

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

**REGULAR SESSION**

**MINUTES**

March 18, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Wetherelt called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

**INVOCATION:** Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice President

**ROLL CALL:**

	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>EXCUSED</b>
<b>Melissa Lonebear</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Debra Charette</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Norma Gourneau</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Eva Foote</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Torrey Davie</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Serena Wetherelt, President</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice President</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Silver Little Eagle</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Nizhoni Friesz</b> *Left meeting @ 9:58 a.m.	<b>X</b>		
<b>Donavin Limberhand</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Gwen Spottedhorse</b>		<b>X</b>	
<b>Melissa Fisher</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Total:</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	

Quorum Established

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** No announcements

**ITEM #1 – STATE MMIP TASK FORCE**

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for having me. My name is Justin Kambic. I've recently been appointed as the Montana Missing Indigenous Persons Task Force Coordinator through Montana Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation Special Services Bureau. I'd like to say that I now have days of experience of doing this job. I'm still trying to get my feet under the ground and figure out what this role entails in its entirety but I can tell you from my background, I've spent many years in Law and Enforcement and through that role as a Search and Rescue Coordinator for the Agency in which I served. I have many,

many, many, many searches under my belt. I've dedicated much of my career, my training and my experience to the topic of search and recovery of missing people. Some of that is through the school of hard Knox. Some of that is decision making I've made on my own account in lessons learned through that process. Others have come through formal training, education and experience. What I've learned is that there is actually a methodology, a search strategy that can be used to help find people, to help find what we're looking for. That is the background that I bring to this position. Much of this position is a communication continuity between the State, myself, the representatives of the task force. There are all of our Federally recognized Tribes are represented on the task force. That is the window in which this can have a voice in how the task force moves forward. Some of decision-making processes. The State of Montana is part of this task force for staffing and employment purposes only. The task force belongs to you guys and the individuals that represent your Tribe on this task force, they are a part of that decision-making process and how things move forward and I respect that. How it'll structure is there is some advisory types of individuals. One of which is Indian Health Services. There're representatives from the US Attorney's office. The Montana Highway Patrol. Office of Public Instruction. The Attorney Generals office. Then through that is the 2 representatives from each Federally recognized tribe. There is a primary and an alternate. The request that I would have from this Council is that whoever you name to the task force as a primary and an alternate be your decision so you have say in it and you get to determine who sits on that task force and how that goes. From there, we take those names to the Attorney General for his ultimate discretion and determination. The plan immediately is to have an in-person task force meeting sometime in the month of June. Once we have all of those names recognized from all of the tribes, I believe it would be the Attorney Generals prerogative to be at that or send a delegate to that to kind of re-kick this task force over. The task force itself has been in existence since 2019. From what I understand and from the many folks that I've been talking to is that the task force started off doing some great things, some pretty impressive things about determining what the barriers are when it comes to Missing and Murdered Indigenous People and through listening sessions through trying to figure out jurisdictional issues and trying to figure out kind of root cause of things. That's where they kind of stuck there to their role and then Covid hit and kind of derailed the process from there. So, I come in here standing on the shoulders of the giants that came before me and my hat is off to everybody that has sat on this task force and everybody that has a part of the task force in the past because without them, we wouldn't be where we are today. Now moving forward, they're some things that I have in mind that I would like to do, that I would like to share my experience and my background in and that is the search. I believe and it is my belief only, that to address the MMIP crisis we need to do 3 things and we need to do 3 things simultaneously. The first part of that is education awareness prevention and training. Through the State of Montana, the last legislative session passed the Search and Rescue Teams training grant. There are some things that we need to be able to do in order to access those grant funds. I'd like to think of them as small hurdles. It's not a barrier. It's nothing, I believe, to be to difficult to attain. Through that is where we can start having trainings for search and rescue teams grant in the local are to be able to respond to missing person cases; to be able to solve these problems before they become to big to handle, before they become long term, unresolved missing person cases and that is one of the things that I intend to do is to continue that training, education and awareness prevention. The next part is those acute missing person cases. These are the ones where someone calls either Law Enforcement or council or elders and says my loved is not where they are supposed to be; they're lost; they're misplaced; they're otherwise not where

