

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

Volume 20 Number 69  
Zoom Meeting

Held: July 3, 2020  
Approved: July 7, 2020

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jennifer Trahan, Council Office Manager; and Abby Dupuis, Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to **order** at 9:20 a.m. Quorum established.

The meeting was opened with a **prayer** by Stephen Smallsalmon.

**The Brothers** sang a flag song.

The floor was opened for comments from the elders.

**Stephen Smallsalmon** is 81 years old and is happy he is doing so well. The elders had told him a long time ago that something would come here, and he thought it was cancer. When the virus got here, he was told to wear a mask. He thinks of the stories the elders told him. He was told that the strong will go in the mountain and the weak will be gone. The pow wow celebration has to be sacrificed for our lives. He is working with the teachers to study how they will run the Nkwusm School and how we will get the language going. Stephen reminded everyone to watch his movie *The Last Beyond*.

The floor was opened for tribal council updates.

**Bing Matt** reported this past three months has been something, working with the COVID virus and the shelter in place has been quite the ordeal. We are not able to do any traveling. It is good that we are home with our families. Council has been trying to keep our people safe from the virus, getting reports from the Unified Command Center Team, and having testing sites. Bing appreciated everyone’s support during this time.

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**Joe McDonald** thanked the council members for their willingness to serve. It is not an easy task and it comes with a lot of criticism. Joe had served on the tribal council for 8 years and learned a lot about tribal government.

**Carole Lankford** thanked the drum group for the song and Stephen for the words this morning. Carole has not traveled. There has been a lot of calls from people trying to work through the system. She works through those as quickly as possible and helps them maneuver through the system. The council members can help people when they cannot get through the system. She was grateful to receive the fruits and vegetable boxes. She encouraged everyone to remain safe, wash their hands, and wear a mask.

**Fred Matt** thanked the employees who have made sacrifices to keep us going and get us through this pandemic. Our leaders in Indian country took some stringent guidelines. As this new wave comes back, people will see these measures are appropriate. He thanked the council members for helping in all aspects. Fred thanks Stephen for the prayer and words this morning.

**Len TwoTeeth** thanked the membership for participating in today's meeting online. Council made lots of tough decisions. He will continue to support the closure of the reservation until we are through this pandemic. Cases continue to spike in Montana. We will continue to try to protect our people. He commended the council for making tough decisions and thanked them for making the decision for choosing to get a payment out to the membership. He thanked the staff for the work they have been doing. Len misses going to the elder meetings. He reminded the membership to do social distancing, wash their hands, and wear a mask.

**Mike Dolson** thanked the drum group and Stephen. He has learned a lot these first six months he has served on the tribal council. It is important to shelter at home and still get the work done, and he thanked those folks for getting it done. The Big Arm right of way case, the progress of Daines' bill in congress, and the broadband to connect everyone across the reservation are all important issues being worked on and Mike thanked the staff that have been involved in those. As we open, he will look to have district meetings on the fourth Friday of the month. July 24 is his next district meeting. People will need to social distance and wear a mask. Mike encouraged people to remain safe and suggested cutting sugar out of their diets to be healthy.

**Charmel Gillin** encouraged everyone to take time to make things right with one another and themselves. She said Kolinstuten has made time for us now to find out how we can restore our tribal values. Stephen spoke about loving/caring for one another. When this pandemic made itself more known here, many of us looked at ways we could support/care for one another. One of those things is forgiveness, which brings unity in our families and Tribe. That is a gift we can

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give ourselves too, and be kind to ourselves. The road closures have made it apparent how much we need to support the Tribal Game Wardens and she hopes we can get more funding to the TROs so they can continue their good work. The reports show the access to our tribal lands. She participated in having more education and awareness for the youth in the community. She is pleased how the committee has been able to bring some exciting campaigns to the forefront. Rob McDonald, Michelle Mitchell, Jami Pluff, Karleigh Bolin, Gwen Lankford are the committee members. Charmel thanked Artie Mendoza, III, aka Kiid Truth, and Shadow Devereaux, aka Foreshadow, for the music videos and TikTok challenges providing national attention to the awareness campaign. She thanked everyone for joining today's meeting.

