



## GEORGIA COUNCIL ON AMERICAN INDIAN CONCERNS MEETING MINUTES

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Date: January 27, 2025

Time: 11:30am

Meeting called to order by: Nealie McCormick

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### INVOCATION

Led by Vonnie McCormick

#### **Council Members Present**

Nealie McCormick, Chairman  
Heidi Altman  
Paul Brannen  
Maureen Meyers  
Royce McCrary  
Christian Dane – Program Manager (non-member)

#### **Guests Present**

Vonnice McCormick  
Hendry Miller, Georgia Archives  
Megan Mooney, Georgia Southern University

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting minutes for the meeting on November 2, 2024, were distributed for review. Paul Brannen moved to accept minutes; Maureen Meyers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

### PRESENTATIONS

Hendry Miller, Archival Services Manager for Georgia Archives, presented what Georgia Archives does and how they can help house the Council's permanent records.

### TRIBE REPORTS

**Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe:** Provided by Chief Vonnie McCormick.

- Vonnie had a Microsoft Teams meeting with Christian and the EEOC to look for a day when they can come and meet with the tribe.
- Vonnie has been having weekly meetings with Georgia Tech on their cule project, which is moving along and will be submitted in mid-February.
- Vonnie and others from the tribal council spent two days at Georgia Tech working on the cule project.
- On December 22nd, Vonnie hosted a hamburger/hot dog party for 6 children and gave out presents from the Atlanta Braves. Pictures will be sent to Christian ASAP.



- Vonnie has been working on an exhibit for a museum in Florida for the Creeks, which has a centennial coming up. They are working on mannequins dressed in 1700s regalia.
- Vonnie is also working on an MOU with the local Boy Scouts chapter, as the national Boy Scouts organization now require them to come in and learn about everything, as most of their materials are from out west.
- Vonnie attended a meeting with the Southeastern Elders with USDA, which happens every 3 months.
- The tribal council held a 4-hour work session on Saturday, Jan. 25, to work on the tribe's 5-year plan.

**Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee:** No report given

**Cherokee of Georgia Tribal Council:** Provided by Paul Brannen.

- Paul mentioned they were going to meet with the EEOC people in January, but were unable due to the snowstorm.
- Paul discussed applying for grants to help with things as a result of the hurricane in September 2024. However, they are located next to the counties that are eligible for the grants, so they don't qualify for the income-based grants.
- Paul mentioned they are doing a cultural immersion and reintegration class based on the book "Breaking Sweet Press", and one of their travel members is leading the study group.
- They did receive the Atlanta Braves donations for three families, and they've had representatives from the DFCS come talk to them. Through those contacts, they've had two permanent placements.
- Paul expressed appreciation for the DFCS representatives and the work they've done to help the families.

## PROJECT REPORTS

Discussion was had on current projects below.

### A) Creation of Institutional Review Board:

- Heidi explained the concept of a tribal IRB to provide oversight and protection for research involving the community.
- The purpose of the tribal IRB would be to ensure informed consent from participants, minimize potential harms, and maximize potential benefits of research projects.
- There was discussion about the need to look into the federal requirements for establishing a tribal IRB on a federal level (though it may not be necessary to do so), including the concept of a Federal Wide Assurance (FWA) registration.
- The Council recognized the importance of community input and participation in developing the policies and procedures for the tribal IRB.
- There was acknowledgement that while establishing an IRB adds an extra layer of work, it is necessary to protect the community's interests and ensure ethical research practices.
- The Council agreed to have Heidi research the federal aspects of setting up a tribal IRB further, and for the Council members to review a sample policy and procedure manual from another tribal IRB.
- The next steps include tribal leaders discussing the IRB concept with the tribal groups to get their perspective and feedback on what protections and oversight they would want included.



- B) Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe digitization of records:
  - The tribal council wishes to house their digital public records with Georgia Archives.
- C) Native Sites project with Partnership on Inclusive Innovation (PIN)
  - Awaiting to see what the applicant pool will look like from PIN
  - Next step will be to determine to which applicants we would like to extend offers.
- D) Missing Persons Day
  - Will follow up with Vice Chairman Kirkland and Atlanta Braves about whether they can host this event, potentially in conjunction with the Native American All-Star Showcase.
- E) Rock Eagle signage
  - Christian sent an email previously to the council members with an outline of the plan for 7 permanent educational signs to be placed at the Rock Eagle effigy site as well as the first draft of one of the sign designs to the council members for feedback, specifically on the content.
  - The total cost for the 7 signs is around \$17,000, which the Council had previously provided \$4,000 towards from last fiscal year's budget.

## BUSINESS

- A) Heidi Altman moved to provide the Georgia Partnership for Inclusive Innovation with \$5,000 for an intern to work on the Georgia Native Sites project and provide \$17,000 to Georgia 4-H for permanent educational signage (all signs are to receive Council approval prior to public display) to be constructed at the Rock Eagle Effigy. Royce McCrary seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A) Sept. 11-13 Planning session/Council meeting at Sapelo Island.
- B) Next Council meeting scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup>.
- C) Folktale Festival on March 22<sup>nd</sup> hosted by the Dunwoody Nature Center.

## ADJOURNMENT

Royce McCrary moved to adjourn meeting. Paul Brannen seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:57pm.