

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

Volume 21 Number 73
Council Chambers, Pablo, MT

Held: July 2, 2021
Approved: July 8, 2021

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Anita Matt, Vice-Chairwoman (Personal Time Off).

OTHERS PRESENT: Jennifer Trahan, Council Office Manager; James 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 Stephen Smallsalmon.

The Brothers Drum Group sang a **flag song**.

The floor was opened for comments from the elders.

Stephen Smallsalmon was happy everyone was here today. Pete Beaverhead used to say to him that when you have a life when you get older, you have stories you hear from a long time ago. Stephen thinks about that. He thanks the Creator each morning that he is still alive. A lot of people have gone away due to this virus. The elders used to tell stories at the hunting camps after they spent the day hunting. There are very few elders left. Some people do not have air conditioning. We wait until the last minute before we get our air conditioning fixed. Stephen looks forward to the one-day celebration. There are two snake dances in that one day, unless the information is posted incorrectly. We used to be camping at the Arlee Pow Wow already and everyone from all over would be there. There is no more going across the river to hunt, riding horses, or post and poles. Stephen used to cut wood for \$75 a cord. He had no tires or taillights. A lot of things have changed. We used to count on those people to get things done, but that is not done anymore. They used to do things for free, but now there is a handout if anyone does anything. The elders knew something was going to come, and the virus is here now. We need to wear a mask, wash our hands, and take care of ourselves. It has been a hard year for everyone. The elders know what the life was a long time ago. They knew it was going to get cold and were

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ready for it, and they were ready for the hot weather in the summer months. He remembers when the agency was in Dixon. That was a long time ago. Stephen is happy he has air conditioning, happy to be here today, happy we are having a one-day celebration, and is happy his bridge got fixed. We should be helping out the elders and be proud the elders are still working. The elders should be helped, but they are told they cannot get any help because they make too much money. He wished everyone a happy Fourth of July.

Shirley Trahan commented that she agrees with what Stephen said. A lot of things happened, and we are still here and doing our best to make a go of everything. Our reservation waters are strong in her heart. So many people are taking advantage; they think they can do it because it is Indian property, and they abuse our lands and waters. She does not agree with that because of everything our people went through to get to where we are. They loved our land, water, and people. They did not want our people to lose out, but that is what is happening nowadays. There is no room because the nonmembers are taking over our space. So many of our people cannot go pick berries or go camping in their favorite spots. There are many young people working hard to learn the language, and some of them are getting fluent. She is proud of them. More and more people are interested in learning the language. If other people did not have to work, they would join the language classes. It is on Facebook and the Culture Committee has an app. Shirley is proud of what our people have managed to keep for our people. There are ATVs and motorbikes on our lands. They are at the river picnicking, fishing, and relaxing. There were some people shooting their guns across the river, and they could have hurt or killed someone. She is pushing for everybody to take a hand in solving that.

Stephen Smallsalmon informed council that people are camping and have trailers at Hammer Dam, and he wishes the Game Wardens would check it out. **Shirley Trahan** read in the council minutes that Fred Matt talked about limiting our lands to tribal members and Tom McDonald suggested closing tribal lands to nonmember camping. We tried that a few years ago, and it did not go over very well. She is pushing hard for our land, water, and people.

James Steele, Sr. welcomed everyone back to the council chambers; he is glad to see everyone here today.

The floor was opened for council updates.

