



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Virginia Council on Indians

P. O. Box 1475, Richmond, VA 23218

**L. Preston Bryant, Jr.**  
Secretary of Natural Resources

**Karenne Wood**  
Chair

### Virginia Council on Indians Meeting January 16, 2007

**Present:** Chair Karenne Wood (Monacan), Juanita Smith (Nansemond), Frank Adams (Upper Mattaponi), Gerald Stewart (Eastern Chickahominy), Reggie Stewart (Chickahominy), Frank Richardson (Rappahannock), Mitchell Bush (Onondaga, Indian At Large), Paige Archer (Meherrin, Indian At Large), Sherry Munford (Sappony, Indian At Large), Reggie Tupponce Sr. (Upper Mattaponi, Indian At Large), Carole Nash (Citizen At Large), Donald McEachin (Delegate), Deanna Beacham (Weapemeoc, Council Program Specialist)

**Absent:** Ben Adams (Upper Mattaponi, Indian At Large), Chris Peace (Delegate), Harvey Morgan (Delegate), Ryan McDougle (Senator)

**Attendees:** Powhatan Red Cloud-Owen (Chickahominy), Pinky Smith (Cherokee/Nansemond), Roger Archer (Meherrin), Arlene Milner (Upper Mattaponi); Jack Milner (Upper Mattaponi); Gerri Reynolds (Rappahannock), Kenneth Munford (Sappony), Gerald Epps (Sappony), William Wright (Nottoway of VA), Lynette Allston (Nottoway of VA), Allard Allston, Jack Kotvas, Helen Rountree, Verde Halley (AISDC), Stephanie Brown (Cheroenhaka Nottoway), Beverly El (Cheroenhaka Nottoway), Ethel Johnson (Cheroenhaka Nottoway), Voshti Clarke (Cheroenhaka Nottoway)

#### Call to Order:

1. The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 PM, and the commencement prayer was given by Powhatan Red Cloud-Owen of the Chickahominy.

#### Administrative Business:

1. Following introductions, the first order of business was the approval of the minutes from November 21, 2006. Following a motion by Frank Adams and a second by Juanita Smith, the minutes were unanimously approved. A welcome was given to council member Mitchell Bush, returned to council meetings after a prolonged illness.

2. The next item of business was the approval of a schedule for the business meetings for the calendar year 2007. A list of third Tuesdays, the usual business meeting date, was distributed to the members. The Chair suggested a schedule including all those dates with the exceptions of March, July and December. A motion to accept that schedule was made by Paige Archer, and seconded by Gerald Stewart. The motion passed unanimously.

3. The Chair then officially read into the minutes a letter of intent to petition for state tribal recognition by a group known as the Tauxenent Indian Nation of Virginia, based in Vienna.

### **New Business:**

1. The first item of new business concerned two bills that has been introduced in both houses of the General Assembly, House Bill 2876 with patron Delegate McEachin and companion Senate Bill 1136 with patron Senator McDougle. The bill language changes the composition of the Virginia Council on Indians to consist of the chiefs of the state-recognized tribes, currently eight. It requires those Council members to elect a Chair and a Vice Chair from among their membership. The members may appoint delegates to represent them at Council events. The bill also adds a sovereignty clause that affirms the recognition of the state tribes as having the right to govern themselves. The Chair introduced Delegate McEachin to open a discussion on the Council members' view of the bill. Delegate McEachin said he introduced the bill at the request of the Governor's Chief of Staff Bill Leighty, who he believed thought it in the best interest of the Virginia Indians to have a council consisting of Native Americans only. Council member Reggie Tupponce read a statement for the record expressing his opposition to the bill because it left no provision for at-large members who had traditionally represented the interests of Virginia's American Indians who are not members of the state's recognized tribes. Council member Frank Richardson stated that he understood that position but as a tribal representative he had to back up the position of his chief. It was mentioned that this bill had been discussed in the Tribal Leadership summit, which was a closed meeting. In regards to the summit, Chair Karenne Wood stated that the chiefs met with Mr. Leighty in England and again in September, and that this bill originated out of those conversations. She said that some concerns about this bill had been expressed, including the loss of the voice of at-large members on the Council, how to accomplish the work done by the Council such as reviewing petitions, how to avoid potential situations of interaction that might be considered in violation of FOIA, and the lack of previous discussion about the language of the bill. Some chiefs were planning to meet with Delegate McEachin the following morning. Program Specialist Deanna Beacham stated that Senate Bill 1136 would be considered at a meeting of the Senate General Laws committee the following day, and that Senator McDougle encouraged anyone with concerns about the bill to contact him. Delegate McEachin stated that he would be available also. Council member Sherry Munford expressed her regrets about the lack of openness in the creation of this bill. Council member Frank Adams stated that his chief, Upper Mattaponi Ken Adams, had concerns about the lack of opportunity to input as to the language. Chief Adams was attending the meeting with Delegate McEachin and would be available to anyone who wanted to discuss his or her opinions regarding the bill. Other council members confirmed that the chiefs had not seen the language of the bill prior to its introduction. Council member Carole Nash stated that as the citizen at-large member she had received calls from other non-Indians, with the shared opinion that at the time of greater cooperation brought on by Jamestown 2007, removing the citizen at-large member from the VCI sent a mixed message. The Chair expressed the opinion that the VCI could not take a position for or against the bill, although all were encouraged to share their views with the patrons or to their chiefs.