**Martin Charlo** thanked everyone for being here today. This is the second quarterly meeting we have done virtually. He thanked all the staff for working through this pandemic and the Tribal Health Department for the testing event. He encouraged everyone to wash their hands for 20 seconds and social distance. Martin started a community garden in Pablo. It is important to social distance and set the example for the membership so we can protect our people. Everything he does is for the membership. We need to flatten the curve.

**Ellie Bundy McLeod** thanked all the viewers today. She thanked them for the honor to serve them. The time is flying by and she is learning a lot. The pandemic has driven our discussions for the past few months. She thanked everyone for their understanding and patience during this uncharted time. Council is doing what is best for everyone. She participated in meetings with the Missing Indigenous Persons Task Force. Brian Frost is the Specialist from the Department of Justice created in 2019 as part of Hannah's Act. He works with local tribes and law enforcement on missing persons cases. Brian has worked at DOJ for ten years. Council participated in a meeting last week regarding the data analysis project. It's important to mention the recommendations made to the interim committee to establish a missing persons response team, have a coordinator, form a team to work on site, create a review team to identify gaps in state/tribal systems and coordinate cooperation between agencies, and continue funding for the program. She mentioned Jermain Charlo. We never forget her and offer help to her family who will hurt forever. June 19 there was a search by Lifeguard Group in Missoula. Ellie and her family participated in the search. It was emotional and sad. We should not ever have to experience this heartache with loved ones. Her heartaches for Jermain's children and family and prays for them. She asked everyone to include them in daily prayers. She thanked the essential employees for working so hard during this time and the UCC Team for their tireless work. She thanked the community who help neighbors; they make these unfortunate times more bearable.

**Anita Matt** thanked everyone for the work that has been done and acknowledged the essential workers, executive staff and tribal council who has managed to get

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through this. She has been working on the homeless committee. She appreciates everyone involved trying to figure out how to help homeless individuals. It might be the new normal. We will continue wearing masks. Anita hopes we can be safe when we open the Tribes again. She was thankful for the prayer and drum this morning. She thanked the people joining us live on Facebook and she appreciates them taking the time and providing the comments they bring forth. She hopes we all have a safe July 4. It has been difficult. She wanted everyone to remain safe, wash their hands and wear a mask. Prayers go out to the sick and families who have lost family members. She thanked the food sovereignty and programs out there that have been providing extra food.

**Chairwoman Fyant** thanked everyone for joining us today and her colleagues on the tribal council. It has been a rough, interesting and adventurous last few months with the pandemic. Nobody's ever been through this before and council is doing their best to work through it with the membership in mind. She has been thinking about how we approach this with our thoughts. We can have a positive mindset or a negative mindset. The more you can work on that and what you're putting out there to the universe, the better off we will be as a community. It involves lots of sacrifice. She thinks of the sacrifices she made in not going to funerals and events, and she apologized to those family. She has to do it from home and that's how she chooses to live. This great pause has been good for the environment. We see on social media and on the news you can see different places that were covered in smog before, so it's good for our environment. For people, it is how you choose to look at it. If you re-evaluate what's important to you, then that's a good thing. Another part of what she has been analyzing is not only how we think about it, but what kind of actions we take. She chose to focus on her garden at home and how to feed her family. She didn't see some of her family for over six weeks because they chose to keep a tight circle themselves. Another thing she did was reach out to different family members and community members. Our actions sometimes speak louder than words. Stephen mentioned the sacrifices, and that is important as native people to reflect on that. Our ancestors had lots of sacrifices than what we are going through. We say our culture is ever changing and we are resilient people, we are rich in our natural resources, compared to people in New York City that cannot even go out on the street. She walks in the evening with her mother. We are lucky we have the lands that we do and we need to respect and take care of them so future generations can enjoy them too. She was reminded twice last week that not only are we rich in natural resources, but as a tribe we, for the most part, take our culture into consideration when we're evaluating any kind of projects we want to undertake. These were from outside people looking in, and she was reminded of that recently. She appreciates that. She asked everyone to be patient and to be kind. None of us have been through this before we are doing our due diligence to make the best decision we can with the information we have. We have lots of other things going on. We had the Big Arm case, the Senate Committee of Indian Affairs hearing on the water compact, aquatic

