    ii. $1.7M left to fundraise. Confident that these funds will be raised.
    iii. Will work to get local neighborhood associations and businesses informed and excited.
g. Bylaws Committee – no report

VII. Old Business – no old business

VIII. New Business

a. Chairwoman Cohenour shared that Susan Arkeketa resigned from the commission. Osage Nation is looking for someone to nominate.

IX. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Lexi talked about parking procedures and TGOV mic protocols.
b. Chairwoman Cohenour recognized former commissioner Vanessa Adams-Harris in the audience.
c. Thursday, May 1: Tulsa American Indian Chamber of Commerce luncheon. Brian Warner, Deputy Chief of the Cherokee Nation, is the guest speaker.

X. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour adjourned the meeting at 6:58 pm.

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Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | May 20, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: David Bible, Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Warren Harjo, Stacy Laskey, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Warren Queton, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Mark Vancuren, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: Joe Deere, Patsy Powell, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee, Erica Waeltz-Carter, Dorcas Williams

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**
    a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.
II. **Roll Call**
III. **Land Acknowledgment**
IV. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
    a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve March meeting minutes.
        i. Commissioner Lawrie made a motion, Commissioner Joyce Roberts seconded.
            1. Aye: 11, Nay: 0
                a. Commissioner Leaf Bolin and Commissioner Shari Williams were not yet present in the meeting.
        ii. Motion carried, March meeting minutes approved.
    b. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve April meeting minutes.
        i. Commissioner Joyce Roberts noted a typo in Section V. Chair / Vice Chair Report.
        ii. Commissioner Lawrie made a motion with one correction, Commissioner Queton seconded.
            1. Aye: 11, Nay: 0
                a. Commissioner Leaf Bolin and Commissioner Shari Williams were not yet present in the meeting.
        iii. Motion carried, April meeting minutes approved with one correction.
V. **Chair / Vice Chair Report**

a. Chairwoman Cohenour noted we have a busy season coming up with Dream Keepers Park and Native American Day. All commissioners' engagement is appreciated.
b. Cheryl recently gained access to the general GTAIAC email, will pass off to the Public Relations Committee.
c. Vice Chair Carter shared a new resource to track federal policies that relate to tribal nations. Previously, there have been several different entities working to impact policy on a local, state, and federal level, but it can be difficult to follow all of them. Needed a unified voice to ensure federal policies consider tribal nations. Multiple organizations have created a single, unified organization: Coalition of Tribal Sovereignty.
    i. Can sign up to get alerts and talking points on how potential federal policies, programs, funding cuts, etc. can impact tribes and Native American communities.
    ii. Recently held a work group to discuss the impact of executive orders and grant freezes ahead of a consultation session that will be held in Oklahoma. Equipped attendees with tools to have their voices heard during the consultation session.

VI. Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships Report

a. Amanda Swope reported that the next quarterly meeting between the Mayor's Office and tribal chiefs will be in June.
b. About 20 City employees did a tour with the Muscogee Nation, including Mayor's Office, City Council aids, and Department of Resilience and Equity staff.
c. The Tribal Relations Committee May meeting focused on children, youth, and families. Deputy Mayor Reyes reported on the Office of Children, Youth, and Families and tribal representatives shared about programming their tribes offer.
    i. Next meeting is on August 4 at 11 am.
d. Progress is being made with the Council Oak and Stickball Park transfer.
e. Extension of stay (30 days) was requested with the Muscogee National lawsuit. They are very close, in discussion on one or two points.
f. City Council items that relate to tribes:
    i. Native American graves and repatriation act with Gilcrease Museum, returning hundreds of items to tribal nations.
    ii. Cheryl added that Yatika Fields, the featured artist for Native American Day, was recently appointed to the Arts Commission.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour reported the committee discussed creating a registration site so they don't have to use Eventbrite anymore, they are working with the City to get a separate webpage set up.
    ii. The City is designing the save the date, should have it by tomorrow. PSO will print.
    iii. Next meeting is June 11 in person or on Zoom.