2. The next item of new business was a report on a Freedom of Information Act request from the Sappony tribe. The Chair said a letter had been received on December 18, asking for information concerning the Virginia Indian Heritage Trail, specifically all papers and emails concerning the research grant and the selection of sites to be included in the initial trail booklet.

The Chair responded with a willingness to comply and an approximation of the costs involved, to which the Sappony replied asking that the request proceed. The Chair asked for an extension on the request until the end of January due to a death in her family, but had not yet received an answer.

3. Next council member Reggie Tupponce gave a report on the AARP Diversity program. The AARP recently formed a Virginia Diversity Advisory Council, and council member Tupponce has been appointed as a representative for the Native Americans in Virginia. He stated that a request has been made for an American Indian alternate as well. Meetings are held monthly by conference call. Anyone interested in the role of alternate can contact him.

4. The final item of new business was information recently received by the VCI office that the Governors' Interstate Indian Council (GIIC) mid-year conference would be held at the Wyndham in DC on February 27, in conjunction with the National Congress of American Indian convention. The VCI's representative to the GIIC is council member Mitchell Bush. It was decided that Mitchell Bush and Karenne Wood would attend the conference.

### **Old Business:**

1. The first item was the monthly report on the VCI budget, with written information distributed to the members in their meeting packets. Program Specialist said she had been informed by the accounting office that the unspent funds from last year's budget had been returned to the Council and that the additional amount of approximately \$9000 would be reflected in the next report available. This would mean additional funds available for replacing the VCI office computer and for the upcoming conference.

2. Next was the Chair's report on the Tribal Leaders' Summit, held the previous weekend in Charlottesville at the Boars Head Inn. On Friday night there was a dinner and reception at the Provost's house. Much of Saturday's program was devoted to a meeting with the officials of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities regarding the Virginia Indian Heritage Program and other joint programs. The meeting included a presentation on VFH's radio programming division, with a suggestion concerning 3-minute segments for public radio on Virginia Indian topics around the time of the Jamestown 400th anniversary. Topics for the shorts discussed included identity, authenticity, stereotypes and mascots, land loss, displacement, and economic marginalization, access to education, Colonial mentality in the present, environmental protection, and preservation of history and cultures. There was a report on the Heritage Trail and booklet, and tribal leaders proposed some additional sites and material for the booklet. The tribal leaders were in agreement in supporting the elements of the Virginia Indian Heritage Program. Each chief present signed a letter of support for the program, and some of the chiefs agreed to visit legislators to gain support for the program's funding. There was also a discussion of the panels to be held at the VFH Festival of the Book in March. One on Friday, March 23 at 6 PM at the Charlottesville library will include Karenne Wood and Gabrielle Tayac, about the construction of history and marginalization of American Indians. Another will be a panel of Virginia Indian leaders discussing books written about us; it will be held Saturday March 24 at noon at the City Council chamber. Confirmed speakers include Anne Richardson, Steve Adkins, George Whitewolf Branham and Wayne Adkins. David Beringer gave a report on the upcoming teachers' summer institute, which will include Indian and non-Indian presenters. There was also a report on upcoming activities planned in conjunction with the Humanities Federation Conference scheduled for November 2007 in Williamsburg.

