



Urban Indian Advisory Board Meeting

Location: Migizi - 1845 E Lake Street, Minneapolis, MN 55407

Date: Monday, December 16th, 2024

Time: 10am - 1pm

Attendees:

Board Members: Tera Nelson (Bemidji Representative), Caleb Dunlap (Duluth Representative), Richard Latterner (St. Paul Representative), and Dr. John J. Littlewolf (St. Paul Representative).

MIAC Staff: Shannon Geshick (Executive Director), Brandon Alkire (Legislative Director), and Michele L. Poitra (Communications Specialist).

Presentations/Discussion by: Libby Fahrenkamp (Outreach and Communications Coordinator) and Rafael Eubanks (Director of Tribal Relations & Tribal Liaison) of the MN Office of Higher Education. Discussion by Kelly Drummer (President) of Migizi in Minneapolis.

Agenda

Topic	Time
Welcome & Introductions	10am
UIAB Elections; Results/Appointments	10:30am
Presentations/Discussions	11am
Planning for the year ahead	12pm

Topic	Time
Adjourn	1pm

Summary or key decisions

- Election results: Caleb Dunlap as Chair, Dr. John J Littlewolf as Vice-Chair, and Margarita Ortega as Secretary. Discussion regarding Ortega's attendance at UIAB meetings - last meeting attended was February 2024 and not present today. UIAB board still in need of a Secretary. Latterner was asked, but he is unable to provide Secretary duties. Dunlap motioned for Tera Nelson to be Secretary, Littlewolf seconded this motion. Latterner agreed for Nelson's appointment. Nelson appointed as UIAB Secretary.
- Structure of how future UIAB meetings should go:
 - Overview of minutes, then approve minutes
 - Bring in previous MIAC report and review
 - 1st hour: business (closed to public) including update from specific communities (St. Paul, Minneapolis, Bemidji, Duluth) and action review (what is this action? Who is the owner? When can we expect follow-ups?)
 - Public comment
 - Agency Presentations/Discussions
 - Community Meeting (evening time)
- Supporting MUID

Action items

- Write a letter of support/recommendation for MUID then request a resolution from MIAC supporting this
- Dunlap & Littlewold to go to next MIAC meeting on 1/9/25 and co-present
- Dunlap will present the UIAB report to MIAC

Details

Raw notes

- Revamp - does our board need to be bigger?
- Election results - Margarita Ortega not attending UIAB meetings means Minneapolis does not have a voice; feels unfair. Unable to make contact with Ortega. Unsure how to proceed regarding her membership on the board at this time, but we are still in need of a secretary.
- Housing concentration for 2025 year
- Opioid Summit had Tribal Leaders speak, but no one from Urban Leadership. DHS may not have planned for that. An Urban Leader stood up and requested the microphone to speak. Latterner feels like we haven't been assertive enough and need to reclaim respect.
- Dunlap requesting if we can ask MIAC what they would specifically want from us as a board - Geshick responded that we bring issues, priorities, good things, and bad things, and the voice of urban Indians to MIAC, that is UIAB's purpose.
- At last MIAC meeting, Dunlap requested UIAB's presentation to MIAC be moved up in placement for presenting so we can be heard by all.
- UIAB Facebook is up and running; Poitra will send us rules on what we can post, as long as it pertains to our mission.
- "Survival of the Streets" guide put out by Agate church; possibly can put out our own guide/manual
- Urban Indian Summit (idea)
- Posting events on Facebook works, but elders don't always have access to that - text chain might help. Dunlap advised there are platforms that could text for us and could potentially oversee those communications.
- Trying to elevate resources from back on the reservations that urban Natives have access to.
- Urban Indian Resource Fair (idea)
- Littlewolf advised partnering with Agate and include our resources. Littlewolf also thinks we should do the Summit, we need to find someone to partner with for funding. Geshick advised MIAC can help fund the Summit. Also potentially contract UIAB for Summit to work a full day or two as \$55 is not equitable.
- Poitra advised of \$55 per diem for UIAB meetings. Can reimburse mileage and pay for food if breaking to have lunch would interrupt the flow of the meeting. No budget specifically set aside for UIAB, just those reimbursements. Must have state vendor ID.

- Presentation from MN Office of Higher Education began at 11:20am and ended at 11:49am. Rafael and Libby have been out doing a lot of presentations on American Indian Scholars program, Minnesota Indian Scholarship, and Fostering Independence Grant. They have yet to meet with Lower or Upper Sioux and Bois Forte, but do plan to meet with them. American Indian Scholars provides a “first dollar” tuition and fee-free pathway for eligible American Indian students. UIAB suggested them to attend the MN Indian Education College Fair to help get their word out, as well as Parental Advisory Committees/School Boards/American Indian Advisory Committees. Discussed a Direct Admissions program to make students aware that they are proactively accepted into schools. Different tiers distinguish which schools fall into each tier. Students can apply for free but still have to go through the admissions process. Fostering Independence Grant is for certain eligible institutions for anyone that was in the foster care system after the age of 13 and can be used until the age of 27; considered a last dollar like functions similar to a first dollar. MN Indian Scholarship is for eligible MN resident students who demonstrate a financial need. Enrolled in a federally recognized tribe, ¼ or more ancestry of federally recognized tribe, and can be used for undergraduate or graduate degrees.
- Discussion from Kelly, the President of Migizi and Treasurer of Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors (MUID). Senator Mary Kunesh is aware this funding is needed. Bill is to put a tax on real estate transactions and part of that goes to urban tribal members. Bill was presented in 2023 and nothing has happened with it yet. Acknowledged there’s a lot of problems with this bill. Shows similarities to the Tribal Aid Act; worried we might not get this to urban member organizations because it’s so similar. Dunlap asked what urban areas does this entail? Twin Cities (20%), St. Paul (10%), Scott County, Anoka County, Dakota County, Beltrami County, Moorhead (1.5%). Dunlap also asked who oversees that list of organizations that get this money? Advised MN Indian Affairs Council. Dunlap asked how organizations would be verified? Advised by State Agency. 37%-43% of total Indians living in urban areas in greater MN. MUID has been meeting with the Governor’s Office for the last 6 years on this. Education, employment, and housing are their 3 focal points. Geshick advised that if we don’t get to the root cause of the problems, like possibly substance use disorder, these 3 things aren’t sustainable for an individual. Nelson asked how UIAB can support; advised a UIAB letter of recommendations or support for it. Help galvanize urban groups and present a united front in front of MIAC. Set up tours with agencies; talk about this need to those who sit on committees; co-presenting to MIAC; testimonials.
- Dunlap motioned to adjourn meeting at 1:40pm, Nelson seconded this motion.