they are supposed to be at. If we can get on these cases, get on these quickly with trained individuals that are equipped, that understand the search methodology that understand scaling and scaling back and scaling up the command type of element. I think that is a very noteworthy cause to a lot of successes when it comes to search. It increases the possibility of finding what we're looking for. The idea of this is to prevent these acute missing person cases from becoming a long term, unresolved case. That is the third strategy is you have to be able to do things to continue the search for these long-term unresolved cases. Stand behind or in front of many faces. Some have been delivered and some have not. The one thing that I know for certain is that we're never going to find what we are looking for if we stop looking. I have strategies. I have experience in continuing that search. I've been a cop for most of my life. I can speak cop. When I took this job, I turned my badge and my gun in. I am no longer law enforcement. I am no longer sworn. One of the hardest decisions I have had to make in my professional career. I have been in several different tribal communities. I've been called to searches and trying to find loved ones who are misplaced and I've had success in that and I want to continue to share that success. I believe that a higher cause, a higher calling for me. That is what I bring to the table. The task force itself, as we move forward, like I said, this is your task force. It's not mine. It's not anybody else's. So, you guys get to drive the decisions and where things are going.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** How many Tribes. I'm Melissa, by the way, and thank you for reaching out. We talked to you. I think it was Debbie and Torrey. How many tribes have reappointed task force members?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Right now, officially through the resolution process, I believe the only one I have a resolution for, in hand, is Ft. Peck. I've been to Ft. Belknap and to Blackfeet country, up in Browning and that process is going through. Just kind of waiting for their next general council meetings to submit those names forward. I anticipate having those. My goal is to have those primary and alternate names through resolution by the end of April for all eight tribes. That's just so I can get with them and meet with them so we can start planning our June meeting and get business done. I'm very result driven. I'm very proactive in what we want to do and I want to meet everybody and start handling business because the more time that goes by when nothing happens is more time when nothing's happening.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Yes. Exactly.

**YOLANDA FRASER:** I have a question. As far as your ability and your capacity to work with the counties and cities. We just had a tragic loss in Billings. That, I feel, could have had some State muscle behind it because there wasn't no amber alert. There wasn't anything from the local jurisdiction there. What can your position bring to that?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Right now, I have no capacity in that. What I can do is offer, through that grant process, once we get everything established and offer that training. The training grant, already in law, says that it is multi-discipline, multi-jurisdictional. It doesn't have to be a strictly law enforcement community, it doesn't have to be strictly a tribal community. It can be any kind of volunteer. I think that's where the search and rescue training grants come from is being able to develop that local response. So, the first thing that we do is get a hold of the missing person clearing house. Get a hold of ----- Report that person. Get all of these other resources that are

available to the location. That includes card teams. That includes everything. All the bells and whistles that come with it. As far as capacity to involve right now, I have no grounds, no footing to engage in an active, individual, case right now. What I want to do is get the word out to the local group to be able to better respond in the moment, in the crisis on these acute cases. Does that answer your question?

**YOLANDA FRASER:** Yeah, it kind of does. The other part is for families. What kind of advice would you give families because they are the ones right there on the ground.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes.

**YOLANDA FRASER:** It's not going to matter to them who's in charge? They are wanting to find their loved one. I'm just thinking. So, ok, your position does not have capacity then they'll have to put pressure on the Attorney General or someone that could because they're over all the reservation jurisdictions.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Correct. Yes.