b. Dream Keepers Committee
    i. Commissioner Matt Roberts encouraged commissioners to send Dream Keepers Awards nominations before the commission takes a break in July.
    ii. Commission will vote on awardees after their September commission meeting in order to give awards at Native American Day on Oct. 13.
    iii. Have received three quality nominations so far.
c. Education Committee
    i. Commissioner Shari Williams reflected on the great turnout at the Students of Excellence awards. All student awardees were present.
        1. Tulsa Public Schools thanks GTAIAC for partnering and supporting students.
        2. Commissioner Matt Roberts added that Amanda was the keynote speaker, Commissioner Guess Purdue shared remarks with the awardees, and Commissioner Bible performed at the drum.
    ii. Commissioner Matt Roberts noted the save the date for Native American Day will be sent to schools as soon as the design is finalized.
d. Public Relations Committee
    i. Commissioner Laskey asked if she could get Kacie's email to get in touch with her. Chairwoman noted she is included on the Native American Day emails and will help make the connection.
    ii. Commissioner Laskey introduced Max with Public Radio Tulsa.
e. Cultural Committee – no report
f. Parks Committee
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour shared the Parks Committee met last week and heard from six firms bidding on the park project. A firm was unanimously selected that is a local, Native-owned landscape firm. Can't name them yet because it has to be confirmed by Mayor Nichols before they are notified.
    ii. Parks Department has been superb to work with, been open to needs, wants, and suggestions to create a Native American cultural destination for Tulsa.
g. Bylaws Committee
    i. Vice Chair Carter shared the Bylaws Committee met immediately prior to this meeting, in a good place on a draft for a revised ordinance for the commission.
    ii. Next step is to submit the draft to the City's Legal Department. Once we hear back from them, will take changes (if any) into account at the next Bylaws Committee meeting. Will be a good one to attend if you want to be part of the discussion.
    iii. The Commission will then vote to make a recommendation to City Council to update the ordinance.

iv. After the ordinance is changed, bylaws changes will be made. Will be a good opportunity to document what the commission does and how we operate. Standing committees, process to recruit new commissioners, etc. Will need to consider what is not currently in there that should be added.

v. Will continue to hold meetings immediately prior to the commission meetings.

VIII. Old Business – no old business

IX. New Business – no new business

X. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Osage Ceremony of Dances (June 5 – 8).

b. Commissioner Bible thanked Commissioner Shari Williams for the great ceremony at Tulsa Public Schools. It's a great time for our students with graduation dances. Commissioner Harjo echoed this sentiment.

c. 20th Annual Day Ohn Day Run: May 24 at 7:30am at Mohawk Park. Almost 270 runners registered. Opportunities to volunteer.

d. Deputy Chief Brian Werner spoke at American Indian Chamber of Commerce this past month. June 5 will be next meeting at River Spirit, speaker will be Heather Turner.

e. August 20 – 22 at River Spirit: Annual TERO Convention.

f. Gathering with American Indian Chamber of Commerce (August 25 – 28).

g. Cherokee Nation has begun building North Tulsa Cherokee Organization community center.

XI. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

i. Vice Chair Carter made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.

1. Aye: 13

ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:43 pm.

CITY OF TULSA
CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | June 17, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: David Bible, Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Joe Deere, Stacy Laskey, Patsy Powell, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Teresa Runnels, Erica Waeltz-Carter, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: Warren Harjo, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Warren Queton, Kim Teehee, Mark Vancuren

I. **Call to Order**
    a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.
II. **Roll Call**
III. **Land Acknowledgment**
IV. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
    a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve May meeting minutes.
        i. Commissioner Joyce Roberts made a motion, Commissioner Deere seconded.
            1. Aye: 12, Nay: 0
                a. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter was not yet present in the meeting.
        ii. Motion carried, May meeting minutes approved.
V. **Chair / Vice Chair Report**
    a. Chairwoman Cohenour reflected that this is a time that many tribes have dances and powwows. Hope the commission can receive notification of those to attend and share with community.
        i. Noted the City's Communications department can help Commissioner Laskey with getting the commission's email up and running.
    b. Nomination process for Humanitarian of the Year Award, selected by the Human Rights Commission.
        i. Lexi shared about the award.
        ii. Nominations are due June 30.
    c. Chairwoman Cohenour turned the floor to Commissioner Deere for an NCAI update.

i. Recently convened at Pequot Nation.
ii. 82nd Annual Convention Nov 16 – 21 at Seattle Convention Center.
iii. Eastern Region Caucus was on Tuesday, no resolutions but some items to watch.
iv. Reviewed membership and 15 tribes were not renewed. Chairwoman Cohenour asked about the 15 tribes that did not qualify for membership. Commissioner Deere provided further details.

d. Vice Chair Carter shared there was a sovereignty symposium in Oklahoma City last Thursday and Friday. Focused on tribal law, draws most tribal leadership in the state.

VI. Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships Report

a. Amanda Swope also attended sovereignty symposium and was a panelist.
b. No City Council updates.
c. Pending litigation with Muscogee Nation: Both parties requested another extension for the next week, have agreeable language. Very close to settlement.
d. Scheduling next inter-tribal meeting with Mayor Nichols.
e. Held several meetings with various organizations, including Tulsa Area United Way, Tulsa Remote, Leadership Tulsa, and Chronologically Gifted.
f. Muscogee Nation meetings with south Tulsa damn project.
g. Working with the City's Communications department to develop responses to Freedmen and allotment for Native community after the Road to Repair announcement. Two very difficult topics in the community.
    i. Open to the Commission providing recommendations or opinions on these issues.
h. Mayor's Office Updates:
    i. Urban Leaders Fellows working with different advisors on various projects.
    ii. Community Conversations have concluded.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour shared the committee is meeting twice a month now, usually a bit further along in the planning process.
    ii. Need to fence in the park to get folks used to not parking on the grass but otherwise will have a similar layout to last year.
    iii. Using Google Forms for rsvp's instead of Eventbrite. Save the date cards have been sent out. City Communications will set up a separate page on the City's website.
    iv. Next meeting: June 25 at 6 pm
b. Dream Keepers Committee
    i. Commissioner Matt Roberts reminded everyone to send nominations, the commission will vote in September.
    ii. Seven nominations received so far. Have not received nominations for Education, Veteran, Language Preservation, or Spirituality awards.