Carole Lankford thanked the departments who are doing so much for our people. The Department of Human Resources Development, Tribal Health Department, and Salish Kootenai Housing Authority are the standout departments that stepped up and went above and beyond the call of duty. Those departments are short-staffed and on a budget. There were requests for fans, air conditioning, sewer, water pumps, and car repairs. It goes to show there is

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a serious need or help out there. The council set priorities on some of the American Rescue Plan funding. A \$2,000 payment will be issued to the membership on July 16, 2021. We have three years to spend the remaining funds, and she hopes it will help get families back on track. Homeowner repairs are very costly, and it is difficult for people to do that. She wants the Tribes to help the membership. Carole appreciates the departments and council helping the membership. There is an individual who lives in his car, and that is where he wants to live by choice. His car broke down, and the Tribes do not pay for car repairs, but we have funding that a church gave us that we used to help him. Otherwise, the council would need to waive policy to help him. Carole works a lot with Morning Star. We might be able to do something with tiny homes. So many people live in campers, tents, cars, and couch surf. If families had an insulated shed to keep warm and have their private belongings, that could go a long way. Carole serves on the Housing Board. SKHA has 30 homes getting rehabbed so people can move into them. There is so much we can do, but it is difficult to find workers and products to rehab homes, so we are in a bind with what COVID caused. It has been a busy last few months. Carole has a beef with people not answering their phone calls. The telephones should be transferred to a cell phone if employees are remote working. People have a need. A tracking system was set up to track requests/issues. Carole thanked Stephen and Shirley for talking about the land. As people inundate our reservation, it is time to take a strong look at closing our lands to nonmembers and she hopes Tom McDonald will bring in some options for council consideration. Carole thanked the drum, the elders, and everyone for being here today. She wished everyone a happy July 4. She prays for the ones we have lost recently. Carole thanked the membership for allowing her to be part of the Tribal Council.

Martin Charlo commented it is nice to see people here again. It has been a crazy year and a crazy quarter we transitioned into. Seeing people without a mask is refreshing. He acknowledged the people we lost in the last year. It wears heavily on a lot of people. Martin thanked law enforcement, Tribal Health workers and the Unified Command Team for getting us through the pandemic; the employees who kept the bills and employees paid; and the staff for getting the stimulus payments issued in less than a month. Martin took interest in aquatic invasive species and got on some boards. Food projects are important. There is a community garden in Pablo, and he thanked the Salish Kootenai College Extension for getting it done. The Morning Star is a pilot project, and it could be extended to other communities if it goes well. People who are in the healing process for mental health issues and addictions benefit from being with their family, being close to home, and in their communities. Martin was appointed to the Big Sky Rail Authority. They are in the process of getting a route to the southern part of Montana and Seattle. He would like to have the rail line run from Polson to Missoula again. Mental health is something we do not talk about. The last couple of years have been extremely difficult. We have lost a lot of important people that our Tribes will miss, and that weighs heavy on him.

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Martin got COVID, and that was rough. The mental part of it was that we lost people to COVID, and he was hoping to save everyone. It was mentioned to him that he had survivor's guilt. Martin leads by example. This last year has been a growing period for him. People are put in our paths. They may be going through the same thing, and we can help each other. Martin encouraged everyone to reach out and talk to each other. We know people are struggling and we will honor all those we lost at the honoring in Arlee. We have an opportunity as a Tribe and an organization, and we have important decisions to make that impact future generations. We are here to listen to the membership and try to do what is best for everyone. We as a people have a lot of healing to do. We have an opportunity to look at the historical trauma we have faced and the lack of mental health activities to help get us through that. We buried a lot of those traumas and a lot of those have come back, and he wants to go about it in a healthy way going forward. He would like us to work on our mental and physical health. Martin participates in the disc golf league at Salish Kootenai College on Fridays at 6:00 p.m. That helps his mental health. The Tribes set up some cooling stations for people, and he will post information about it. He asked people to help their family members who are struggling with the heat and to be cognizant of their neighbors, families, community, and do better going forward. It is an honor for Martin to serve on the Tribal Council and to be in a position to help tribal members.

Bing Matt commented that it is good to see everyone here today. He thanked Stephen for the prayer, the drum group for the flag song, and Shirley for being here. It has been a busy quarter. The council has been doing a lot of work on water rights and getting weekly reports from the staff. Tom McDonald is doing an excellent job at the Bison Range. Bing and Mike have been working with Forestry to revise the Timber Use Policy Statement, and that should be completed soon. Council went to Helena in April to meet with the governor to discuss strategic planning, goals, and priorities. Bing and Tom McDonald attended the IBMP meeting in April and they are going to Lapwai on July 21 for another meeting to discuss plans for the upcoming bison hunt. The partitions were taken off the council desks. Bing was quarantined three times, but he never got COVID. It has settled down at the complex now that most everyone is vaccinated. Stephen talked about hunting stories from long ago where people went horseback riding. Bing was thinking of the hunting camps he went to in the South Fork and the stories that were told to him. It is good to hear stories and relive those memories. He wished their stories were recorded now that they are gone. Bing got a report yesterday that people were at the River Honoring area and could not get their boat on shore because people had the landing area blocked off. Bing asked Tom McDonald to look at that area to make sure they are protected from people taking over our land. We have had a lot to do with COVID. The memorial this weekend is going to be said with the number of tribal members we have lost since the last pow wow. Bing hopes it will help people go

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on with their lives after suffering losses. It has been a miserable year and a half and a difficult time for everyone. Bing was glad to see everyone here today.

Ellie Bundy McLeod thanked everyone for being here, Stephen and Shirley for their words, and the drum for their song. It has been an incredibly busy quarter. We have some amazing folks working on behalf of the membership. The council came up with priorities, and the staff will be called upon to help them accomplish those. Ellie gave a report on MMIP activities. As of June 17, 2021, the Montana Missing Persons Clearing House had 189 active missing persons. Of that number, 60 have been identified as indigenous. The CSKT Work Group resumes monthly meetings. In May they held a fundraiser to raise funds for the newly established MMIP Victim Services Fund to help families who may have someone go missing. Ellie is grateful for the volunteers who serve on the work group. Ellie provided MMIP presentations, human trafficking, and the CSKT response plan to the UM Native American Indian Law School Student Association, Gonzaga, Friends of Missoula Quakers, State Task Force, and Ronan School. There will be a National Native American Law Enforcement training in August. CSKT was the first tribe in the nation to complete a response plan for missing persons cases and are being looked to nationally. She is proud of that. Ellie spoke at the MMIP awareness event on May 5 at the Montana State Capitol and the UM for Project Beacon. Ellie speaks at events showcasing the new missing persons network. CSKT was the second tribe in the state to join that network. Ellie goes to networking meetings to create a networking system that extends beyond the state of Montana with the goal to be national networking. She is part of the Regional Task Force Leaders and is part of interviews for MMIP issues to raise awareness and shed light on this devastating reality. Ellie was reappointed to the Montana Task Force for two years. The task force works on causes that contributes to MMIP. Nearly 80% of missing persons from 2017-2019 were juveniles and 30 out of 60 were reported as a runaway. Some students from Ronan participated in the June meeting regarding runaway issues, and she thanked those students for speaking. Ellie attended various trainings and meetings on MMIP issues. Ellie received an award for her work, and she is honored. Ellie hopes there will not be a need for this work in the future. She is grateful for the opportunity to serve the membership and the council members for all they have accomplished together.

Fred Matt thanked the membership for being here today, the drum for the song, the elders who spoke, and his colleagues for all they have accomplished collectively. Fred is grateful to the membership for giving him the opportunity to represent them on the Tribal Council over the years. He acknowledges the Creator every day and the council begin each meeting with a prayer. Fred lost his wife two and a half years ago, and that was a real low point in his life. It was timely for him to return to the council at that time. He is hopeful he does the job he is challenged to do for the membership. He uses his years of experience in getting the job done for the membership. He has heard about the challenges

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of single parents, and now Fred is a single grandparent facing the challenges of raising children. Fred has served on the Tribal Council for 20 years, and he hopes he represented us well. Fred is unable to retire due to being a single grandparent and with the uncertainty of the election he sought full-time employment with S&K Gaming, so he is resigning from his position on the Tribal Council and will not be seeking re-election. Fred needs to fulfill his commitment to his grandchildren, and he needs resources to do that. Fred is grateful for the opportunity of serving on the Tribal Council. He wished everyone well and hopes to see them at Sunday's event in Arlee.