**YOLANDA FRASER:** It has to come down to some point where we have some kind of influence so families can get the help they need right away.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Right. And I think that can be answered through the representatives that you send to this task force. Those are things that we can address that is happening in your local communities here because it's not the same everywhere. That is a big problem all over Montana that I see from my position. One of the things that I have done, I think it's kind of unique in the search and rescue realm, is to take this more culturally appropriate response in making sure that we have family advocates and we have victim advocates. Not because everybody is a victim right now but because there's a different language that is being spoken with search and rescue response; that's being spoken with law enforcement; that's being spoken with medical personnel. Especially how that reverberates down to family members of the subject that we're looking for. I've found that it helps to have somebody that is trained on how to speak all of those languages to better relay that information to the families so the family knows what's going on. So, when the family looks at an incident command and they see what appears to be nothing happening and they have the questions like "why is nothing happening?" "why is nobody out kicking rocks over looking for my loved one?" then that person can say "Well, here is the strategy, here is what is going on. There're hasty searches here. There're drone searches here. There're helicopters in the air." When helicopters are in the air, we try to clear the area out so the helicopter doesn't have to. The one thing that I found in several cases of tribal lands where I've done active searches is that there is no shortage of help. Everybody wants to come together and be there whether you know the person or not. Often times, the law enforcement response or the search and rescue response is we need to keep it controlled and we need to keep it those that are trained to do this. So, we want to discount those. We don't want to consider those for our planning. There're ways that we can come together on all of that and I think that's going to be answered through the search and rescue training grants.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Yolanda can you introduce yourself. So, our grassroots people, everyone in this room is kind of self-trained. We've had to take measures to try to get justice for our people. So, if you could just introduce yourself and explain.

**YOLANDA FRASER:** Hi, I'm Yolanda Fraser. I am the grandmother of Kaysera StopsAtPrettyPlaces. We had to do a lot of our own pushing, investigating, digging. We had experts in other states that were in that field that we had to give our reports to.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes, and I am aware of some of those. First of all, again, it is because of you and your efforts and the efforts of your group that we are here today to be able to start knocking this down. We're late. I make no bones about it. But we're here and we want to start helping with this.

**YOLAND FRASER:** Well, that's good. I know we have my colleagues here, Malinda Harris and here daughter. Rae Peppers, our former legislature, she is the one that put that bill through for the position that you are in.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes. Thank you.

**YOLANDA FRASER:** I guess, part of it for coming today is because, within that time period; the space to now, we didn't really know what the position, what it's supposed to be doing. What resources were there for our people because there just wasn't any. Now we're coming to listen to you because you are in that position now.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** And we're building it. We're on the ground floor. We're rebuilding it, I should say. Not because it was broken before but for those tasks with Covid coming in and it just became difficult to come together and meet and talk about the things. The legislature has moved the needle. It may not appear that is has moved that far and I can make that argument as well but it has moved. It's because of organizations like yours. It because of the work that this task force has done previously that we're here and we have these abilities. This is the ground floor and we want to build it up. If you come up with other needs that are specific to you and your family and your community, bring them through the task force, through the representatives, and those are the things that we can talk about. I view my position mostly as that conduit. It's not a rank and file. They call me the coordinator of this but I'm here as that conduit, as that channel in which tribal communities can up channel their own concerns to higher levels of State government. I'm not the higher level of State government but I have those ears and then it works the other way around too. So, when the government officials come down and say, we've got these ideas or we got these plans, so you think it can work in some of our tribal communities. Then I channel that back down through the task force. If there's other things like certain victim services during an active search or if it's a search method or specific search and rescue training, technical rescue, rope rescue, swift water rescue. Whatever it happens to be, then we can have those conversations and start channeling things that way.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** I have a question. Can this task force be the driving force to change the law on how missing persons are reported and how fast action can, you know, boots on the ground, how fast we can get searches started for

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes. Like I said, we are on the ground floor of that as it is. So, just by accessing the grant funds, that is legislation that has been pushed by many people in this room and it's here. There're some things that we have to do in order to get it. The first one says there should be an MOU. The next one is protocols for action planning which sounds like it's the hardest part but the good news is, I already have that. That is already built and all we need to do is tailor it to your specific community. The next part is the community action plan. Once all those are done, that opens up the grant funding process and we can do it right now. It's \$61,000 dollars and I'll be honest, that's not a lot. My intent

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** For all the tribes?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes. For right now. However, I am a post certified instructor. I have a plethora of knowledge and skills and abilities that I want to pass down. I want to teach. I want to be involved in. I think that's the plan. There're some things that we need to do in order to get that done but we can be frugal. A direct answer to your question. It's a small group of individuals that changed the world. That's the only thing that has ever changed the world. So, yes. This can be the catalyst for a lot of that. Again, we are on the basement floor. The only place we go is up.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok.

**ROSIE HARRIS:** I know you are talking about all this and stuff. My kind of concern is that my sister's Hannah's Act, you know, that was for all the missing and murdered, not just women but kids and men too. My concern was right after that happened, like she said, everything went blank. How do we know that's not going to repeat itself? Because in the end, when you think about it, you're talking about all these task force and everything, we've been a task force. What makes us very scared is that there's nothing actually in place. Do you guys have anything for search and rescue where they can properly equip themselves in case they do find a body? Do you have something that is set up so when there is stuff that is needed to be examined or anything, is there steps that you have in your plans for that situation? Because, you know what? A lot of the things that happen around here is no documentation. There's a lot of people that don't really step up. Yeah, they'll do their job but that's all it is, is a job. But us guys, we see it differently. You know, there's a lot of us that have gone through trauma, that have gone through actual things that have happened. You know, I have almost been murdered 3 times. That's sad to say but I'm a young individual. For me, seeing all these things. I like how you talk about getting it into the schools. There's a lot of things but it also has to come with family too because a lot of people are not watching their children as well. It needs to be a community thing. I think if you can get more information out there, get stuff that could actually help us. Also, what about our database. That was another thing. There's a lot of people, like me, I'm a search and rescuer. I help out. Not just in Lame Deer but I also go off reservation. I go out there and I hear about all these cases that are not being talked about or just brushed under the rug. People just gave up. Where is our task force for that as well? We need something later on. Say you find evidence or something happens or something comes up. Do you have something that is going to be put in place for that as well? That is something that a lot of us worry about is all these unsolved cases that are just getting left in the dirt. To me, I just feel like it does sound like a good plan but we're tired of hearing it. We want to see it. We want things to happen. Not only that, we would

like communication. We would like you, as a representative, to come to each and every one of us. Especially the families that are involved in this. Not only that, our tribal members because these guys are the ones that are also helping us. Trying to enforce everything. I don't want my sisters cause to be in vain. That's what I don't want.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Understood.

**ROSIE HARRIS:** Thank you.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** And to answer some of your questions. First of all, I have not walked a mile in your shoes and I would never pretend to. That would be far to pretentious of me. What I can tell you is I've been a student to this game for quit some time and I do have protocol and procedure for documentation to continue it forever and always.

**ROSIE HARRIS:** So, are you going to set up something so a lot of us can go through a training. I've been talking for years about getting the proper training. I would like that. I would like proper training. Not just for myself but for people that do come out because, you know, there are things that we have to worry about. You know, with the case that happened up in Billings at the rest area, I was helping there. They had a map, everything. They had things marked off that they searched but in reality, I don't know if they did or not and that scared me. I keep talking about, why don't you guys get flags and while your walking, you can push them into the ground. That way you know that area at least has been checked. So, for me, I feel like a lot of that does need to be included. Not only that, to me, if your going to have these things, invite people that are willing to do it because there's a lot of us that get left in the dirt and we're trying to make things happen. In reality, when something happens, usually the family will only call certain people. My family is very fortunate, I haven't been on a lot lately because of my health issues but each time I've been called, I have no money, no nothing but I go because I care. That's something that a lot of us really do, we do care. It does make it hard for us but for me, I think the proper training would be very, very beneficial. Also, kind of like, CNA training where if people are going to come in and they are going to be equipped and stuff, have that training as well. If there was somebody in need and they were hurt or something happened, you would want them to be trained in that as well. I think that is something you should put in there as well. Thank you.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Absolutely. Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Rosie, he's also here to talk about grants and stuff that are available for search and rescue. Right? Or for training.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** That's what, and I thanked him when he reached out to us because I feel like his experience with the search and rescue, that's one of our main obstacles when we're looking for someone who's missing. I appreciate you and I'm glad that you are here. We're willing to do any kind of training we need to for our membership, for our boots on the ground people.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** I guess as a point of clarity too. If I were told to give a vision of the best suited place for this search and rescue teams training grant, it's not with the task force, it's not with law enforcement, per say. It's with the grass roots, the boots on the ground individuals. That's where I see us having the biggest impact. It's you folks that are out there looking. It's you folks that are out there kicking rocks over and trying to find people and that's the best place for this.

