

North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:41 PM

Location: Room 327B, North Dakota State Capitol
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58505



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:37 PM.

Opening Prayer: Offered by Dr. Viola Slater.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Director Brad Hawk opened the meeting and welcomed all participants.

Roll Call

Member	Present	Absent
Chairwoman Lonna Jackson-Street	XX	
Chairwoman Janet Alkire	XX	
Chairman Mark Fox	XX	XX
Chairman J. Garret Renville		XX
Chairman Jamie Azure	XX	
Dr. Leander McDonald	XX	
Dr. Viola Slater	XX	
Erica Thunder		XX
Brad Hawk, Executive Director	XX	
Lt. Gov. Michelle Strinden		XX
Governor Kelly Armstrong	XX	

Other Attendees:

Roz Leighton (Chief of Staff, Governor's Office), Anthony Bauer, Melinda Padilla Lynch, Marietta Kemmet, Legislative Council Staff, DPI Staff, County and Tribal Representatives.

Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve the agenda by Chairwoman Janet Alkire, seconded by Chairwoman Lonna Jackson-Street.
 - Motion carried by voice vote.
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Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve minutes from the March 6, 2025 meeting by Dr. Viola Slater, seconded by Chairwoman Janet Alkire.
 - Motion carried by voice vote.
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Welcome by Governor Armstrong

Governor Armstrong welcomed attendees and shared recent updates:

- Highlighted the 2025 Legislative Session and partnerships.
 - Discussed key legislative wins including creation of the MMIP Task Force and Feather Alert system.
 - Reaffirmed commitment to direct communication, responsive emergency support, and collaborative planning.
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North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission (NDIAC) Update

Director Brad Hawk provided an agency update:

- G2G Conference planning and agency transition updates.
- Shared growth and success of intergovernmental collaboration.
- Economic development and tribal priorities remain top focus.

New Business

Emergency Response

Chairwoman Lonna Jackson-Street expressed appreciation for the state's quick coordination during recent Spirit Lake emergencies.

Lt. Jenna Clawson Huibregtse of ND Highway Patrol discussed specialized training offerings for tribal law enforcement and committed to coordinating efforts with each Nation.

DPI Curriculum and ND Indian Education Conference

Lucy Fredericks and Sashay Schettler (ND DPI) presented the updated ND Tribal Studies textbooks:

- First comprehensive update in 30+ years.
 - Covers created by artists from each of the 5 Nations.
 - Books to be distributed by end of 2025 to grades 4, 8, and high school libraries, including non-public schools.
 - Indian Education Summit scheduled for July 2025.
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Legislative Update – ND Legislative Council

Attorneys Katie Carpenter and Casey Ortel presented a legislative update:

Key Bills Passed:

- HB 1563: Study on tribal land taxation.
- HB 1567: Dental care study including Native youth.
- HB 1013: DPI budget with \$650K for curriculum, \$300K STEM, \$300K Essential Understandings.
- HB 1051/1056: Tribal access to special road and bridge funds.
- HB 1199: MMIP Task Force established.
- HB 1252: Expanded use of Tribal Healthcare Coordination Fund.
- HB 1535: Feather Alert system.

- HB 1545: Indigenous Peoples Day recognized.
- HB 1549: Correctional Facility Grant program.
- HB 1564: ICWA removal protocols updated.
- HB 1581: Tribal Tourism Grants (\$20K max).
- HB 1603: NAGPRA compliance fund (\$500K).
- SB 2018: \$750K Tribal College Grants, \$600K Native Small Business Grants.
- SB 2056: Waiver process for tribal arrest warrant transfers.
- SB 2207: Motor vehicle excise tax exemption for tribal governments.

Notable Failed Bills:

- HB 1455: NDIAC tribal legislative review mandate.
 - HB 1521: Excise tax exemption for enrolled tribal members.
 - HB 1536: Standalone Native curriculum bill (merged with HB 1013).
 - HB 1565/1611/1617/1618: Tribal school infrastructure grants.
 - SB 2376: Expanded tribal gaming in Grand Forks County.
 - SCR 2014: Election study (opposed due to litigation).
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Tribal Leader Updates

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa – Chairman Jamie Azure (also, Alysia LaCounte):

- Thanked state and tribal partners for fast response to recent wildfires.
- Highlighted emergency coordination gaps and plans for improved communication.
- Emphasized importance of interagency collaboration to protect lives and homes.

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe – Chairwoman Janet Alkire:

- Reflected on intergovernmental progress and her final months in office.
- Expressed appreciation for continued partnership and joint problem-solving.
- Highlighted the importance of building bridges across systems and communities.

Spirit Lake Tribe – Chairwoman Lonna Jackson-Street:

- Reported an ongoing water crisis and emergency response efforts.
- Recognized NDIAC and state agencies for immediate support.
- Requested future meeting with Governor Armstrong to discuss HB 1521 impacts.

Commissioner Updates

Dr. Viola Slater:

- Raised concern over administrator and teacher shortages.
- Suggested legislative changes to allow retired educators to return to full-time work.
- Praised the textbooks for helping both Native and non-Native teachers teach tribal history.

Dr. Leander McDonald (via Zoom):

- Reported record enrollment and graduation at United Tribes Technical College (147 graduates).
- Warned of proposed federal budget cuts to tribal colleges (\$128M to \$105M).
- Emphasized need for continued investment and partnership in higher education.

Closing Remarks

Governor Armstrong reaffirmed the state's commitment to tribal partnership, transparency, and responsive governance.

Acknowledged the importance of the legislative update and committed to providing it at all future NDIAC meetings.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:41 PM