



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JUNE 18, 2024

The June 18, 2024, meeting Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) was at County of Los Angeles Hall of Administration, Sybil Brand Room 372, 500 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, California, 90012.

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog called the meeting to order at 6:43 P.M. and read the Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgment.

Invocation

Commissioner Ted Tenorio provided an invocation.

Roll Call

Present: Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog
Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor
Treasurer Denise Escoto
Caroline Bhalla
Andrea Garcia
Vivian Garcia
Dawn Jackson
Mona Morales Recalde
Bryce Lewis-Smith
Rudy Ortega Jr.
John Only A Chief
Ted Tenorio
Rich Toyon

Absent: Chrissie Castro (Excused)
Rene' Williams (Excused)

Staff: Heather Rigby, Chief Deputy
Stephanie Guadron, LANAIC Administrative Manager

Quorum was met.

Commissioner & Staff Introductions

Commissioners provided brief introductions including their names, appointing office and tribal affiliation.



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Discussion Items

Review and discuss the County of Los Angeles Chief Executive Office Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations memo on a possible opposition position to HR 6589: Gabrielino/Tongva Nation Recognition Act of 2023

Commissioner Andrea Garcia stated that this is the third time that the LANAIC is addressing the current item and that the matter is outside of the body's purview. Commissioner Garcia also stated that with the findings that came back from LAIR she does not recommend that the LANAIC should take a stance because the letter will cause harm and the charge of the LANAIC is to promote the equity of marginalized groups. Commissioner Garcia shared that there are meeting minutes that reflect members of the body sharing that this action is not in the purview of the LANAIC and that the topic is far reaching.

Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog stated that the discussion is the same that it was three months ago and last month the discussion took a turn. He shared that he was interested to see if there were any options on the item.

Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. stated that he understands that the door could close behind any other [Tongva] tribe that would also like to go for Federal recognition. Commissioner Ortega also stated that the LANAIC could recommend to the congresswoman to follow the process that is established with the Office of Federal Acknowledgement. Commissioner Ortega presented a motion proposing that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors do not take any action for HR6589

Please see section below, '*Commissioner General Comments on Non-Agenda Items*', for the presented motion and voting information.

Presentations

Care First Community Updates, Tencha Chavez (LANAIC CFCI Alternate Designee)

This item was tabled by the chair until the next meeting.

County Process Updates, Heather Rigby (Chief Deputy, LA County Department of Arts and Culture)

Heather Rigby stated that there has been an interest in reviewing the LANAIC Bylaws and that the Department of Arts and Culture (Arts and Culture) has initiated the review process with County Counsel. Heather also stated that an Ad Hoc will be established once the review from County Counsel is finalized. Heather stated that upon initial review there are items that stood out that clearly require amendments since they go against County Code and policy. Heather shared that one prime example of the misalignment is how the LANAIC Bylaws state staffing practices that are in violation to Civil Service policies. Additionally, Heather stated that it is



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unusual and uncommon for a County commission to have bylaws, as bylaws are typically needed for non-profits that require a Board of Directors.

Chairperson Shawn Imitated Dog stated that he mentioned to Heather during a recent discussion that the LANAIC commissioners were probably more involved than they should have been in the development of the LANAIC staff position. Commissioner Andrea Garcia asked if the majority of County commissions have bylaws. Heather Rigby stated that she can find out and provide examples of some bylaws that may be in existence. Commissioner Dawn Jackson stated that the LANAIC has been around for 47 years and asked if the LANAIC was created in a totally different way as other commissions that do not adopt bylaws.

Heather stated that there was not a lot of involvement or support provided when the LAANIC was under WDACS, and in its transition to Arts there is more support. As the work portfolio grows and there is growing interest from the Board of Supervisors, there are more eyes and there is more necessity to adhere to County policies.

Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. stated that he serves on multiple commissions and that more has to be done for Indian Country and that the LANAIC is told that there will be Brown Act violations when there will be none. Commissioner Ortega stated that we [the LANAIC commissioners] are not 'yes' people for the BOS and that his father was on the first [LANAIC] commission and that he has seen it since 1984. Commissioner Ortega stated that as rules and policies are developed, he doesn't want to lose what there is and how the Harms Report was conducted is a good template.

Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog stated that when he stepped into the role of Chairperson he heard stories about the wild west times with Ron and now. Chairperson Imitates Dog stated that the LANAIC is running into roadblocks and he has to go back to the commissioners to tell them that we are not able to put things on the agenda. He stated that it is a balancing act with needing to be in compliance and that he hopes we could find a happy medium because in the last six (6) months he has heard more "no's" than "yes".

Commissioner John Only A Chief stated that he agrees with Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. and that as a community elected commissioner the direction that he feels the LANAIC moving toward is in becoming a County commission. He stated that the commission should reflect the community and that he is all for having a balancing act, but that this is for the Native American Indian community who he represents.

Kimberly Ortega stated that Supervisor Solis is a strong champion of the LANAIC and has supported with the Harms eRport and advocated to CEO for more funding. Kimberly stated that on behalf of her office there is no tokenizing of appointees and the LANAIC. Kimberly also stated that her office fights for their voices and last year for Native American Heritage Month presented a motion for what the next 50 years looks like. Kimberly stated that Supervisor Solis is very interested in establishing an Office of Tribal Affairs. Kimberly shared that during the report back process, CEO found a lot o issues with the City/County agreement – the County is making a greater investment than the side of the City and that she wants to get the report back



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to the LANAIC so that the body could see for itself if the County should establish the Office of Tribal Affairs and make the County commission separate from the City.

Heather Rigby stated that the CEO Report Back was filed last month and there will be a presentation at next month’s meeting to go over the report.

Kimberly Ortega stated that it is very challenging that there is no staffing counterparts at the City or anyone specifically to reach out to about tribal matters. She also stated that having separate bodies may result in additional resources for the community.

Commissioner John Only A Chief asked if County Counsel will review the bylaws to see if they are aligned with one code? Heather Rigby replied that they are reviewing against the entire municipal code. Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. stated that he believes that the unique culture of the tribal people [on the LANAIC] will not make it an easy transition.

Introduction to United American Indian Involvement, Inc. Charlene Harrison (CEO, United American Indian Involvement, Inc.

Charlene Harrison provided an introduction of herself and the current projects that UAI has been working on building out. There are plans to expand services to include medical, dental and mental health programs for eligible participants.

Action Items

Take action adopting absentee excuses for the June 16, 2024 meeting: Commissioner Chrissie Castro (Excused); Commissioner Rene’ Williams (Excused)

A motion was made by Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. and seconded by Commissioner Mark Villasenor to adopt absentee excuses for the June 16, 2024 meeting: Commissioner Chrissie Castro (Excused); Commissioner Rene’ Williams (Excused). The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Villasenor, Escoto, Bhalla, Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega Jr., Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio
NO	
ABSTAIN	Garcia, Lewis-Smith
ABSENT	Castro, Williams



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Take action approving the May 21, 2024 Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) Unapproved Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. and seconded by Commissioner Mark Villasenor to approve the unapproved May 21, 2024 LANAIC Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Villasenor, Escoto, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega Jr., Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio
NO	
ABSTAIN	Bhalla, Garcia, Garcia, Lewis-Smith
ABSENT	Castro, Williams

Adopt draft letter requesting that LA City Council designate areas of West Los Angeles Sawtelle as Indigenous Cultural Districts

A motion was made by Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. and seconded by Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde to adopt a draft letter requesting that LA City Council delegate areas of West Los Angeles Sawtelle as Indigenous Cultural Districts. The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Villasenor, Escoto, Bhalla, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega Jr., Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio
NO	
ABSTAIN	Garcia, Garcia, Lewis-Smith
ABSENT	Castro, Williams

Chair’s Report

Establish a Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee and appoint members

Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog stated that the Ad Hoc Committee would be established and appointed once the Report Back from County Counsel is completed.

Executive Director Report

Updates on the Traveling Exhibit “100 Years After the Indian Citizenship Act: The Continuing Struggle to Guarantee Voting Rights to Native Americans”

In Alexandra’s absence Stephanie Guadron provided a brief update about the exhibit that was installed in the main floor of the Hall of Administration for the first two weeks of June.



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Committee & Ad-hoc Committee Reports

Self-Governance Board

Commissioner Dawn Jackson stated that the Community Needs Assessment survey is live and she made signs with QR codes to help collect responses.

Homelessness Committee

None

2024 Native American Heritage Month Ad Hoc Committee

Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde stated that the in chambers session will be held and that a reception may be taking place at an alternative location after the session.

FY23-24 Annual Report Ad Hoc Committee

None

Legislative Agenda Ad Hoc Committee

Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. stated that he is interested in potentially supporting a listening session for wearing regalia at graduations and in policies about reparations or a prescription about how land can be comanaged with tribes.

Commissioner General Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde asked what the status was with updating the LANAIC website. Heather Rigby stated that the Department is in the beginning state of finding funding for this ask and that in the interim, commissioners are welcome to send over examples of websites that they would like to highlight.

Commissioner John Only A Chief asked if County Counsel is the only resource that is available to review the bylaws or if the LANAIC could hire a third party lawyer to conduct the review. Heather Rigby stated that County Counsel is the only resource available to review the LANAIC bylaws because they are the in-house experts for Los Angeles County.



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Announcements/Future Agenda Items

A motion was made by Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. and seconded by Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde recommending the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors neither support nor oppose HR6859: Gabrielino/Tongva Nation Recognition Act of 2023. The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Villasenor, Escoto, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega Jr., Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio
NO	
ABSTAIN	Garcia, Garcia, Lewis-Smith, Bhalla
ABSENT	Castro, Williams

Public Comment

Anna Hopkins – Farm2People (anna@farm2people.org)

Anna Hopkins stated that Farm2People would like to connect about how they may support local food insecurity barriers for Indigenous foodways through food delivery. She stated that Farm2People would like to partner with Native local farmers and invited commissioners to share her contact information with anyone in their networks who may be interested in meeting with her.

Cesar Aranguri – Indigenous Ark Urban Technologies (cesar@urbanarktech.org)

Cesar Aranguri stated that he has been working with Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde on the major issue with zoning updates for the proposed Indigenous District in Sawtelle West Los Angeles. He also stated that he is in support of an Indigenous District in Sawtelle West Los Angeles because the champions of this cause would like this land to become a cultural core for community organizations to protect cultural practices. Cesar also stated that cultural housing would be huge in Los Angeles and that there are other major cities that this model could be shared with. Commissioner Dawn Jackson asked Cesar if he has experienced any opposition to this project. Cesar stated that homeowners of the immediate 2-3 blocks of land may be in opposition to zoning changes.

Commission Adjournment

Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog adjourned the meeting at 8:14 PM.