

**MINUTES OF THE
NATIVE AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE**

Thursday, May 20, 1999 - 9:00 a.m. - Room 405 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. Beverly Ann Evans, Cochair
Rep. M. Keele Johnson, Cochair
Sen. Millie M. Peterson
Sen. Pete Suazo
Rep. Eli H. Anderson
Rep. Judy Ann Buffmire
Rep. James R. Gowans
Rep. Susan J. Koehn
Rep. Jack A. Seitz
Rep. Jordan Tanner

Members Excused:

Sen. R. Mont Evans

Staff Present:

John Q. Cannon, III,
Research Analyst
Patricia Owen,
Associate General Counsel
Vanessa Thompson,
Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials distributed in the meeting are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

1. **Call to Order** - Chair Evans called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.
2. **Committee Business** -

MOTION: Sen. Peterson moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 1998 meeting with the amendment that on page 2 the minutes be changed to reflect that the invitations to the 2nd Annual American Indian Economic Development Summit were distributed by Forrest Cuch, Division of Indian Affairs, not Judy Edwards, Department of Health. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Suazo absent for the vote.

Forrest Cuch, Director, Division of Indian Affairs, introduced Anna Cutler, the new secretary for the Division.

Mr. Cannon updated the Committee on: Native American-related legislation in the 1999 Legislative Session; and the status of the Empowerment Zone funding application the Committee supported in 1998. The Four Corners area was designated as an Enterprise Community, will receive \$2.5 M over 10 years, and may be eligible for additional federal funds.

Sen. Evans asked the Committee to consider issues they would like to discuss this year. Rep. Tanner suggested discussing the Navajo Trust Fund. Sen. Peterson would like the Committee to address hate crimes and taxation. Helen Thatcher, Department of Workforce Services suggested the Committee look at the TANF Program. Sen. Evans suggested a site visit to the Uintah Basin.

3. State Native American Coordinating Board -

Under this agenda item, the Committee heard from each member of the Coordinating Board with Committee discussion following each report. A brief summary of each report follows.

Forrest Cuch- Chair, State Native American Coordinating Board

Mr. Cuch distributed a handout entitled, "Utah Division of Indian Affairs and State Native American Coordinating Board Strategic Plan—Projects Targeted to the Native American Community FY 1999 (Draft)" and discussed its contents. Mr. Cuch spoke about the Circle of Nations dance program scheduled for September 10 and 11 at Abravanel Hall. He also updated the Committee on the progress of the Circle of Wellness. Mr. Cuch also mentioned that a Tribal Leaders' meeting is scheduled for June 11. He expressed concern about hate crimes in Utah. Mr. Cuch introduced Ed Meyer, Department of Economic Development, and Perry Matthews, Assistant Director, Utah Division of Indian Affairs, who contributed to the Strategic Plan. The Committee also discussed Native American involvement in the 2002 Olympics.

Phil Pugsley - Office of the Attorney General

Mr. Pugsley distributed a handout entitled "Report to Native American Legislative Liaison Committee." He spoke to the Committee regarding his position in assisting in Native American related issues in the Attorney General's office.

Ed Meyer - Department of Community and Economic Development

Mr. Meyer gave a brief summary of projects the department is currently working on with regard to Native American issues. Mr. Meyer commented that many Native Americans are not aware of services available to them. He also addressed the upcoming Economic Summit, educational programs, and funding for these programs.

Amanda Singer - Department of Human Services

Ms. Singer spoke to the Committee regarding access to services by Native Americans. The goal of the department is to increase accessibility to services. Services by the department include the Meals On Wheels program, disabilities assistance, and substance abuse counseling.

Lori Bradley - Department of Corrections

Ms. Bradley addressed the continuing increase in population of Native Americans in correctional facilities. The Department of Corrections is working on more cultural awareness among its prisoners, including a "talking circle," and is also increasing substance abuse training programs.

Shirlee Weight - State Office of Education

Ms. Weight discussed the issue of low test scores among those students coming from homes where English is a second language and explained that her position in the State Office of Education is threatened by a recent cut in funding.

MOTION: Rep. Buffmire moved that the Committee write a letter to the Superintendent of their concern for funding for highly impacted schools and coordination of programs in the State Office of Education. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Peterson, Rep. Anderson, and Rep. Koehn absent for the vote.

Phil Bernal - State Board of Regents

Mr. Bernal spoke of the importance of math and science at the elementary level. Programs such as MESA and the Step Program are aimed to help students prepare for higher education. The Compact Program assists Native Americans at the higher education level.

Judy Edwards - Department of Health

Ms. Edwards spoke to the Committee about current programs aimed at helping Native Americans. There have been developments in the Diabetes Program as well as the Children's Health Insurance Program. .

Helen Thatcher - Workforce Services

Ms. Thatcher addressed employment issues among Native Americans. She spoke about the Workforce Investment Act and the Internet job database. The Department of Workforce Services hopes to make the database more accessible to Native Americans.

Kevin Nichol - Department of Transportation

Mr. Nichol spoke about the Uintah Basin Railroad project and how it may positively impact Native Americans in the area. Public involvement, including open-houses, include Native American communities in order to listen to their needs and comments.

Brock Cheney - Department of Natural Resources (appearing for Karen Krieger)

Mr. Cheney spoke to the Committee about increasing outreach projects and internships for Native Americans.

Bruce Johnson - Utah State Tax Commission

Mr. Johnson mentioned that taxation on Native Americans is largely governed by federal law. Different taxes apply to different pieces of land. It is the goal of the Tax Commission to treat everyone as fairly as possible. Due to the complexity of these issues, Mr. Johnson suggested more time to address these issues be given at a future meeting.

Dr. Mike Marshall - Department of Agriculture and Food

Dr. Marshall spoke of a workshop to test and prevent disease in livestock. He also, addressed agriculture in the classroom, mainly at the elementary level.

Stephanie Bernkopf - Department of Environmental Quality

Ms. Bernkopf discussed the Navajo Mountain project and drinking water problems at the new high school.

4. Adjourn

MOTION: Sen. Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.