

December 29, 2021
Nevada Indian Commission
Executive Director Report

BUDGET

Nevada Indian Commission - 2600
FY2022 Starting Balance = \$ 352,074
Current balance = \$ 209,863

Stewart Indian School Cultural Center & Museum - 2601
FY2022 Starting Balance = \$ 295,952
Current Balance = \$ 102,490

Gift Fund

FY2022 Starting Balance = \$ 182,760
Current Balance = \$ 101,697
To Be Received = \$ 72,194
Expended = \$ 8,869

Totals as of 12/22/21 - The funding for NIC budget is 75% General Fund and 25% Transfer from Tourism. - The funding for SISCC&M budget is 38% General Fund and 62% Transfer from Tourism.

COVID-19

- Through on-going efforts of the NIC, the Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition, the Churchill County Coalition, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, and the Governor's Office continue to build a comprehensive, culturally appropriate public service campaign to effectively communicate COVID-19 mitigation measures. Since October, this group produced a second tele-town hall with a panel of health experts and a celebrity emcee. The December 7 tele-town hall had 2,348 participants, 34 individuals entered to ask questions and 13 questions were answered live. The Immunize Nevada Facebook post of the live event has 463 views in three weeks.
- Additional billboards have been erected (see appendix), social media messaging, handouts, stickers, and now tee shirts, all designed by Native Artists are being dispersed throughout the communities. Again, this work was prompted by Walker River Paiute Chair Amber Torres' request during Governor Sisolak's Summit with Tribal leaders to have messaging about preventing COVID for our Indigenous people.
- Many of our Tribal Health Clinics, have designated one day a week for anyone wanting to get a COVID vaccine booster.
- As the State and the Public Employees' Benefits Program continue to trouble shoot testing and vaccination protocols for all Nevada employees, a surcharge or an additional \$50 for insurance will be leveled against all unvaccinated employees to pay for the testing program. The entire NIC staff has been fully vaccinated.

NATIVE VOTE

- In partnership with the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) and All Voting Is Local, four more Tribal Nations are in the process of applying polling places on their respective reservations: Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe and Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe.

- ITCN passed a resolution encouraging all Tribal Nations to provide a sample Tribal ID to the NIC to share with the SOS office, who will share with County Clerks (see appendix).

CONSULTATION (AB 264)

- On December 3, Tribal leaders were given a copy of the written draft policy in an effort to collect more feedback. To date, just, three Chairs have submitted comments on the draft presently. As the pandemic continues to monopolize our Tribal leaders, it has been extremely difficult to get input for this policy. The current draft is included the appendix.
- Due to a conflict with mandatory Nevada Division of Human Resource Management training, our November 5 AB 264 training for Nevada employees who interact with our Tribal communities on a regular basis was postponed.
- As previously reported, Dr. Debra Harry (Pyramid Lake Paiute), an associate professor at the University of Nevada and Lynn Manning-John (Duck Valley Shoshone Paiute), the Owyhee Combined School Vice-Principal, will conduct this professional development to provide a historic and contemporary look at our Indigenous history, Tribal governments, cultural impacts and effective methods for collaboration and effective communication. Because winter weather impacts travel in our state, we are identifying Spring dates for this important event, which will be offered in person at the University of Nevada as well as virtually.
- The Nevada Indian Commission executive director attended and helped organize a virtual, December 8 meeting with the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation (CTGR) Chairman Rupert Steele, the CTGR Business Council, Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak, State Engineer Adam Sullivan, Conservation and Lands Tribal Liaison Dom Etchegoyhen, and several members of the Governor's staff, to formally initiate the process of addressing water rights reserved for the Tribes by the Federal Government.
- The CTRG , the State of Nevada, and the State of Utah and are seeking to establish a Federal Water Team focused on the Goshute Reservation that would analyze all existing water rights claims, resource availability, and future needs in the process of reaching a mutually agreeable water rights settlement. This federal Water Team would include the State of Nevada, the State of Utah and the CTGR.
- On December 3, the Nevada Indian Commission arranged a meeting between Chairman Brian Thomas and Councilwoman Lynneil Brady of the Sho-Pai Nation of Duck Valley Reservation with the Nevada Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jhone Ebert, the Director of Inclusive Education Julie Bowers, and DuAne Young, the Policy Director Office of the Governor to discuss the needs of the Owyhee Combined School.
- On December 3, the Nevada Indian Commission arranged a meeting between Chairman Arlan Melendez, Joel Korotkin, Director of Economic Development, Bethany Sam, Public Relations / Community Information Officer, Michael Ondelacy, Business Enterprises Director, and Bucky Harjo, Public Relations Assistant with Michael Brown, Executive Director of the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development, Dominique Etchegoyhen, Deputy Director

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Division of Water Resources Basin Engineer Melissa Marr to discuss a water export project.

- On December 3, the Nevada Indian Commission arranged a meeting between Chairman Warren Graham and Elder Kathy Adams-Blackeye of the Duckwater Shoshone Nation with Nevada Director Kristin Swallow and Guinevere Hobby, Tribal Liaison of the Nevada Department of Transportation to discuss road improvements.

NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT (NAGPRA)

- The University of Nevada, including President Sandoval and representatives from the College of Liberal Arts, continue to update Inter-Tribal Council on the University's NAGPRA compliance.
- The NIC has received a second request for an in-person meeting between Tribal representatives and the UNR NAGPRA working group.
- The University has begun vetting candidates for a full-time NAGPRA coordinator and a full-time Tribal Liaison. NIC Commissioner Kelly Krolicki and Executive Director Stacey Montooth are participating on the search committee for these two important jobs.

US SECRETARY OF INTERIOR INITIATIVE INTO INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

- On December 3, during a private meeting at the Stewart Indian School campus, Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak apologized to 40 Tribal elders and leaders and pledged the full resources of the State to assist our Native American communities recover from the impacts of the forced assimilation which started in 1890.
- Governor Sisolak and several senior staff members and Nevada directors and a representative from the Department of Interior, heard testimony from two Stewart Alumni, Linda Eben Jones (RSIC) and Ann Big Goose (Washoe).
- As a result of this meeting, the Governor will send a letter to US Interior Secretary Deb Haaland asking for the Stewart Indian School attendance records which were seized by BIA in 1980 when the school closed. Plus, the Governor will ask about federal funding and resources to examine unmarked graves and search for sacred remains throughout the 110-acre property that is currently owned by Nevada.
- The Governor emphasized any actions taken to comply with the Secretary's initiative will be done in complete collaboration with our 27 Tribal Nations, Bands, Colonies, and Urban Indians. See media links:

<https://news.yahoo.com/governor-apologizes-nevadas-role-indigenous-235541872.html>

<https://www.rgi.com/story/news/politics/2021/12/03/sisolak-apologizes-nevadas-role-native-american-relocations/8858399002/>

<https://nativenewsonline.net/currents/nevada-governor-apologizes-for-state-s-role-in-forced-assimilation-of-native-youth>

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) & US ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION FUNDS

- To assist our Tribal Nations, make application for ARPA grants, the NIC is collaborating with the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED).
- In turn, GOED has partnered with University of Nevada-Reno to hold a two-day conference in February with our 27 Tribal Nations to review the grant application process and to develop a larger five-year plan.
- \$900 million in ARPA funding will be directed to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), including direct aid payments to Tribal governments to address concerns related to housing, potable water, wildlife trafficking, and BIE-funded schools, colleges and universities. The NIC is alerting our Tribal Nations to all funding streams.
- \$700 million will be allocated to Tribal Nations listed in the BIA's Federal Register notice. Allocations will be based on tribal enrollment data, using a distribution approach that groups tribes by enrollment size.
- The ARPA allocates \$3 billion to the US Economic Development Administration in supplemental funding to assist communities nationwide including \$ 100 million to Tribal Nations, which were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (see appendix).
- The Executive Director of the Nevada Indian Commission has discussed the availability of these funds at every opportunity including the past three Inter-Tribal Council meetings, via emails, phone calls and in person conversations.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- More research needs to be done by the NIC including identifying the goal for which our agency might start its meetings with a land acknowledgment. Here is some sample language which can be considered for our Chairman to announce at future NIC Commissioners' meeting:

"I would like to begin our Nevada Indian Commission meeting by acknowledging that we gather today from the ancestral homelands of the Numa, the Newe, the Nuwuvi, and the Wa She Shu who have lived in the Great Basin since time began. Please join me in expressing our deepest respect and gratitude to our four major Indigenous groups; the Northern Paiute, the Shoshone, the Southern Paiute, and the Washoe--not just the original caretakers of the land we now call Nevada--but for their enduring stewardship and protection of our shared lands and waterways. Today, the Nevada Indian Commission reaffirms its commitment to improve the quality of life for our 27 Tribal Nations, Bands, Colonies, and the 50,000-plus Urban Indians who chose to make Nevada their current home."

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS / ONGOING PROJECTS

- * Continue to communicate with Nevada Administration, and Buildings and Grounds Director regarding bat hazard in building #1, #3, plus skunks living under building #3
- * Attended Rez Tour Townhall event at Reno-Sparks Indian Colony with Assembly member Natha Anderson, former Assembly member Shea Backus, and other dignitaries (October 5)
- * Introductory meeting with Yvanna Cancela, new Chief of Staff for the Governor (October 12)
- * Participant in the Nevada Recovers Listening Tour virtual which focused on the American Rescue Plan Act grant funding requirements from the US Department of the Treasury to assist Tribal Nations severely impacted by the pandemic (October 12)
- * Virtually attended the Cedar Spring Water School Art + Environment presentation by Oscar Tuazon and Confederate Tribes of Goshute Chairman Rupert Steele, sponsored by the Nevada Museum of Art (October 28)
- * Helped draft, distribute Nevada's 2021 Proclamation for Native American Heritage Month
- * Attended, assisted with Nevada Day Native art demonstrations at the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center (October 30)
- * Identified, drafted, posted short feature stories to the NIC Facebook page of Great Basin Tribal leaders, including Veterans killed in action, each day in the month of November to celebrate Native American Heritage Month
- * Spoke with Governor's Cabinet regarding the American Rescue Funds distributed and potential grant funding for our Tribal Nations (November 4)
- * In person meeting with UNLV School of Public Health's Project Coordinator Samantha Smith of the Nevada Institute for Children's Research & Policy (November 5)
- * In conjunction with the Ah Wah Nee Exhibition and Symposium, during the *We Danced, We Sang, Until the Matron Came* program, provided a monologue on boarding schools (November 5)
- * Introductory meeting to US Department of Interior contact Heidi Todacheene, a Senior Advisor in the Office of the Assistant Secretary, arranged by the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) Chief Executive Officer, Christine McCleave (Turtle Mountain Ojibwe) with my Nebraska counterpart, Judi Gaiashkibos (Ponca) joining (November 17)
- * Selected Honorary Coach for the University of Nevada Women's Basketball Team for the Nugget Classic during Native American Heritage Month (November 28)
- * Hosted, attended Indian Territory Meeting (December 16)
- * Conducted interviews for NIC Admin III candidates (December 21)

STANDING MEETINGS

- * Governor's Cabinet (presented on ARP funds distributed to Tribal Nations on November 4 meeting)
- * Tribal Food Task Force Calls
- * Monthly briefings with Director of Travel Nevada
- * National Delegation Staffers (Senator Catherine Cortez-Mastos and Senator Jacky Rosen)
- * Naval Air Station-Fallon Withdrawal Updates
- * Intergovernmental Executive Committee meetings regarding Naval Air Station-Fallon
- * Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN)
- * Governor's Interstate Indian Commission (GIIC)
- * Nevada State-Federal Tribal Liaison Working Group Meeting
- * Western Governors' Association - State Tribal Officials
- * Internal Executive Branch on Lithium Topics
- * Budget Reviews with the Finance Manager for the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs
- * University of Nevada NAGPRA Working Group

NOTABLE PRESENTATION / INTERVIEWS ON SISCC&M, NIC, OR CURRENT EVENTS

- * Provided guided tour of the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center & Museum to former Nevada Lieutenant Governor Sue Wagner and former Washoe County Manager and former Washoe County School Board president Katy Simon Holland (October 22)

- * Ideas on Tap: *The History and Culture of Native Americans* presentation with Nevada Education Programs Professional for Indian Education, Fredina Drye Romero (Kaibab Band of Paiutes) and with Senior Director for Strategies 360, Marla McDade Williams (Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone) (November 10)

- * Community Conversations podcast interview for Native American Heritage Month (November 11)

- * The Importance of a Land Acknowledgement for the Reno Human Rights Commission with Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Public Relations/Community Information Officer Bethany Sam (December 12)

- * Moderated discussion with Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Sunday Forum about PeeHee Mu'Huh and the actions of Tribal Nations to stop the exploration for a Lithium Mine at this sacred Shoshone site near the Ft. McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone reservation. Native Organizers Alliance member and new NIC Commissioner Tammi Tiger (Choctaw Nation) presented

- * At the Carson Colony, in conjunction with Native American Heritage Month, staffed an information booth about SISCC&M and mitigating COVID (November 24)

- * Guest appearance on State of Nevada by KNPR's Paul Boger's segment on public radio (December 16)
<https://knpr.org/knpr/2021-12/investigations-nevadas-boarding-schools>