



Elders Monthly Meeting
2953 Shaw be Quo-ung Drive, Manistee, MI
Aki Maadiziwin Community Center
Regular Meeting
January 18, 2025

Call to Order: 12:48 pm

ROLL CALL – Quorum Present Present: 5 Absent: 0

Jessica Steinberg, Chairperson – present	Kareen Lewis, Vice Chairperson - present
Brian Gibson, Secretary – present	Chuck Fisher, Trustee – present
Dianna Harris, Trustee - present	

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Motion: Chuck Fisher **Second:** Brian Gibson

Motion to approve the agenda with additions: Item VI. 9(c) Elders Corner newsletter submissions, VII. (b) Elder Conference meals, VIII (b) Snowsnake, (c) Cultural Committee, XI. (b) DEI, Access to Program Funds.

Five (5) in favor, None opposed, None Absent; motion carried. Agenda approved with additions.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES – Motion: **Second:**

Minutes for Elder meeting on November 10, 2024, not completed. No Action Taken.

REPORTS:

Chair Jessica Steinberg: (a) Elder Conference Attendance; planned for 250 based on 2023 attendance, 350 attended, some with family members beyond spouse. Issues with dinner first evening, ran out. Factors included more attendees than anticipated, inability of LRRCR kitchen to adapt and provide additional items. Meals at the buffet were comped to the Elders who were unable to be fed first evening. LRRCR staff responded following days with food for 350 for all meals, cost increased for conference as a result. Total rooms reserved were 165, original set aside 125. Will plan for 350 attendees and 165 rooms in 2025.

Trustee Chuck Fisher: (b) Michigan Indian Elders Association will meet April 2025 at LRRCR. Decision to host Delegates only meeting due to time and planning constraints to act as host tribe for full meeting. LRBOI Elders will move ahead with organizing MIEA Delegates Meeting April, 2025.

Trustee Chuck Fisher: (c) Elders Corner can be added to the LRBOI Newsletter. Asking for articles from Elders be sent to Chuck for inclusion. Chuck will try to add items of information as possible.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg: (a) Ugly Sweater Contest Winners 2024; prohibited from getting prizes due to the items assigned to 2024 budget, and overall budget line exhausted with added conference costs. Will work to find a different route to get prizes to the winners.

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg: (b) Elder Conference Meals; The conference attendees brought additional family members to the conference who were provided food. Question to the Elders; *Should we allow Elders to bring additional family members to the conference and provide food for them as part of the event? This is a cultural norm, however, in past years Elders were issued a ticket for meals collected at the buffet line.*

Discussion: Overall was that the Elder Conference was for an Elder and their spouse/significant other, and to keep costs affordable, additional members of family would not be *provided meals* during the conference. Should continue practice of issuing meal tickets in 2025. *Voice vote from floor: Ayes prevailed.*

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg (a) Elders Budget 2025: Will try to get a copy for review at February 2025 meeting. It is suggested that a bus trip be planned to Mt. Pleasant Industrial School, June 2025. Will explore costs. Vice Chairperson Kareen Lewis suggested we add at no cost, teachings at the end of Elder's meeting to continue cultural education efforts. Sally Russo asked if Elders would consider hosting events at the conference like naming ceremonies. Discussion; naming ceremonies are specific and persons seeking names should approach an Elder with tobacco to ask for a name. The Annual Conference is not a good venue for this activity, but those can be held by individuals and families and persons seeking a name should approach an Elder or pipe carrier with sema (tobacco) and seek their name. Trustee Dianna Harris raised concern that fires are not being lit when people pass, and that we should have a list of firekeepers established. Discussion; Fire keeping is an individual family responsibility and people should ask for those tenders by offering sema. Fire keeping is not a 'government responsibility' as much as it is the responsibility of the community to ensure the knowledge and skills are passed onto other. Traditional knowledge and teaching sessions will be added to agenda and included as needed for interested attendees to address the gaps in traditional knowledge as a result of Boarding School interference. Elder Darlene Martin would like to continue with shared and invited lunches with Elders from other Tribes. Committee noted suggestion and will consider how to implement that effort.

Trustee Chuck Fisher (b) Snowsnake: Snowsnake organizers are looking for prizes. Committee to consider request. Warriors Society assisting with event, prizes can be forwarded to them.

Trustee Chuck Fisher (c) Cultural Committee: The cultural committee is transitioning to a Commission status, will need five (5) members. There will be stipends. Apply to the Ogema's office.

ITEMS OF INTEREST:

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg (a) Humana Insurance/Trinity Health: Elders who are having issues with Trinity Health accepting Humana Insurance should reach out to Linda Hook at Acrisure or Members Assistance for information and assistance with getting bills paid. Elder Humana from LRBOI is set up so Elders can bill Humana for out of network providers. Advised to reach out with issues.

