



Bayfield County Administrator

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Mark Abeles-Allison, *County Administrator*
Kristine Kavajecz, *Human Resources Director*
Paige Terry, *Clerk III*

MINUTES OF THE:
Bayfield County Tribal Relations Committee Meeting
9:00am, Thursday, March 18, 2021
Virtual Meeting Via Web Ex, hosted by Red Cliff

Members Present: *Supervisor* Jeff Silbert, *Supervisor* Steve Sandstrom, *Vice Chair* Nathan Gordon, *Chairman* Rick Peterson

Others Present: *County Administrator* Mark Abeles-Allison, *Bayfield County Tourism & Recreational Director* Mary Motiff, *Bayfield County Forest Administrator* Jason Bodine, *Tribal Attorney* Wade Williams, *Red Cliff Community Health Center Director* Diane Erickson, Chase Meierotto, *Interim Police Chief* Bill Voss, *UW-Extension Area Director* Mary Pardee, *Bad River FRTEP* Joy Shelble, *Bayfield County Emergency Management Director* Meagan Quaderer, *Bayfield County Environmental Sanitarian* Michelle Simone, *Bayfield School Board President* Nicole Boyd, *Bayfield County Clerk III* Paige Terry.

Called to order at 9:01 am by *Chair* Peterson

UW-Extension Area Director Mary Pardee and Bad River FRTEP Joy Schelble introduced themselves to the Committee.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Minutes of January 7, 2021:

Motion by Gordon seconded by Sandstrom to approve the minutes of January 7, 2021. Motion Carried, 3-0, 1 absent.

4. Bayfield County Emergency Management Director Introduction; Meagan Quaderer:

Bayfield County Emergency Management Director Meagan Quaderer introduced herself to the committee. Quaderer informed the committee that the emergency management department is currently working on an all-hazard mitigation plan and was curious as to who to contact in Red

Cliff regarding possibly accepting the plan. Peterson reported that Linda Nye would be the desired contact.

5. Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program; Bad River Program, Joy Schelble:

Joy Schelble reviewed the tribal extension program stating that she primarily works with youth and families. Schelble explained one primary goal of the program being to restore traditional Ojibwe knowledge, particularly around plants and medicine.

9:15 - Jeff Silbert joined the meeting.

Schelble reported that she expects more status updates regarding FRTEP, its grant cycle, and the possibility of expanding services to Red Cliff, and reviewed activities the program has explored in the past. Gordon reviewed Red Cliff's food sovereignty practices in comparison to Bad River and suggested that Schelble reach out to Suzette Brewer at the Native American Tourism of Wisconsin (NATOW) organization in regard to Agro-Tourism as Red Cliff is considering exploring that avenue in the future.

6. Public Health Updates:

Simone reported that the Bayfield County Health Department has been focusing on distributing vaccines. Bayfield County is nearly finished vaccinating the 65+ population and will begin expanding their vaccination efforts to include food service workers. Erickson reported that the Red Cliff Community Health Center is also focusing on distributing vaccines and has distributed 1,640 first dose vaccinations. Erickson continued, informing the committee that 52.1% of the 18+ population of Red Cliff has been vaccinated. Red Cliff is currently unable to vaccinate the 16-year old population due to the Tribe's limits with receiving the Pfizer vaccine. Erickson reported that the Health Center has recently received a freezer that will allow them to properly store the Pfizer vaccine. Red cliff has been reaching out to the Bayfield County Health Department to assist in vaccinating Bayfield County residents on the vaccination waiting list. Erickson explained that Red Cliff does not have to follow as strict of vaccination guidelines as the County. Red cliff will be expanding their vaccination guidelines to include Bayfield Businesses, more specifically the food industry.

Erickson reported a drastic drop in COVID-19 testing where previous testing events would report approximately 150-200 citizens and the most recent testing event reporting less than 10 individuals. Erickson informed the committee that the testing events have currently been suspended. Erickson reported that the 18-54 age group is expressing increased hesitancy in receiving the vaccine, therefore the Tribe is working on a campaign to promote the vaccine and target this age group. Gordon suggest that Red Cliff partner with Bayfield County to campaign vaccinating the younger population.

