

**TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBE
NORTHERN CHEYENNE RESERVATION
LAME DEER, MONTANA**

SPECIAL SESSION

**MINUTES
January 27, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: President Wetherelt called the meeting to order at 3:09 p.m.

INVOCATION: Debra Charette

ROLL CALL:

	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Melissa Lonebear	X		
Debra Charette	X		
Norma Gourneau		X	
Eva Foote		X	
Nizhoni Friesz	X		
Serena Wetherelt, President	X		
Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice President	X		
Torrey Davie	X		
Donavin Limberhand	X		
Silver Little Eagle		X	
Gwen Spottedhorse *arrived @ 11:06 a.m.	X		
Melissa Fisher *arrived @ 10:44 a.m.	X		
Total:	9	3	

Quorum Established

ELDERLY

No updates at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL TO
SUPPORT THE LEGISLATION OF THE MONTANA INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT**

Motion made by Melissa Lonebear. Second by Torrey Davie.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Melissa Lonebear	X			
Debra Charette	X			
Norma Gourneau				

Eva Foote				
Nizhoni Friesz	X			
Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice President	X			
Torrey Davie	X			
Donavin Limberhand	X			
Silver Little Eagle				
Gwen Spottedhorse	X			
Melissa Fisher	X			

8 votes Yes	0 votes No	0 Abstentions	Motion Carried
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DISCUSSION:

Alaina Buffalo Spirit: Good afternoon, I just want to thank you for sponsoring this special meeting. It really means a lot because it involves our children. All the tribes in Montana have already submitted a resolution in support of the, it's called the Montana Indian Child Welfare Act. I was contacted by the Attorney General that wanted us to pass this resolution in support of this. There's a hearing on February 1st if any of you want to go testify or you can testify by zoom. It has to do with umm; I'll read the resolution. I want to thank you all council for your attendance and respect for our children because if we, if we don't speak up for our children who will? As the home counselor for the Indian Child Welfare Program, I'm dealing with like 200 cases out of state and possibly 200 plus in state. Reading some of the reports, it's really heartbreaking. Some of the abuse that goes on with our children really touches my heart. I'm the only person working in the ICWA office at the present time. So, this resolution says:

WHEREAS; the tribal council is duly elected body representing the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation of Montana and is empowered to act on behalf of the tribe. All actions shall be adherent to provision set forth and constitution; and

WHEREAS; the Montana Legislature wishes to enact a state version of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which was enacted in 1978 to stop the widespread removal of Indian Children from their families, homes, and tribal communities; and

WHEREAS; the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council believes it is in the best interest of the Northern Cheyenne children to be protected from harm and to prevent the unnecessary trauma that occurs when children are removed from their family, culture, and community; and

WHEREAS; the Tribal Council acknowledges that tribes and tribal communities, state governments, members of Congress, national and legal organizations, and thousands of native American individuals have supported ICWA as an essential and effective policy that protects the best interests of Native American children; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council supports the legislation of the Montana Indian Child Welfare Act, in order to preserve for us and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our nations, to preserve cultural values, and to promote stable placements for Northern Cheyenne children in loving, permanent homes, connected to their families and our culture.

I appreciate Edina for setting up the special session and all that you do. I just want to touch on one case that we're working with. I won't be sharing the names because of privacy but there's a child in Colorado that we went to court for in Greeley Colorado.

Secretary Redstar: So she could expedite it.

Councilwoman Lonebear: And while it goes through that process, you can take a copy with you to give testimony or whoever's attending and you can send it to the, probably the Montana Indian Caucus.

Alaina Buffalo Spirit: Ok.

President Wetherelt: I don't think it's that one.

Alaina Buffalo Spirit: No, I didn't read this because it's by the Secretary.

President Wetherelt: Yeah, so it's this one. It tells what the constitution and bylaws that we use.

Alaina Buffalo Spirit: Oh ok.

President Wetherelt: We needed to have that on there because it's coming from us.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Debra Charette.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Melissa Lonebear	X			
Debra Charette	X			
Norma Gourneau				
Eva Foote				
Nizhoni Friesz	X			
Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice-President	X			
Torrey Davie	X			
Donavin Limberhand	X			
Silver Little Eagle				
Gwen Talawyma	X			
Melissa Fisher	X			

8 votes Yes	0 votes No	0 Abstentions	Motion Carried
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MEETING ADJOURNED @ 3:17 P.M.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED by the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council with 8 votes for passage and adoption, 0 votes against passage and adoption, and 0 abstentions on this 23rd day of February 2023.



Edina Redstar, Secretary
Northern Cheyenne Tribe