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg (b) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and Access to Federal Programs for Indians: The President of the US signed an Executive Order regarding removal of DEI inclusive programs. Will need to watch impacts to programs like Title VI Elder meals. Will keep Elders apprised as needed.

ELECTED OFFICIAL REPORTS: Report Highlights

Ogema Larry Romanelli:

- Asking EDC for an update on the Gateway Project, awaiting more information from EDC
- Advised the group he is thankful for supporters who spoke on his behalf at his removal hearing on December 16, 2025.
- His office and staff continue to work on finishing the FY 2023 audit.
- He expressed the Muskegon Casino project is not 'dead.' Governor did not tell us "No", she did not "confer." He will continue to seek approval of the project. Though the original package 'died' there is opportunity to submit a new request, and that is ongoing.

Liaison Gary DiPiazza; no report currently.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Questions raised regarding the GWE Stimulus and 1099 being issued. To be determined.
- Enrollment Audit discussions continue. Concerns regarding costs and targeting of members/families raised by the group. This is ongoing.
- Question regarding the 2023 audit; is the Tribe under Sanction. Answer is 'yes' at this time. The audit is being addressed and efforts to lift sanctions are actively underway.

NEXT MEETING: February 1, 2025

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Brian Gibson, Seconded by Chuck Fisher, *Voice Vote Affirmation: Aye*
Meeting Adjourned at 3:45 PM.

Elders Monthly Meeting
2953 Shaw be Quo-ung Drive, Manistee, MI
Aki Maadiziwin Community Center
Regular Meeting
February 1, 2025

Call to Order: 12:53 pm

ROLL CALL – Quorum Present Present: 5 Absent: 0

Jessica Steinberg, Chairperson – present	Kareen Lewis, Vice Chairperson - present
Brian Gibson, Secretary – present	Chuck Fisher, Trustee – present
Dianna Harris, Trustee - present	

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Motion:** Kareen Lewis **Second:** Chuck Fisher

Motion to approve the agenda:

Five (5) in favor, None opposed, None Absent; motion carried. Agenda approved.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUEST: AJ PIERSON, WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Ms. Pierson is seeking higher education degree in Government Administration at WMU.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES – Motion: **Second:**

Minutes for Elder meeting on 01/10/2024, Dianna Harris offered minutes, need correction. Not completed. No Action Taken. Review, edit and adopt at later date.

REPORTS:

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg: (a) FY 2025 Budget: Requested information from Council Comptroller, Bradley Pringle. Information not received.

Trustee Chuck Fisher: (b) Michigan Indian Elders Association will meet April 2025 at LRCR. Decision to host Delegates only meeting due to time and planning constraints to act as host tribe for full meeting. LRBOI Elders will move ahead with organizing MIEA Delegates Meeting April, 2025.

Trustee Chuck Fisher: (c) Elders Corner can be added to the LRBOI Newsletter. Asking for articles from Elders be sent to Chuck for inclusion. Chuck will try to add items of information as possible.

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg: (d) Council has added two (2) additional Elder Committees to FY 2025 Budget.

OLD BUSINESS:

Trustee Chuck Fisher: (a) MIEA Meeting confirmation of plans needed. Motion to host ONLY delegates meeting. *Voice vote from floor: Ayes carry motion.* Trustee Fisher to finalize details with Chairperson and submit appropriate purchase order request and room set aside requests.

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg: (b) Elder Conference finalization. Dates set as November 7, 8 & 9, 2025. RSVP will be requested by September 15, 2025, Meal tickets issued to Elder attendee and spouse/significant other. *Voice vote from floor: Ayes carry motion. Chairperson will move forward with plan.*

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg: (c) DEI impact update. Concerns raised regarding funding access and LRBOI Treasury and distribution of funds (GWE). Committee will continue to monitor.

NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Chuck Fisher: (a) Elders Survey. Elder Meals is seeking response to an Elder Survey; please consider filling out the information.

Chairperson Jessica Steinberg: (b) Bus trip for Elders; need a lead to take this task of planning on. Vice Chairperson Kareen Lewis to assist and needs volunteers to work with her.

ITEMS OF INTEREST:

Elder Lee Ivinson: Active Shooter training has occurred at LRCCR. Also following up with Human Trafficking and Fire Safety.

Elder Lee Ivinson: Voter registration nearly 1200. Breakdown of ages given with percentage of total registered to date.

ELECTED OFFICIAL REPORTS: Report Highlights

Ogema Larry Romanelli:

- His office and staff continue to work on finishing the FY 2023 audit.
- Sanctions have been appealed; waiting for update on that status.

Liaison Gary DiPiazza; no report currently.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment.

NEXT MEETING: March 1, 2025

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Kareen Lewis Seconded by Chuck Fisher, *Voice Vote Affirmation: Aye*
Meeting Adjourned at 3:03 PM.