iii. Chairwoman Cohenour reminded everyone that the awardee doesn't need to live in the Greater Tulsa area, but their impact needs to be in Tulsa.

c. Education Committee
   i. Indian Health Care Resource Center is hosting Resilience Through Tradition Culture Day Youth Summit the Saturday before Native American Day, October 11. Looking for area Indian Education departments to set up information tables.
   ii. Some school districts have Native American Day off and others don't. This can affect attendance—for some students it's more difficult to come when school is in session and for others it's more difficult when school is off.
   iii. Indian Education programs at different districts offer summer programming for students.
d. Public Relations Committee – no report
e. Cultural Committee
   i. Commissioner Powell: June 20 is Muscogee Nation honor walk at Cultural Department
   ii. Commissioner Dorcas Williams shared that she and Commissioner Guess Perdue have been involved with the Gathering Place. They are organizing Global Gatherings throughout the summer to showcase different cultures. July 12 is the Native American event, will have storytelling and dancing.
   iii. Chairwoman Cohenour reminded Commissioner Powell and Commissioner Dorcas Williams to share those types of opportunities with Commissioner Laskey so she can send out through the commission email.
f. Parks Committee
   i. Chairwoman Cohenour shared that the committee selected TSW, a woman and Native-owned firm, for the Dream Keepers Park work.
   ii. Kick off design meeting with Parks Department soon. Excited to move forward. Have to spend grant funds within a certain time period.
   iii. Would like to have the gardens done before the Route 66 Centennial celebration. Cherokee garden is secured, waiting to confirm Muscogee Creek garden, and were denied by Osage Nation (for now).
   iv. Commissioner Laskey asked when RFPs will come for the large monument. Chairwoman Cohenour shared that will be later on, need to get further with the design of the park.
g. Bylaws Committee
   i. Vice Chair Carter reported that the draft ordinance revisions were submitted to City's Legal Department, awaiting comments or approval. Will update Commission after hearing from them for the Commission to review and vote.
   ii. Began discussing bylaws updates, as once ordinance is amended bylaws will be tackled. Could make changes such as committees, order of meetings, and Dream Keepers Awards process. Open to ideas and participation.

iii. Next meeting will be prior to the August commission meeting.

VIII. Old Business – no old business

IX. New Business – no new business

X. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Commissioner Deere: Inter-Tribal coming up at River Spirit Casino. Nine tribes Inter-Tribal tomorrow in Miami.

b. Commissioner Runnels: Tomorrow, Miss Indian Tulsa will be passing crown to her successor at 6:30 pm at Glenpool Indian Center.

XI. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Dorcas Williams seconded.

1. Aye: 13

ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | August 19, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Patsy Powell, Joyce Roberts, Teresa Runnels, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: David Bible, Joe Deere, Warren Harjo, Stacy Laskey, Warren Queton, Matt Roberts, Kim Teehee, Mark Vancuren, Erica Waeltz-Carter

I. **Call to Order**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.
   b. Roll Call
   c. Land Acknowledgment

II. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve June meeting minutes.
      i. Vice Chair Carter made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.
         1. Aye: 10, Nay: 0
      ii. Motion carried, June meeting minutes approved.

III. **Chair / Vice Chair Report**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour noted this past weekend was the Tulsa Indian Club Pow Wow, during which Commissioner Guess Perdue was the honored elder.
   b. Working hard on Native American Day.
   c. Vice Chair Carter shared the Supreme Court of Oklahoma in the Oklahoma Tax Commission case.
      i. Argued that an individual who lives on the Muscogee reservation and works for the Muscogee Nation should have been exempt from state personal income tax.
      ii. Ruled that the Muscogee Nation's reservation isn't a reservation for civil purposes, only criminal under McGirt. This is the first time a body has ruled that the reservation can be designated as such for one purpose and not another.
      iii. Education about tribal sovereignty is still needed for municipal and state partners.

