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# PEORIA TRIBE

OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA

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CHIEF  
Craig Harper

SECOND CHIEF  
Rosanna Dobbs

## PEORIA TRIBE OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA BUSINESS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 6, 2024

### MINUTES

#### CALL TO ORDER/INVOCATION:

Chief Harper called the meeting to order, and Jenny Rampey gave the Invocation.

#### DECLARATION OF QUORUM:

Secretary Jenny Rampey declared a quorum with all members present.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Jason Dollarhide requested two additional line items be added to the agenda. First line item: Discussion/Approval on the addition of a \$150 stipend to the Economic Development Committee. Second line item: Discussion on Process of Submitting the Writ to Oklahoma Supreme Court pertaining to Peoria versus Qualls and Holden. Jenny Rampey made a motion and was seconded by Rosanna Dobbs to approve the amended agenda. Motion passed.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Nicholas Hargrove made a motion and was seconded by Rosanna Dobbs to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, held on July 2, 2024. Motion passed.

#### MONTHLY TRIBAL/PROGRAM REPORTS:

##### **Financial Reports**

Nicholas Hargrove made a motion and was seconded by Scott Myers to approve the Financial Reports for June 2024 as presented. Motion passed.

##### **Enterprise Reports**

Chief Harper introduced Mary Jewett, General Manager of Buffalo Run Casino & Resort. Ms. Jewett introduced herself and thanked the council for having her.

Ms. Jewett began her report, which included June Highlights:

##### ***Slot Financials***

- **Slot Win** showed a *decrease* of 10.46% (\$227,148) from June 2024 to June 2025

- YTD showed a *decrease* of 4.39% (\$299,105) from June 2024 to June 2025

### ***Hotel Financials***

- Hotel **Occupancy** reflected a *decrease* of 10% (333) from June 2024 to June 2025
- YTD reflects a *decrease* of 14% (1283) in occupancy from June 2024 to June 2025
- Room **Revenue** reflected an *increase* of .56% (\$893) from June 2024 to June 2025
- YTD reflected a *decrease* of 12.04% (\$58,473) from June 2024 to June 2025

### ***Golf Financials***

- **Golf Revenue** reflected an *increase* of 4.78% (\$5,874) from June 2024 to June 2025
- YTD reflected an *increase loss* of 29.01% (\$104,298) from June 2024 to June 2025
- **Golf Net Income** reflected an *increase loss* of 68.7% (\$29,738) from June 2024 to June 2025
- YTD reflected an *increase loss* of 61% (\$74,021) from June 2024 to June 2025

### ***Food and Beverage***

- **Bistro** comparing June FY2024 to FY2025 showed an *increase* of 1.08% (\$966)
- **Backwoods** showed an *increase* of 1.69% (\$836)
- **Coal Creek** showed an *increase* of .98% (\$914)
- **Main Bar** showed an *increase* of 1.04% (\$700)
- **Backwoods Bar** showed an *increase* of 16.9% (\$487)
- **Vending & EDR** showed an *increase* of 343.04% (\$3,674)
- **Total F&B Sales** showed an *increase* of 2.5% (\$7,577)

### ***2024 Casino Distribution***

- **Casino Distribution** showed a *decrease* of 12.87% (\$44,468) from June 2024 to June 2025
- YTD showed a *decrease* of 27.64% (\$401,722) from June 2024 to June 2025
- **Budget** showed \$400,000 with a difference of 25% (\$98,944)
- YTD showed \$1,200,000 with a difference of 12% (\$148,346)

Ms. Jewett's presentation showed changes in the Finance Department.