**MALINDA HARRIS:** Hi. My name is Malinda. When you talk about training and stuff like that way, I'm really happy to hear about that. You know, we have a lot of people who are on search and rescue right now here in Lame Deer. When my daughter wants to go take training, she asks people, "How do I get this training and stuff." They always tell her, just go on line and look, they got training up there in Billings. I mean, what kind of answer is that when a person really wants to get their certificate for search and rescue. I see they had one up there up North somewhere that they did this weekend and there was quit a few of them that got certificates for search and rescue. Are you planning on doing something like that for the community and us grassroots people here?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** So, my initial plan, as of right now, once we get all the things done in order to access those grants, that grant fund, I'm going to bring them here.

**MALINDA HARRIS:** So, we can all get training?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** I learned this methodology of search and rescue from a fellow by the name of Brett and his dad. Brett and Skip Stoffel. They wrote the book on it. Skip Stoffel wrote a lot of the world war 2 era stuff as far as down pilots behind enemy lines stuff. How do we go search and rescue for them? Between the two of them, they kind of realized that, hey this is something that I can imply in the inland search function in the lower 48. All over the world, quit frankly. So, they literally wrote the book and I have it in my truck. I brought it with me. I will show it to you. It's about that thick. It's a text book. He literally wrote that book and I'm going to bring him here. If you'll have him, we'll bring him here. If not, we'll find a place to where you can come to us and he can teach the search and rescue methodology. He can teach lost person behavior strategy. He can teach international search and rescue incident database. He can teach mapping and imagery and software.

**MALINDA HARRIS:** Would we get a certificate saying we are certified for that?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes. He's an instructor from the National Association for Search and Research, NASAR. That is one of my intentions as well. Depending how things go, I am going to go get myself instructor certified for basic inland search function, lost person behavior. If I can find an instructor course for that so I can get certified in that. So I can teach it and I can just come here and teach anybody that wants to learn.

**ROSIE HARRIS:** There's things that we do struggle with. When people do get their certificates, they do get their trainings but they never train. Are you keeping your word on this?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yeah and it's a perishable skill. It goes away if you don't use it.



**ROSIE HARRIS:** You know, it does affect a lot of the families. I'm actually friends with the boy that passed away and that's very tragic. My friend, that's his nephew and it was really sad that they were portraying him as somebody that was involved in criminal activity when he just got here from California. That did not make sense to me. Nothing was very, like verified. The family just said that they think, they were not too sure because he was hanging out with certain individuals and that happens a lot to as well. So, for me, I feel it is a big thing to make sure when the search is on, you make sure that you do check that are properly because that's where I noticed we've been falling through the cracks in that certain area. But then, you have the chance, like my sisters' case, where they had moved the body. So, for us, anything that could help, like communication, we need radio lines, we need open communication. Not just with our group and your group, how we're merging, but also with the police. Because they don't take us seriously. That was another thing about, you know, search and rescue is the police don't take us seriously because they don't think we know what we're doing. But, in general, we're actually doing their job. Which is very sad. For me, I feel that if that were a little bit clearer where we could work with the agencies as well, because those crucial hours are very, very crucial. We don't want that to happen, what happen with us. So, I think for families and individuals that that should be taken into consideration too.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes. Absolutely and you hit the nail on the head too. Many, especially missing persons, many searches for missing person have a concurrent or simultaneous criminal investigation that goes along with them. There's that give and take that shouldn't take place between search parties and law enforcement. This is not the first I am hearing this. I've experienced, I've seen this play out in real time on both sides of the fence. So, I've seen it to where law enforcement basically says no, we don't need your help, no we don't want your help and they shut down information flow. They've shut down everything. I've seen that happen. I've also seen what happen when a search and rescue unit become a resource a law enforcement agency. I've seen how they can go tandem and work hand in hand with each other in that give and take. It actually boasters the search effort. They're trying to solve a problem too. They're trying to solve a case and they're trying to find this missing person. A search party, they are on the same objective but they are not on the same sheet of music. They're not on the same page at all. When they get on the same page, it's actually so empowering to see how those work together. When there's a trust in the law enforcement agency to say, I know that when this group goes out and searches and they find something, they're not going to trample evidence. They're going to be able to coordinate and preserve it the way it needs to be coordinate and preserved so they send sworn law enforcement out to process it. They know that if they find an individual or the quote on quote, the smoking gun, they're trained on how to specifically handle those things so it doesn't jeopardize future prosecution. When a search agency becomes lock step with a law enforcement agency, now we are in the best of both worlds. The way to get there is to become a resource for that law enforcement agency.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** President Wetherelt, I would like to make a motion to appoint Yolanda Fraser as the primary and Rosie Harris and the Alternate to the Task Force. That's my motion.

**ROSIE HARRIS:** One more question. With the Law Enforcement part. Are we going to have like a thing where we can all get together and have a brief before everything happens or are we

going to go and do what we have to do and come back? I kind of notice that a lot of that does happen too with the communication line.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Right and that's difficult to answer. I don't know your law enforcement personnel. I don't know if it's BIA or if there's any FBI around or you know, the tribal law enforcement. I don't know that so that's difficult for me to answer.

**ROSIE HARRIS:** A lot of the officers that do come on to our reservation, they're not from our reservation. Some of them don't know how to handle certain situations. Not only that, in Billings as well, they're not use to Native Americans. A lot of people still think we live in tipis. For me, I feel like there should be something where we can call upon outside so we can get the proper communication line before it even begins and then continue that as we go and do our searches. Like right now there is a boy missing up in Billings. He's 16. This one that just recently passed away. Why wasn't there no amber alert? Why wasn't there something put in place because, yeah, he was involved, maybe, in something that he shouldn't have been but he's still a young individual.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Right. Right.

**ROSIE HARRIS:** That should have been issued. At least, something, a BOLO or something to indicate that this young person is or could be in danger.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yes, and part of that comes through the training, as well. My philosophy is, at least through the task force end of things, how you guys run your search and rescue unit is how you run it. I have no control or say over any of that but our door will always be open and I will continually reach out to law enforcement because I was one at one time and I speak their language. I know their struggles. I know what's happening with them. So, I want to continue to reach out to them even if they say, no we don't want to talk to you today. Ok, how about tomorrow? How about next week? And just keep it open. I really think the way that this gets answered, on a large scale, is to become a resource for them and have that training. Have that skillset. Have that equipment. Have all of the things so when a problem, when a search kicks off, you can help solve problems for them. That's what they're looking for. Especially in the early phases of an acute missing person case where time is critical and resources are limited. To have a group of people that is trained and equipped and educated to go out and assist and bolster their investigation is the answer to that. That's some of the training that I want to conduct through the search and rescue teams training grant.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok. There's a motion on the floor and a second.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** I just want to say thank you again Justin. Then, we have people from our NCIS. Everyone can meet and discuss with him after the vote here.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** We have also our search and rescue's here and then, one more question.

**AUGUST SCALPCANE:** I got a question. You're with the State. Are you guys going to look at older cases because I have case with one my niece. It's going on 3 years now and she was, I want to say murdered in Billings. They found her when she went missing. We didn't have help. Thank God some of our people from here went looking for her. When she was found, she wasn't fully dressed. I ain't going to say what she was missing in clothes. After she was found, her clothes were found at north side along with her phone. There was a girl she was with. They gave us 6 different stories. 6 different stories on what happen that night but yet nothing's been done. She had bruises all over her and scratches. On her neck, she was strangled but yet nothing's been done. They just said that she drowned. This girl named 4 different locations they were at. I drove to Billings and talked to all these people and she wasn't there. I was fortunate enough to look at some the cameras from these places that the lady said she was at. Looked at certain times and she wasn't there. I was fortunate enough that some of those businesses let me look at the cameras and go through hours. She told me she was at the Metra and to talk to the security guard. She gave me the name and number. I followed up and went there and talked to the security. This lady, she is still free. She is still around here. She took the bag back to my mom's house with nothing in that backpack. Which is kind of crazy. She gave her a whole different story too. There're enough red flags there and I know you're on the task force but still, nothing's been done. I know she's not hanging here with the rest of these guys. Maybe it's my fault for not putting her poster out there but her life mattered too. I know she was kind of an addict but her life still mattered. I talked to her all that day when she was going to a concert. She was actually in contact with me. She ran out of gas in Hardin and that's the last time I talked to her. The next day I ran into this girl she was with. It's kind of crazy I ran into her the next day and she gave me a totally different story. Long story and that's when we reported her missing. And she was found, I drive by that every day, I mean every weekend. I go to Billings every weekend and I look down there. I'm always wondering what happen to her. She was laying by the Yellowstone County river. I always look at that area when I'm down there. I went down there a couple times now. But yeah, Yellowstone County won't do anything about it. Probably because she's native. I don't know. That's all I can think of. Are you guys going to look into those cases?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** So, like I said before, I don't have the ability to look into individual cases. But what I do have is protocol to give kind of resources and ideas on how to keep cases moving forward. Even if it's inch by inch. Those are the things I'm certainly willing to share and I can point you out to different resources. Through the task force we can kind of develop that. In short answer, I don't have the capability to look into individual cases.

**AUGUST SCALPCANE.** Ok. I've worked in law enforcement. I know what's a red flag. Before I started working there. I knew. He told me to keep digging and I did. I found out kind of who was with them that night. That lady lied about it. There was more than one of them that night. There're so many different, crazy stories that they say happen that night. I'm hoping, if you are a part of this, you can bring it up and you can push it or whatever. Or point me in the right direction of who I need to talk to.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** For sure. For sure.

**COUNCILWOMAN LITTLE EAGLE:** Can you send us a draft MOU for the, is it for the grant?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Yeah. So, the MOU's, we'll get those worked through. I'm still not entirely sure what that language looks like but I do want to make it clear that if you guys get that language as a council and you don't like it, please let me know and we can work on whatever the verbiage is that you don't care for or if you like it as is, we'll communicate. We'll talk about it. This is far too important to not give it the effort. That's what I can sit here and promise you is that I'm going to give it the effort in hopes that we'll make some impactful changes. I will get those to you when that is available.

**COUNCILWOMAN LITTLE EAGLE:** Ok. Is the grant accessible right now or is it?

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** So, the way that the law reads, currently, is that this grant is here. It exists. They funds have been transferred. The money is there. Any money that goes there, stays there. In order to access this money, you have to number one, have the MOU; number two, protocol for team activation, which again, I have and all it needs is to be tweaked to be specific to your local community and then three is to engage in some community action planning, which again, we have the protocol. So, these are hurdles. These are small things but they are hurdles, they are not barriers. We can get through them. We can get over them.

