

Approved 9/11/19

**LITTLE RIVER BAND OF OTTAWA INDIANS  
TRIBAL COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2019  
AKI MAADIZIWIN  
COMMUNITY CENTER**

**OPEN SESSION  
MINUTES**

The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Council held a meeting at Aki Maadiziwin Community Center on September 7, 2019. Following are the minutes of that meeting.

Recorder Di Piazza said to Speaker Pete that the recorder is on.

Speaker Pete thanked Gary Di Piazza. Pete said he has been asked to do the Opening Prayer so if they can stand go ahead.

**I. Opening Prayer**

Ron Pete, Tribal Elder, offered the Opening Prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, our Creator.

Thank you so much for seeing us here this morning.

Be with us as we travel throughout the end of the day.

Be with us and bless us with our food that we are about to eat today.

Bless us with all of our hearts, our minds

Be with our First Responders.

Especially with our First Responders that are dealing with the hurricane that has been going on.

Be with the Police, the Fire Department, and the Coast Guard.

Bless all of them and thank you for bringing them with us during this terrible time.

Be with our Warriors and be with our Vets today as they fought for this place for us to be free.

Bless all of our Military Personnel wherever they are serving throughout the world and here in the states.

Be with them and bring them home safely to their families.

A Special Blessing beyond Joe Riley and Wendy today that is going to be a day for them.

Wrap your arms around them and bless them.

In our Heavenly Father's name. Amen.

**II. General Business**

**A. Call to Order**

The regularly scheduled Tribal Council meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

Speaker Pete asked Recorder Di Piazza to do a roll call.

**B. Roll Call**

T. Guenthardt -Present	C. Champagne -Present	D. Corey -	Absent
S. Crampton - Absent	G. DiPiazza - Present	R. Pete -	Present
R. Wittenberg- Absent	D. Lonn - Present	S. Lewis -	Present

Quorum established.

Recorder Di Piazza said six present and three absent they have a quorum.

Speaker Pete thanked Recorder Di Piazza.

Others Present: David Lonn, Vicki Pete, Jeanne Bleich, Rick Bleich.

Others Present That Did Not Sign In: Grace Hendler, George Le Vasseur, Ogema Romanelli, Michelle Romanelli, Officer Patrick Gilles, Valerie Mc Donnell, Terri Burmeister, Tammy Burmeister, Michael Burmeister, Kathleen Bowers, Julia Nickelson.

**C. Approval of Agenda**

Speaker Pete asked can he have an approval for the agenda. Pete said excuse him he is sorry. Pete said the other three Council people they certainly were not going to be here but they did have a prior commitment so that is why they are not here. Pete said they do have a quorum. Pete said okay can he get an approval for the agenda. Pete recognized Gary Di Piazza.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR SATURDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 7, 2019 WITH NO ADDS OR NO CORRECTIONS;** by  
Di Piazza; supported by Lonn.

Speaker Pete asked is there any discussion. Pete asked is anybody going to abstain. Pete asked Recorder Di Piazza to do a roll call.

**Roll Call #1**

T. Guenthardt -Yes	C. Champagne -Yes	D. Corey -	Absent
S. Crampton - Absent	G. DiPiazza - Yes	R. Pete -	Yes
R. Wittenberg-Absent	D. Lonn - Yes	S. Lewis -	Yes

Motion carried (6-0-0-3)

Recorder Di Piazza said six in favor and three absent the agenda has been approved for Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>.

Speaker Pete thanked Recorder Di Piazza.

**D. Tribal Council Minutes     □ 8/21/19**

Speaker Pete recognized Sandy Lewis.

**MOTION TO APPROVE TRIBAL COUNCIL MINUTES FOR  
8/21/19; by Lewis; supported by Lonn.**

Speaker Pete asked is there going to be any abstentions. Pete asked any discussion. Pete asked Recorder Di Piazza to do a roll call.

**Roll Call #2**

T. Guenthardt -Yes	C. Champagne -Yes	D. Corey - Absent
S. Crampton - Absent	G. DiPiazza - Yes	R. Pete - Yes
R. Wittenberg- Absent	D. Lonn - Yes	S. Lewis - Yes

Motion carried (6-0-0-3)

Recorder Di Piazza said six in favor and three absent Tribal Council Minutes for 8/21/19 has been approved.

Speaker Pete thanked Recorder Di Piazza.

**III. Continuing Business**

**A. Grants & Contracts**

Speaker Pete said under Grants & Contracts there is nothing.

**B. Budget Modifications**

Speaker Pete said under B. Budget Modifications there isn't anything.

**C. Approval of Budgeted Expenditure**

**1. Approval for Diane Lonn to attend the Uniting Three Fires  
Against Violence (UTFAV) Annual Leadership Summit to be  
held October 1-2, 2019 on Mackinac Island**

Tribal Leadership Summit will inform and educate Tribal Leaders and Tribal Staff about emerging issues related to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Indian Country.

Speaker Pete recognized Diane Lonn.

Councilor Lonn said to Speaker Pete she went on this last year and it is very informative. Lonn said they talk about emerging issues with Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault in Indian Country. Lonn said it provides an opportunity to network and share information. Lonn said there usually like quite a few Tribes maybe ten from all over. *The rest of Councilor Lonn's comments could not be made out clearly, because she wasn't speaking into the microphone. The tape recording was fuzzy and those comments were not picked up.*

Speaker Pete thanked Diane Lonn. Pete asked does anyone have any further discussion. Pete asked does he have some support. Pete recognized Sandy Lewis.

**MOVE FOR THE APPROVAL OF DIANE LONN TO ATTEND THE UNITING THREE FIRES AGAINST VIOLENCE (UTFAV) ANNUAL LEADERSHIP MEETING TO BE HELD OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 ON MACKINAC ISLAND; by Lewis; supported by Di Piazza.**

Speaker Pete asked is there going to be any further discussion. Pete asked is anyone going to abstain. Pete asked Recorder Di Piazza to do a roll call.

**Roll Call #3**

T. Guenthardt - Yes	C. Champagne - Yes	D. Corey - Absent
S. Crampton - Absent	G. DiPiazza - Yes	R. Pete - Yes
R. Wittenberg- Absent	D. Lonn - Yes	S. Lewis - Yes

Motion carried (6-0-0-3)

Recorder Di Piazza said six in favor and three absent Diane Lonn will be travelling.

Speaker Pete thanked Recorder Di Piazza.

**IV. Old Business**

**Reports that are due: July 2019**

- A. Financial Report**
- B. Enrollment Commission**
- C. Health Commission**
- D. Housing Commission**

**Reports received:**

- ☐ July 2019
- ☐ July 2019
- 1. ☐ May 2019
- 2. ☐ July 2019
- ☐ July 2019

Speaker Pete said they have a Financial Report that was submitted on July 2019, the Enrollment Commission for July 2019, Health Commission May 2019 and July 2019, and the Housing Commission for July 2019. Pete asked is there any further discussion from Council on those.

**V. New Business**

**A. Approval of an Additional \$250,000 for Analytical Environmental Services (AES)**

AES is still working on the Muskegon Project and additional Bills are expected.

Speaker Pete asked is there any discussion. Pete asked does he have a motion. Pete recognized Sandy Lewis.

**MOVE FOR THE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #19-0907-232;  
APPROVAL OF AN ADDITIONAL \$250,000 FOR ANALYTICAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES; by Lewis; supported by Lonn.**

Speaker Pete asked is there any further discussion. Pete asked is anybody going to abstain. Pete asked Recorder Di Piazza to do a roll call.

**Roll Call #4**

T. Guenthardt -Yes	C. Champagne -No	D. Corey -	Absent
S. Crampton - Absent	G. DiPiazza - Yes	R. Pete -	Yes
R. Wittenberg- Absent	D. Lonn - Yes	S. Lewis -	Yes

Motion carried (5-1-0-3)

Recorder Di Piazza said five in favor, one against and three absent Resolution #19-0907-232 is passed.

Speaker Pete thanked Recorder Di Piazza.

**B. Acceptance of the Final Report for 2019 Tribal Special Election**

The Special Election has been certified by the Election Board and Tribal Council is required to accept the report.

Speaker Pete said it is Terri Burmeister to support this.

Terri Burmeister, Election Board Member, represented this agenda item. Burmeister asked if Council received a copy of this.

Speaker Pete said yes he does.

Terri Burmeister said they just want the Elected Officials to accept the report for the 2019 Election from the Election Board which is Kathy Gibson.

Speaker Pete said okay that is great and he does have one question that he wanted to ask her he is positive and know that he doesn't have to ask her this. Pete asked is there any Court Challenges.

Terri Burmeister said no.

Speaker Pete thanked Terri Burmeister so much. Pete asked does anyone else have anything for her. Pete recognized Gary Di Piazza and asked does he have a motion.

Councilor Guenthardt said he will make a motion.

Speaker Pete recognized Tom Guenthardt.

**MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FINAL REPORT FOR 2019 TRIBAL SPECIAL ELECTION;** by Guenthardt; supported by Lewis.

Speaker Pete asked is there any further discussion. Pete asked is anybody going to abstain. Pete asked Recorder Di Piazza to do a roll call.

**Roll Call #5**

T. Guenthardt - Yes	C. Champagne - Yes	D. Corey -	Absent
S. Crampton - Absent	G. DiPiazza -	Yes	R. Pete - Yes
R. Wittenberg- Absent	D. Lonn -	Yes	S. Lewis - Yes

Motion carried (6-0-0-3)

Recorder Di Piazza said six in favor and three absent the Final Report has been accepted.

Speaker Pete thanked Recorder Di Piazza.

**VI. Concluding Business**

**A. Next Meeting Date(s) - Wednesday, September 11, 2019**

**B. Ogema Weekly Status and Business Update**

Ogema Romanelli thanked Speaker Pete. Romanelli said it is nice to see everybody here. Romanelli said he only has a few updates today. Romanelli said that would be he went through Odeno Housing in Fruitport and it is going very well. Romanelli said if they go out there they will see about 20 to 25 houses that they built and about ten more ready to go with some lots that are sold. Romanelli said that is going full swing now so. Romanelli said they been out to them because it was a slow start last fall with the new year and he thinks better marketing it is making a change so hopefully they will have an update for them financially at the fall Membership Meeting. Romanelli said they are also doing \_\_\_ operations out of the Muskegon Office now one day a week and that is providing some clinic information and help. Romanelli said also they are doing the Pharmacy so they will find more about that as they go along. Romanelli said they have the Memorial Plaques that are out behind the Government Center now that they are in place; a Memorial Tree with a Memorial Plaque. Romanelli said

they have about 25. Romanelli said what it is is every year since they have been reaffirmed the people that have passed on, Walked On, they have a plaque for each year so there is about 20 plaques and they will find the names of those people that year on the plaque. Romanelli said there are a couple that are defective and they will have to get fixed. Romanelli said they will have a little ceremony after the Membership Meeting on a Saturday. Romanelli said on Saturday after the Membership Meeting they want to have just a little Memorial type of service too for all the people that have Walked On. Romanelli said so it looks good and he thinks it will be fine so. Romanelli said that is it.

Speaker Pete thanked Larry Romanelli. Pete asked is there any questions. Pete said to Larry Romanelli okay and he will see him in a bit.

### **C. Legislative Affairs Update**

None Offered.

### **D. Public Comment Period**

Speaker Pete said there are going to be having a public comment period. Pete said they want to do this for Joe and Wendy Riley they are going to be attending the services and things here. Pete said so they are on a limited time here that is necessary. Pete asked anyone for public comment. Pete said okay right here and thanked them.

Jeanne Bleich said public speaking is not her specialty. Bleich stated her name and her husband's name is Rick Bleich. Bleich said they are Muskegon County residents. Bleich said Rick is a Marine Veteran and has worked as a Police Officer for the City of Muskegon for 28 years. Bleich said he is actively working for the City of Muskegon and Montague Police Departments at this time prior to his stroke. Bleich said he was past City Council Member, past President of the PROC, Police Officer, \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_, currently he one of the \_\_\_\_ Council in Muskegon County. Bleich said she personally retired from Hackley Hospital. Bleich said \_\_\_\_ and she was on Dialysis. Bleich said 13 people from their community stepped up to save her life and she got a kidney. Bleich said they have had a lot of miracles in Muskegon County. Bleich said on July 2<sup>nd</sup> of this year Rick suffered a stroke and that is why she can talk. Bleich said so when the Little River Band purchased the property from Fruitport Schools it changed their whole lives. Bleich said they can no longer ride their horses on their back five acres or hunt this property. Bleich said they can see their daughter's tree stand from the house on Turtle Creek \_\_\_\_\_. Bleich said they contacted the Tribe many times and they have spoken with Tom St. Dennis on several occasions. Bleich said he told them that they would be good neighbors and that they were interested in buying their property. Bleich said he said they would keep them informed when through the different phases because as this gentleman said the beginning of construction wasn't going well. Bleich said then things started to get better and

last year there was substantial movement things started rolling back there. Bleich said Ron Stroup talked to them about possibly doing a house swap. Bleich said their ten acres for one of the houses back there. Bleich said at this time their house, their well, had gone dry twice due to the water pumping. Bleich said their house has Steven's Creek that runs through it and their livestock, their horses, their chickens, their pigs that their daughter shows for 4-H which they had to water. Bleich said they had to call Gonyon's Well Company twice to come out to their house and both occasions they were pumping water out of the ground. Bleich said she understands that it is important to have a subdivision but their ten acres is where they live and without water, it was no good. Bleich said that is why they were willing to swap. Bleich said their water tank was draining, the creek was getting dry, and their pond was getting fuller from the water they pumped. Bleich said fast forward to this year they were building a house out the back corner of their property. Bleich said the builders created a road through her property to build their home. Bleich said there are trees down. Bleich said Mr. Stroup was not available when she went to the building to talk to him and one of his employees said, "*What are you going to do call the police.*" Bleich said so she did, the Police came, and they were trespassed. Bleich said they didn't press charges because that is just not the way they are. Bleich said after that Mr. St. Dennis, Mr. Stroup and Mr. Cerio, the Realtor, came to their house and talked to them about doing a different house that included the entire ten acres again and their home. Bleich said they called two weeks later and said they were not interested in their house and the front five acres but offered them \$130,000 for the back five because they found it useful for their project. Bleich said then Rick suffered a stroke, the doctor said he would never walk or talk, knowing this she had to find a safe location for them to live. Bleich said so she called Tom St. Dennis telling him the entire situation because the one thing they can ask anybody about her is that she is honest maybe too honest and maybe she should have kept that in her back pocket privately but that is just the way she is. Bleich said so her husband is in the hospital and she is agreeing to make a deal for a house swap. Bleich said she said she would meet them at the construction site on Friday. Bleich said she left the hospital to meet them and when she walked into the construction trailer Mr. Stroup and Mr. St. Dennis said they just received an offer for that house today. Bleich said the house that had been vacant for two years. Bleich said so once again they had no deal. Bleich said she left feeling that is okay she guessed they will just have the \$130,000 because that is what they \_\_\_\_ on their house and what they offered them. Bleich said she had a semi in her front yard because they could put it there and they were planning on moving to one of the houses in the subdivision. Bleich said neighbors from the community had come to help load them. Bleich said she didn't think that once this had been \_\_\_\_ then they will at least get the \$130,000. Bleich said their realtor listed their house. Bleich said their realtor called and said they are no longer interested in it. Bleich said their realtor said they would do the paperwork for free and just to make the deal go through because of the difficult situation. Bleich said they also found that they are \_\_\_\_ to split their land and build their own house on the back five acres because it is landlocked by the Odeno Property. Bleich said so hers.....if they



haven't driven back there they have to see it and she is going to follow her \_\_\_\_\_. Bleich said her back corners of her property are right here the \_\_\_\_ starts right here so her property is landlocked. Bleich said she can't get to that without riding through the subdivision and they won't give her a variance of the opportunity to build from their subdivision. Bleich said so they said they wouldn't go public because she thinks that is useless she doesn't want to.....she is not against the subdivision, she is not against the casino, she is just trying to find a place to build a home for her husband that is safe, that they can live in without buying things with money that they don't have anymore.

Speaker Pete said to Jeanne Bleich so if he can ask her this he means they are limited on time....is what the....what is the \_\_\_\_ that she is asking and for the record can she state her Tribal I.D. number.

Councilor Lonn said she is not.

Jeanne Bleich said she is not from the Tribe.

Speaker Pete said oh, she is non..... Pete said well that's.....

*Councilor Lewis was making comments but they were not picked up on the tape recording and couldn't be made out clearly.*

Speaker Pete said she is not a Tribal member to talk up here, yes. Pete said he knows that so.....

Jeanne Bleich said she called and.....

Speaker Pete said she will give them just a minute but all public comment at a Tribal Council Meeting is only for Tribal members to do that so what he is saying to her is that he cannot comment on this because he really doesn't know what she is asking. Pete said what he can do is call Tom St. Dennis.

Jeanne Bleich asked can she tell him what she is asking for.

Speaker Pete asked Larry Romanelli does he want to talk about this a minute.

Ogema Romanelli said well again, he realized at the beginning that was not a Tribal member but he is willing to take the name, address and phone number at least contact information. Romanelli said he is willing to do that now the EDC again is going to be in charge of this because he is not aware of it. Romanelli said he thinks either the Council or he could at least take the name and phone number and if he has no problem at this point since she has already given the story to ask what she may think is the solution. Romanelli said then he doesn't know maybe they should contact the EDC is his suggestion.

Speaker Pete said if they.....let's.....he is willing to take the number and he is willing to do it with just her and talk to Tom St. Dennis at the EDC but right now they have to end this thing now....right now and so he would like to take her number and her phone.....her name. Pete said if she will go right there and they will talk to the EDC. Pete asked what is her name. Pete asked is there any questions from Council. Pete said oh, he is sorry.....

Councilor Lewis said to Kathleen Bowers will she get that number.

Speaker Pete said yes.

Councilor Champagne said she knows that she is not a Tribal member and they say this is only for Tribal members.....the meetings however she thinks this impacts the Tribe as a whole and she thinks that the Tribe should be listening to when someone is \_\_\_ their concerns. Champagne said to Jeanne Bleich that she thanks her for coming and letting them know her concerns and hopefully someone can help her on this. Champagne said she hopes her husband gets better too. Champagne thanked them.

Speaker Pete said absolutely and in no way is he disrespecting her situation whatsoever. Pete said he has to, as the Speaker, follow the rules. Pete said so that is what he is doing so if she would appear that would be fine. Pete said okay and recognized Diane Lonn.

Councilor Lonn said she agrees that she is not a Tribal member and that they are going to talk to EDC because she wants to hear both sides. Lonn said she wants to sit down with her and hear again, what happened. Lonn said get all the information and then talk to Mr. St. Dennis and whoever else if she would give them that. Lonn said they are supposed to be good neighbors.....

Speaker Pete said right.

Councilor Lonn said.....and this \_\_\_ is not being a good neighbor.

Speaker Pete said the other thing is really true not including themselves. Pete said every time he reaches in his pocket there is two.....there is a quarter in there and it has two sides so he has to hear both sides of this. Pete said okay is there anything else for public comment.

## **VII. Adjourn**

Speaker Pete asked can he get a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN;** by Guenthardt; supported by Lonn.

Speaker Pete asked is there any discussion. Pete said yes.

Ogema Romanelli asked can he ask where..... Romanelli asked Jeanne Bleich how did she know to come here did she get the information from someone.

Jeanne Bleich said she called the main number.

Ogema Romanelli said oh, okay.

Jeanne Bleich said the Tribal number and she asked if she was able to come speak with a Councilor and they said yes. Bleich said she called twice and they called back and said she needed to ask to get on the agenda. Bleich said then she said no there is public comment.

Ogema Romanelli thanked Jeanne Bleich very much.

Jeanne Bleich said she apologizes she didn't know.

Ogema Romanelli said no and thanked Jeanne Bleich again.

Speaker Pete said they need to take a vote and asked Recorder Di Piazza to do a roll call.

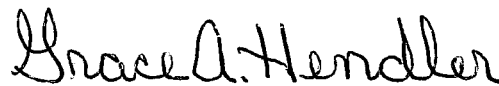
**Roll Call #6**

T. Guenthardt -Yes	C. Champagne -Yes	D. Corey -	Absent
S. Crampton - Absent	G. DiPiazza -	Yes	R. Pete - Yes
R. Wittenberg- Absent	D. Lonn -	Yes	S. Lewis - Yes

Motion carried (6-0-0-3)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Grace A. Hendler  
Transcribing Assistant



Gary Di Piazza,  
Tribal Council Recorder