



Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission

Special Meeting | February 25, 2025 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: David Bible, Linda Leaf Bolin, Daniel Carter, Cheryl Cohenour, Joe Deere, Waynetta Lawrie, Winnie Guess Perdue, Patsy Powell, Joyce Roberts, Matt Roberts, Mark Vancuren, Dorcas Williams, Shari Williams

Commissioners Absent: Susan Arkeketa, Stacy Laskey, Warren Queton, Teresa Runnels, Kim Teehee, Erica Waeltz-Carter

I. Call to Order and Introductions

- a. Chairwoman Cohenour called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

II. Roll Call

- a. Chairwoman introduced Mark Vancuren, a new commissioner appointed by Tulsa County.

III. Land Acknowledgment

IV. Approve Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to approve January meeting minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Powel seconded.
 1. Aye: 13, Nay: 0
 - ii. Motion carried, January meeting minutes approved.

V. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Cohenour visited Mohawk Park with the Parks Department to a tour. Park staff are interested in reactivating the park and refurbish the powwow grounds so the Native American community can host powwows at the park. They also have a facility that's used for STEM programs that will be moved to another park, could be a satellite cultural center but not the best location for a main cultural center. Looking forward to the commission working with them on this.
- b. Vice Chair Carter followed up on last month's discussion on federal grant freezes. Tribal nations have put forward an enormous effort to educate the new presidential administration on treaty obligations and the impacts of potential freezes. Difference in services to federally recognized tribes and other "DEI" programs. Already been progress



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and encouraging statements from government leaders to protect funding to tribes. Still been layoffs and hiring freezes in positions that affect tribal programs.

- i. Chairwoman added there has been progress on health access and climate change initiatives to move forward with certain efforts.
- ii. Commissioner Deere: NCAI is confident with the message they delivered when they were in DC two weeks ago.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Native American Day Committee
 - i. First meeting is this Thursday, February 27, in person and on Zoom. Need a theme and featured artist. Theme could relate to the 100th anniversary of tribal citizens being USA citizens.
 - ii. Chairwoman Cohenour shared this will likely be the last NAD at Dream Keepers Park before construction starts, will need to plan for a different location for a few years.
- b. Dream Keepers Committee
 - i. Commissioner Matt Roberts passed out copies of the Dream Keepers award descriptions and a list of past awardees.
 - ii. Always taking nominations, the entire commission will vote on the awardees in September to recognize them in October (NAD) and November (commission meeting award ceremony).
- c. Education Committee
 - i. Commissioner Matt Roberts shared about the first ever cross-commission education meeting with other Title V Commissions. With GTAAC being the oldest commission, Commissioner Roberts was able to offer insights on what has worked well regarding recognizing students, involving students in Native American culture, and partnering with TPS.
 1. Chairwoman Cohenour reiterated the opportunity for collaboration with other Title V Commissions. Noted that GTAAC's Human Rights Commission (HRC) seat is still open, need someone who is able to commit to attending those meetings. Want to maintain that seat and participate as much as possible.
 - a. Lexi shared information about HRC.
 - b. Daniel proposed that interested folks email Cheryl and the commission can vote on who will represent next month.
- d. Public Relations Committee – no report
- e. Cultural Committee – no report
- f. Parks Committee
 - i. Chairwoman Cohenour is presenting to the Osage Nation tomorrow (2/26) regarding funding for their garden at Dream Keepers Park.
 - ii. The Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations are interested in being part of the flag monument.



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iii. Out for bid, many architects and engineering companies are interested. Will narrow down to 3 – 5 options, then the Tulsa Parks Department & GTAIAC Parks Committee will come together to hear presentations.

1. Commissioner Dorcas Williams: Will bidders be from Oklahoma or out of state? Chairwoman: Both.

iv. Will need to fundraise for the monument and interpretive signage for tribal gardens, which were not included in the grant.

v. Commissioners will be called upon to help facilitate conversations with tribal leaders for garden designs.

g. Bylaws Committee

i. Next committee meeting will be important and will be at 5pm before the March commission meeting. All commissioners are invited to join, Vice Chair Carter will circulate proposed changes to the ordinance and bylaws.

h. If you want to change committees or join a new committee, let Chairwoman Cohenour know.

VII. Old Business – no old business

VIII. New Business – no new business

IX. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Mayor Nichols stopped by during the committee reports section of the meeting and briefly spoke about how there is not a more important time to serve on commissions than right now. The Mayor's Office is actively working with tribal partners.

b. Tulsa Public Schools Indian Education's Social Dance (April 12 from 2 – 10 pm) at Will Rogers High School Gym. Acknowledging Native students. There are volunteer opportunities, Commissioner Shari Williams passed out a flyer.

c. Commissioner Shari Williams: Can have students selected by April for students of excellence, can be hard to get them here in May when they are graduating.

i. Chairwoman Cohenour proposes doing the recognition in April. Commissioner Matt Roberts agrees it's a nice recognition, long-time partnership and tradition.

d. Tulsa City Count Library's 2025 American Indian Festival of Words is this Saturday, March 1. The breakfast begins at 9am and the ceremony begins at 10:30am.

e. Owasso Cherokee Heritage Festival on Saturday, March 1 from 10 – 2.

f. University of Tulsa Law Students are hosting their 2nd Annual Powwow on March 29.

g. Cheryl recognized Jaymie Collum (Community Engagement Coordinator at Tulsa Municipal Courts) in the audience, who introduced herself.

X. Adjournment

a. Chairwoman Cohenour entertained a motion to adjourn.

i. Commissioner Deere made a motion, Commissioner Powell seconded.

1. Aye: 12

a. Commissioner Leaf Bolin left the meeting prior to the motion.

ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm.