

**PEORIA TRIBE OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA
BUSINESS COMMITTEE MEETING
September 6, 2022**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/INVOCATION:

Chief Craig Harper called the meeting to order. Carolyn Ritchey gave the Invocation.

DECLARATION OF QUORUM:

Secretary Tonya Mathews declared a quorum with all members present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion was made by Hank Downum and seconded by Kara North to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion was made by Hank Downum and seconded by Rosanna Dobbs to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, held on August 2, 2022. Motion passed.

MONTHLY TRIBAL/PROGRAM REPORTS:

Financial Reports

Motion was made by Carolyn Ritchey and seconded by Kara North to approve the Financial Reports for July 2022 as presented. Motion passed.

Enterprise Reports

Patrick Browne, CEO of Buffalo Run Casino & Resort, introduced himself to the Business Committee and tribal citizens in attendance. He then informed the Committee that the Casino was five months into the new 2023 fiscal year and that the following reports will speak on that. Mr. Browne then introduced Brian Favreau, Director of Casino Operations with Buffalo Run Casino & Resort.

Mr. Favreau began his report by giving an overview of Slots and eSports Departments, which included:

- The completion of two new gaming areas:
 - ***Buffalo Zone:*** This newly designed space has a full wrap around theme dedicated to the Buffalo games that are popular with our patrons yet unique to this area of Oklahoma. This space was formerly known as the “Launch Pad Zone” – where new games were placed for trial runs.
 - ***Hunt for Neptune’s Gold hallway:*** This newly designed area has a full wrap theme dedicated solely to the most popular game offered by VGT called “Hunt for Neptune’s Gold” and is located as the entire hallway in between the main Casino

floor and the Backwoods gaming area. It continues its strong performance - performing 2x on average of the other games on the floor. Many guests stop to take pictures with the graphics located in this area.

- An overhaul of the Backwoods gaming area: Game mix has been refreshed. Replaced most of the older games leaving only 6 out of the 64 original games. This area will help bring in premium products that are requested by patrons.
- Education on eSports: Staff recently attended an eSports Conference and learned that eSports is a unique opportunity for the Casino to be included in and more focus will be put on building this amenity out. A few changes were made immediately that included:
 - Added an access door for young players so that they do not have to walk through the Casino.
 - Recently hosted the group from Miami Recreation Days and it was very successful.
 - Started showing up at events to get the word out about Esports being offered at the Casino. This has proven to be successful as the membership numbers have grown drastically from 2 to 30.
 - Focusing on memberships and tournaments noting that colleges are recruiting for teams as well as offering scholarships and degrees in eSports.
 - Preparing to host both big and small tournaments with players from six states ranging in age from 8-38.
 - New Goal: High School and College partnerships to drive in large tournaments consisting of hundreds of new patrons.
 - Will be hosting an assortment of Quarterly tournaments.
- Esports had highest recorded sales in July and August 2022.
 - Slot Financials: July was the biggest month in the last four months for Coin-in however still down 8% from July last year; Down 18% YTD; Big jackpots are one of the biggest strengths of the Casino.

Mr. Favreau ended his report and introduced Ms. Mary Jewett, Marketing Director for Buffalo Run Casino & Resort. Ms. Jewett began her report, which included:

- ***Marketing: Business Strengths and Opportunities***
 - Strengths of the Casino include Superior guest service, great leadership team, food product is good, clean property inside as well as outside
 - Opportunities for the Casino include Data driven decisions, eMarketing/SMS
 - Marketing=Data=Revenue
 - eMarketing and eBlasts have a much quicker turnaround and the ability to target our audience as well as a large cost savings than per postcard
 - The first eBlast went out just before the Black Crowes concert, with 35.31% that opened the link - which is a good rate
 - eMarketing Objectives include increasing headcounts and to expand our demographic, seek email signup opportunities, develop targeted online promotions, follow up with 'Thank you' emails as well as reminder emails
 - Phone tracking stats showed what casino a customer goes to after leaving Buffalo Run or where they were before arriving at Buffalo Run. The goal is to find out why a player leaves Buffalo Run Casino to go to another facility.

Ms. Jewett ended her report by asking if there were any questions. Third Councilman Isabella Clifford mentioned that our casino billboards needed to be replaced with more eye-catching

ones. Ms. Jewett replied, stating that two new billboards have been picked up and that the old, plain one has been retired. She is working on improving the overall billboard strategy.

Ms. Jewett then introduced Angela Gosney, Director of Finance for Buffalo Run Casino and Resort. Ms. Gosney began her report, which included financials for all enterprises:

- **Golf Financials:**
 - FY July 2023 showed an increase of 12% in revenue over last July; This is the 2nd highest month for the property overall in the history of the Golf Course.
 - Golf rounds also increased by 15% over last July
- **Hotel Financials:**
 - Hotel revenue increased 13% over last July; This is the highest increase in the history of the Hotel.
 - Room Revenue increased 12% over last July
 - Grab-n-Go sales increased 27% over last July; The increase in sales must mean that our customers like the selection and convenience of the items offered.
- **Fiscal Year Coin-in Comparison:** From April-August 2021 compared to the same months in 2022, the coin-in shows an overall decrease of -4.32% but it's slowly picking back up; seeing positive trends
 - From April-August 2018 compared to the same months in 2022, there is a difference of +15.72% in coin-in. The casino is doing better than pre-covid
 - The goal is to do \$52 million, working hard to maintain numbers, customers don't have the disposable income like in the past – which is due largely to inflation and not receiving money from the pandemic.

Chief Harper spoke to this stating that Casino management is watching revenues versus expenses and will continue to monitor this closely over the next thirty days.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Chief Harper gave a recap of his written report:

- Continuing to hold bi-weekly Director's meetings, as well as, one-on-one meetings with each Director
- Finalized a decision for an Architectural Firm, Blue River Architects, prioritizing work now and will present an update soon
- Attended Intertribal Council Meeting
- Attended the Tribal Leaders of Oklahoma meeting
- Attended NTHS Board Meeting
- Attended the "Painted Hides" event and Stomp Dance

Following the list of events he attended, Chief Harper asked Wess Farless, Peoria Language Specialist, to give a brief update on the how the new language class is going. Mr. Farless stated that the class was going very well and that the students were eager to learn – which makes it easy.

Chief Harper ended his report by introducing Jo'lynn Kaiser, Director of Early Childhood for the Tribe. Ms. Kaiser began her report with a slideshow that included:

Where We Were, Last Quarter (Early Childhood):

- CCDF subsidy recertifications have been processed
- Woodland playground installation is complete

- All classrooms are open and staffed
- Solidified partnership with NTHS for Mental Health consults bi-weekly at each site
- Secured a 15-passenger van

Where We Are, This Quarter (Early Childhood):

- Summer Program – several field trips, enrichment activities, staycations (bringing activities to the center)
- Enrollment – 78% enrolled, with 50% of those being Peoria citizens. Wait list has 93 on it
- Family Meetings – Family fun night at the City pool and an End of Summer celebration
- Field Trip to the Hatchery where the children were taught how to catch a fish.
- Big 4th of July event at Buffalo Run
- Annual Backpack Giveaway was a success in which staff distributed 1,000 backpacks to the community

Where We Are Going, Next Quarter (Early Childhood):

- Partnering with the Cultural Preservation department to hold a stick ball family meeting
- Trunk or Treat event with Tribal departments
- New 5 Star QRIS in Oklahoma
- Licensing to be done
- Outreach at local elementary schools

Ms. Kaiser ended her report by introducing Tracy Coach, Director of Health and Human Services for the Tribe. Ms. Coach began her report with a slideshow that included:

Where We Were, Last Quarter (Health & Human Services):

- Outreach services at several events
- White Bison/Medicine Wheel training held for area Peer Recovery Support Specialists
- Whitney is now certified to teach the 12-step program
- Tribe joined the Opioid settlement
- ICW successfully found permanent homes for three children
- Domestic Violence program started direct/emergency services for victims
- Joined with HIS and John Hopkins to provide a home visitation service to area Native parents. Shelby is now certified to provide health education and social support to parents with young children.
- CHR purchased a new vehicle using grant funds for transports
- Completed our first parenting support group

Where We Are, This Quarter (Health & Human Services):

- Started a new session of Peoria Advantage
- The Tribe joined the ICWA Amicus Brief
- Warrior Down Certification
- Participating in many outreaches
- Prepping for departmental move to the Academy
- Flu Shot Drive

Where We Are Going, Next Quarter (Health & Human Services):

- Moving into the Academy
- Family Spirit begins

- Narcan training for First Responders
- Outreach – Wyandotte Block Party and Teen Life Fair with the Miami Public Library
- Collaboration with Washington school to host a parent support group/class for parents of their students

Second Chief Rosanna Dobbs asked Ms. Coach if her department or the Tribe offers the same classes that ICWA requires. Ms. Coach answered that she has been unable to get the Certification for that but is looking into it. She further stated that she has spoke with Judge Jennifer McAffrey in Ottawa County and that Judge McAffrey is interested in the possibility of sending people to these classes if they are offered by us in the future.

Third Councilman Isabella Clifford asked Ms. Coach if there could be a flyer made listing all of the available services that her department has to offer. Ms. Coach answered by stating that this is currently in the works.

Chief Harper spoke up regarding the Early Childhood Center stating that enrollment is maxing out, which, in turn, generates tuition/revenue and will create a long-term budget. He further stated that an expansion may be necessary sooner rather than later and that this is something to start thinking about. He then spoke to the Health and Human Services Department by stating that their new office location is where Early Childhood was just a year ago and to look at where they are now – with already a need for expansion. He then stated that hard work is put into investing in and developing departments by setting goals and objectives.

Chief Harper then addressed the Business Committee asking for feedback on what they felt were the needs for the future Health and Wellness Center. He asked that they start thinking about details for the architects and to take into consideration that the gym be large enough for the Children’s Christmas Party, General Council, as well as any other Tribal events since we have outgrown all of our current spaces. He further stated that this project is realistically approximately two years away but that he would like to start brainstorming on it now. He asked that the Committee be prepared to discuss this project at the next meeting with their ideas. Chief Harper then asked the Committee to think about what the future of the Health and Human Services Department and/or Health and Wellness Department for the Tribe should look like as well as how Health fits in to both categories. He then stated that he wasn’t sure how the Tribe will fit in with the emergency management services already being offered in our area and asked the Committee to be thinking about it. He stated he saw the near future of the Tribe having services such as in-house legal staff, a court system, and Marshalls. In closing, Chief Harper asked the committee to think about how what can be established to help fill needs for our citizens.

Ms. Coach ended her report by asking if there were any further questions. Seeing none, the meeting proceeded.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Committee reviewed the documents presented for “New Members Recommended for Approval by the Enrollment Committee on 08/18/22 Tentatively to be Approved by the Business Committee on 09/06/22 or at the Next Regularly Scheduled or Special Meeting”. No questions were asked from the

Committee. Motion to approve the recommendations was made by Carolyn Ritchey and seconded by Kara North. Motion passed.

Resolution R-09-06-22-A, “Approval for Changes to the Peoria Tribal Membership Roll”: Motion was made by Rosanna Dobbs and seconded by Carolyn Ritchey to approve Resolution R-09-06-22-A as presented. Motion passed.

Resolution R-09-06-22-B, “Resolution Authorizing Submittal of Application to the SSBCI (State Small Business Credit Initiative) Program”: Motion was made by Carolyn Ritchey and seconded by Hank Downum to approve Resolution R-09-06-22-B as presented. Motion passed.

Resolution R-09-06-22-C, “Resolution Approving and Authorizing Amendments to Chapter Four of the General Revenue and Taxation Act of the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma”: Motion was made by Isabella Clifford and seconded by Kara North to approve Resolution R-09-06-22-C as presented. Motion passed.

Discussion/Approval to Define “Pre-K School Reimbursement”: Following discussion of the agenda item, the Business Committee agreed to include any state accredited Pre-K Program. Motion was made by Rosanna Dobbs and seconded by Hank Downum to approve this definition. Motion passed.

Discussion/Approval for Budget Modification: Following discussion and questions from the Business Committee, motion was made by Isabella Clifford and seconded by Kara North to approve the approved budget modification to support adding Pre-K to the School Reimbursement program. Motion passed.

Reappointments to the Peoria Housing Authority Board of Commissioners (Shelby Betsey and Winston “Cap” Ulrey): Motion was made by Rosanna Dobbs and seconded by Carolyn Ritchey to reappoint both representatives as presented. Kara North and Isabella Clifford abstained. Motion passed.

Solar Feasibility Study Presentation – Dan Gero with Woven Energy: The presentation given by Dan Gero with Woven Energy was a presentation only and was strictly meant to share results of a feasibility study performed as part of a grant fulfillment for the Tribe. The primary goal of the grant used to obtain this study was to plan and/or develop for renewable energy sources. Following the presentation and questions/discussion by the Business Committee, Chief Harper reminded those present that not only was this only a presentation but that this is the first discussion regarding this topic and that no decisions were being made at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chief Harper began “Public Comments” by going around the room and asking each tribal citizen if they had any questions or public comments so that each had the opportunity to address the Business Committee.

Citizen Laura Pappenfort introduced herself and stated that she drove eight hours to attend the meeting. Ms. Pappenfort stated that she has been working in the fiber/cell tower industry for over thirty years, in business development and acquisitions. The company she is employed with, Blue Bird Networks, will be laying new long-haul fiber from St. Louis to Tulsa and asked if it would be possible for it to come through Miami where it would have significance to her, being that a lot of Miami is Peoria reservation. She asked if the Tribe would be interested in writing a letter of support to see if she can get this accomplished. She further stated that there would be no obligation to the

Tribe for this to happen. In closing, Ms. Pappenfort stated she will send over more information for the Committee to review.

Citizen Annette Black stated that she would like to discuss the Solar Energy presentation with Chief Harper at a later time. Chief Harper stated that he would.

Citizen Axle Farless stated that he was having mixed emotions regarding the Solar Energy presentation and felt like the Business Committee was not in support of it. Third Councilman Isabella Clifford spoke up stating that what was stated in the report and what she gathered from the presentation was that it was not feasible for the Tribe to pursue it at this time. Secretary Tonya Mathews stated that she also gathered that same information. Ms. Mathews then asked Chief Harper if grants were being pursued to help offset the costs to begin the process of converting properties to solar energy. Chief Harper stated that this was the first part of a grant for that reason and that there were no current plans to pursue anything beyond this presentation. Ms. Mathews stated that she felt like it could be a possibility sooner rather than later with the help of grant money to help offset some of the costs. Second Chief Rosanna Dobbs agreed and stated that she also gathered the same conclusion that Third Councilman Clifford stated regarding the presentation.

Citizen Anna Johnson thanked Wes for teaching the language class and stated that she would like to have other classes offered in regard to our culture. Ms. Johnson then stated that she would like for the glass case at Northeastern Tribal Health Center to be filled and that she didn't like seeing it empty. She then asked for the Committee to consider having trips for citizens to our ancestral lands. Ms. Johnson then stated that at this year's General Council meeting, a citizen stood up at the back of the room and made the recommendation to give Chief Harper a pay raise and that her concern is that she believes that some citizens didn't know what was happening at the time and therefore did not vote; she stated that she thinks there needs to be more explanation during these motions to allow more time for everyone to understand what is happening. Treasurer Hank Downum stated that nobody could really be prepared for how to handle it because nobody knew that kind of motion was going to happen. Third Councilman Isabella Clifford stated that this same process took place two years ago at that General Council meeting and that the same topic has been brought up the last three out of four years. Secretary Tonya Mathews stated that the motion is repeated by the Chief before votes can take place. Chief Harper stated that her concern is noted and that he will make a better effort regarding repeating any and all actions from the floor. He further stated that he understood that any discussions from the floor during those meetings can be confusing because several people may be trying to talk at once.

Citizen Denise Broyles asked what the status was for meat distribution. Chief Harper answered by stating that the Master Plan is to build a Food Distribution Center with the ICDBG grant to be able to house and sell our own food that he hopes will include: beef, buffalo, fish, mussels, fresh produce and other foods. Ms. Broyles then asked if citizens will get a discount. Chief Harper stated that the plans for the details of the Food Distribution Center were not that far yet. He then answered additional questions asked by stating that we get our meat processed by the Quapaw Nation at their Processing Facility and that we currently use the meat in our restaurants and at the Learning Centers. He then briefly discussed a long-term plan for food sovereignty. He finished by stating that he is waiting to hear back from the attorneys regarding the ARPA funding plans.

Citizen Mark Glades stated that his son was an Esports Teacher and has a Peoria flag in his classroom and asked when Peoria flags would be available for citizens to purchase to fly over their homes. He then told how Chief Harper drove a flag to his son's classroom, after he requested one. Mr. Glades

stated that he is proud of his heritage and would like to purchase a flag. Chief Harper stated that a program has been discussed and is in the works. Mr. Glades then inquired what the remaining amount was of the ARPA funding and what the timeline looks like for the funds to be distributed. Chief Harper replied that approximately \$15.5 million is left and that a list of 15-20 options have been sent to the legal team for review and opinion. He then stated that the obligation deadline to spend it is in 2024 with the actual spending deadline being in 2026. Another citizen interjected asking if the Tribe is considering distributing any additional money to citizens. Chief Harper stated that it is still on the table as an option.

Second Chief Rosanna Dobbs stated that citizen Nick Hargrove asked her for the status of Zoom!. Secretary Tonya Mathews asked Chief Harper if there was an update to give to Ms. Dobbs on behalf of Mr. Hargrove. Chief Harper replied that with attendance at meetings growing, the goal is to possibly move the Business Committee meetings to the new Community Center. If that is to happen, does the Committee want to invest the money into this building right now before the meetings are moved and then have to invest the money again at the new location or would it be better to just wait and invest the money in just the Community Center. He stated that those kinds of things need to be considered as we move forward. Third Councilman Isabella Clifford asked Chief Harper if he had an answer regarding her question last month on if our meetings fall under the "Open Meetings" clause. She reiterated that having an answer to that question would aid the Committee in making a decision regarding the investment of everything needed to get Zoom! set up. Chief Harper stated that he did not have an answer yet but has reached out to the legal team for one. He expects an answer within the next 10 days. Darin Abernathy, Director of Construction for the Tribe, spoke up and stated that he and IT with the Casino are currently looking into the potential cost of adding Zoom! to the Community Center. He is still waiting on a final answer.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion was made by Rosanna Dobbs and seconded by Carolyn Ritchey to move into Executive Session at 9:00 pm. Motion passed.


Motion was Carolyn Ritchey and seconded by Hank Downum to come out of Executive Session at 9:57 pm. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Hank Downum and seconded by Carolyn Ritchey. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:58 pm.



Authorized Signature



Date Approved