



Bayfield County Administrator

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Mark Abeles-Allison, *County Administrator*

Kristine Kavajecz, *Human Resource Director*

Paige Terry, *Clerk III*

MINUTES OF THE: Bayfield County Tribal Relations Committee Meeting

9:00am, Wednesday, April 13, 2022

Virtual Meeting Via Web Ex, hosted by Red Cliff

Members Present: *Supervisor Jeff Silbert, Supervisor Steve Sandstrom, Tribal Chairman Chris Boyd, Tribal Vice-Chair Nathan Gordon*

Others Present: *Bayfield County Administrator Mark Abeles-Allison, Assistant Tribal Attorney Wade Williams, Tribal Administration Liaison Bryon Daley, Red Cliff Community Health Center Operations Coordinator Michael Lang, Bayfield County Public Health Nurse Holly Weber, Bayfield County Health Director Sara Wartman, Treaty of Natural Resources Division Administrator Chase Meierotto, Bayfield County Tourism Director Mary Motiff, Red Cliff Planning Administrator Nicole Boyd, Legendary Waters General Manager Randy Soulier, Legendary Waters Marketing Representative Demetri Morris, and Bayfield County Clerk III Paige Terry.*

Called to order at 9:04 a.m. by *Tribal Chair Chris Boyd.*

- 2. Introductions and Tribute:** Tribal Chair, Chris Boyd reported that the tribe has recently lost a few of its members, including tribal elders. County Administrator, Mark Abeles-Allison mentioned that Silbert and Sandstrom have been re-elected to the County Board and that Mary Motiff was re-elected as the Washburn for the City of Washburn. *Chairman* Boyd informed Sandstrom that he is invited to the Council's quarterly retreat at the end of April. Tribal Vice-Chair, Nathan Gordon gave his congratulations to the elected members.

- 3. Public Comment:** None.

- 4. Motion to Approve Minutes of January 26, 2022, County-Tribal Relations Committee Meeting:**

Motion by Gordon, seconded by Silbert to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2022, County-Tribal Relations Committee Meeting. Motion carried, 4-0.

- 5. Departmental Collaborations:**

- a. Public Health Update:** Bayfield County Health Director, Sara Wartman reported that the county had been experiencing a drastic reduction in COVID-19 cases until the previous week when the number of cases began to slowly increase. The county has reported 14 positive cases the past week with one currently active outbreak. Fewer cases are being reported to the health department with a majority of cases experiencing milder symptoms. *Chairman* Boyd asked for more information on the demographic of the current affected population. Wartman replied that there is an outbreak in the Bayfield School District with staff members being sick. Bayfield County Public Health Nurse, Holly Weber further explained that 50+ population is getting sick with milder symptoms while the 20-30 age group experiencing the most severe symptoms. *Chairman*

Boyd asked Wartman if the entire population will eventually need a second booster vaccine. Wartman explained that it is anticipated that COVID-19 will be treated similarly to the common flu in the future with yearly vaccines available. The second booster vaccine is currently available for the 50+ age group as well as those that are immunocompromised, but it will eventually be opened to the general population. Weber informed the committee that the current COVID-19 symptoms are more similar to the common cold than the flu with more cases reporting severe congestion, sore throat, cough, and fatigue. Red Cliff Community Health Center Operations Coordinator, Michael Lang reported 5 current positive cases on the reservation with three of the cases being one family. An additional seven individuals would be coming out of quarantine that day. Red Cliff is currently enforcing a 5-day quarantine policy that has been working really well. The Red Cliff clinic will be holding a mass vaccination event for the 50+ tribal population at the Legendary Waters Resort and Casino on Tuesday, April 26, 2022. Lang explained that the tribe has been scaling back on their COVID-19 restrictions as well as testing in an effort to limit the number of individuals that are missing work to wait on test results. Red Cliff will be moving forward with their Easter event that is planned for the coming Friday and will be providing masks to attendees. Wartman stated that Governor Evers will be making a visit to the area as part of a thank you tour to thank the public health offices for their work during the pandemic.