The summit continued with reports from the various intertribal organizations, including UIV, MPM, VITAL and AIS-DC. Karenne presented the report on the SOL's review process that had been distributed to the tribal leaders and VCI members. The meeting continued with a discussion on the proposed legislation concerning the VCI, previously discussed in this meeting (see new business Item 1). The proposed apology resolution was also discussed, and the tribal leaders agreed that they needed to meet with the resolution's sponsors. A meeting was planned for the eight state-recognized tribes to review the schedule of Jamestown 2007-related events requiring multiple tribes' participation. The Chair stated that in her opinion the Summit meeting was very productive and the tribes showed unity.

3. Karenne then called attention to a list of potential sites for the Virginia Indian Heritage Trail booklet that had been distributed by email to VCI members and tribal leaders earlier. She had asked for additional suggestions. Some new sites had been suggested by email, and the Council members suggested others.

Also in regards to the Virginia Indian Heritage Trail, at the March 2006 planning session, there was agreement regarding transferring \$25,000 of the money that was raised to the United Indians of Virginia for a grant program for the tribes to be used to present tribal histories. UIV agreed to accept such funds and administer the grant program. Transferring the money requires approval by the VCI, so the Chair requested a motion on the transfer. Member Frank Adams moved that the funds be transferred to the United Indians of Virginia to be used for the grant program, and member Sherry Munford seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. The next item on the agenda concerned the most recent draft of the proposed bylaws, which the bylaws subcommittee had distributed to all the Council members several days prior to the meeting. At the opening of the discussion, Council member Frank Richardson expressed a concern that the Chair's Executive Report, which had been submitted prior to the opening of the General Assembly as required by the Code of Virginia, had not been reviewed first by the Council. He requested a motion that any material submitted by the Chair on behalf of the council should first be reviewed and approved by the Council members. The motion was seconded by Council member Paige Archer. The vote on the motion was as follows: Yeas: Richardson, R. Stewart, Munford; R. Tupponce, Archer; Nays: F. Adams, G. Stewart, Smith, Nash, Wood; therefore the motion did not carry.

The bylaws committee said the previous draft had resulted in several changes to the draft bylaws, but the corrected draft was not yet available. Additional suggestions were made during the ensuing discussion. The bylaws subcommittee agreed that all the accepted changes would be incorporated into another draft which would be submitted to the Council office in time to be posted along with the draft minutes. This would allow the draft to be available for public review prior to a motion to adopt. A copy of the most recent draft of the bylaws document is appended to these minutes.

During the discussion of the bylaws draft a concern was raised about the appropriateness of circulating council members' remarks via email to the entire membership. The point was put to Counsel Jack Kotvas, who said that it would not be a violation of the Freedom of Information Act to circulate email that consisted of information only. Following the bylaws discussion, Council member Reggie Stewart submitted a motion that requests from Council members to circulate email that consisted of information only could be done without approval of the Chair. The motion was seconded by Frank Adams, and was passed unanimously.

**Announcements:**

A meeting of the Conference Subcommittee will be held immediately following this business meeting.

1. The next business meeting will be February 20, 2007 at 6 PM in room 7 West of the GAB. It will be preceded by a Recognition sub-committee meeting in the same room at 4:30 PM.

2. The Virginia Historical Society has indicated that they intend to invite VCI members to a meeting regarding their upcoming exhibits for spring 2007: Pocahontas - Her Life and Legend in February and Jamestown, Quebec, Santa Fe - Three North American Beginnings in March. Information will be distributed as soon as available.

3. There will be a reception at the Science Museum January 24, 2007, where the John Smith 400 shallon is now on exhibit. VCI members and tribal leaders are welcome to attend this reception. RSVP's may be emailed or called in to the VCI office.

4. VCI members received invitations to the National Museum of the American Indian reception on January 29, 6:30 - 8:30 PM, in honor of the Return to a Native Place exhibit. RSVP date is January 24. Carpooling is encouraged.

5. Camilla Townsend, author of Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma, will give a lecture entitled Pocahontas as Broker: Risks and Rewards for Native Women at Contact, at Old Dominion University's Mills Godwin Hall on February 8 at 8 PM. Free and open to the public.

6. A Cross Cultural Discussion with Tavis Smiley is scheduled for February 9, 2007 in Williamsburg. Karenne Wood will participate.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 PM. It was to be immediately followed by a meeting of the VCI Conference planning sub-committee.