

Council on American Indian Concerns

Regular Monthly Meeting, January 14, 2009
DNR Conference Room, Atlanta

Council members in attendance: Nealie McCormick, Marilyn McGaughey, Ralph Crews, Tom Gresham, Royce McCrary, Sarah Hill

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Nealie McCormick at 1:35 pm. Ralph Crews led the opening prayer.

The November 2008 meeting minutes, which had been emailed to members earlier, were approved as sent. Ralph Crews pointed out that he has not received a copy of the annual report that he requested at the September meeting. Pam will send him a copy.

A written treasurer's report was presented by Pam Meditz and reviewed by Ralph Crews. It listed reconciled expenses to date for the current, FY 2009, fiscal year (\$12,137) and a projection of obligated expenses for the remainder of FY 2009 (\$6,750).

Relating to budgeting, a motion was made, seconded and approved to again donate \$500.00 to the Society for Georgia Archaeology for Archaeology Month, which is held in May.

Ongoing Business

Sarah Hill presented Council members with a log sheet documenting emails directed to the Council from its web page and actions she has taken from November 4, 2008 to date. No significant issues were raised in these emails. Pam Meditz reviewed a one-page summary of the previous two months' log of communications to the Council via the Council's telephone number and the Historic Sites Region's email addresses. All such inquiries were generally routine and either she, Linda Moye, Nealie McCormick, Vonnie McCormick or Sarah Hill took appropriate action, usually a follow-up communication or reference to another resource. She noted that there was one request, from Patricia Davis, to look into a case of possible disturbance to burials; Pam asked Ms. Davis to submit a formal request (with the Council's form) and we agreed to revisit the request when the form has been submitted. Tom Gresham will respond to her when he receives a copy of her form.

Marilyn McGaughey reviewed the current status of our Rules and Regulations, reporting that she had spoken with Diane DeShay, the attorney with the Attorney General's office who is handling this. Ms. DeShay has reviewed about half of the Rules and Regulations draft, and will finish her review as soon as her workload slackens.

Regarding recent news stories concerning Indians, Marilyn McGaughey mentioned an AJC report that the Georgia Legislature may consider a bill to allow gaming in Atlanta, perhaps in a casino-like setting, at Underground. She noted a USA Today article about a hospital in

Arizona whose work is sensitive to Native American cultures. Another article she discussed was about the Mauri Indians of New Zealand. She cited an AJC article about the DNR's initiative to gather native grasses at Panola Mountain State Park for use at Etowah Mounds State Historic Site, a project the Council help fund. She discussed an article about the importance of casinos to many Indian tribes across the country. Ralph Crews discussed an article from his local paper about the burial salvage project on Ossabaw Island that the Council co-sponsored. Tom Gresham reported that project director Dan Elliott said the Associated Press article about the project was run in 153 media outlets, most of which are on-line. Tom pointed out that the project generated good publicity for the Council, and the Council is cited in the caption to the photograph that accompanied the article. The Council agreed that we will write a letter of thanks to State Archeologist David Crass, whose office partially funded the project and who prepared the press release, and to DNR Game Management Chief Mark Whitney, whose office funded the bulk of the salvage operation. The Council thanked Tom Gresham for his time and effort in the project. Tom reported that Dan Elliott hopes to have a report on the findings by late February to mid-March.

New Business

Marilyn McGaughey reported on the search for a replacement physical anthropologist for Karen Burns. Dr. Rick Snow, the former forensic anthropologist for the GBI and an Atlanta resident, was the preferred candidate. Nealie McCormick stated that he had spoken with Rick Snow and learned that he most likely would accept the appointment. Dr. Snow will make his final decision in a day or two. Meanwhile, Dr. Snow's resume has been sent to the Governor's office with the Council's recommendation to appoint him to the position of physical anthropologist.

Nelial reported that he had been in touch with the Governor's office about reappointments of current members of the Council. He was told that the reappointment process is in progress, that no problems are known, and that the reappointments should be completed in the next month.

Tom Gresham pointed out that when all current members are reappointed and Rick Snow is appointed, we will need to print a small number of new Council brochures. Sarah Hill noted that we will also need to update our website.

Regarding Council equipment, Tom Gresham reported that Karen Burns turned over to him the microscope and saw that had been in her possession, and that he in turn would deliver them to Pam Meditz for safe keeping at the Preservation Laboratory at Panola Mountain. The equipment can be made available to Rick Snow when he joins the Council. We then discussed other equipment purchased by the Council. Nealie reported that he still has possession of one video projector and the second projector had been issued to a Council member (no longer active) who now lives out of state. Because the projector technology is outdated we agreed that it would not be cost effective for us to try to track down the equipment. We then discussed the two surveillance cameras (gopher cameras) purchased for DNR law enforcement, and particularly for Dan Parrish. We agreed that they might still be needed by DNR, even though Dan Parrish is no

longer with that branch of law enforcement. Nealie will make some calls to ensure that the equipment is still with DNR and enquire if it is still of use to DNR law enforcement.

We then elected officers to serve for calendar year 2009. A motion to re-elect the existing slate of officers (Chair Nealie McCormick; Vice-Chair Marilyn McCormick; Secretary Tom Gresham; Treasurer Ralph Crews) was seconded and approved.

We discussed our calendar for 2009. Marilyn McGaughey suggested that we meet at or with Fernbank Museum, perhaps in April or May. She will call to see if that is possible. Pam Meditz pointed out that our regular meeting day for November (the 11th) falls on a State holiday (Veterans' Day), and thus the building will be closed. We agreed to meet instead on the following Wednesday, November 18th, 2009.

In a discussion of the annual Governors' Interstate Indian Council conference, to be held this year in Arizona, we agreed that it is important to have Georgia represented. A motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize Nealie and Vonnie McCormick to attend on behalf of the Council and Georgia.

In personnel news, we noted with regret that Christine Neal has retired from the State Archeologist's office and will no longer be a liaison to the Council. Ryan Kennedy, who attended a Council meeting late last year, spoke up to say that he will be representing DNR's Archeological Services Unit at our future meetings. We agreed that we will write a thank you note to Christine Neal for her help with Council affairs.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Visitors: Pam Meditz, Ryan Kennedy, Frances Crews, Vonnie McCormick