IV. **Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships Report**
   a. Amanda Swope provided City Council updates. There was not much action regarding tribes.
      i. Joyce Roberts appointed to the Human Rights Commission.

ii. Approving and establishing Pearl and Crutchfield TIF districts.

b. Muscogee Nation settlement update: Settled the case and submitted to court, held a signing ceremony with Mayor Nichols and Chief Hill. The Judge ruled to allow Creek Freedman to participate. Hasn't ruled on accepting the agreement yet or allowed Oklahoma state of the governor to be parties. Have moved forward with work group (meeting tomorrow) to start discussion points. Working well with Muscogee Nation to address different situations.

c. The Southern TIF District was passed by the Planning Commission last week. Development meetings will take place to raise awareness of concerns when developing property in that area.

d. Presented at:
    i. Muscogee Nation Sovereignty Day
    ii. Inter-Tribal Council (next one is in Durant, Oct 8 – 10)
    iii. Indian Health Care Resource Center opening, Mayor also attended.
    iv. Quarterly tribal meeting with three chiefs in July – Nations get individual time with Mayor Nichols in addition to inter-tribal discussion.
    v. South Tulsa damn project with Muscogee Nation is about a decade out but thinking about what plans may be for City departments to have an updated quote.

e. City Council is visiting the Muscogee National Council, replacing Tribal Relations Committee meeting, on Friday.
    i. Amanda will send information to Chairwoman Cohenour and Vice Chair Carter.

f. Renaming of Midland Valley Trail to Tuckabatchee Trail – Reopening previous conversation. Currently, there is no opposition. There is an opportunity for GTAIAC to provide a letter supporting this change.

g. Council Oak and Stickball Parks: City of Tulsa came to an agreement with the Muscogee Nation; an MOU will accompany the deed that specifies why the City took this action and Nation's intention with it moving forward. Arts Commission conveyed the art on the property. The last step is for PSO tell the City what easements exist. Will probably see this in City Council in next month.

h. Tulsa Airport has various art projects they want to offer space to the nations, want to highlight Native culture more. Amanda connected them with the nations' cultural secretaries. Encouraged commissioners to elevate this with their contacts. Will send out RFPs this month or next.

i. Continuing to connect City departments to the correct departments within tribal nations.

j. National League of Cities – Local Indigenous Leaders subgroup. Could be helpful with co-governance.

V. Nominating Committee: Appoint Chair and Elect Members

a. Chairwoman Cohenour had asked Commissioner Matt Roberts to chair the Nominating Committee prior to this meeting and he agreed.

b. Chairwoman Cohenour nominated Commissioner Lawrie to the committee, and she accepted.

c. Commissioner Guess Perdue nominated Commissioner Leaf Bolin to the committee, and she accepted.
d. Chairwoman Cohenour made a motion to elect Commissioners Lawrie and Leaf Bolin to serve on the Nominating Committee.
    i. Aye: 10, Nay: 0
    ii. Motion carried, Commissioners Lawrie and Leaf Bolin will serve on the Nominating Committee.

VI. Discussion and Possible Action: Commission Meeting Time

a. Chairwoman Cohenour and Lexi shared that TGOV staff have asked commissions that meet in the evenings to consider moving up their meeting times to accommodate staffing constraints.
b. Commission Discussion:
    i. Vice Chair Carter: 5pm is not feasible, many jobs end at 5 and meeting at that time won't work.
    ii. This commission has the extra consideration of County appointees who may be coming from farther away from downtown.
    iii. Some commissioners commented that it would be nice to not have the meetings so late.
    iv. Commissioner Guess Perdue asked if it would inhibit anyone to move it up. Commissioner Dorcas Williams couldn't attend at 5pm but could do 5:30.
c. Vice Chair Carter would like to put off a final decision until next meeting to engage commissioners who aren't present tonight. Chairwoman affirmed that for those in the room, 5:30 works.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee
    i. Secured sponsorship from Osage Nation for $10k. Requests to Muscogee Nation and Cherokee Nation are still out.
    ii. Making some changes to event layout. Biggest change may be to the parade route due to street maintenance along 18th Street, which is currently scheduled to complete by end of September. Working on an alternate route in case it's needed.
        1. Vendors will not be allowed to park on the park in preparation for the renovated Dream Keepers Park renovations.
    iii. Will need to think about another chair for Native American Day so they can get used to the process. Chairwoman Cohenour would like to support the next person who will take it over and lead them through the process next year before they take over.
    iv. Posters are complete and available for commissioners to take with them.
    v. T-shirts are for sale on the website. Vendor, parade, and volunteer signups also available on the website.
    vi. Receiving videos from Princesses promoting Native American Day has been slow.
    vii. Chairwoman Cohenour noted some conversations with other commissions at the Title V Commission Retreat, have helped others with Tulsa Community

Foundation accounts and spoke with Josh Starks (HRC) about the Veteran's Day parade. Wants to have more communication between commissions.

