

White Earth Reservation Business Committee

Special Meeting

May 16, 2023

White Earth, MN

Chairman Michael A. Fairbanks called the meeting to order at 12:53 p.m., roll call was taken with a quorum present.

Present: Michael A. Fairbanks, Chairman
Michael LaRoque, Secretary/Treasurer
Henry Fox, District I Representative
Eugene Sommers, District II Representative
Cheryl "Annie" Jackson, District III Representative

Absent:

Others Present: Laurie York, Deputy Director
Curtis Rogers, Deputy Director
Tracy Lhotka, Chief Finance Officer
Antonio Solorzano, General Counsel
Maria Bevins, Recorder

Agenda Approval

Additions:

- **Signatory Requests Ratifications**
- **2022-2023 Elders Commission Proposed Budget**
- **Enterprise Personnel – Executive Session**

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve with additions; second by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

RBC Meeting Minutes (No Meeting Minutes)

Calendar Review

- Calendar items were discussed

Tamarack National Refuge

Eugene Sommers, District II Representative referenced the Resolution Division of Natural Resources – Tamarack Refuge Return.

Resolution – Division of Natural Resources – Tamarack Refuge Return:

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve; second by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Teal Season

Dustin Roy is present and provided a brief update on the teal season. The Minnesota DNR has been doing an experimental early teal season, it occurs in the beginning of September.

This is a three-year experiment, and this coming fall will be year three. Meetings have been held with the Minnesota DNR regarding the teal season. There has been a productive number of hunters; however, a concern with shooting other species and they are keeping a close eye on this. The Minnesota DNR plan on implementing a regular season after this experiment. In past years White Earth has closed its borders entirely to the early teal season and not allowing early goose season on open water. White Earth has also closed bodies of water and individual rice beds that would allow for membership to hunt geese during that time. Asking for directions for the early teal season for this year.

The Chairman stated they have been dealing with this for a couple years now. RBC had concerns regarding the teal season because it's during our ricing season and the teal flies into the ricing beds. This brings a safety issue for the ricers and the hunters. In the past years, White Earth put up notices across our reservation line that we close our reservation to the season. White Earth will be asking the Refuge to close again for this year. Historically upper Rice Lake is a huge part of our harvest. White Earth will reach out to Commissioner Strommen on this issue and if the state would honor our historical sovereignty and treaty rights. Especially with 1855. White Earth will write a letter to the Commissioner and Governor expressing our concerns. White Earth RBC will address their Legal team.

Eugene commented on working with the Minnesota DNR, they overstep a lot and lack of consultation with the Tribe. Mr. Sommers stated he doesn't agree to open up the lakes and to keep the lakes closed. Cheryl does not agree with the early teal season and the Minnesota DNR should be having consultation with White Earth. This is for the safety of our members. Henry stated this is for the safety of our members and protection of our members who will be harvesting wild rice. Michael LaRoque commented on this is not only a White Earth issue, but Leech Lake as well. Leech Lake also closed their borders lakes to early teal season. This is protecting our members.

Antonio is requesting permission to work with White Earth Division of Natural Resources and to coordinate and collaborate with Leech Lake with bringing forward a letter for the Chairman to sign to the Minnesota DNR outlining our position on these issues.

2022-23 Elders Commission Proposed Budget; includes the NICOA Conference:
Motion made by Henry Fox to approve; second by Michael LaRoque. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Consent Agenda / Signatory Requests for May 16, 2023; Additions:

1. Public Health Amendments & Resolutions

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve with additions; second by Michael LaRoque. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Ratifications:

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to approve; second by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Motion made by Eugene Sommers to go into Executive Session at 1:12 p.m.; second by Michael LaRoque. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.



[REDACTED]

Executive Session ended at 1:56 p.m.

Motion made by Cheryl "Annie" Jackson to adjourn at 1:56 p.m.; second by Henry Fox. Motion carried: 4 for, 0 against.

Michael LaRoque, Secretary/Treasurer