Wartman stressed that the COVID-19 pandemic has placed an increased pressure on the youth and there have been an increase in self-harm cases among the youth population. Weber informed the committee that the department was able to secure an assembly speaker to visit all of the Bayfield County School Districts later in the fall. The speaker is nationally renowned for his “Can I Kiss You?” Program. Goodie bags filled with informative brochures and similar items will be made available to all attendees. Weber explained that the department will begin focusing on putting more effort into the AODA and Suicide Prevention programs as well as expanding the AODA focus to include more general mental health due to the limitations on funding for AODA.

Tribal Administration Liaison, Bryon Daley reported that the Red Cliff warming shelter was shut down April 1, 2022. The tribe will be opening the top floor of the Mishomis House the upcoming Friday so tribal members will be able to come in and work towards completing a specifically engineered program to be allowed to stay at the house. *Chairman* Boyd explained that the house will segregate genders and will not be co-ed. Abeles-Allison reported that Paige Crenshaw, the new director of the homeless shelter in Ashland, spoke at the previous night’s Criminal Justice Council meeting. Abeles-Allison informed the committee that shelter is looking to expand to the nearby two-story building so they may be able to offer more rooms.

Abeles-Allison congratulated Red Cliff Planning Administrator, Nicole Boyd on her re-election to the Bayfield School Board.

- b. Tourism; Trails, Events, and Byway:** Bayfield County Tourism Director, Mary Motiff reported no current events going on and no new updates for the trails. Motiff informed the committee that the national designation of the scenic byway has opened up additional grant opportunities. One project along the byway has been proposed for a grant, which is to relocate the museum in the Town of Bell due to the building sinking into the ground. The project would move the entire building while allowing a bathroom to be built as well. Motiff explained that a Viking Cruise is scheduled to visit the area later in the year. Motiff stated that a new tool is in development that would allow individuals to book virtual itineraries for the multitude of activities available throughout Bayfield County. The itineraries could be scheduled for either a full or half day and would allow individuals to complete a virtual walkthrough of their experience so they can better plan their trips to the area. Motiff informed the committee that she has been appointed as a new representative for the County Tourism Deer Society, a group that will be responsible for making the recommendation for the number of distributed doe tags and ensuring the region continues to

follow the maintenance goals for the deer population. Additionally, the Bayfield County Tourism Department has been invited to attend the IPW International Tourism Conference in Orlando, Florida.

Gordon informed the committee that Red Cliff will be holding its annual Pow Wow on July 1-3, 2022, and the tribe's Cultural Days will take place on the third weekend in September. County Board Supervisor, Steve Sandstrom expressed concerns over the Viking Cruise that would be visiting the area and the potential negative impacts it may have on the environment. Discussion took place regarding the possible impacts that the cruise may have on the environment and the possibility of a COVID outbreak after the visit. Gordon reported that the tribe is working to get its Tourism Department back on track and is currently looking to redo parts of the tourism kiosk shed located at Legendary Waters. Visitor guidebooks and advertisement stickers for the Red Cliff Fish Company will be placed at the kiosk. The Fish Company is moving towards developing an online source to sell apparel and is hoping to be able to accept online orders for fish in the future. Demetri Morris with Legendary Waters reviewed some of the upcoming events that will be held at the casino. Abeles-Allison asked for an update on a snowmobile trail that was rerouted the previous year. Motiff explained that she was not capable of giving an accurate update and the question should be rerouted to the Forestry and Parks Department.

10:26 – The committee took a short recess.

10:36 – The committee reconvened.

- c. **Tribal / County Lands Update:** Assistant Tribal Attorney, Wade Williams reported that he has had discussions with Abeles-Allison and Bayfield County Corporation Counsel John Carlson regarding the land transactions. A recommendation has been made to postpone the joint Tribal Council-County Board meeting until June to ensure that the matter is finished, and a proper announcement can be made at the meeting. Abeles-Allison clarified that Bayfield County is waiting on approval to withdraw 706 acres from County Forest Law. Once the land is withdrawn, the county can take action to withdraw the remaining 148 acres to prepare it for transfer to Red Cliff. The committee discussed moving the meeting and agreed to tentatively schedule the joint meeting for June 8, 2022.

