

MINUTES FOR QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN INDIAN ELDERS ASSOCIATION

July 24, 2019

HOSTED BY SAGINAW CHIPPEWA INDIAN TRIBE

Onion Creek played a grand entry song and a flag song. The flag carriers and the shawl warriors introduced themselves. An invocation was given by George Martin, *Lac Courte Oreilles* elder and veteran. The Chair of SCIT Elder Advisory Board, Joseph Sowmick briefly spoke and introduced Ronald F. Ekdahl, *Chief of Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe*. The Chief acknowledged the tribes present and welcomed the MIEA to the community.

Call to Order

MIEA President, Jerry Curtis, *Keweenaw Bay Indian Community*, called the meeting to order at 9:23 a.m. He thanked the veterans for their service.

Roll Call

Jerry Curtis conducted the roll call. MIEA Secretary, Jodie Palmer, *Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians*, announced eleven tribes were represented with twenty (20) tribal delegates and/or alternates present; a quorum was achieved. Jerry plans to reach out to Bay Mills to ask why they are not sending delegates.

Jerry asked if there were any additions to the agenda. There were none.

Approve Agenda for July 24, 2019

Jerry Curtis asked for approval of the agenda. Wanda Ritsema, *Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians*, made a motion to approve the agenda. Coleen Nessner, *Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians*, seconded the motion. The motion carried with nineteen (19) yes votes and one (1) abstention.

Approve Minutes of April 15, 2019

Jerry Curtis asked for approval of the minutes from the previous meeting. Vaughn Sagataw, *Hannahville Band of Potawatomi Indians*, made a correction to the minutes: Hannahville is hosting July 2020 MIEA, not SCIT. Coleen Nessner made a motion to approve the minutes of April 15, 2019 with the one correction. Theresa McFall, *Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians*, seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed. Jodie Palmer thanked Tammy Okuly-Shananaquet and Wanda Ritsema for taking the minutes in her absence.

NEW BUSINESS

Treasurer's Report for July 2019

Treasurer Tammy Okuly-Shananaquet, *Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians*, presented her report. She stated as of June 30, 2019, the balance was \$37,128.60. There were \$6,900 in expenditures since

her last report. Coleen Nessner made a motion to accept the treasurer's report; Vaughn Sagataw seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Scholarship awards announcement was made by Jerry Curtis. There were three \$1000 scholarships awarded to Victoria Geldner, Julien Malherbe and Emma Kemeny, all members of *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians*. There were six \$500 scholarships awarded: Andrew Tallman, Kaitlyn Hamann and MacKenzie Knutsen, *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians*; Kalel Faber, *Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe*; Justin Williams, *Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians*; and Stephanie Miller, *Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians*.

Nominations and Elections

Nominations and Elections Committee Chairperson, Colleen Nessner, stated nominations for vice-chairman, treasurer and officer-at-large were going to be held today. These positions will be for two year terms. Elections will be held at the October meeting. Members from Keeweenaw Bay Indian Community and Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band are ineligible to run. Coleen opened nominations for vice-chairperson. Two nominations were made and declined or were ineligible to run. Dolores Green nominated Judy Winchester, *Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians*. No other nominations were made. Coleen opened nominations for treasurer. Wanda Ritsema nominated Tammy Okuly-Shananaquet, *Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians*. No other nominations were made or accepted. Colleen opened nominations for officer-at-large. Rochelle Bustra nominated Patricia Beebee, *Sault Ste. Marie Band of Chippewa Indians*. Rebecca Kladder, *Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians*, was nominated by Tammy Okuly-Shananaquet. Two additional nominations were made and were declined or ineligible to run. Those elected at the October meeting will officially start their terms at the April 2020 meeting.

Committee Updates

There were no committee updates to report. The flag committee announced a meeting would be held immediately after the business meeting

Jerry asked all of the committees to meet while attending MIEA as work needs to move forward.

Presentations and Discussion items

- ❖ Tuition Waiver – Jerry Curtis called upon the delegates to speak with their tribes, lobbyists, and legislative representatives to support this most recent attack on Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver (MITW). John Kiogama, *Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians*, gave a brief history of the MITW and called for MIEA to take a stand. He will bring a resolution to the next meeting.
- ❖ MIEA Scholarships were discussed. Suggestions were made to increase applications and perhaps modify the application process. Explanations were made that some applications were rejected due to being incomplete.
- ❖ Shawls – It was determined each tribe would design and make their own shawl(s) using the colors of red, purple, pink, and turquoise. There were several fine examples at the opening ceremony.
- ❖ Line 5 – Sarha Jo and LJ Denemy from the Line 5 camp outside of Mackinaw City presented to the group. Twenty percent (20%) of fresh water is being put at risk by Line 5. It presents a major threat to our environment and climate; there are areas where the pipeline is already leaking. The pipeline transports oil from Tar Sands, Alberta, Canada to a refinery in the Detroit area. The black snake is referred to in Lakota prophecy as a threat and Anishinabek prophecy as a time of choice. We need to love, respect and pray for the water every day. MIEA asked how we could

support the water protectors. There is an upcoming “Water is Life” festival planned for two days prior to Labor Day at Mackinaw City where we could be active participants. There was a suggestion to designate MIEA scholarship funds specifically to environmental science areas. Dale Anderson, *Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians*, made a motion to donate the proceeds from today’s auction to support Line 5; Wanda Ritsema seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried. There is a FaceBook page with updated news: MackinawOde (Heart of the Turtle).

- ❖ IT Assistance – Jerry Curtis was given a name and contact information to assist Michael Duschene with the MIEA website.

Adjournment

Sandra Pittsley, *Keeweenaw Bay Indian Community*, made a motion to adjourn. Vaughn Sagataw, *Hannahville Band of Potawatomi Indians*, seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed with twenty (20) yes votes. The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Upcoming Conferences:

October 2019 ~ *Nottawaseppi Band of Potawatomi Indians*
April 27-29, 2020 ~ *Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians*
July 20-22, 2020 ~ *Hannahville Band of Potawatomi Indians*
October 2020 ~ *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians*