

**TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES  
OF THE FLATHEAD INDIAN NATION, MONTANA**

Volume 20 Number 50  
Zoom Meeting

Held: April 3, 2020  
Approved: April 7, 2020

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Shelly Fyant, Chairwoman; Anita Matt, Vice-Chairwoman; Ellie Bundy McLeod, Secretary; Martin Charlo, Treasurer; Charmel Gillin; Fred Matt; Carole Lankford; Len TwoTeeth; James “Bing” Matt; and Mike Dolson.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jennifer Trahan, Council Office Manager; Jim Steele, Sr., Sergeant at Arms; and Abby Dupuis, Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to **order** at 9:00 a.m. Quorum established.

The meeting was opened with a **prayer** by Bing Matt.

**Chairwoman Fyant** welcomed everyone to the April quarterly council meeting and thanked everyone for tuning in to this historic event of livestreaming the council meeting. Zoom has been used by the council this week, but the livestream is new. She acknowledged all the essential employees who continue to work during this time. She praised and acknowledged parents who are at home with their children. It is an amazing blessing and honor to be home teaching our children. We need to be strong for one another during these times of unknown. It is a time to be patient, creative, and understanding in what family is all about. Our ancestors that survived were resilient. We need to practice protocol, handwashing, wearing masks, physical distancing, and staying home if not an essential worker, exercise, eat properly, and have a routine of some sort. Except to get medical care, everyone needs to stay home. We need to be checking on family. Staying home slows the spread of this virus. Regarding mental health, people should get some Vitamin D and walk a mile a day, play music, do their usual routine, stay hydrated by drinking water, and call a friend or family member each day. This is a time we need to connect with our families. We are all experience anxiety, and we need to learn breathing techniques to calm us down. We get fight or flight body reaction when we are anxious.

**Rob McDonald**, Public Information Officer, gave a report on the unified command team who is managing this pandemic. Lake County and the tribal government joined together to deal with the COVID-19. There are 3 confirmed

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cases in Lake County. The topic of wearing a mask has been discussed. Medical staff on the front lines have access. Their resources are getting low. Food preparers have been provided facemasks. There was discussion on how to prioritize medical supplies. Medical staff is the priority.

The floor was opened for council updates.

**Ellie Bundy McLeod** thanked the viewers who tuned in today. Being on the council is a job that never stops and it is a privilege and honor to serve the membership. Ellie acknowledged the outstanding work that the employees do. She serves on the MMIP Task Force and gave an update on the meeting that was hosted in Pablo. The DOJ offered a \$25,000 matching grant for a tribal college to support a network for MMIP database. She attended a new grantee orientation offered by the VAWA, who has a cooperative agreement with CSKT for planning and determining changes in criminal jurisdiction to exercise domestic violence jurisdiction. She gave a shout-out to Jim Taylor and Lisa Shourds for all of their work on that grant. She attended the reception for the Little Shell Tribe and wished them well as they navigate their new journey. She attended the Flathead Nation flag dedication in the Missoula County Commissioners Sophie Moiese Conference Room. She looks forward to having a long working and respectful relationship with Missoula County. Ellie went on a field trip to the Rattle Snake. The dam is to be restored and removed this summer. The fish and wildlife will be rehabilitated. There is an opportunity for students to tour the dam and actively participate in restoration. The St. Ignatius district meetings are held the third Monday at 6:00 p.m., at the Long House and dinner is provided. The January district meeting had a legal presentation. The February district meeting was informal, and she sought feedback from the community on what they want to know more about. The March and April meetings were canceled due to social distancing. Completing the 2020 census questionnaire is important, as it will provide funding for critical programs. She thanked those essential employees coming to work every day to do our payroll, serving the elders, law enforcement, MVP making sure our power is still on. Ellie thanked the unified incident command team for working tirelessly. They have a huge job ahead of them. Ellie thanked the people in the community for all they are doing to help others. It makes it easier to get through difficult times like this when people are being kind to others. She thanked the people on the front lines fighting this fight; we have a long road ahead of us. She hopes we remember the value of a hug. She hopes we appreciate watching our kids play on the playground and playing with other kids, the value of education, how fortunate we are to enjoy social activities with friends/family, the things we can do that we take for granted every day. To know if someone is sick or dying, we have time to spend with them, and we can't do those anymore. She hopes we do not take it for granted in the future, even going to funerals. We need to get through this together.