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invasive species, monitors to protect tribal lands, and weekly meetings with the Unified Command Center. She mentioned to the membership to just be patient with us and know these sacrifices we are making right now will be what will carry us down the road. She has been struggling these last couple weeks with no Arlee celebration. Last week she felt she should be getting ready and packing up camp for the celebration. It hit her that it will not happen this year. That is really difficult. But that is what we have to do this year so we can all be here next year. She asked people to reach out to the people who may be alone or are struggling and check on them, and make sure they have food. There are people doing that in the community, and she appreciates it. Shelly thanked everyone for listening today.

**Jami Pluff** and **Ruth Swaney** discussed the CSKT COVID-19 Relief distribution and reviewed the FAQs. Tribal Offices have been closed to protect the staff and community. They gave an overview of the CARES Act funding and the 11 priorities developed by tribal council. One of the priorities was a stimulus payment to the tribal membership. It is not a per capita and has different requirements and a FAQs sheet was developed. All persons who meet all the following requirements are eligible to receive a distribution: (1) enrolled member as of July 16, 2020; (2) are living on August 14, 2020; and (3) submit a request for support by July 30, 2020. Each CSKT member will receive approximately \$1,800. Members may voluntarily complete the request for support that is available on [www.cskt.org](http://www.cskt.org). If people choose not to request the stimulus relief, it will not affect their per capita payments. The request for support, upon verification of all information submitted, will be the basis for processing the distribution. The form contains the necessary information to meet the regulations of the CARES Act. The Tribes are closed due to the shelter in place order until July 13, 2020. If a person is unable to complete the request online, they may request a form by email for standard mail. They can contact [covidsupport@cskt.org](mailto:covidsupport@cskt.org) or call 406-675-2700, extension 1002. The online form is available at [www.cskt.org](http://www.cskt.org). The home page has a money icon that people need to click on. The form will appear, and people need to fill in the blanks. A confirmation email is sent to the person after the form is submitted. The Treasury determined that the Tribes needed a needs analysis for each individual receiving a payment. Persons in nursing homes or other care institutions are eligible for the distribution if they are self-pay. Persons should consult their agency for guidance on that. Any person who receives benefits under the Social Security Act, such as pension, survivors, disability, Medicaid, Medicare, TANF, etc. should consult their agency to find out the possible impacts. Persons incarcerated are eligible if they submit the request for support form or if a properly authorized person submits it on their behalf. Distributions may be subject to deductions imposed by the correction facility. If a family has several minor enrolled children in foster care, they are eligible for the distribution. The form must be made the appropriate agency on their behalf. Disbursements will be under the supervision of Tribal Social Services. The funds cannot be

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deposited into the IIM accounts. Any person that misses the July 30, 2020 deadline to submit the form are not eligible to receive the distribution. If a person does not know their enrollment number and/or their children's numbers, they can find the number on their enrollment ID card, certificate issued by the Enrollment Office upon initial enrollment action; the letter issued by the Enrollment Office for income tax exemptions or similar purpose; per capita payment check stub; IIM statements; or current statement from Tribal Credit if the person has a loan. If a person did not cash the distribution check within the 90 days after it was issued, it cannot be reissued, due to time limit on expenditures of the CARES Act funds. Any check not cashed by the November 14, 2020 deadline will be forfeited. The contact information for any questions or assistance is email [covidsupport@cskt.org](mailto:covidsupport@cskt.org); call Jami Pluff at 406-675-2700, extension 1195; or standard mail to the Central Accounting Office, PO Box 278, Pablo, MT 59855; attention: CSKT COVID-19 Relief.

**Joe McDonald** introduced the honoree Mike O'Donnell. He began working for us in 1976 and established the Salish Kootenai College that year. Mike was the first president for three years, and then Joe took over in 1978. Joe visited Mike yesterday. He is retired, but he still counsels students. He would take grant opportunities and study those and fit our college needs into those grant applications. Mike did a lot for our Tribe, our college, and many of us. Joe thanked Salina Kenmille for taking the lead in this and for making this happen. Selina approached Chairwoman Fyant because she wanted to honor Mike. Martin sent him a zoom invite, and Mike replied that he is a nontribal member and it must have been a mistake that he was invited to the council meeting. Mike came to the reservation in the 1970s. He served as the original SKC president, served as the principal of Two Eagle River School in the last 1980s and brought in multimillion-dollar grants to CSKT. It is estimated that he brought in nearly \$100 million due to his grant writing. Although he is a nontribal member, he had a commitment to tribal people. He was a teacher for the Northern Cheyenne. He started an endowment fund for SKC with matching funds. He raised \$1 million and the fund matched it with \$2 million. He motivates people to get a higher education. His mentoring encouraged generations to strive for more. The tribal council gifted him with a blanket. **Ellie Bundy McLeod** read a statement on what a difference he made in her life and she thanked him for all he has done for SKC.

**The Brothers** sang an honor song.

**Mike O'Donnell** thanked the council so much for this honoring. He worked with many awesome tribal members who made sacrifices for the good of the college. Mike worked harder because he was surrounded by people he admired and did not want to let them down. Mike was very touched by this honor.

**Tony Incashola, Sr.** commented that it has been an honor to be part of this horning over the years. This will be his last year doing this. We think about those people that went before us, taught us what we know, and gave us our values. We are fortunate to live in this beautiful area that our ancestors worked hard to preserve, protect and pass down to us. Tony hopes the next generation has the same opportunity we have today. Each tribe has its own traditional values and ceremonies. This memorial is done at the pow wow, but since there is no celebration this year it is being done at the quarterly council meeting. They always recognized those people that went before us before the pow wow events started. It is important for us to remember how fortunate we are because of our ancestors and people that went before us. People have struggled since 1492, but we have survived, come forward, and continue to thrive because of those strong traditions and values given to us by parents, grandparents, and ancestors. We have all lost someone that is close to us. Through the ceremony, we will never forget about them. He thanked everyone who made our lives strong. We have had great leaders for our people throughout the years. We have all come from great people and leaders. We will continue to honor them and do what they taught us. **Greg DuMontier** and **Myrna DuMontier** sang the memorial song as Tony read the list of names to honor those we have lost since last July. **Chairwoman Fyant** read the list of names of the veterans we lost throughout the year: Glen Howlett, Victor Cordier, Arnold Schliep, Joseph Bud DuMontier, Dashene Hewankorn, Camille Mathias, Francis Stanger, Joseph Vanderburg, Leslie Clairmont, Lillis Waylett, Larry Schwarz, and Nathan Gray. She was grateful to those veterans and families who made the sacrifices for us.

**Council** did a public service announcement for people to remain safe, wear their masks, social distance a minimum of 6 six, and wash their hands for 20 seconds. That is the greatest protection we have for our families. We will need to practice these protocols and they will be the new normal for a long time into the future.

**Tony Incashola, Sr.** offered the closing prayer.

Council **adjourned** at 11:36 a.m., and is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, July 7, 2020, at 9:00 a.m.

**CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES**

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Ellie Bundy McLeod  
Tribal Secretary