b. Dream Keepers Committee
   i. Chairwoman Cohenour gave the report in Commissioner Matt Roberts's absence.
   ii. Nine nominations received so far, always open to more. Nominate as soon as possible, will vote on awardees after the next commission meeting.
c. Education Committee
   i. Commissioner Shari Williams reported that Tulsa Public Schools students return tomorrow. Superintendent Johnson has proposed a policy update to the school board to address mascots, a change that originated with Indian Education Parent Committee. Dr. Johnson has met with students (student leaders across the district as well as Indigenous students at each of the two schools) and tribal chiefs. Students want to be recognized in an appropriate way, and they feel the current mascot imagery of these two schools does not honor Native students.
      1. Schools will keep their names but re-brand the mascot imagery with community input.
      2. Policy will be voted on by school board in September.
   ii. Vice Chair Carter asked if a letter from the commission would be helpful. Commissioner Shari Williams can speak with Dr. Johnson about this and provide a copy of the policy to commission to inform if and what the Commission would say. Vice Chair Carter emphasized that the commission's role is to be a voice for the Native American community, and he don't want to sit out on this issue.
      1. Commissioner Leaf Bolin reflected on previous times when she has spoken as a commissioner on similar issues.
      2. Commissioner Dorcas Williams clarified what the current imagery portrays, as the school sits on Muscogee land, but the imagery is more stereotypical Plains Native Americans. Should honor Creek land.
   iii. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to have herself and Vice Chair Carter look into the issue and draft a letter supporting students.
      1. Vice Chair Carter made a motion, Commissioner Dorcas Williams seconded.
         a. Aye: 10
      2. Motion carried, Chairwoman Cohenour and Vice Chair Carter will look into this issue and draft a letter supporting students.
d. Public Relations Committee
   i. Commissioner Joyce Roberts shared that the committee will work on a media release from the City of Tulsa for Native American Day once the agenda is finalized.
   ii. Ava Rose Johnson will sing at Native American Day. Channel 6 requested her to sing when Native American Day is on air.
e. Cultural Committee – no report
f. Parks Committee

i. Chairwoman Cohenour reported that the committee is waiting for the City Contract to be finalized and signed with TSW, should be early September. Will start meeting with all three tribes' cultural appointees to continue work.
ii. Spirit Bank wants to discuss sponsorship.

g. Bylaws Committee
   i. Vice Chair Carter reported the committee is still working on the GTAIAC ordinance. Submitted draft to City Legal and they sent back redlines. A few folks met with Legal to discuss their changes. Earlier this week, Lexi received another revised version from Legal. The committee reviewed it today and will request some further changes.
   ii. The committee and Legal should come to an agreement next time they discuss. Could possibly have a draft by next commission meeting to show GTAIAC then send to City Council.
   iii. Vice Chair Carter offered to send the draft to everyone interested and reminded commissioners that everyone is invited to committee meetings.

VIII. Old Business – no old business

IX. New Business – no new business

X. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Welcoming Week Kickoff Event: Welcoming America has selected Tulsa as the national Welcoming Week kickoff location. Event is September 12 from 5 to 8 pm at the Gathering Place.

XI. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
   i. Commissioner Leaf Bolin made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.
      1. Aye: 10
   ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | September 16, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Joe Deere, Stacy Laskey, Winnie Guess Perdue, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Teresa Runnels, Erica Waeltz-Carter, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: David Bible, Warren Harjo, Waynetta Lawrie, Pat Powell, Warren Queton, Kim Teehee, Mark Vancuren

I. **Call to Order**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
   b. Roll Call
   c. Land Acknowledgment

II. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve August meeting minutes.
      i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Waeltz-Carter seconded.
         1. Aye: 12, Nay: 0
      ii. Motion carried, August meeting minutes approved.

III. **Guest Speaker: Amber Masters, Vice President of Statewide Initiatives at Teach for America**
   a. Potential is equally distributed across all students, but opportunity is not.
   b. Nearly 10% of Oklahoma teachers leave the profession every year.
   c. Native American experience in education:
      i. 4% of educators identify as Native in Oklahoma, and 12% of public school students are Native (approximately 74,000).
      ii. 9% of Native students are proficient by the time they graduate high school.
      iii. This does not have to be our reality, can work for all students to have access to an excellent education.
   d. Teach for America (TFA) finds promising leaders and supports them through teach for two years while learning about systems-wide challenges and opportunities. TFA teaches them to be systems thinkers. TFA wants to partner with the next generation of Native leaders to ensure we meet students' needs.
   e. Ignite Fellowship – Virtual tutoring from college students.

f. Tribal nations partnerships – Cherokee, Osage, and Rosebud Sioux
g. As of last year, TFA is the largest pipeline of Native American teachers in the country. In Oklahoma, over 700 scholars are engaging in opportunities provided by TFA.
h. Opportunities for the Commission to work with TFA:
    i. Share your vision for education and how TFA can support.
    ii. Help us identify Native scholars and leaders.
    iii. Collaborate on mentorship and resources.
i. Commission Discussion
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour encouraged Amber to sign TFA up for a booth at Native American Day, as it's a big opportunity to connect with students.
    ii. Commissioner Matt Roberts: When you talk about Native students and those entering TFA, how do you get the word out?
        1. Amber: Met with Cherokee Nation, asked what their vision for education is and how TFA can support. They have a list of scholars in Oklahoma and across nation with whom they share information about the Ignite Fellowship and other professional development opportunities. Also provide scholarship students with incentives to join Ignite.
        2. Commissioner Matt Roberts: Where are the students?
        3. Amber: There are six regions across the country where TFA serves Native students. Incoming corps members select where they go to teach, so TFA strives to inspire more corps to come to Oklahoma.

IV. Chair / Vice Chair Report

a. Chairwoman Cohenour shared that the Human Rights Commission selected Winnie Guess Perdue as one of two Humanitarian of the Year Award recipients for 2025. The ceremony is on December 11 at 6pm in the City Council Chambers.

V. Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships Report

a. Amanda Swope shared that the City had their first two public safety work group meetings with Muscogee Nation.
b. The meeting between the Tulsa City Council and Muscogee Nation Council took place in August. Moving forward, councilors with overlapping areas will meet in small groups.
c. Council Oak & Stickball Park: Paperwork is making its way through Muscogee Nation National Council, should be complete next month.
d. City of Bixby has taken steps to fly the Muscogee Nation flag at their city hall, and Broken Arrow may be as well.
e. Gilcrease Museum wants to be active and engaged in returning art pieces to nations under NAGPRA.
f. The inaugural Tribal Municipal Partnerships Award was given to Mayor Nichols.
g. Working on housing collaboration opportunities with Cherokee Nation.
h. City Council item: Approved public hearing date for Southern Villa TIF district.
i. The Midland Valley Trail renaming is going before the Park Board. They will likely continue to circle back to this commission for a letter of support.
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour stated that they've been down this road. She understands them following up, and if a formal request comes through will bring it as an item

for discussion. Other commissioners echoed that this has been discussed in the past.

VI. Discussion and Possible Action: Commission Meeting Time

a. Chairwoman Cohenour reminded commissioners of last month's discussion.
b. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter: Has TGOV proposed a time? Lexi shared that 5 or 5:30 would be appreciated.
c. Commissioner Deere expressed that 5:30 is reasonable. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter noted that at that time, heading into downtown you are going against most traffic.
d. Vice Chair Carter stated that 5:30 would be the earliest time to move the meeting to, as an earlier time could prohibit future commissioners from joining. There are too many people who work until 5 and it's difficult to leave work early.
e. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter remarked that GTAIAC is good at keeping meetings short.
f. Commissioner Laskey motioned to change time the meeting time to 5:30, Commissioner Deere seconded.
    i. Aye: 12, Nay: 0
    ii. Motion carried, GTAIAC meeting times will change to 5:30 starting in October.
g. Lexi will take care of paperwork and change the calendar invite.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour reported that Native American Day is in good shape.
    ii. The Muscogee Lighthorse will support with security by bringing their mobile command unit and armored vehicle.
    iii. The Sunday before event (October 12), meet at noon at Dream Keepers Park to receive deliveries and set up tents.
    iv. Will borrow the Parks Department's stage one last time, offered financial support from the commission to help with repairs to hydraulic system.
    v. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to have commission financially support stage repairs.
        1. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter made a motion, Commissioner Deere seconded.
            a. Aye: 12, Nay: 0
        2. Motion carried, GTAIAC will financially support stage repairs.
    vi. The committee meets every Wednesday between now and the event.
b. Dream Keepers Committee
    i. Cheryl reminded everyone we will stay for executive session immediately following this meeting to select Dream Keepers awardees.
c. Education Committee
    i. Commissioner Matt Roberts: 51 parade entries for Native American Day, 19 of which are schools.
    ii. Commissioner Matt Roberts shared that many factors go into education rankings across the nation, such as per pupil spending. Oklahoma has the best Indian Education programs in the nation. We have selfless, dedicated educators.
        1. Commissioner Dorcas Williams appreciated this information.

iii. Commissioner Shari Williams followed up on last month's discussion about Tulsa Public School's new policy about school branding. The TPS Board approved the new policy and revising Webster and Central's mascots to comply with the new policy. Moving forward to planning and community and student input. Thanked commissioners who sent letters of support to the TPS board.
    1. Community meeting on Sept 30th, including tribal representation.

d. Public Relations Committee
    i. Commissioner Laskey: Channel 6 will promote Native American Day on October 7 at 8:45.
    ii. Expecting press release from City soon.

e. Cultural Committee
    i. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter: Broke Arrow Intertribal Veterans Pow Wow next month on October 4.
    ii. Commissioner Dorcas Williams: Burning Cedar is starting a language club, which they're calling a speaking practice. Next one on October 12.
        1. Amanda noted Mayor Nichols will be stopping there for 918 Day.

f. Parks Committee
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour: Waiting for City to finalize contract with landscape architect.

g. Bylaws Committee
    i. Vice Chair Carter reported that they are still working with City Legal to finalize changes to the ordinance, hope to have something next month for the commission to consider.