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**Anita Matt** commented that January started out with the quarterly meeting, orientations, council getting used to their new roles, strategic planning, ordinance revisions, land field trip, and recognition of the Little Shell Tribe. February started out with the same routine, the Boys and Girls Club, USDA, budgets, homeless meetings, and IT training. She had a district meeting and Legal gave updates on the water rights. Legal does a good job. In March, we hit the COVID, and the CSKT and council shifted priorities, with the EOP keeping people safe and implementing the partial shutdown. Since then, we spent countless hours on conference calls on the stimulus funds coming to the Tribes. She appreciates everyone stepping up and creating spreadsheets of our departments. She thanked Martin and IT for the zoom meetings, which helps us continue our leadership roles. The most recent call she set in on was the Farm Bill Coalition. There was a call on April 1 for the Cares Act. We will keep the information coming to the membership. She thanked everyone for joining us today.

**Martin Charlo** echoed what has been said this morning. This year has been a learning curve. Martins serves on the TERS School Board, budget committee chairman; COVID committee chairman. Martin will be starting a community garden will be started in Pablo for our food sovereignty and to help people needing fresh produce. He thanked the people that are working right now, such as law enforcement, Tribal Health Department staff, DHRD, SKHA, Tribal Credit, MVP, S&K Electronics, SKT, Maintenance, Quicksilver, Transportation, Information Technologies, Natural Resources Department, Incident Command Team, Char-Koosta News, Personnel Department, Financial Management, Enrollment, Contracts & Grants, Legal Department, Prosecutors Office, Defenders Office, and all the essential workers who are out there working, and his fellow council members. He reminded everyone to thank the food servers, store clerks, etc. who are risking their health to serve the community.

**Fred Matt** commented that this event is bringing us all together, which is a positive during this crisis. The highlight of the St. Ignatius district meeting was the Legal Department providing an update on the water compact. Senator Daines introduced legislation to start the process for settlement. That was a big turning point. Many of the council attended the Little Shell recognition in Great Falls. It was an awesome event. They have been working towards recognition for over 100 years. We need to follow the tribal, state, and national directives to address this pandemic. Fred thanked his colleagues for working together during this time and he thanked Martin for setting up the Zoom meetings for the council.

**Charmel Gillin** is glad to be part of this morning and she thanked everyone for watching this meeting live. She is thankful for this day and this morning and the prayer being led by Bing Matt. It has been a lengthy three months starting off the year 2020. Charmel's district meeting reports are in the Char-Koosta

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News. In January she requested a study on homelessness on the reservation to get some guidance to make policy decisions on housing/shelter needs. The committee has met a few times. A project with EDO grant funds has been identified to develop tiny homes. We need adequate shelter to keep displaced people safe. She supports the THD committee to develop bylaws and qualify us for accreditation of our healthcare facility and department. This will put the CSKT in a much better position to improve the quality of care for our membership and require high standards for our healthcare. She joined reapportionment committee and has not gotten direction from council whether we should proceed with policy options for actions. She talked about the Forestry Advisory Committee, with Bing and Mike being assigned as the council committee members. The committee was established to primarily assist in creating an update for the TUPS. Council approve the policy for having livestreamed council meetings and she looks forward to this type of communication with the membership and create a level of transparency with the membership. She has attended department head and orientation meetings, attended the federal hearing on the Big Arm trespass case. She studied the disaster emergency plan to understand the council's role to be prepared for this health crisis. This work has given her appreciation for the ranks in the CSKT organization. Special recognition goes out to medical professionals, law enforcement, safety, judicial, legal professions, maintenance, AIS, elder care, food preparers, the tribal corporations, Eagle Bank. They should each be recognized and thanked by all of us. In the future, we will have opportunity to embrace one another for the talents and gifts that have been brought out by every person. She got up early this morning and went to Safeway to do some grocery shopping for three families. She could see the strain on the workers' faces. There are three tribal members who work at Safeway. Blessings and afflictions happen to everyone. We are all vulnerable, just as we will all be blessed.

\*\*\*\*\* **Break** \*\*\*\*\*

**Mike Dolson** thanked everyone for attending this meeting. He is still learning a lot and likes how the council complement each other in the work they do. He has enjoyed attending the orientations. The tribal population should be proud of the people they have working for them. He is finding his job is help them/support them doing their job, and then get out of their way and let them do their job. He thanked all the employees. The managers and directors, given this time of the virus to make sure they keep the communication open and why they are doing what they are doing to keep essential workers providing service to the membership. He encouraged everyone to stay home and observe the appropriate distance from folks to remain safe. There is support for the people at home. People can contact him by telephone if they need anything. Indian Health Serve has a call line. The Flathead Reservation Community Action Group has many volunteers who are willing to do shopping and deliver medication. We are seeking licensure for broadband across the reservation, to provide internet

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and Wi-Fi services. Our ancestors knew what to do and that is why we sit here as the seventh generation. It is our responsibility to take care of ourselves and we have a responsibility to the seventh generation.

**Len TwoTeeth** acknowledged the tribal employees who made this livestreaming possible. He appreciates their professionalism. The council has worked hard to address the pandemic. Council has been proactive in addressing trying issues, such as the partial government shutdown, continuing elder services, homelessness, and strategies how to access FEMA resources. He is honored to be working with this group of people. We have tribal members approaching us letting us know about all the out of state coming to reservation using our tribal lands and campgrounds. That has been addressed to make sure our lands are not being used as hideouts for the out-of-staters. Our director of KCC put together some guidelines how to utilize the Elmo hall during this pandemic. It was posted in the hall. Len can provide a copy if anyone needs one. Len thanked the essential employees who are working and taking a risk to provide services to our people. We had an employee, Dode Bykari, who recently retired after 39 years of service. He also acknowledged the people who work hard to ensure our children are fed every day, including the Boys & Girls Club. Len feels fortunate to participate in our first livestreamed meeting. Our elders are the first to speak at these meetings. That is something that was missed this morning. Council appreciates their guidance. Len never forgets who he works for.

**Bing Matt** thanked the Incident Command Team for putting so much time into this and keeping our people safe and healthy. He encouraged everyone to stay home. A lot of meetings have been canceled due to COVID-19. We will continue to work with the small loggers. Bing attended a meeting regarding the highway projects that are coming up, such as the Perma Curves project. He attended the Little Shell Tribe recognition, attended a meeting with the Lake County Commissioners. Bing thanked the essential services who continue to provide services, such as law enforcement and Mission Valley Power. He thanked the schools for providing meals to children at home.

**Carole Lankford** commented that what has been said this morning makes her emotional because there are so many thank-yous and appreciation. She thanked the council. Her hats are off to the chairwoman for doing an awesome job. Shelly has made some changes in these short three months that have made a huge difference. She thanked the front line workers, school cooks, and the Bread Basket. More food will come into the Bread Basket through the Care Act. They will be able to serve more people. There are many families struggling to make ends meet. 980 meals were delivered by the Boys and Girls Club. They are adding Dixon and Arlee to their service area. She thanked everyone for delivering those meals. Carole attended a redistricting meeting in Helena. The Census is first, and then we can discuss redistricting. Carole thanked the public for viewing today's meeting.

**Chairwoman Fyant** reported that one of our initiatives is food sovereignty. She has been talking about this since 2016. One thing she heard at a conference is a nation that cannot feed itself is not truly sovereign. That touched her heart. One her main objectives getting on council was to protect our sovereignty. Basic needs, food, water, meaningful employment and housing is what we need to work on and prioritize. A food sovereignty team was established. NCAI established a tribal food sovereignty advancement initiative and a land policy meeting was held. The other policy meetings have been canceled for now. There has been pressure to close the Bison Range. The Refuge Manager contacted her and they have had some out-of-staters hanging out there and some vandalism has occurred. They requested a letter of support from the Tribes and they plan on closing the Bison Range. Council initiated a shelter in place and asked for all departments, corporations, and affiliates to update their essential services plan. Those were due on Wednesday. Charmel organized those for the council. Council will review this next week to figure out if any changes are needed. The unified command system will provide an update on Monday. They are developing a website and hotline to list all services. People who are food insecure need to reach out to the Flathead Reservation Community Action Team. Guidelines were established for using the Long House for services. People are being encouraged to have wakes at their home instead of the center. Those guidelines are available on the website. There have been questions if we are going to have checkpoints on the reservation. More discussions will be held on that. She gave a shout-out to her fellow council members. They are all doing the best they can to lead from home.

**Council** honored some of the tribal members who are 90 and older. We have 30 tribal members in that category. **Shelly Fyant** honored Clarence Edward Hunter, Sr. and Betty Schall. **Bing Matt** recognized Madeline (Squeque) Finley and Clifford Edward Miller. **Len TwoTeeth** honored Nicolas Lefthand, Margaret Auld Elliott, and Alice Lefthand (Finley) Hewankorn. **Mike Dolson** honored Angeline Andrew and Thelma M. Niemeyer. **Carole Lankford** honored Dorothy Webster and Gladys M. Disney. **Charmel Gillin** honored Annie Edwards, Myrna M. Holley, and Madge E. Vert. **Fred Matt** honored Evelyn J. Wabaunsee. **Martin Charlo** honored Audrey M. Smith, Daniel Wood Stohr, Marie L. Ramey, Reginald Thomas Dumontier, and Mildred M. Gerber. **Anita Matt** honored Paul Elmer Terriault, Jr., Dorothy C. Johnson, Audrey I. Wiseman, Bernice F. Tallant, and Alvina M. Hendricks. **Ellie Bundy McLeod** honored Dorothy M. Myers, Helen E. Howard, Dorothy A. Dillon, James Thomas Sparks, and Betty L. Gano.

The floor was opened for questions from the membership through Facebook Live.

**Clay Burke** was camped in the woods and came down to get food, and then he was told the woods were closed. Martin Charlo advised we shut down the woods and campsites to day use only for Flathead Reservation residents. The Game

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Wardens will work with the campers in the woods. They need to follow the social distancing rules and have smaller camps.

**Catherine Addison** asked if council was in contact with state/governmental representatives about PPE. Martin Charlo answered that the command team is in constant contact with FEMA. This is a global issue for PPE and we are doing everything we can to get those in the area. We are doing what we can at our level. There is no regulation on these goods. **Shelly Fyant** has been in contact with other agencies. She was in contact with MSU to look at getting us some test kits. We are getting resources other than the national stockpile that has been depleted.

**Mary Antiste** has heard that Tribal Credit is changing the homeland status so that nontribal members can purchase property, and she hopes that does not happen. **Martin Charlo** has not heard that and thought it might just be a rumor on Facebook. **Carole Lankford** commented that is not accurate.

**Gigi Yazzi** asked with the new Little Shell Tribe being established, those who have a shared blood quantum, will that be counted in enrollment in our tribe. **Carole Lankford** explained that issue has not been addressed. **Shelly Fyant** would need to look at the enrollment amendments, but believes we have not accepted other Indian blood for quite some time.

**Willie Stevens** asked if we could have checkpoints on the reservation boundaries to check people for Coronavirus. **Charmel Gillin** stated this has been a topic with FEMA and HHS conference calls. Coronavirus relegated expenses can be reimbursed by FEMA. **Shelly Fyant** commented that the national guard may be a potential resource for us. Martin Charlo stated that we have billboards posted. Checkpoints are difficult to put in.

**Judy Gobert** asked if we have tests at Tribal Health, or just the hospitals. Shelly Fyant said THD has some tests. They are testing priority 1 through 3 according to the CDC guidelines. Those are people who are showing symptoms.

**Craig Pablo** asked if council approached Missoula County to work cooperatively as well as with Lake County. Chairwoman Fyant said Bob McCrea assured us they are reaching out to Missoula, Sanders and Flathead County before council gave them the delegation of shared authority. They will provide a report on Monday. A website is being developed and should be up and running next week to get out information to the public. Charmel Gillin commented Lake county is the only county we have a joint incident command center with. Missoula has its own command center. They have local and regional incident command meetings where they coordinate in this area and regionally as well.

**Senaca Incashola** asked what could be done to compensate our essential workers. They should be compensated for putting themselves and their families on the line. **Shelly Fyant** posed the question of hazard pay to an attorney and he will be reporting back to her. This was a topic during one of the conference calls if additional hazardous pay could be reimbursed through the Cares Act funding. We are looking at using some of those tests to test our essential services employees.

**Brenda Richey** asked if folks are willing to make masks. She hopes people will contact her and assist with this because we are at a critical moment where people need to wear masks.

**Leonard Michel** asked with the closure of tribal lands, would they hire people to watch the reservation. **Charmel Gillin** stated that we had iterations of the contingency plans. The most recent one we just received a few days ago. It will identify the needs and concerns that each department/program has for us. We are aware they are using more emergency hire right now. Departments need to make council aware of their needs so they can be addressed. **Anita Matt** said we have staff working staggered shifts and employees who are on call.

**Jessica Learn** asked are the nonessential and essential employees with high risk factors afraid of being laid off and of being put in nonpaid status. **Martin Charlo** said we are not looking at laying off people. We are trying to continue the nonessential employees to be paid administrative leave. With people at risk that are essential, they are asking the supervisors to work with them to work at home or place them on administrative leave as well.

**Ruth Swaney** asked if the CSKT will continue the shelter in place and partial shutdown past April 10. Council explained that it is in place until revoked. They are monitoring this situation on a regular basis.

**Diana Cote** wondered about having elder home services and needing sanitary things. Pat Matt had answered that through Families First. April Charlo, FRCAG, has a form for people to volunteer or a specific need.

**Martin Charlo** had a question for homemade PPE. Shelly commented that is something that we can work with the Incident Command Team.

**Mary Antiste** asked who is checking tribal enrollments. There are people with hardly any blood and are now tribal members. **Chairwoman Fyant** said we have an enrollment staff that does thorough research.

**Brianna Rose** asked if the people working will be mandatory tested for Coronavirus before coming to work. Charmel Gillin advised that there were some requests in the department reports that some of the departments would like to

have protocols established so they feel comfortable about how they are bringing people back on. That is something we need to further develop. Our healthcare professionals will help us establish those guidelines.

**Leonard Michel** asked with the Health Board if the membership's bills be paid on a better time line. **Shelly Fyant** commented that the health board would help us work towards accreditation. That is an administrative issue and a work in progress. We will be getting a director hired. This pandemic added another layer of work for all of us. She hopes to discuss with council on Tuesday how we sort all of this out and who will work on what. We need a different system because none of us have the ability to cover it all.

**Catherine Addison** and **Clay Burke** asked if we will continue this format with council meetings or when will the next livestream council meeting be scheduled. **Charmel Gillin** hopes our policy we adopted is something that provides the guidance and expresses the intension to do so. Our IT Department has work every hard to even get today's meeting set up and broadcast. We will know after today what kind of tech problems we will need to overcome to continue this format. She hopes we can make an announcement as soon as we get it figured out. Shelly hopes to livestream next Tuesday's meeting.

**Ellie Bundy McLeod** read a portion of the shelter in place resolution. It will remain in effect from March 16 until such time as tribal council lifts the order. Ellie said THD purchased material for sewing classes so maybe we can tap into those resources and see if those folks can sew some makes. She will follow up with Clayton Matt on that. She gave a shout out to Phoenix Matt for providing meals to elders in St. Ignatius on her own dime.

**Chairwoman Fyant** wanted to answer a question regarding per capita. It is her understanding in 1984 the Tribes established a set number and amount of per capita for enrolled members. That was based on the rental money that we got from corporations that rented the former Kerr Dam. There was a guaranteed income stream there for 30 years. That 30 years was up in 2013. We could have stopped per capita then, but we chose to continue the per capita. We are doing that through Energy Keepers, Inc. That total is about \$9 million per year. It is something the councils in the past have not wanted to discuss. We could invest that \$9 million in economic development ventures that would pay us a better return later. She is here to serve the membership in the best way possible. It is a difficult discussion that needs to happen. Additionally, other discussions need to take place about constitutional reform, wellness reform, and election reform. **Charmel Gillin** added that there is always misinformation that goes out and about. She clarified that the council has not received any pay increases. There has been a pay freeze on tribal employees for the past 12 years. It is something she has been speaking toward to say that we have to have an exit plan for that. We are working toward one. Council's salary is not a high salary. Most council

members take a cut in pay to serve on the council. We do this because we believe in tribal values and do our best. Victor Michel had asked a question about what might be done for elders living off the reservation. That is something we need to keep on the dashboard of our policy group and remain cognizant that while we can maintain payroll for employees through administrative leave and put the direction out to our corporation and entities, we have to acknowledge the nonresident tribal members are enduring hardships as well. She wants the policy board to be considerate of relief measures for those tribal members. Our corporations are trying to meet objectives that are driven by contracts, financial requirements that are beyond the level of control of the tribal government. There are corporation veils between the council and corporations. They are aware of our intentions and desires to keep their employee on their payroll.

**Len TwoTeeth** commented that he wanted to acknowledge some of the important issues Shelly brought up. We need to have those discussions. Len would not support eliminating per capita. He has seen families depend on that payment. We have tribal members that do not work for the Tribe that are struggling. He understands the investment opportunities, but he does not support it.

**Fred Matt** encouraged everyone to keep in touch with what's going on locally and nationally. There is a lot going on.

**Chairwoman Fyant** announced that the next council meeting will be on Tuesday. Information will be distributed so the membership can join the meeting. The council honors the essential workers. She is asking everyone to stay home during this critical community transmission phase. Montana is expected to peak in April and May. People should wear a mask when they are out in public. We need to look ahead six months down the road.

**MOTION** by Fred Matt to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Carole Lankford. Carried, unanimous (10 present).

Council **adjourned** at 12:03 p.m., and is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at 9:00 a.m.

**CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES**

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Ellie Bundy McLeod  
Tribal Secretary