



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Virginia Council on Indians

P. O. Box 1475, Richmond, VA 23218

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

**William P. Miles**  
Chair

### **Virginia Council on Indians Meeting November 27, 2007**

**Present:** Chief Bill Miles (Pamunkey), Chief Ken Adams (Upper Mattaponi), Assistant Chief Earl Bass (Nansemond); Sharon Bryant (Monacan), Joanne Howard (Eastern Chickahominy), Deanna Beacham (Weapemeoc, Council Program Specialist)

**Absent:** Chief Carl Custalow (Mattaponi), Chief Stephen Adkins (Chickahominy), Chief Anne Richardson

**Attendees:** Chief Gene Adkins (Eastern Chickahominy), Mitchell Bush (Onondaga), Pam Talbott (Monacan), Terry Talbott, Lynette Allston (Nottoway of Virginia), Allard Allston, Archie Elliott (Nottoway of Virginia), Sid Turner (Nottoway of Virginia), William Wright (Nottoway of Virginia), Dave Kearney, Shelby Penn (United Cherokee), Phyllis Thompson (United Cherokee), Jessica Penn (United Cherokee), Helen Rountree, Jack Kotvas.

#### **Call to Order:**

1. The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:30 PM by Chief Bill Miles, who asked Chief Gene Adkins to give the invocation. Chief Miles then asked those present to introduce themselves.

#### **Administrative Business:**

1. Chief Miles noted that Joanne Howard was now representing the Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division and announced that Assistant Chief Earl Bass had been designated by Chief Barry Bass to represent the Nansemond Tribe.

2. The next order of business was the approval of the minutes from October 16, 2007 meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as distributed was made by Assistant Chief Bass, and seconded by Chief Adams. The motion passed unanimously.

3. The next order of business was the election of a Vice Chair as noted in the Code of Virginia. Assistant Chief Bass nominated Chief Anne Richardson, and Chief Adams nominated Assistant Chief Bass. The Chair then called for secret ballots, and Assistant Chief Bass was elected by a vote of 3-2.

## **Old Business:**

1. Copies of the VCI budget report for the month of October 2007 had been distributed to the VCI members for their review. A motion to accept the report as presented was made by Assistant Chief Bass and seconded by Sharon Bryant and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Chief Adams had asked that the Council consider the wording of the proposed Werowocomoco historic highway marker. The language agreed upon by the chiefs and the highway marker editorial committee had been distributed to the VCI members. Chief Miles asked each of the members for comments. Assistant Chief Bass moved that the Council accept the marker wording as presented, and the motion was seconded by Joanne Howard. The motion passed unanimously. The Chair asked that a memorandum on the Council's action be sent to the Director of the Department of Historic Resources.

## **Public Comment:**

1. Chief Adams had invited Dave Kearney, an experienced sports event organizer, to address the Council on the topic of the possibility of organizing indigenous games in Virginia in the future. The type of games and scope of event could be whatever the tribes wanted. There have been national and North American indigenous games held in various states and in Canada. A Native American Sports Council exists in Colorado which is affiliated with the Olympics Committee. Various sports facilities might be available for a venue. Following Mr. Kearney's comments, the Chair asked the Council members on their opinions and comments. Member Bryant suggested and others agreed that the members take the suggestion back to their tribes. The Chair asked that this be done, and suggested that if there were interest on the part of the tribes, the next step would be obtaining a formal proposal with more detailed information. The matter will be discussed again at the next VCI meeting.

2. Chief Miles asked that a public comment section be added to the agenda for the VCI meetings in the future, with a limit of 3 minutes per speaker.

## **New Business:**

1. Chief Adams brought before the Council a concern about Virginia Tech budget cuts threatening the job of Professor Harry Dyer, the sole American Indian faculty member of the American Indian Studies program. He said that he, Chief Steve Adkins and Chief Anne Richardson planned to meet with the Virginia Tech provost on December 13 about this, and he hoped for a letter of support from the Council. Assistant Chief Earl Bass moved that the VCI send a letter of support, and the motion was seconded by Sharon Bryant. The motion passed unanimously, and the Chair asked that a letter be prepared in the next few days.

2. The next item was a discussion regarding appointments to the advisory committee that the Code of Virginia specifies the VCI shall appoint. The council members shared their thoughts, and Jack Kotvas from the Attorney General's office suggested that possible duties of the advisory council could be included in the bylaws. It was decided to table appointments to the committee until clarification as to its possible duties, which could be included in the bylaws.

3. The next item was a discussion of the VCI bylaws. The Chair asked that the voting members of the VCI review the bylaws before the next meeting and make suggestions as to changes. The Chair pointed out that some of the bylaws needed to be changed to confirm with

the Code of Virginia. He asked that a considerable portion of the January meeting time be set aside to discuss the suggested changes.

4. The next item on the agenda was the annual VCI conference, which is usually held the third Friday & Saturday in March. After a review of past conferences, it was suggested that this might be a possible duty of the advisory committee, although there might not be enough time for a new committee to organize it this year. The Chair suggested tabling the conference discussion considering the other concerns the Council has at present. It was agreed that the community looked forward to the annual banquet but perhaps a simpler version could be organized. The conference will be discussed again at the next VCI meeting.

5. The Chair then addressed the matter of the recognition committee considering the petition of the Nottoway Tribe of Virginia. Paige Archer has indicated that she is resigning as the chair of the committee. He said Dr. Rountree, who is a consultant to the committee, had expressed some concerns but that more preparation and reconstitution of the committee needed to take place before those concerns could be addressed. The minutes to the November 2 meeting of the recognition committee have been posted on the Commonwealth Calendar. The Nottoway chair Lynette Allston thanked the committee for their work to date and said the group appreciated the transparency of the process and conscientiousness of the committee members.

#### **Announcements:**

1. The next VCI business meeting of the VCI will be January 15, 2008 at 6:30 PM in room 7 West of the General Assembly Building.

2. The VITAL Christmas dinner will be at Chickahominy on December 2 at 3 PM. Tickets can be obtained from VITAL board members.

3. Assistant Chief Earl Bass announced that Regency University had awarded a four-year scholarship to the Nansemond tribe. It is expected to be a continuing program.

4. Chief Adams is working with the Sesquicentennial Commission for the Civil War and asked that anyone with Civil War information regarding the Virginia Indians please share it with him for inclusion in the educational component of the commemoration.

#### **Additional Business:**

Following the announcements, Chief Adams moved that the Council enter a closed session according to the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711 (a1) to receive legal advice. Legal counsel Jack Kotvas and the Program Specialist were also asked to join the closed session. The motion was seconded by Assistant Chief Bass and passed unanimously. Upon return to public session, the Council certified by roll call vote that only the specified item had been discussed.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 PM.