

W. Duff

British Columbia Indian Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting

Held at the Board Room, Provincial Museum, Victoria, B. C.

January 18th, 1974

The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m. Friday, January 18, 1974.

Present:

Chief James Sewid

Chairman

Mrs. Kitty Carpenter

Mr. Don MacLaren

Mr. Ross R. Modeste

Mr. Wilson Duff

Mr. C. E. Robin

Dr. George C. Clutesi

Mr. R. J. McInnes

Secretary

Item Par The Chairman welcomed members of the Advisory Committee to the meeting.
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Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were adopted as read.

Business arising out of the Minutes

Policing on Indian Reserves

It was moved and seconded that:

Whereas there are presently some seventeen special constables serving in Indian communities.

And whereas it is felt additional villages would benefit from the presence of trained law officers.

And whereas Band Councils should continue to be encouraged to employ and support such officers.

It was therefore recommended that the Department of Attorney General and the federal Department of Indian Affairs continue to offer encouragement, training, and financial support to Indian Band Councils in order to expand the existing special constable programme to many other areas of the Province.

Court Workers

It was moved and seconded that:

Whereas there is a great need for the services of a greater number of Court Workers to assist the Indian residents of the Province.

And whereas there are eleven Court Workers presently employed by the Native Courtworkers Association of British Columbia throughout the Province.

And whereas the support offered the Native Courtworker Association to date is appreciated.

It was therefore recommended that consideration be given to increasing the financial support to the Association to permit the training and employment of still additional workers to better serve the Indian people of the Province.

Employment Opportunities

It was moved and seconded that:

Whereas the fishing industry is the principal employer of Indian people on the Pacific Coast.

And whereas there are opportunities for employment in many areas relating to the fishing industry.

And whereas the fishing industry should be encouraged to employ a still greater number of Indians.

And whereas opportunities in other industries operating in the Province should also be made available to the Indian worker.

It was therefore recommended that the Provincial Government in conjunction with employers explore the possibility of expanded employment in the fishing

industry as well as special employment opportunities in other industries, such as logging and construction.

Indian Legends

Mr. Duff reported the project undertaken by Misses Storie and Gould has been completed and a limited distribution of the stories made.

Copies of the stories have been distributed as follows:

- One copy in the Provincial Museum
- One copy in the Provincial Archives
- One copy in the University of British Columbia Library
- Twenty copies in the British Columbia Indian Advisory Committee
- Two copies to Jennifer Gould
- Two copies to Susanne Storie

The Chairman thanked Mr. Wilson Duff for his outstanding contribution to the programme and it was moved and seconded that the Chairman direct a letter of thanks to both Miss J. Gould and Miss S. Storie.

Ownership of the stories rests with the Indian Bands and the story teller concerned.

Roads on Reserves

It was reported that in discussion with the Federal Department of Indian Affairs, the Provincial Department of Highways expressed interest in the problems of road construction and road maintenance on Indian reserves. Provincial authorities have agreed to look into the feasibility of some form of provincial assistance.

Housing on Indian Reserves

The Advisory Committee welcomed Mr. Larry Wight, Regional Director, Department of Indian Affairs and Mr. Michael Audain, Special Advisory, Minister of Housing, Province of British Columbia, and Mr. Eric Halpin, Community Development Officer, Department of Indian Affairs.

Mr. Wight informed Committee members that the budget of the Department of

Indian Affairs for Community Development amount to approximately \$7,000,000.00 annually and of this amount some \$3.2 million is allocated for housing needs. The funds theoretically represent assistance to help meet the cost of constructing new homes and meeting necessary repairs to existing homes. In practise it appears to represent the major source of funds available for all housing needs.

At the present time it is stated that some 3,400 new homes are required in the Indian communities of the Province. One tenth of the need is currently being met. The on-reserve housing programme will presently permit a maximum subsidy of \$8,500 per unit. These allotments will be increased to \$10,000 commencing April, 1974.

A massive capital expenditure programme is required to provide needed and adequate housing in the Indian communities of the Province.

Mr. Audain outlined the various programme being developed by the Provincial Department of Housing to help meet the needs of all residents of British Columbia

All programmes are available to Indian people residing off-reserve and who are in a position to meet the requirements of the programmes. Assistance under existing and proposed programmes would not be available to Indians residing on reserve lands.

While there is little Provincial activity in housing in the Indian communities the construction of senior citizens homes by service clubs and ethnic groups is continuing to be encouraged. The Province may authorize a grant equal to one-third of the cost of constructing such a home. Federal authorities are prepared to award an additional 10% capital grant.

The Neighborhood Improvement Programme which is available only in the organized areas of the Province is enjoying considerable success.

Following a general discussion of the housing problems facing Indian residents of the Province it was moved and seconded that in view of the success of the

success of the Neighborhood Improvement Programme it was recommended that the Provincial Government explore the possibility of establishing a similar supplementary assistance programme on Indian Reserves.

In addition it was moved and seconded that information relative to the assistance available for the construction of homes for the elderly in Indian communities be ~~be~~ directed to individual Indian Band Councils through the Union of B. C. Indian Chiefs.

B. C. Indian Land Question

It was moved and seconded that:

Whereas the Land Question is the most important item facing the Indian people today.

And whereas it is one that has concerned the Indian people and Government for a long period of time.

And whereas it is a fact of history and of law that the aboriginal title to the non-treaty lands of British Columbia remains unextinguished.

And whereas the settlement of the B. C. Indian Land Question is the most urgent problem that exists between the Indian citizens of B. C. and the Provincial Government.

And whereas the lack of a settlement will possibly interfere with the orderly development of the northern area of the Province and the introduction of programmes of assistance to Indian residents.

And whereas it is the considered opinion of Advisory Committee members that the Indian people did not receive a fair share of the lands of British Columbia or of the wealth derived from the lands.

It was therefore recommended that the Provincial Government be urged to become actively involved in a just settlement to the Indian people of the Province.

Kitwancool Documents

It was moved and seconded that:

Whereas the Kitwancool claims and rights were submitted to the Government of the Province of British Columbia under date of January 9, 1957 and February 19, 1968 no acknowledgement of the documents has ever been received.

It was therefore recommended that the Government give favourable consideration to the Kitwancool claim at this time.

Indian Lecturers

It was moved and seconded that:

Whereas many Indian people have tremendous knowledge of Indian history and legends.

And whereas students in the Provincial school system have indicated an interest in Indian history and legends

And whereas at the present time knowledgeable Indian people are not being used to teach Indian history in the schools.

And whereas the use of such instructors would reflect pride in Indian students and act as an incentive to them.

It was therefore recommended that the Provincial Department of Education explore ways and means of funding local School Boards to enable the hiring of knowledgeable Indian lecturers to instruct in Indian history and legends in local Provincial Schools.

Indian Advisory Committee

It was moved and seconded that:

Whereas the members of the B. C. Indian Advisory Committee are appointed because of their keen interest in the Indian people of the Province and because of their great personal knowledge of the problems and needs of the Indian people.

And whereas it would appear that the many needs of the Indian people are,

with greater frequency, being brought to the attention of the Government of British Columbia.

And whereas members of the Advisory Committee are qualified and in a position to assist the Government of British Columbia arrive at just and equitable decisions regarding many of the requests presented to Government.

And whereas in the opinion of its members the recommendations resulting from the deliberations of the Advisory Committee could prove of valuable service to both Government and the Indian people.

And whereas the Government of British Columbia does not presently appear to be utilizing, to the fullest, the collective knowledge and skills of the Advisory Committee.

And whereas it would appear the interests of Government and the Indian people could be better served by amending the defined duties of the Advisory Committee.

It was therefore recommended that the Government of British Columbia be urged to redefine the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee in order to better serve the Government of British Columbia and the Indian people of the Province.

At 4:25 p.m., January 18, 1974, the meeting adjourned.

James Sewid
Chairman

Date

Jan. 24, 1974

R. J. McInnes
Secretary