Charmel Gillin was happy to be here and she feels privileged, blessed, and thankful. She echoed the sentiments of appreciation and valuing everyone's presence here today, especially the elders. Shirley has done a great job. Charmel spends a lot of time keeping up with the information that comes to the council. Her goal is to keep her email inbox empty and read everything that comes in. The council relies on the staff to keep them well apprised of the details, and they do an incredible job of that. On a personal level, she is thankful that there have been some gatherings. The stick game event on Father's Day was a good thing. It came across as rocky in the beginning, but the overall purpose of it was good and the purpose of the memorial on Sunday is really good. We need good things and to share good words with one another. We need to support each other no matter how hard it is sometimes. This job is spiritual to her as much as anything. Our lives are spiritual and each of us needs to be able to work it out in the best way possible with good intentions and do our best. That is something nobody can take from us. This last quarter Charmel held district meetings in May and June. She will not have a July meeting; it is a good time for family summertime celebrations. We allowed time for people to get vaccinated. There was light attendance at her district meetings, but there were some zoom connections and good interactions and reports. She hopes to resume more meetings in the fall. At her district meeting there was a report on the feasibility analysis for the Polson West project regarding potential development on that land. Charmel has a report she can share with people. Janet Camel and Velda Shelby distributed a report to the people in attendance and is available if anyone wants it. The report is confidential but is available to the membership. Bryon Miller gave an update on the status of S&K Gaming and that information is available to the membership. Anyone wanting the information just needs to make a request to the Tribal Council. The Tribes have a communications portal available now at comments@cstkt.org. The comments go through the Communications Director and are addressed regularly. Rick Eneas had provided a report on the restructure and reorganization. The Tribal Council wants to refocus its agendas and meetings toward policy review, strategic planning, and government duties. As the membership is aware, our government has grown. Our duties morphed into corporate officer roles, so the day-to-day operations are transitioning back to a single Executive Officer position. That raised much discussion at her district meeting, and she continues to hear about this decision.

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Charmel has heard it compared to a point in our history when we had an Executive Secretary position. Rather than reinstate that system, the council considered a realignment of departments and service types. The chairwoman has had the oversight and supervision since the last reorganization. To address the ongoing observation of this critical need, the council identified the needs in January 2020. Since that time, we had to address the health crisis. That was the primary overarching challenge for the past 18 months, and she hopes they did a good job keeping these things going. The council continued to seek out a reorganization remedy and implemented this model that was approved by the entire Tribal Council. The council is committed to see this as a new creation to benefit the entire membership and improve council performance. It will continue to be reviewed. We must be adaptable during this reorganization. We are in a learning mode. Policies need to be adjusted when they are not serving what they are supposed to be serving. Charmel appreciates the support from the membership. With the priority planning, we need to understand and have Rick keeping us aware of the American Rescue Plan funds. We received 65% of it so far, and most of it is going to the membership. The remainder of funds to be allocated to the CSKT will be based on the 2019 employment figures that were submitted. Some of the priorities the council has discussed include homelessness, addiction, mental health, increased elder care and support, youth education and outlets, support small businesses to access capital, and increase access to technology to boost the local economy. The remaining 35% of the funding to come is what will be used to address the critical needs priorities. The challenge is to figure out the central themes that issues fall into and address implementation of those themes. It is important for the membership to understand what we are facing in this time because we need to hear from the membership. Tribal members can provide input at comments@cskt.org. Charmel thanked the membership for being active in the tribal government.

