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VCNAA SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

May 25, 2021
GoTo Virtual Meeting

Members present: Carol McGranaghan, Chair; Carol Irons, Vice Chair; Hillary Hoffmann, Secretary, Lucy Neel, Doug Bent, Jeff Benay

Guests: Jess Robinson, Vermont State Archaeologist

The meeting was brought to order by Carol McGranaghan at 11:00am. Carol McGranaghan provided an update about the situation with the Danville public school mascot. A resident of Danville had reached out to the Commission (via Carol M.) to inform the Commission of the potential for the mascot being reinstated. This is not the first time that the Commission, and the Danville School Board, have considered the school mascot issue. Discussion ensued about the appropriate response from the Commission. The next Danville School Board meeting will involve a discussion of this issue and the meeting is scheduled for June 1.

Jeff Benay suggested that the best way for the Commission to respond is to attend the meeting, to inform the School Board and the residents, and other members of the public about the damage that indigenous mascots can do, especially to children.

Carol mentioned that Melody Brook had written a letter to the Danville School Board in the past regarding the harm that indigenous mascots cause, which has been distributed to teachers in the school in the past. Nulhegan has adopted Melody's letter as the tribe's official policy.

Jeff Benay mentioned that Chief Menard's previous statements about the Danville mascot have been misinterpreted by some residents of Danville and offered to appear at the meeting as a representative of Mississquoi to clarify that Chief Menard is opposed to indigenous mascots. Chief Menard's previous statement about indigenous representation was taken out of context.

Carol M. indicated that she planned to attend the meeting. Carol asked for input from the Commission on whether the Commission would like to participate in person, send a letter, or both.

Hillary Hoffmann offered to attend the meeting as a Commissioner.

Jeff Benay made a motion to authorize Carol McGranaghan to attend the Danville School Board meeting on June 9 and represent the Commission's position on mascots and requested that as many Commissioners attend the meeting (virtually) as possible. Carol Irons seconded the motion.

The Commission voted to approve the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

Carol McGranaghan suggested that the Commission take up the matter of legislation on mascots in the fall.

Carol Irons offered to read Melody Brook's letter at the Danville School Board meeting.

Carol McGranaghan discussed the need to go into executive session; Carol Irons seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the Commission went into executive session.

The Commission voted to leave executive session and the meeting was adjourned at 11:45.