VIII. Old Business

a. The Nominating Committee should have slate of officers to present next meeting.

IX. New Business

a. 918 Day is Thursday, look up all events online.
b. American Indian Allotments and their Lasting Impact: Event at Zarrow Library on September 18 at 3pm

X. Announcements / Public Comments – none

XI. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
    i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Waeltz-Carter seconded.
        1. Aye: 12
    ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | October 21, 2025 | 5:30 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: David Bible, Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Stacy Laskey, Pat Powell, Warren Queton, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee, Mark Vancuren, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: Joe Deere, Warren Harjo, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Erica Waeltz-Carter

I. **Call to Order**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.
   b. Roll Call
   c. Land Acknowledgment
II. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
   a. Commissioner Leaf Bolin arrived at 5:34 pm.
   b. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve September meeting minutes.
      i. Commissioner Vancuren made a motion, Commissioner Laskey seconded.
         1. Aye: 13, Nay: 0
            a. Commissioner Teehee was not yet present in the meeting.
      ii. Motion carried, September meeting minutes approved.
III. **Guest Speaker: Emilee Taylor, Executive Director of Strategy and Data at Tulsa Public Schools** – to be rescheduled
IV. **Guest Speaker: Pete Otis, Director of Development at Tulsa Performing Arts Center**
   a. Tulsa is one of approximately 35 cities to partner with the Kennedy Center through the Any Given Child program, allowing Tulsa Public Schools (TPS) students to take field trips to watch performances at Tulsa Performing Arts Center.
   b. This year's show: Channeling Our Ancestors. Thes show is locally created & produced and will be shown to Kindergarteners and 7th graders this year.
      i. The production is about learning & unlearning. Breaking down stereotypes and educating children about what it's like to be Indigenous in Oklahoma today.
      ii. Bringing more Indigenous live theater and performances to Tulsa.
      iii. Invited commissioners to be guests at any of the performances. Taking place November 4 – 7 at 10am and noon.

c. Free master class for the public on November 21.
    i. All Indigenous class coming from around the country.
    ii. Currently 34 people signed up.
d. Amanda Swope: Can you talk about data and responses you've received from the show?
    i. Pete: There is robust pre- and post-show learning that takes place. Feedback from students shows they've never seen Indigenous representation like this before and it's easy for students to absorb the material.

V. Chair / Vice Chair Report

a. Chairwoman Cohenour thanked commissioners for coming out and helping at Native American Day. The event was larger this year than previous years, despite the rain.
    i. Livestreamed the event and had 7,000+ views.
    ii. Public Relations Committee did a great job getting the word out.

VI. Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships Report

a. Amanda Swope shared that City Council approved the Southern Villa TIF District which is in partnership with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.
b. Council also approved the transfer of Council Oak and Stickball Parks to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Mayor will be signing final deed tomorrow (10/21). The National will recognize the national holiday for tree on November 1 from 10 – 2.
    i. Vice Chair Carter emphasized how important it is for the City to acknowledge this land's importance to the Nation. This conveyance is unprecedented, not just symbolic.
    ii. Chairwoman Cohenour thanked Vice Chair Carter for the tremendous work he did to help get the legal teams together to talk.
c. Shared what she's been working on
    i. Met with TRC about including Nations in visits when folks come to Tulsa from other cities.
    ii. Working to help Tribes get involved in Route 66 Centennial celebrations, if they would like to.
    iii. Mayor's Office Community Conversations
    iv. Tour of new Family Safety Center with Cherokee Nation
        1. Chairwoman Cohenour underscored the impact of Family Safety Center
    v. Presented at state tribal interim study discussing how the state could be better about working with tribes
    vi. United Indian Nations & Intertribal Council meetings
    vii. Continuing to meet with Muscogee Nation settlement group, next meeting Nov 13. Going well, focused on communication needs
d. Commissioner Teehee arrived at 5:49 pm.
e. Commissioner Teehee asked if GTAIAC has submitted a letter acknowledging the transfer of Council Oak and Stickball Parks. Vice Chair Carter noted that last year the commission wrote a letter to Mayor Bynum supporting the land transfer, but haven't done anything to acknowledge that the transfer is complete. Commissioner Teehee offered an idea to present a certificate from the commission to the City.

i. Commissioner Teehee motioned to have GTAIAC present a certificate to City of Tulsa acknowledging the transfer of land to Muscogee Creek Nation, Vice Chair Carter seconded.
    1. Aye: 13
    2. Motion carried, GTAIAC will present City of Tulsa with a certificate.