Mike Dolson stated that it has been a pleasure to work with the council. He thanked Stephen for the prayer, Shirley for the words, and the drum for the song. It is good to see the membership in the council chambers again. The pandemic affected us all. COVID is not gone, and we still need to be aware even though we reduced the restrictions. This past quarter has been very busy. Mike was happy that Shirley mentioned the land and water. The council is working on the Tribal Lands Ordinance 45-B to protect tribal lands. The water compact passed, and we have resources to help provide protection to water resources. Mike is concerned about a well that was drilled in Hot Springs. It threatens the hot water that our people are using. He continues to monitor that. Mike participates with the Tribal Education Committee. People have been emphasizing the mental health of the membership. He emphasized mental health of our children. The Tribal Education Committee is looking into the education our children receive and are promoting participation by the membership in the education of our children. Protecting and helping elders is essential, and so are our children.

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With the pandemic slowing down, he will be scheduling in-person meetings in Hot Springs. Mike can be reached at 880-5524.

Len TwoTeeth thanked everyone for being here today and his colleagues for the tough work they have done in the past two weeks. The council came to the conclusion that an economic relief stimulus payment was needed, and he thanked the council for doing that for the membership. He feels the council did their job. Len acknowledged the comment from Shirley. The council received concerns and complaints about the influx of out-of-state visitors on tribal lands and the damages to our resources, so they had a conversation and came up with a plan. One concept to the plan is to hire 10 additional Game Wardens to provide complete coverage. Len challenged the membership to bring that up each week to council to see what we are doing. We need to get that action done quickly. Len thanked Fred Matt for his years of service on the Tribal Council, including serving as our chairman in the past. Fred brought a lot to the table and Len learned a lot about the Tribes' history from him. It was an honor to work with Fred. Len also learned a lot from former chairman Ron Trahan, and he was glad to see him at today's meeting. Len acknowledged the group led by tribal member Doug Pierre. The group made a tremendous difference in our communities by planning and implementing cleanups throughout the reservation. They are great role models. It is important as leaders to acknowledge good things we see. The group overcame one of the greatest battles of their lives; they took charge of their lives and made a difference in the community. The reorganization and restructure had a lot of discussion before it was implemented. There are some flaws, but he assured the membership that in his role as a council-elect he will not allow there to be a disconnect between the Tribal Council and membership. It is important for tribal members to be able to reach out to the council members. Len enjoys seeing people here in the chambers; it reminds him who he works for.

Chairwoman Fyant announced that Anita Matt had surgery so she is on PTO today, and Shelly wished her a speedy recovery. Shelly thanked the elders. She looks forward to that refocus of what is really important and where we come from. Stephen made her lonesome for those good old days and having elders and families here and living that life. We live a different life now. We know the land and water is what we have left, and it is our responsibility to protect it for future generations. Shelly encouraged everyone to keep creating memories for their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She heard stories of how the whole conservation permit system came about when nontribal members were overrunning the Jocko and the Tribal Council was encouraged to protect the Mission Mountains. The reorganization will allow the council to have one-on-one time with the Elder Advisory Committee to get the good quality time with them. Shelly hopes to have an in-person district meeting soon and opening the centers for meals in the near future. The pandemic was a time for Shelly to reflect on what her priorities were and what they are now. One thing she goes back to is the traditional values and principles to take care of our people and