- Hired Robin Gertonson as the Executive Finance Director
  - Ms. Gertonson comes with seven years of Tribal Gaming experience and twenty years of accounting experience
- Hired Brian Smith as the Finance Director.
  - Mr. Smith comes with 15 years of experience in the industry/accounting

Ms. Jewett's Finance Department is working on improving stability. Ms. Jewett is excited with the new Finance Department to be able to look at the finances and process to make sure that Buffalo Run is updated and current on everything that they do. Some of the objectives that we are looking at are:

- Golf Financials
- Hotel Financials



- Cost Savings
- Sage Reporting (WIPFLI)
- Theft from Vendors & Team Members
  - Identified a vendor was not delivering products in the amount of \$28,000

Ms. Jewett stated that they are working on launching their new app in two weeks that will give guests push notifications. Guests will be able to see the casinos promotions, and this will replicate the website and kiosks. Buffalo Run will be changing out their billboard campaigns in about six to eight months. Will be promoting that Buffalo Run is more than a casino. Ms. Jewett stated that they will be updating the design and amenities for the Trucker's Lounge. The Sweet Bar will be open this Saturday. Ms. Jewett explained that since the Golf Course is under the casino, and they are highly regulated, there are things that can and cannot be done. Ms. Jewett's team has been looking at and directing those that best benefit the Tribe and our loyal guests as well.

Ms. Jewett introduced John Renslow, the new Golf Course Manager for Peoria Ridge Golf Course. Mr. Renslow thanked the committee for having him. Mr. Renslow is a Class A PGA Professional for twenty-five years and is from Northern California. Mr. Renslow has been fortunate to be in a variety of course types from Equity Private Clubs to High Resorts such as Callippe Preserve, Poppy Ridge and Poppy Hills. Poppy Ridge and Poppy Hills are both owned by Northern California Golf Association (NCGA). Poppy Hills has been part of the AT&T Pro In for years. Callippe Preserve Golf Course in Pleasanton California ranked number one in the state by Golf League and number one in the country for opening golf courses by pageants. Mr. Renslow and his wife moved here three to four years ago. Mr. Renslow initially worked at Patricia Island Country Club in Grove, Oklahoma. Mr. Renslow again thanked the Business Committee for having him.

Ms. Jewett explained that the casino was not able to track the number of tribal citizens employed with the casino until recently. Buffalo Run currently employes forty-four tribal members:

- Three Peoria Citizens
- Forty-one:
  - Cherokee, Wyandotte, Creek, Seneca Cayuga, Shawnee, Osage, Ottawa, Quapaw, Potawatomi, Navajo, and Miami

Ms. Jewett's presentation included miscellaneous information:

- Property Updates
  - Purchased four AC units = \$400,000 and estimated to arrive August 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Generator = \$120,000 and estimated to arrive September 16<sup>th</sup>
  - Hotel Air & Dehumidifier = \$80,000 and estimated to arrive September 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Suppression System down Friday and Saturday = \$10,000 and will be repaired this week
  - Not ADA compliant = Upgrades are in progress
  - Parking lot will have curbs with plants in them installed at edge of hotel parking
  - Installing restrooms on the east side office area



- Designated area for guests to play monthly promotions
- Telsa Charging stations coming in August

Ms. Jewett's team participated in Heritage Fest with a booth on both days. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration was a success with a band, fireworks, food vendors and a flyover. Ms. Jewett thanked the Business Committee.

Chief Harper introduced Charla EchoHawk the Director of Cultural Preservation.

Ms. EchoHawk explained that she was due to give her presentation in May, however her uncle Steven Kinder passed away at that time. Ms. EchoHawk acknowledged the staff of Cultural Preservation:

- Wesley Farless – Language Specialist
- Burgundy Fletcher – Historic Preservation Specialist
- Jacey Vangel – Archival Specialist

Ms. EchoHawk began her presentation explaining that Cultural Preservation is responsible for feeding everyone that comes to General Council meeting as well as the stomp dance that was held at the OP Building. Cultural Preservation fed just under two hundred guests with a huge hog fry. In addition to the stomp dance Cultural Preservation held a Memorial Day Tribute on Memorial Day at the Tribal Cemetery. The American Alliance assisted with recognizing all of the deceased tribal citizens that lay to rest at the cemetery. The Memorial Day Tribute was an opportunity to share with visitors all the restoration projects that are under way. One hundred and twenty guests were moved to the Community Center to be fed.

Cultural Preservation hosted the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Powwow that lasted three days. Ms. EchoHawk stated that the powwow takes all resources available. The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Powwow was successful and came in under budget and guests had a wonderful time.

Ms. EchoHawk stated that Cultural Preservation hosted the third and final Painted Hide workshop last week. The painted hides effort was initiated through the University of Illinois and funded through a grant called Humanities without Walls. Ms. EchoHawk has been working with a museum in Paris, France that currently holds painted hides that were gifted to the French from the Peoria and Miami Tribes. The hides could be held on exhibit at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma one day.

Ms. EchoHawk spoke about the different departments in Cultural Preservation.

- Language with Wesley Farless
  - Will host its sixth class
  - 129 Citizens have taken the classes
  - Worked with Early Childhood
  - Created flash cards and a book

Burgundy Fletcher, our Historic Preservation Specialist has been working on phase one of the Tribal Cemetery Project. The Tribal Cemetery is on the National Register of Historic Places. A grant from Heritage and National Park Service fund in the amount of \$497,000 along with \$50,000 from Peoria Tribe was funded for phase one. Phase one included headstone restoration



and security of fencing around the perimeter. In 2022, fifty-nine unmarked graves were discovered. Some of the unmarked graves were found under where the pavilion sat. Cultural Preservation used a company by the name of Pishny Restoration Services that specializes in historic cemetery restorations. Pishny repaired and restored over one hundred and fifty headstones. Installation of a single lane road that will exit from the parking lot all the way around the cemetery and reentering at the other side of the parking lot. The entrance and exit of the road will have a gate that will be accessible from dawn to dusk. Fencing around the cemetery has been completed and the gates will be completed this week. Phase two is already in the works.

Tribal Archive Specialist Jacey Vangel was able to acquire a small collection of materials from the Joplin History and Mineral Museum in Joplin, Missouri. In the collection was a basket identified as Modoc. The Modoc and Peoria Tribes held a ceremony to return the basket back to the Modoc Tribe.

Ms. EchoHawk stated that Cultural Preservation will be adding a Repatriation Specialist, Administrative Assistant, and an information desk person. Ms. EchoHawk thanked the Business Committee for having her.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:**

Chief Harper began his Administrative Report for July. The report included the following highlights:

- Celebrated July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Hosted Tribal Taco Event
- Hosted Luncheon for Steve Bashore
- Attended Tar Creek Apprenticeship Program
- Attending ITC Board Meetings
- MAEDS Meeting
- Hosted Leadership Cohort Training
- Attended Intertribal Food Coalition
- Peoria Tribe donated forty-one boxes of beef to Title IV
- Met with Shelly Wahr, Tribal Transportation and Public Safety Coordinator, to review funding for Priority Roads

- Attended Quapaw Open House for Public Safety
- Coordinated with Peoria Riverfront Museum
- Coordinated with Dickson Mounds Museum in Havana
- Attended NTHS Board
- Miami Senior Center transferred ownership to the tribe

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Discussion/Approval of Economic Development Committee receiving a \$150 Stipend:**

Treasurer Jason Dollarhide discussed that the members of the Business Committee sit on the Economic Development Committee. Mr. Dollarhide stated that he sees the Economic Development Committee like any other committee that the Tribe has except the only difference is that the same members sit on the Business Committee. Mr. Dollarhide stated that several members of the Economic Development Committee expressed interest in receiving a stipend.

Second Chief Rosanna Dobbs stated that she agrees that the Economic Development Committee is just like any other committee even though it contains members of the Business Committee. Ms. Dobbs would still recommend a stipend for the Economic Development Committee if it contained other members than the Business Committee. When the Economic Development Committee was created most of the Business Committee members were not on the Business Committee.

First Councilman Nicholas Hargrove stated that it is a little controversial and will abstain. Mr. Hargrove recommended that if a stipend is given it should be the bare minimum and not exceed any other committee's stipend.

Secretary Jenny Rampey stated that it is a good idea since she drives from Pryor Oklahoma and is a retired schoolteacher. A stipend would be a benefit for giving time to the Tribe since the cost of living has gone up.

Third Councilman Scott Myers stated that he was unaware that the Economic Development Committee even existed when he ran for the Third Councilman position. Mr. Myers was made aware of the Economic Development Committee after winning the position of Third Councilman. Mr. Myers stated that it is a drive for him to attend the Economic Development



meetings to help find revenue for the Tribe's citizens and he agrees that the bare minimum should be considered.

First Councilman Kara North stated that she was on the Business Committee at the time the Economic Development Committee was talked about being established. Ms. North stated that the Economic Development meetings are another meeting that she attends for the benefit of the Tribe. Ms. North agrees with the bare minimum.

Chief Harper asked for clarification in regard to the Economic Development Committee being a six-member committee that would receive a \$150 stipend per meeting.

Jason Dollarhide made a motion for the Economic Development Committee to receive a \$150 stipend and Jenny Rampey seconded the motion. Motion passed with Nicholas Hargrove abstaining.

**Discussion of Process of Submitting the Writ to Oklahoma Supreme Court Pertaining to Peoria versus Qualls and Holden:** Treasurer Jason Dollarhide stated that the Business Committee had a discussion inside of Executive Session and items were agreed upon in the discussion. An email was received that stated by the majority of the body had directed the Attorney McBride to make a Writ to the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Mr. Dollarhide questioned how this came about since no meeting occurred. The email caught Mr. Dollarhide off guard and that the situation was wrong. Mr. Dollarhide stated that the Business Committee must start standing by the decisions made in session whether right, wrong, or indifferent. The email would have had a better outcome if stated the General Council gave a directive to continue with the writ. Mr. Dollarhide stated the Peoria Constitution states that the Tribe will follow Robert's Rules of Order, in Robert's Rules of Order it is not stated that a phone call to members is considered a vote.

First Councilman Nicholas Hargrove stated that he was in the same position when he received the email. Mr. Hargrove stated that Mr. Dollarhide said everything and can only echo Mr. Dollarhide's sentiments. Mr. Hargrove stated that he was not involved or made aware of the decision that was made in the email.

Second Chief Rosanna Dobbs states that she understands everything that Mr. Dollarhide is saying, however she stated that there was a little more complexity that occurred in Executive Session. The email from the attorney changed things.

**New Members Recommended for Approval by the Enrollment Committee on 07/18/24. Tentatively to be Approved by the Business Committee on 08/06/24 or at the Next Regularly Scheduled or Special Meeting:** Motion to approve the recommendations was made by Jason Dollarhide and seconded by Scott Myers. Motion passed.

**Resolution R-08-06-24-A, "Resolution for Changes to the Peoria Tribal Membership Roll":** Motion was made by Nicholas Hargrove and seconded by Kara North to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-A. Motion passed.



**Resolution R-08-06-24-B “Resolution Authorizing the Transfer of Certain Real Property from the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma to Peoria Lease Holdings, LLC”:** Motion was made by Rosanna Dobbs and seconded by Scott Myers to approve R-08-06-24-B as presented. Motion Passed.

**R-08-06-24-C “Authorization and Signatures with Local Bank for a New Account Entitled Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma for Tribal Transportation Planning Grant (TTP)”:** Motion was made by Jason Dollarhide and seconded by Kara North to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-C as presented. Motion Passed.

**R-08-06-24-D “Authorization and Signatures with Local Bank for Certificate of Deposit Accounts”:** Motion was made by Scott Myers and seconded by Nicholas Hargrove to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-D as presented. Motion Passed.

**R-08-06-24-E “Request for Funding from Bureau of Indian Affairs for Aid to Tribal Government”:** Motion was made by Jason Dollarhide and seconded by Rosanna Dobbs to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-E as presented. Motion Passed.

**R-08-06-24-F “Resolution Authorizing Designation of Roads Project Priority with Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) Funding”:** Motion was made by Kara North and seconded by Nicholas Hargrove to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-F as presented. Motion Passed.

**R-08-06-24-G “Resolution Authorizing Submittal of Application to the Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program (TTFBP) through the Federal Highway Administration”:** Motion was made by Rosanna Dobbs and seconded by Scott Myers to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-G as presented. Motion Passed.

**R-08-06-24-H “Resolution Approving and Authorizing a Request for Surplus Buffalo for all Current and Future needs from the Intertribal Buffalo Council”:** Motion was made by Jason Dollarhide and seconded by Kara North to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-H as presented. Motion Passed with one no from Scott Myers.

**R-08-06-24-I “Resolution Authorizing the Purchase and Transfer of Assets of the Miami Senior Center to the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma”:** Motion was made by Scott Myers and seconded by Rosanna Dobbs to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-I as presented. Motion Passed.

**Reappointment to the Peoria Housing Authority Board (Isabella Clifford and Kara North):** Motion was made by Scott Myers and seconded by Jenny Rampey to approve reappointment of Peoria Housing Authority Board. Motion passed with 2 Abstentions, Jason Dollarhide and Kara North.

**Discussion/Approval of Budget Modification:** Motion was made by Jenny Rampey and seconded by Nicholas Hargrove to approve Budget Modifications. Motion passed.



**Discussion/Approval of Donations:** Donations from July Business Committee Meeting: Fairland Volunteer Fire Department \$1,000, National Native American Hall of Fame Quarter Page \$500, Ottawa County Fair Board will send Peoria Tribe Staff Member \$5,000, Route 66 Heritage Festival \$1,000 and no donations made for August Business Committee meeting. Motion was made by Scott Myers and seconded by Nicholas Hargrove to approve donations. Motion passed.

**Discussion/Approval of Employee Wage Change Recommendations (was held in Executive Session):** Motion was made by Jason Dollarhide and seconded by Kara North to approve wage changes as recommended by H.R. in Executive Session. Motion passed.

**R-08-06-24-J “Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Product Sale Agreement with Airgas USA, LLC”:** Motion was made by Jason Dollarhide and seconded by Scott Myers to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-J as presented. Motion Passed.

**R-08-06-24-K “Resolution Authorizing Submittal of Grant Application to the Historic Preservation Fund Grant”:** Motion was made by Jason Dollarhide and seconded by Rosanna Dobbs to approve Resolution R-08-06-24-K as presented. Motion Passed.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chief Harper began “Public Comments” by asking if there were any questions so that each Tribal Citizen had the opportunity to address the Business Committee or ask questions.

##### **Citizen Leanna Reeves:**

Ms. Reeves is recommending a process change. Ms. Reeves’ brother passed away in May and the costs of funeral expenses have gone up. Ms. Reeves stated that the Peoria Tribe is slow to pay, and we need a process change. Ms. Reeves suggested that the tribe increase the funeral fund up to \$50,000 and have it setting aside for when the Tribe receives the death certificate a check can be cut right then. Currently, it is taking the Tribe 90 days to make payment which causes the families of the deceased to accrue extra charges. Ms. Reeves suggested that once the death certificate is received a payment should be made within 5 days. It took 7 weeks to receive the payment for her brother’s funeral expenses.

##### **Citizen Shelby Betsey:**

Ms. Betsey issued a question regarding transportation for daycare. Ms. Betsey stated that a lot of Peoria citizens live in housing in the Commerce district, and a few are no longer able to use tribal daycare during school hours due to no transportation from school to daycare. Ms. Betsey would like this investigated so that citizens can utilize the Tribe’s daycare.

##### **Citizen John Froman:**

Mr. Froman would like to know who is all on the Economic Development Committee? Mr. Froman cautioned that in Robert’s Rule of Order it states that more than four is a quorum and a decision should be made in Business Committee meetings. When Mr. Froman was Chief, the Business Committee was cautious when they got together. Mr. Froman agrees that every committee should receive a stipend.

Citizen Charla EchoHawk:

Ms. EchoHawk acknowledged that the Peoria Tribe's application to have federally recognized status is out for public comment in 30 days and this will give eligibility for annual funding. Ms. EchoHawk would like to incorporate in the tribal burial funds to include a headstone if buried at the tribal cemetery.

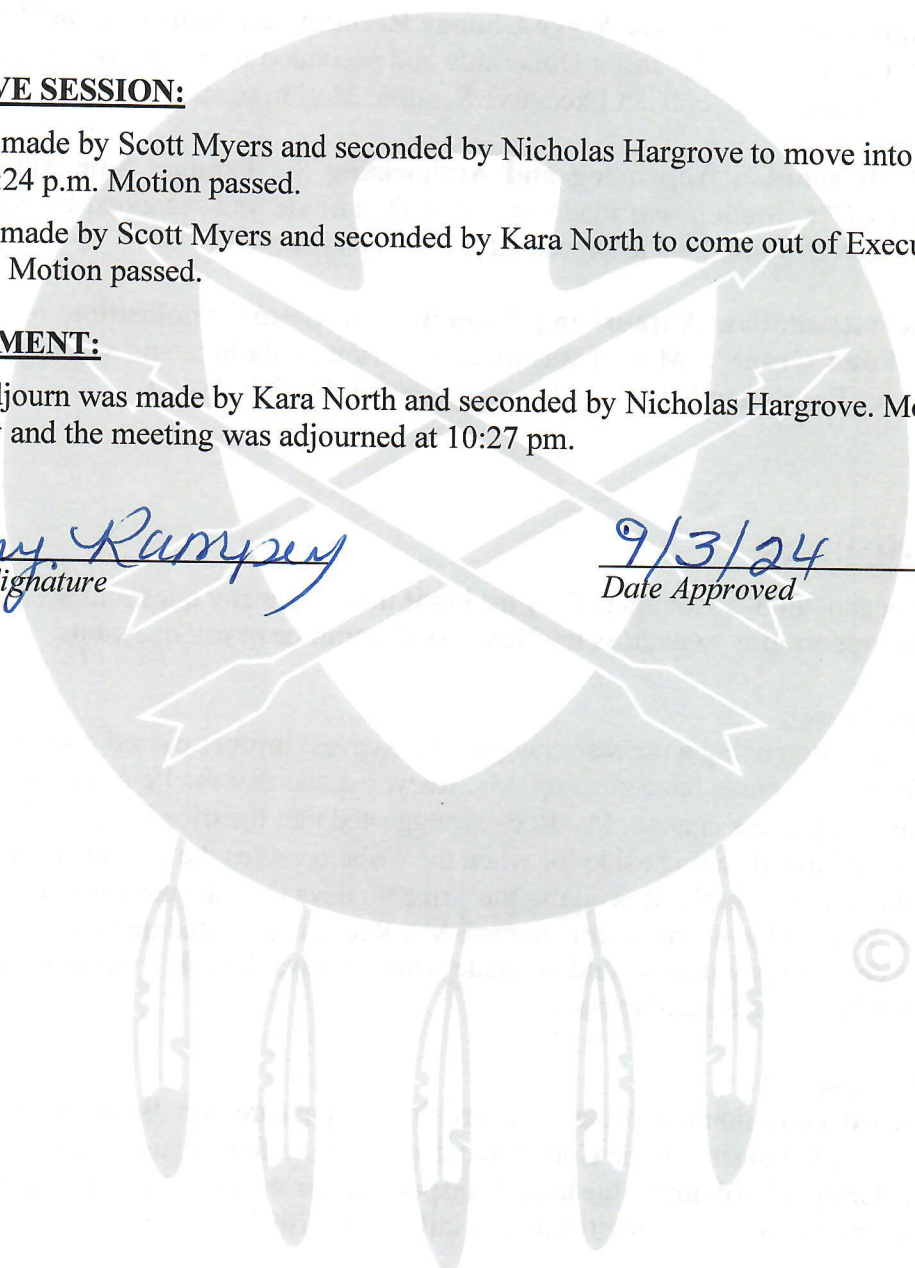
**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Motion was made by Scott Myers and seconded by Nicholas Hargrove to move into Executive Session at 8:24 p.m. Motion passed.

Motion was made by Scott Myers and seconded by Kara North to come out of Executive Session at 10:25 pm. Motion passed.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Kara North and seconded by Nicholas Hargrove. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 10:27 pm.

  
Jenny Ramsey  
Authorized Signature

9/3/24  
Date Approved