VII. Nomination Committee: Presentation of 2026–2027 Officer Slate

a. Commissioner Matt Roberts shared the Nomination Committee has not met and there is not a slate to present. No one has expressed interest in serving as chair or vice chair. The commission will need to have a quick meeting prior to the Dream Keepers Awards Ceremony next month.

VIII. Committee Reports

a. Native American Day Committee
    i. Chairwoman Cohenour reported that she is finalizing all invoices and payments. Would like to take the bills from City of Tulsa before City Council to have them forgiven, which has not been done before.
    ii. Will create a detailed checklist and divide up the work amongst the committee next year.
    iii. Next year will be the 10th year of Native American Day in Tulsa.
    iv. Discussed possibly giving a gift of gratitude to committee volunteers. Vice Chair Carter suggested a certificate that would be given to volunteers before Dream Keepers.
b. Dream Keepers Committee
    i. Commissioner Matt Roberts: 7 of 11 recipients were at Native American Day. Received great feedback from awardees and their families.
    ii. The ceremony is on November 18.
    iii. Commissioner Teehee shared that since Chief Hoskin is receiving an award, the Cherokee Nation will sponsor the reception and provide everything needed. Commissioners expressed gratitude.
c. Education Committee
    i. Commissioner Matt Roberts sent a thank you email and post cards to all the Indian Education departments, schools, and music departments that participated in Native American Day. Continue to get more participation, especially from post-secondary institutions.
    ii. Commissioner Shari Williams shared an opportunity for commissioners to volunteer as judges for classroom door decorating contest for Native American Heritage Month.
    iii. Chairwoman Cohenour reflected on how proud she is of the student ambassadors as culture keepers. Many attendees remarked how excited they were to see so many students.
d. Public Relations Committee
    i. Commissioner Laskey reflected on the great media exposure that Native American Day received.
e. Cultural Committee

i. Commissioner Dorcas Williams remarked how much people appreciated the Native American Day livestream, and she heard from folks all over Oklahoma who tuned in.

f. Parks Committee
   i. Chairwoman Cohenour shared that the committee is kicking off the design concept in November. Head designer was at Native American Day.
   ii. Focused on meeting fundraising goal by engaging with community partners and foundations.

g. Bylaws Committee
   i. Vice Chair Carter: Have a workable draft to the proposed revised ordinance, included in meeting packet.
   ii. Lexi will send a summary of the changes.
   iii. Would like to vote on the ordinance changes in commission in January 2026, giving commissioners three months to review the documents and ask questions individually. After GTAIAC votes to support the changes, they go to the Mayor and City Council. GTAIAC can't change the ordinance but can recommend changes. After the ordinance is updated, then the committee will tackle streamlining the bylaws. The ordinance will be easier to read, and bylaws will provide more details on how commission carries out those duties.
   iv. Vice Chair Carter noted some of the primary proposed ordinance changes, and a couple questions from commissioners were raised. Brief discussion ensued.

IX. Old Business – no old business

X. New Business – no new business

XI. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Commissioner Queton encouraged commissioners to watch the next episode of The Lowdown and they may see someone familiar.
b. Native American Major Leaguers
c. Veterans Fair Housing Summit on November 6 from 1 – 4:30 at Centennial Center at Veteran's Park. Hosted by the Human Rights Commission's Fair Housing Committee.
d. Tulsa Expungement Expo on November 1 from 10 – 2 at the 36th Street Event Center.

XII. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
   i. Commissioner Bible made a motion, Commissioner Queton seconded.
      1. Aye: 13
   ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | November 18, 2025 | 5:30 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | City Council Chambers

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: David Bible, Linda Leaf Bolin, Cheryl Cohenour, Stacy Laskey, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Pat Powell, Warren Queton, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Mark Vancuren, Erica Waeltz-Carter, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: Daniel Carter, Joe Deere, Warren Harjo, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee

I. **Call to Order**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm.
   b. Roll Call
   c. Land Acknowledgment
II. **Consent Agenda**
   a. Approval of October Meeting Minutes
   b. Nominating Committee: Present Slate of 2026 – 2027 Officers
   c. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.
      i. Commissioner Laskey made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.
         1. Aye: 12, Nay: 0
            a. Commissioner Leaf Bolin and Commissioner Shari Williams were not yet present in the meeting.
      ii. Motion carried, Consent Agenda approved.
III. **Dream Keepers Awards Ceremony**
   a. Other than recognizing Dream Keepers Awardees, no action was taken.
   b. Commissioner Leaf Bolin and Commissioner Shari Williams arrived at 5:40 pm.
   c. GTAIAC recognized 11 Dream Keepers Awardees.
IV. **Adjournment**
   a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
      i. Commissioner Waeltz-Carter made a motion, Commissioner Lawrie seconded.
         1. Aye: 14
      ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm.