

**TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES  
OF THE FLATHEAD INDIAN NATION, MONTANA**

Volume 23 Number 2  
Council Chambers, Pablo, MT

Held: October 7, 2022  
Approved: October 11, 2022

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tom McDonald, Chairman; Len TwoTeeth, Vice-Chairman; Martin Charlo, Secretary; Ellie Bundy, Treasurer; Mike Dolson; Carole Lankford; Jennifer Finley; Jim Malatare; James “Bing” Matt; and Terry Pitts.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jennifer Trahan, Council Office Manager; James Steele, Sr., Sergeant at Arms; and Abby Dupuis, Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to **order** at 9:06 a.m. Quorum established.

**Chairman McDonald** called for a moment of silence in honor of Anita Matt.

The meeting was opened with a **prayer** by Johnny Arlee.

The **Yamncut Drum Group** sang an honor song.

**Vi Trahan** commented that children need to learn respect and they learn it from their parents and grandparents. Life isn't easy and we won't be handed things so children and grandchildren need to learn to work for what they have to build themselves a future and get a job with the Tribes. **Bing Matt** mentioned Vi's granddaughter is going to the INFR and is second in barrel racing and qualified for junior barrel racing. She is in the seventh grade in Arlee and requested a donation of \$1,360.00 to help with travel expenses and entry fees. **Chairman McDonald** will have the donation committee review the request. **Jennifer Trahan** advised the donation committee approved the maximum allowed of \$300.00. **Chairman McDonald** suggested requesting a donation from the corporations. **Terry Pitts** suggested having the donation committee to look at all the participants to give them some assistance.

**Terry Pitts** feels blessed to be here, but he has a sad heart; not only was Anita Matt our council representative, but she was a friend. Anita had a lot of work in place and was very dedicated to her job. Terry appreciates the words from the elders today. His dad told him he picked up Johnny Arlee one time, who was on his way back from making a movie, and Johnny is still here today to give us good words. Terry appreciates Vi's commitment and words. The drum group sets the

Tribal Council Meeting Minutes  
October 7, 2022

stage and brings good spirit to the chambers. Terry's heart is in a good place and he will make a valid effort.

**Carole Lankford** just returned from Washington, DC. She was there on energy issues. She thanked the drum group; it is a wonderful way to start the meeting. She thanked Vi for her words. Carole looks up to Vi. Carole thinks Vi and Stephanie are great parents for the next generation. We need parents and grandparents to look after their kids to do well. Carole was focused on numerous things this past quarter. She serves on the Boys and Girls Club Board. The club purchased a new building for a satellite club in St. Ignatius. Children need a place to go after school and in the summer months. There is a shortage of staff at the club. The Boys and Girls Club teaches cultural activities such as beading and drumming. Council went on a fieldtrip to view a piece of property by Missoula that they are working on in coordination with other organizations. It's a good opportunity for the Tribes. Carole and Martin attended the City of Polson council meeting regarding the gaming expansion and it was voted down. We are working behind the scenes to help people understand what's going on. The masonic temple in Polson was viewed as a possible homeless shelter. We continue to work on redistricting and returning Big Medicine. Carole is still involved with the Lake County Drug Court. She gave a shoutout to Magnus, Danny, Shay, James, Steven, and Angela, who went through the Drug Court. They keep things going and do amazing things in the community to come together and get well together, and Carole prays for them every day. We are working on a dog ordinance with Lake County, city governments, and all the entities we can bring together. She hopes we get the ordinance done. Carole was appointed as chairman of the AMERIND Cell Commission. There's a lot going on and prices are going up. They are dealing with the rates for governmental agencies and housing authorities. Carole participated in the Governor's golf cup. It's a connection we need to have because we are involved in state government. She met with the city council to purchase the Boys and Girls Club. The House Appropriations staff had a meeting regarding fires. They listened to our issues as a tribe. The Tribes held some employee appreciation events to thank the employees. The Tribal Council and executive staff serve food to the employees. Council went to Lost Trail for a dedication and met with the Secretary of Interior and hand-delivered a letter regarding bonus pay for firefighters. Jennifer Finley was going to talk about BIE funding. Carole volunteers at the Bread Basket. She joined a family on a search. She went to a meeting about work on having a regional treatment center. Council attended the Electrify the Big Sky. She continues to work on a post and pole technical assistance program. One is a roping arena. Hopefully, the railroad will fund something like that. There will be a pavilion, a walking path, and a boat ramp. She talked about a meeting with S&K Technologies and the U.S. Air Force pertaining to a STEM program. It helps people that either go to college or don't go. The U.S. Air Force has many programs that help students. The Boys and Girls Club received an offer from NASA to send 40 students to Cape Canaveral in Florida. There were a total of 51 children that

Tribal Council Meeting Minutes  
October 7, 2022

signed up, so S&K Technologies funded the remaining 11. There is a Tribal Healing Court in the works that should kick off next month. Dana Comes At Night has extensive knowledge and was hired to run the court. CSKT held a midyear shareholder meeting with the tribal corporations. Six of the tribal council members traveled to Wenatchee to meet with the Upper Columbia Tribes regarding the Canadian coal mines. Carole went to Washington, DC to participate in an energy summit. She is proud of Brian Lipscomb and thinks it is great we have good opportunities for our tribe to be energy efficient and do positive things here. CSKT continues to work on funding for the language programs at Two Eagle River School.

**Mike Dolson** appreciated the drum and the elders that spoke. Mike reminded folks he serves on the Two Eagle River School Board and school is back in session now. Fentanyl is being made in rainbow colors now that look like candy. He asked people to keep our children in their prayers. Mike encouraged everyone to learn how to administer Narcan; it can save lives. Mike is involved in the Columbia River Basin Treaty negotiations. He is involved in the Progress Act to rewrite the regulations to the Title IV of Public Law 638 compacting and contracting. The Land Ordinance is going through some changes and will be available to the public soon. Mike reminded the membership that he holds district meetings the last Friday of every month in Hot Springs. Mike can be reached at (406)-880-5224.

**Martin Charlo** thanked everyone for being here today. The Beartracks Bridge dedication will be on Monday beginning at 10:30 a.m. The procession begins at 12:30 p.m. on the south end of Higgins Bridge, and then the pow wow is at 2:30 p.m. at Caras Park. Monday is Indigenous People's Day and the Tribal Council approved it as a holiday. The Vanderburg family, MDT dignitaries, and Missoula County representatives will be speaking at the dedication. They fundraised and dedicated \$10,000 from their budget to help pay for the event. There will be 30 vendors selling crafts. Martin will be a co-MC. They will be giving out 25 gift cards. The Yamncut and Chief Cliff are the host drums. Martin thanked everyone involved. He talked about the AIS program. We catch things other stations don't. Martin thanked the firefighters for keeping our community safe. The Tribes are working on the development of a dog ordinance. There will be a walking path and a disc golf course in Dixon. Martin thanked everyone who went to the Medicine Tree yesterday. We want to make a point to allow those things to happen. There was no council meeting yesterday so the council could go on the Medicine Tree trip.

**Jennifer Finley** went on the trip to the Medicine Tree yesterday. There were a lot of good words shared and she was happy to see so many young people there. Jennifer reminded people that the council increased the burial assistance amount from \$5,000 to \$6,000 and the per capitas were increased from \$400 to \$500. In working on the budget, we are in a unique position where we must raise

Tribal Council Meeting Minutes  
October 7, 2022

money for budgets where other organizations depend on tax dollars. Jennifer went on the trip to Wenatchee to meet with other tribes and government agencies to talk about pollution coming from Canada. Council has been meeting with some of the departments. They met with the Personnel Department and made suggestions about how we want to see improvements and the importance of bringing back the employee recognitions for longevity, bringing back the employee newsletter, provide better services, having a training position in the Tribes so the workforce can be trained on supervision, customer service, etc. It's about how we provide better services to the public. Council met with the Tribal Health Department about how to improve services. A clinic is being built in Ronan. The Tribes went from 100% land ownership down to 30% and now we own over 65% of the reservation. The Tribes have to be strategic in buying land since we do not have an unlimited budget. Jennifer is involved in the Montana State Tribal Economic Development Commission and represents the CSKT on that board. She is happy that the tribal council members get along with each other. They each bring different things to the table to serve the membership. Jim Malatare welded things to repair the pow wow grounds, Chairman McDonald brings knowledge of fisheries, and they all bring something different and get along for the benefit of the people. Jennifer canceled her district meeting due to Anita Matt's funeral, so she will reschedule it for a later date.

**Bing Matt** read a letter from Gracin O'Conner who is going to the INFR. She is 12 years old, and she has two horses. She has requested a donation from the Tribes for \$1,360.00 to cover her travel expenses and entry fees. Bing thanked the drum for the song and Johnny Arlee for the prayer. The council viewed some property at Primm Meadows and Gold Creek, and he hopes we will get that property through a donation from The Nature Conservancy. Council went to Lewistown to the Charlie M. Russell Refuge and looked at some property. All the tribes plan to donate some bison in there to start a herd. They covered 400 miles on that trip. Bing went on the trip to Wenatchee to have a meeting about Columbia River Basin issues with the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho regarding selenium poisoning the fish. The council looked at their sturgeon fish hatchery and toured the Kootenay River. CSKT has been dealing with the gravel pit issue in Arlee. There are many people that are opposed to it. There are lot of people moving to Arlee, and it will become a suburb of Missoula if they continue to build. The proposed housing project in Arlee got shut down. 72 new homes in Arlee is a lot. It's sad to see so many homes being built there. Bing thanked the drum for the song, Johnny Arlee for being here today, the council reports, and Martin's work on the Beartracks Bridge issue.

**Jim Malatare** thanked everyone for being here today. He appreciated the words from Johnny Arlee and Vi Trahan. Johnny has been a huge influence on Jimmy. It has been a pleasure working with this tribal council. Jim is looking for a better way to serve the people. We need to look to the future of our kids. He thinks about what we can do for the young folks. Jim appreciates the work Mark

Tribal Council Meeting Minutes  
October 7, 2022

Couture does with the Tribal Lands Department to buy land. He wishes we could buy all the land back for our people. Jim attended the Upper Columbia Tribe meeting. The combination of these tribes should make some noise to stop this activity in Canada. We need to protect these waters and the fisheries. It's affecting everything south of the border. Jim went on the land fieldtrip with Bing and it's a great area to start a bison herd. He wants to talk to the elders committee about their thoughts on that. Jim thanked the tribal council members for covering all the issues that come up and have meaning to our membership. Jimmy thanked the drum group for the song. He appreciates working with this council.

**Ellie Bundy** thanked the drum group for the song, Johnny Arlee for the prayer, and the elders for their words. She acknowledged Anita Matt; this is the first quarterly council meeting without her. Anita's heart was in the right place. Ellie was happy to welcome council member Terry Pitts, who committed to completing Anita's priorities. The Tribal Council is honoring the retirees and those who gave so selfishly to the Tribes to serve others. She thanked them for their years of service to the Tribes. Ellie hopes we can get to a place of serving the membership in a professional way. Ellie is amazed at our employee roster; we have amazingly talented folks working for this organization, and she appreciates them. Ellie gave an update on Missing & Murdered Indigenous People. There are 179 individuals missing in Montana and 48 of those are indigenous, which is 27% of the missing in a state where we represent 7% of the total population. Ellie provides MMIP presentations to raise awareness. Ellie gave a presentation to the Mountain Line Transit in Missoula, and she will be serving on a panel at the White House Symposium this fall. Ellie continues to educate herself of human trafficking. She will be going to a symposium in Helena next week. These are scary times with fentanyl and we need to get a handle on this epidemic. Ellie serves on the Salish Kootenai Housing Authority Board, Lake County 9-1-1 Board, and the Emergency Advisory Committee. Ellie thanked her colleagues for a successful quarter. The council is a diverse group and they all get along well with each other. It is a privilege to work with each of them. Ellie thanked the membership for the opportunity to serve them.

**Len TwoTeeth** thanked the drum group for the song, Johnny Arlee and Vi Trahan for their words, and everyone for being here today. Len acknowledged tribal elders Wayne McCoy, Diane Michel, and Clarice King and thanked them for being here today. Len will start having district meetings again. The council has taken the initiative to acknowledge their workforce, realizing it's our employees, including the tribal corporation employees, that make this Tribe successful; we are here today because of them. Len agreed with Jennifer Finley's statement about how great this council works together. There is no animosity; they support each other and work together to get things done. They cannot do that without the leadership of Chairman McDonald, who is leading them to a new era of dealing with the issues. One of their challenges is acknowledging that

Tribal Council Meeting Minutes  
October 7, 2022

this reservation is growing. The population is astounding and we see the impacts of that on our resources. The Tribes would like to buy all the parcels of land that are for sale, but they can't. The staff is prioritizing what's best for the membership. As we can access the land settlement funds we will purchase more land than ever before; however, one obstacle with the land settlement is the government has laid out some requirements we need to meet before accessing those funds. It is frustrating, challenging, and will be a little time-consuming, but we will get there. Len never forgets who he works for, and it is important that the people know that.

**Chairman McDonald** thanked the Tribal Council members for working together. It's about the people and the resources for generations to come. Tom thanked the drum, Johnny, and Vi. The marijuana revenue sharing agreement is being negotiated. We got folks who are inclusive and we are working with the Missoula County Commissioners. The council took a trip to Primm Meadows and they are looking forward to a section of land coming back to the Tribes. The Lost Trail is another area. Council is working with large landowners and it's a good opportunity for land back. The tribal corporations came together and we are trying to create an opportunity to increase revenue so we can be more responsive to our needs and be able to buy more land back. Council challenged the enterprises to do that. Bing Matt mentioned the buffalo and the Columbia River Treaty. This is about us standing up for our rights. In 1855, our forefathers said this is for us and us forever and we have the obligation to take care of it forever to sustain our people forever. It is a good idea to put buffalo on the Charles M. Russell Refuge. It is important to restore buffalo there. We hope to have a successful buffalo hunt this year. If not, there will be an administrative removal. The council increased the burial assistance amount, the per capita amount, and funding for the pow wows. Tom thanked those who were part of that. The pow wows need to be funded adequately. It was a difficult fire season this year, and he acknowledged the staff and thanked them for keeping people safe.

**Art Trahan**, Division of Fire, gave a fire update. The crews will be burning in the St. Mary's timber sale on the east end of Pistol Creek on Monday. The crews are still doing the rehabilitation work on the Elmo and Garceau fires. There have been people trying to drive and recreate in the Red Horn fire area in the buffer zone, but the closure is still in place.

**Chairman McDonald** recognized recent retirees and thanked them for their years of service to the Tribes: Dalene Gardipe, Mission Valley Power – 07/14/2022; Douglas Brown, Mission Valley Power – 07/19/2022; Gerald McElderry, Tribal Forestry – 07/28/2022; Mary Price, Legal Department – 09/01/2022; Bernadette Atwin, Tribal Probation – 09/22/2022; James Taylor, Prosecutors Office – 09/30/2022; and Monty Marengo, Tribal Forestry – 03/25/2021.

**Martin Charlo** recognized the first year Salish Language Program Apprentices: Nadia Adams, Ontequa Matt, Elijah Cahoon, John Stevens, Geraldine McDonald, Andrea McDonald, Lydia McKinney, and Naomi Stevens.

**Martin Charlo** recognized the second year Salish Language Program Apprentices: Laurencia Starblanket, Mali Matt, Al Woodcock, Jan Gardipe, Lauren Clairmont, Malia Vanderburg, and Kristina Mays.

**Len TwoTeeth** recognized the Kootenai Language Program Apprentices: Marquise Askan, Kikis Perez, Peter Auld, Seneca Stanger, Elijah Lefthand, Jacqueline Wright, Denzel Lefthand, and Nolan Antiste. They took the lead on singing the hymns.

**Jennifer Finley** honored Julie Cajune. Julie's work makes a difference in the lives of kids, and she is a teacher of teachers about the beauty of our culture and who we are. Julie's work will last for generations. Her work makes us stronger as a Tribe and as a people. She has won numerous awards nationally and internationally. Julie creates materials that teaches people about us. The placenames happened on the reservation because of Julie. Her work is remarkable. **Julie Cajune** stated her mentor was Johnny Arlee and other tribal elders, and she was grateful for what her elders taught her.

**Len TwoTeeth** honored Char Neal, who works for the Tribal Health Department. Char is always there to answer calls no matter time of day or night and she works for the people and helps them in their time of need.

**Len TwoTeeth** honored Natalie Kenmille, who works for the Dire Need program. Natalie is always there to help those in need.

**Martin Charlo** honored Charlene Petit, who works in Contracts & Grants as the Lead Contracts & Grants Specialist. She is very knowledgeable about our organization. Charlene is committed to her work and family, and she has a good work ethic.

**Jennifer Finley** honored David Spear. He has taught photography at Two Eagle River School for the past 20 years. He and his wife have a nonprofit and raised money to teach classes at TERS and send students to New York, Maine, and New Mexico. David has opened the world to students and allowed them to express themselves and be heard and seen. There is power in what David does. He takes an interest in what the students think and how they feel through his work.

The **Yamncut Drum Group** sang an honor song.

\*\*\*\*\* **Break** \*\*\*\*\*

**Greg Spahr**, Financial Management, gave a financial update on the budget, financial strength, and water compact. Total expenditures approved for fiscal year 2023 was \$187,484,542. Council increased the per capita to \$500, burial assistance to \$600, and Tribal Elder Assistance payment to \$600. There is \$9.8 million budgeted for maintenance and building upgrades. There was an emphasis on sustainability within program budgets.

**Len TwoTeeth** acknowledged the veterans attending today's meeting: Dan Decker, Bernie Azure, George Ducharme, and Bing Matt. Len thanked them for their service.

**Mark Couture**, Tribal Lands Department, showed copies of the land status maps from 1855 to present. In 1935, the allottees were allowed to sell their allotments. The Tribes have had the opportunity to purchase some land back over the years and they purchase as much land as possible. To date, the Tribes have 66% ownership of our homelands. 1,318,583.5 acres encompass the reservation and the Tribes have 874,310.78 acres in tribal ownership. **Len TwoTeeth** asked if the State lands that will be exchanged will automatically be in trust status like the Bison Range was. **Mark Couture** stated that has been brought up in the meetings but there was never a definitive answer. Mark talked about the recreation lands and mobile apps that show ownership. When that happens, individuals need to make sure if it is individual trust or tribal ownership. The apps just say CSKT trust or USA fee, but it does not indicate if the land is an individual landowner, and they need permission to enter those properties. Individuals can pay money to work with brokers, but they can work with the Tribal Lands staff at no cost to them. Individuals are required to go through the Tribal Lands Department to purchase or sell their land and the BIA procedures must be followed.

\*\*\*\*\* **Lunch** \*\*\*\*\*  
(prayer by **Jim Malatare**)

The floor was opened for comments from the membership. No comments were made.

The floor was opened for closing comments from the council members.

**Martin Charlo** stated COVID is still here. We are in the season where we are congregating more, so please be safe and take precautions.

**Jim Malatare** talked about Nkwusm. The kids are making their own regalia today, and Allen Pierre is helping the adults make regalia. Jim has four great-grandchildren going to school at Nkwusm.



**Chairman McDonald** mentioned Mack Days is this weekend. The Mission Valley Live Performing Arts has a Japanese masters of drumming in the Polson High School auditorium tonight.

**Carole Lankford** stated when we had the election last time Ron asked about election judges and if they could be appointed for the next election. Rick was handling the election rules so she doesn't know if that is part of the discussion. The council would no longer serve as election judges; it would be an independent board, along with an attorney. She wanted to know if that's in the works. **Chairman McDonald** will follow up and discuss further in the chairman's meeting. **Martin Charlo** thought the Election Committee would make that decision. Tom thought it would be best to make that decision this year since we are in the off season. **Ruth Swaney** said it's time to start discussing it now and make any proposed changes. In 2021, we had the July primary in one fiscal year and the general election in the following fiscal year.

**Terry Pitts** was asked about the Black Bear Ranch we purchased. He thought the intent for that ranch was for a rehab center. He wanted to know who's living there and what's being done there. **Len TwoTeeth** said it's leased to One Heart. They use the ranch facility as a recovery center primarily for those waiting to get into treatment and need a safe place to go until a bed becomes available. He will ask them to give a report to council.

**Mike Dolson** read Section 2 of the constitution that states the council or an election board appointed by the council shall govern the election rules and certify the election. Section 6 says the council or an appointed board shall appoint all election officials.

The meeting was closed with a **prayer** by Bing Matt.

Council **adjourned** at 1:00 p.m., and is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

### **CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES**

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Martin A. Charlo  
Tribal Council Secretary