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being close in the community. However we can implement that as a council and government is what we are looking for. Shelly serves as the CSKT delegate on the National Congress of American Indians for the Rocky Mountain region, and she chaired the Land and Natural Resource Committee. 5 resolutions came forward in that committee and they had to do with the important environmental issues. People are losing their reservations and villages because of climate change. Secretary Haaland announced the Boarding School Initiative. She had a zoom meeting with the Native American Boarding School Coalition. It is an advocacy group to provide awareness and education about the boarding school issues. Three boarding schools in Canada discovered the remains of thousands of children who never came home. The Ursuline has unmarked graves. We have a lot of healing that needs to happen as a result of the boarding school era. The Boarding School Coalition has resources, but the answer will come from the people here. It will be a long and difficult process, but that healing really needs to happen. That will come from the membership. Three Chiefs Culture Center is sponsoring a Treaty Day commemoration on July 16. That is the foundation of who we are as a tribe today. Shelly was thankful for the elders that protected our rights, especially doing what we do in our usual and accustomed places. Shelly is involved in the Buffalo Nations Food Sovereignty Initiative and CSKT being a signatory on the Buffalo Treaty. To that effort, they are developing an institute at Montana State University. There will be a Buffalo conference in Lewistown in October. The reorganization has allowed the council to finish the Personnel Ordinance 69-D revisions. They are nearing the completion of the Tribal Lands Ordinance 45-B. Next up will be the Cultural Waterways Ordinance to protect our waterways, and then the Probate Code. Other pending revisions include Mental Health Ordinance, Dog Ordinance, and Tribal Administrative Procedures Ordinance. CSKT is involved in transboundary issues with First Nations, which is about protecting our waters (Elk River and proposed tech mine). We are also involved in the Columbia River Basin issues, such as the Simpson proposal to take down the four Lower Snake River Dams to restore salmon to our waterways.

***** **Break** *****

Terry Tanner informed council that he has worked on the reservation for over 50 years and worked for the Tribes for over 30 years. It was an honor to have worked for the CSKT in various capacities and to speak on behalf of the Tribes nationally in the different countries he went to. We need to tell Gianforte that we are the caretakers of this land. We need to protect, preserve, and take care of the land we live on. That is the most important thing he learned by working for the CSKT. Terry thanked Fred Matt. Terry replaced Fred on the Fish and Wildlife Board. Terry has had to educate our Game Wardens about our aboriginal rights. He thanked the council for all they do. Even though Terry is retired, he keeps an eye on what the Tribes are doing. He thanked Stephen and Shirley for speaking this morning. Terry used to change water lines when he

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was 9 years old. He knows the landscape very well and keeps an eye on our sacred sites on and off the reservation. Terry honors, loves, and respects the Tribal Council.

Tom McDonald, Natural Resources Department, discussed the Fish and Wildlife Reservation Board. Chairman Mickey Pablo signed the cooperative agreement thirty years ago to work cooperatively with the state of Montana to avoid expensive litigation. It called for an advisory board. The governor appointed three members for the State, the Tribal Council appointed three members for the Tribes, and a Fish & Wildlife Service employee was appointed as a neutral board member. The board was critical in avoiding litigation and providing stewardship to the fish and wildlife. When Governor Gianforte took office, he appointed new board members. Tom thanked Fred Matt for his dedication and years of service to the Tribes. He has been critical for the fish and wildlife direction and served on the board for years. Tom acknowledged the board members and introduced the members in attendance today. He honored Rod Richardson, Pelah Hoyt, Michael Jamison, Whisper Camel-Means, and Terry Tanner. They were given a gift bag and a blanket. Tom has been trying to fill positions at the Bison Range; he wishes he could hire everyone that has applied. They want to be part of the future and protect the resources.

The Brothers Drum sang an **honor song**.

Tom McDonald informed council that his mother passed away last July, and his brother passed away yesterday. Fred Matt had sent Tom a picture of his brother Terry when he was in high school, and that picture was the highlight of their afternoon yesterday. Those little things matter during a time of loss, and he thanked Fred for that. **Chairwoman Fyant** expressed her condolences to the family and offered prayers to his family. She thanked Tom for showing up today; it shows the dedication of the staff to show up during a time of loss such as this.

Chairwoman Fyant presented the Michael T. Pablo Chairman's Award to Rhonda Swaney and Ryan Rusche their efforts in getting the water rights compact approved and signed on December 29, 2020. The CSKT compact is the largest settlement in US history. Rhonda stated it has been quite a journey and has taken many years, and she appreciates having the opportunity to work on it. Ryan mentioned the staff that helped get the compact through. It is fun to be part of something that is bigger than him.

The Brothers Drum Group sang an **honor song**.

Rick Eneas, Tribal Executive Officer, discussed the American Rescue Plan Fiscal Recovery Fund. CSKT received \$38.9 million in the first allocation. It is unknown at this time what the second allocation amount will be. CSKT has until December 31, 2024 to obligate/spend the funds. The first priority was a \$2,000

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economic relief payment to tribal members on July 16, 2021. The other priorities for the remainder of funds are assistance to households for necessary improvements such as water/sewer and home repairs; mental health care needs to increase treatment options, alternative court options; addressing housing shortages on the reservation; continued improvements to reservation broadband access; assistance to business and industries which were impacted in some manner by COVID. Rick gave an update on the reorganization. The new structure is intended to provide an opportunity for the council to focus on planning for the future, including water compact, Bison Range, infrastructure; allow for greater continuity in government administration; is important for the implementation of long-term objective; improve the communications between the council and the membership and staff; and improve services to the membership. There is a revised organizational chart resulting from the reorganizational structure and has broken down the services into 4 different categories consisting of Tribal Member Services, Tribal Resource Management, Tribal Government, and Financial Management. The goal is for the Tribal Council to be able to spend time updating policies and ordinances to address issues affecting the membership and community; allow time for the council to spend on long term planning to address significant needs of the membership, such as housing, economic challenges, substance abuse; increased frequency of communications to the membership; increased responsiveness and customer service focus from staff to the membership and general public; and increased opportunities for input from the membership in the council deliberation process. **Greg DuMontier** was concerned about the Culture Committees no longer having a direct tie to the council. He was part of the reorganization in the 1980s and he wants there to be tighter working relationship with the Culture Committees, Elders, and the Tribal Council. He asked what will be done to facilitate a stronger working relationship with the Culture Committee. **Chairwoman Fyant** explained that one way they plan to improve the working relationship is to have one on one time with those committees on a monthly basis. **Charmel Gillin** stated that the elders continue to be the advisors and it is an error that the organizational chart does not show that. It was not intentional. They are part of the review process and provide advice, and that will be maintained. She thought we should draw a square on the chart to remind everyone of that.

Tom McDonald and **Stephanie Gillin**, Natural Resources Department, gave an update on the Bison Range. The CSKT has up to two years to assume full operations, but the goal is by January 1, 2022 we will be prepared to take those over. Some positions have been filled already. Leonard Gray was hired as the Coordinator, Isaiah Asencio was hired as a Game Warden; Antone Paul was hired for the IT position; and Willie Stevens was hired as the Lead Maintenance Worker. Interviews were conducted and a selection was made for the Foreman position. That hire should be finalized soon. There are some vacant Wildlife Biologist positions. The Big Medicine mount is in a fragile state and there are concerns about moving him anywhere. Tribal staff would need to assess his

condition. Electric charging stations will be installed. A progress report on the Visitor Center was provided and slides of the work were shown. The tribal signage should be put on the landscape next week. Tom answered questions from the audience. **Chairwoman Fyant** stated that moving the Visitor Center to Ravalli Hill is an option, but the transfer did not come with any funds.

Rhonda Swaney, Legal Department; and **Ryan Rusche**, Chief of Staff; discussed the water compact implementation. Ryan hopes to introduce the new superintendent at the next quarterly. She has been a good advocate. There will be youth camp in August for middle school students to learn about some of the career paths for water compact work in the future. There will be many new job opportunities into the future. Rhonda and Ryan answered questions from the audience.

Myrna DuMontier gave a report on the activities she has been working on behind the scenes to exercise our aboriginal land. She did that yesterday with her grandchildren and told them stories. Myrna talked about the culture camp she set up at Seeley Lake. They also went to Darby and learned more about that land. Myrna informed council that she was asked to join the Montana Conservation Elders Group. She met with Katie McDonald to find out who is going to actively monitor the cultural sites in the Bob Marshall. Myrna invited Whisper to the next Conservation Elders meeting. She will provide council regular reports on the plan.

Chairwoman Fyant informed council that she just received a text that the Lake County Democrats are carrying the United States and Montana flags and want to use a Tribal flag. **Council** had no objection. **Charmel Gillin** requested that they be told to not hold the Tribal flag below the State flag.

Chairwoman Fyant left the meeting to participate in the Director of Commerce meeting.

Leonard Michel commented that there is more recreationalist on our lands. We need to look at our fees and charge different rates. We need to get tribal members out there to watch areas the elders do not recreationalists to be at. Jette is one area. **Ellie Bundy McLeod** stated that is part of the discussions they been having and partly why they got more Game Wardens.

Leonard Michel asked when Fred Matt's resignation will be effective. **Fred Matt** advised that his last day on the council will be July 17, 2021. Leonard heard from some council members that Fred was going to withdraw his name from the ballot and the ballots were already printed, so he wanted to know how the election would be handled. **Mike Dolson** explained that the Election Board accepted the withdrawal request since the ballots were not printed yet, so the candidates that withdrew their names will not appear on the ballot. Leonard

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asked what section of the Election Rules allowed that to happen. Mike referred to Section 6(e) of the Election Rules. Leonard said it should have gone to the full council. Mike explained that it went to the Election Committee. Only appeals go to the full council in accordance with the Election Rules. Leonard asked what if he appeals that decision. Mike advised Leonard would need to show how he was personally harmed by the action, and then it would go to the full council for an appeal.

Leonard Michel got some local ranchers together to put in a pipe to serve 1,000 acres for the local ranchers to tap into. He wanted the council to know that so when this project goes forward, maybe someone can bring that to the Irrigation Project to have that put in since we are getting some money. It would benefit the membership and cut down on pumping charges.

Martin Charlo commented on the election discussion. The Election Board made that decision based on the integrity of the election. We should not have people on the ballot if they do not want to be on it. There was no reason to leave the name on there since the ballots have not been printed yet. The Election Committee was solid in making a decision. The Election Committee is made up that way instead of full council because some of the council members are up for election and should not be part of the decision to maintain the integrity of the election. **Ellie Bundy McLeod** told Leonard that there was additional discussion after she had spoken to Leonard about it. They were able to remove a candidate from the ballot who did not want to be on council. **Leonard Michel** commented that is why there is a schedule of events. During the last council election, a tribal member wanted to run for council after the deadline to apply and that request was denied, so that is not fair. That is why the membership wants to see the judges chosen by the membership. It is council's responsibility to talk to the membership. Council always says rules are rules, but every time there is a rule made the council can withdraw from the rule, but the membership cannot. Lines are drawn between the council and the membership. The last election is a prime example, and it had the lowest voter turnout. One suggestion was sending absentee ballots to all tribal members, but they were told they could not do that this time but maybe next time. That is a roadblock. The membership wants to vote by absentee ballot. The membership needs computers and people to teach them how to use the computers. The information from the council does not reach the membership. People do not receive or read the Char-Koosta News or read their emails, so they are not receiving the information. Council needs to make more efforts to get people to vote. The Tribes gave some computers to the St. Ignatius School during the pandemic and Leonard wanted to know how many of those computers went to tribal members. **Martin Charlo** commented that there should have been a disclaimer about this being election season. He appreciates the candidates attending the meeting and being engaged. The Election Committee will make the best decisions for the membership. **Mike Dolson** stated that every effort is being made to let the membership know

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absentee ballots are available to be sent to them if they request one. **Charmel Gillin** stated that she always goes back to the oath. We have to be rule followers to uphold the constitution. There is interpretation that comes with applying rules. She remembers the circumstance Leonard is talking about because she was on the Election Board when that person requested to be on the ballot a few days after the deadline. The Election Board ruled they would not allow that person to apply as a council candidate after the deadline.

MOTION by Carole Lankford to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Len TwoTeeth. Carried, unanimous (9 present).

Council **adjourned** at 1:27 p.m., and is scheduled to meet again on Thursday, July 8, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES

/sgnd/

Ellie Bundy McLeod
Tribal Council Secretary