7. County Lands on the Red Cliff Reservation, Grants and Legislative Initiatives Updates:

Meierotto reported that the GLRI grant proposal application, pertaining to approximately 340 acres of land valued at \$522,000, has been submitted, but no news has been heard back yet.

Silbert informed the committee that Governor Evers had included tribal land transfers in his budget proposals, specifically stating; “the Governor’s budget allows the sale of certain County property acquired due to delinquent taxes AND the sale of County Forest lands be excluded from the public sale requirement if the sale is to a federally recognized Tribe or Band.” Peterson reported he brought the topic up to the governor as well along with the Great Lakes Inner Tribal Council, which is composed of all of Wisconsin’s 11 Tribes. The Council expressed a positive attitude towards the initiative and some Tribes reported being unaware of the laws and procedures regarding land repatriation. Gordon suggested support letters pertaining to the land repatriation be drafted that could be sent to other tribes in search of support towards the project. Committee members expressed support towards the idea of drafting support letters and discussed possible recipients for said letters.

Bodine delivered an update on the Blueberry road timber sale, stating the project is nearly complete. Gordon asked Bodine if the County was responsible for overseeing the cleanup on County K. Bodine answered that the County is only involved with projects involving County forest land. The County is responsible for overseeing a couple of jobs off Old County K, one of which is just about finished, but not every job being conducted on County K is being overseen by the County. Silbert informed the committee that Bayfield County is in the process of pursuing a County forest carbon sequestration project, but the lands that are to be repatriated to Red Cliff have been excluded from the project to uphold the agreement with Red Cliff.

8. Joint Meeting Planned, November 30, 2021, Location? Agenda Topics?

Gordon suggested the next joint meeting between Bayfield County and Red Cliff be hosted in Red Cliff and suggested the history of land repatriation between the two governments as a potential topic idea. Sandstrom suggested an agenda topic of reviewing the COVID-19 pandemic experience to determine how there may be more cooperation between Bayfield County and the Red Cliff Tribe during a potential pandemic in the future. Sandstrom suggested adding the topic of tourism between the County and the Tribe and the Bayfield County Economic Development work to the agenda. Gordon informed the committee that the topic of Tourism used to be on the agenda for the Bayfield County-Tribal Relations Committee and suggested it be added back to the agenda moving forward. Gordon suggested Jean Gordon and Mark Abeles-Allison as point-of-contacts for adding items to the joint meeting agenda. Abeles-Allison questioned if the County Board would be able to meet in Red Cliff approximately one hour before the scheduled joint meeting so the board may hold its regularly scheduled meeting. Gordon answered saying the board should be able to meet ahead of time.

9. Discussion Regarding Joint Tribal County Land Resolution:

Gordon asked if the draft resolution was strictly for the County Board. Abeles-Allison explained that the resolution included in the supplementary packet was a draft of a joint resolution between Bayfield County and the Red Cliff Tribe per what was discussed at the previous meeting. Silbert explained the traditional Bayfield County process for drafting and approving a resolution. Silbert informed the committee that the goal of including the resolution was to seek input from the committee on potential edits so the resolution may be forwarded on to the Bayfield County Board and the Red Cliff Tribal Council.

Gordon suggested the following changes be made:

- Remove the word “held” from the heading (title) of the resolution.
- Review the fifth and seventh “Whereas” clauses on the first page of the resolution as there appears to be some redundancy.
- On the fifth “Whereas” clause on the first page, which reads; “Whereas, Bayfield County now owns approximately 1,300 hundred acres of land withing he Red Cliff reservation boundaries – almost ten percent of the entire reservation land base; and,” the words “now owns” should be changed to “owned.”
- On the seventh “Whereas” clause on the first page, which reads; “Whereas, Bayfield County owns 1210 approximately acres within the Red Cliff Reservation; and,” insert the word “currently” before the word “owns.”

Abeles-Allison asked if the committee would like these changes to be made and the resolution brought back to the committee for approval. Gordan answered yes. Williams suggested that the language in the proposed resolution be drafted to reflect the language that was originally presented in the resolution passed by the Tribal Council back in November 2020. Peterson expressed concern regarding an overlap of language between the resolution and the existing MOU and suggested the resolution draft be cleaned up before being brought before the Tribal Council and County Board.

The committee discussed a specified date/timeline being added to the resolution. It was decided that a specific date would not be added to the joint resolution. The topic of the joint resolution would be added to the agenda for the next County-Tribal Relations meeting.

10. Tax Delinquent Properties on Reservation:

Peterson asked Abeles-Allison if the topic was currently in litigation. Abeles-Allison answered stating the topic related to the current MOU and the County was looking to avoid tax delinquent parcels returning to County ownership. Gordon asked Abeles-Allison that the Red Cliff Tribe be notified of the tax delinquent notices before the notices are published in the Daily Press so the Tribal Council may be aware of them ahead of time. Abeles-Allison agreed to give the Tribe preliminary notice in the future. Abeles-Allison reviewed Bayfield County’s process for handling tax delinquent properties and explained that it is the County’s goal to avoid tax delinquent properties on the Red Cliff Reservation falling back into County ownership due to delinquent taxes. Silbert read an excerpt from the current MOU between Red Cliff and Bayfield County that listed the criteria for tax delinquent properties on the Red Cliff Reservation falling back under County ownership.

11. Discussion Regarding 2019 Senate Bill 886 Regarding DOT Transportation Aid Transfers to Counties with Tribal Headquarters:

Peterson reported that the item was brought before the Red Cliff Tribal Council and did not receive a lot of positive reception as the Council was concerned over the possibility of the funds being diverted from the Tribe’s gaming dollars to be put towards road repair. Gordon questioned Abeles-Allison if this bill was the same as a previous bill that had been presented and was unable

to move forward in the past. Abeles-Allison replied that he was unsure, but this current bill was brought forward by a separate county. Abeles-Allison reported that he was unaware that the funds for the bill would be taken from gaming dollars that would otherwise go to the Tribe and is unaware of the current status of the bill. Gordon suggested removing the item from the agenda to give it more time to mature. Abeles-Allison informed the committee that the bill was passed on from Menominee County. Peterson explained that Menominee County is rather unique as the Tribe is its own county, therefore any funds would be directed forwarded onto itself. Silbert asked for clarification on the relationship between the gaming dollars and the bill being presented. Peterson explained that the dollars to fund the bill would be diverted from Tribal gaming funds. Peterson continued by explaining that there was no clause in the bill that stated where the funds would be utilized, therefore the Tribe was concerned that some of their funds would be removed and utilized to repair roads in a completely separate area in the County.

The committee continued discussion regarding the specifics listed in Menominee's resolution supporting the bill, implications the bill may hold for Red Cliff, and concerns regarding the bill.

Motion by Sandstrom seconded by Silbert to table the Discussion Regarding 2019 Senate Bill 886 Regarding DOT Transportation Aid Transfers to Counties with Tribal Headquarters until further notice. Motion Carried, 4-0.

12. Superior Days Topic Review: EMS, Tribal Land Repatriation, In Rem and Knowles Nelson:

Abeles-Allison reviewed the potential topic for the next Superior Days event. Abeles-Allison explained that Superior Days would be different this year as it would be strictly remote. Bayfield County is looking to get together with Ashland County and the Red Cliff Tribe to schedule a time to meet with and discuss some important topics with a variety of state dignitaries. Abeles-Allison informed the committee that the potential date for holding the Superior Days virtual gathering would occur in early April. Peterson stated that Red Cliff would be willing to join Bayfield County in this gathering.

13. Reports: National Designation of Highway 13, Wisconsin Lake Superior Byway:

Motiff reported that the byway first became state designated in 2012. Wisconsin now has three nationally designated scenic byways. Motiff informed the committee that the first scenic byway, the Great River Road, has been upgraded to an all-American road. Motiff explained that she does not have many details yet pertaining to what the scenic byway designation will mean or what actions may have to be taken. Motiff stated that she would like to develop a marketing plan as well as a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new nationally designated scenic byway. Motiff is anticipating major projects for the byway.

14. Future Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, May 20, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

The committee held a moment of silence for Bad River Tribal member Joe Rose.

Bill Voss the interim chief with the Red Cliff Police Department introduced himself to the committee.

15. Adjourn:

There being no further business to discuss, *a motion was made by Gordon seconded by Silbert to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried, 4-0 meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.*