Chairman Boyd asked if any new board members were elected. County Board Supervisor Jeff Silbert and Abeles-Allison stated that Jeanna Penney would be replacing Tom Snilsberg and Madelaine Rekemeyer would be replacing David Zepczyk on the board.

Treaty of Natural Resources Division Administrator, Chase Meierotto inquired about a letter that was received from Bayfield County pertaining to a timber sale taking place adjacent to tribal lands. Silbert explained that the parcels for the sale have been identified and a bid will take place at the following month's Forestry Committee meeting. *Chairman* Boyd asked if the land will be put for sale after the timber harvest and if it would be possible for the tribe to acquire the land before it is stripped. Abeles-Allison stated that he would reach out to the Forest Administrator for more information.

6. **Countywide Broadband Plans:** Abeles-Allison reported that Bayfield County has worked together with Norvado and Bayfield Wireless to expand broadband infrastructure throughout the county. Two broadband projects were approved the previous year with three more projects focusing on fixed wireless and fiber being approved for 2022. The county has committed resources in the terms of space on the county-owned towers to the projects. Abeles-Allison reviewed the Affordable Connectivity Program with the committee. Red Cliff Planning Administrator, Nicole Boyd informed the committee that Red Cliff has submitted an application to the NTIA for a Fiber-to-Home project that would expand the in-ground broadband infrastructure to reach all tribal households and lands outside of the reservation in the

Town of Russell. Red Cliff is still looking to submit a separate application to expand the cellular service on the reservation.

Chairman Boyd asked if the county had received any funds for emergency housing. Abeles-Allison stated that the county had received CDBG-CV funds for rental and mortgage utility assistance as well as small business assistance. The funds would be available throughout the rest of the year. *Chairman* Boyd questioned if every resident would be able to apply for the funds. Abeles-Allison explained that the rental/mortgage assistance funds would only be available to non-tribal Bayfield County residents but was unsure if tribal residents would be able to apply for the business assistance funds. Abeles-Allison continued, stating that the county receives FEMA funds that are distributed on a regional basis. The committee discussed the Housing Coalition presentation that was recently given by UW Extension Community Development Educator Kellie Pederson to the county board. Abeles-Allison informed the committee that he would contact Pederson and ask that she share her presentation with the group at the next committee meeting. *Chairman* Boyd suggested the county and tribe working together to collaborate for a job fair to help advertise employment with both entities. Legendary Waters General Manager, Randy Soulier suggested holding the job fair at the casino. Discussion took place regarding the possibility of collaborating a job fair, but no date was decided at the meeting. Motiff stated she would like to get a large group together to discuss the affordable housing issue in the region. The committee discussed the topic of difficulty finding applicants for jobs and the lack of affordable housing. Wartman briefly discussed the Health Infrastructure Grant that is currently available.

7. **Joint Water Proclamation:** Boyd suggested having the legal bodies work together to clarify the proper language that should be used in the proclamation. The committee agreed.

8. **Joint Tribal Council / County Board Meeting Planning:**

a. **Location:** Legendary Waters Resort & Casino Event Center

b. **Time:** 5:00 p.m.

c. **Date:** June 8, 2022 (Tentative)

d. **DRAFT AGENDA:**

i. **Introductions**

ii. **Opening Ceremony**

iii. **Youth Presentation**

iv. **State of County / State of Tribe**

v. **Collaboration focus; Lands, Health, Tourism:** Gordon suggested removing tourism and health as breakout topics. Boyd further suggested having lands being a standalone item on the agenda. The committee agreed and the agenda item will be renamed to “Collaborative Efforts.”

vi. **Water Proclamation:** As was previously discussed, the proclamation would be handed off to the Tribal Attorney and Bayfield County Corporation Counsel to determine the final language that would be used. The committee discussed the possibility of inviting Governor Evers to attend the joint meeting so he may also sign the proclamation.

vii. **Working to Build Relationships**

viii. **Group Picture**

9. **Future Meeting Date and Time:** July 13, 2022 at 9:00 A.M.

10. **Adjournment:** There being no further business to discuss, *Tribal Chairman* Boyd adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

PAIGE A. TERRY,

Clerk III, Bayfield County Administrator's & Clerk's Offices

On behalf of the Bayfield County-Tribal Relations Committee

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