**COUNCILWOMAN LITTLE EAGLE:** Is the grant first come, first basis or is kind of like allocated to each tribe.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** So, that hasn't really been discussed, to my knowledge. It is \$61,000 so I kind of want to do the best bang for the buck, sort of speak, and make sure that it's tailored to everybody so everybody is getting the opportunity to seize upon it. I don't want to have it just go to one or the other or do this and that. So, one potential item, again this'll be up for task force discussion once everybody is seated, is to say, hey, these are some things that I would like to do. Perhaps we host a big training in a centrally located place in the State. Maybe Great Falls. Maybe somewhere else. Bring everybody there to begin with and that's when we can start doing, managing the inland search function. That's when we can start doing the fundamentals of search and rescue, wilderness, first aide, CPR. As we develop and get that initial plunge over with, we get money kind of going through, cycling through, then we can start talking about technical rescue stuff. High angle rescue; low angle rescue; swift water; ice water; many various other types of aerial skits; people trained in operating drones for search and rescue purposes. Kind of growing on it from there but the first thing is to kind of get everybody that fundamental kick off, here goes, we've got a missing person. What do we do and how do we do it in order to gives us the best probability of finding what we're looking for. One thing I want to teach.

**COUCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** I was in the middle of my vote as well.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Sorry.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Yeah. That’s ok. That’s ok. Like I said, thank you for coming. Yolanda and Rosie, are you willing to accept the task force? Ok. I have to abstain because Yolanda is my sister but I am behind this 100 percent. Just so you know.

**A MOTION TO APPOINT YOLAND FRASER AS PRIMARY AND ROSIE HARRIS AS ALTERNATE TO THE STATE MMIP TASKFORCE.**

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Debra Charette.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>9 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>1 Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok, really quick. We have an individual from Search and Rescue that would like to say something too.

**THERESA SMALL:** I am the liaison for the Tribe and the State. I am the former DES Coordinator for the Tribe. I am the coordinator for the grassroots people who are sitting here. I would like to say thank you Yolanda and Rosie for offering and stepping up. You are both very good advocates. Thank you for your voice. You’ve helped in so many ways with me when I’m not a voice. That’s one thing that I noticed about myself is that I don’t really voice. I work. I act. By doing so, in the time that we’ve been a part of MMIP, we’ve seen a lot of things come to light that we don’t have and making them changes and setting the rules, setting up the amber alert. There are many more that we can work on. You talk about training. When I was in DES, yes, we did provide training. We worked with the Law Enforcement. They have a program that is over the plan of operation for the Tribe so perhaps that can be something that can be added to that plan of operations. We do, at the moment, get called to work with the Law Enforcement and the NCIS. Of course, it’s all grassroots so community does bring home our people. There is no really no searching like the search and rescue. How we understand it to be is that here, everybody helps because we are a village and taking initiative to be accountable and responsible to our youth and for each other, for ourselves. Obviously, we can’t give what we don’t get, right? So, it’s having that understanding and always responding. Like Melissa said, we don’t push people aside because they are or for whatever reason. Winter time is harsh here. Everybody has to go out and get wood here. It’s a different ----- all winter season compared to the spring and summer. We’re always together. We operate together. There’s always someone willing to do it. We are acknowledged by the council and hopefully, still, we’ll continue to work with the

youth. That is, what I say is that grassroots search and rescue is not mine. It doesn't belong to anybody but it belongs to everybody. Everybody is responsible. What we've found is that people might be quiet and might not come to the, you know, they might not show up but in some point and time, it's going to happen to their family and we want to be available to always assist.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you. I know others might have questions for him. He can be available out in the hallway.

**THERESA SMALL:** I brought a t-shirt to give to you. We did, recently, we do go to the schools, by the way. We do go to the schools. We do our jobs in the communities for doing the - - - - of drives. Simple things like that to keep active. To keep people engaged. To keep the volunteers engaged. This is a shirt for you. This is recent when we went to the high school and did a, kind of an acknowledgement of the high school students. Then asking the people to stand up, one by one if they were doctors, lawyers, janitors. Everybody that played a part in our community, we have that responsibility to look out for our kids.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you.

**THERESA SMALL:** We also work with. Also, I just wanted to say one more thing. We do have partners that we work with. The Sovereign Body's Institute and the Soul Bird Fund. Those people are very, very important. So, if you could advocate for them and support them please. Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you.

**JUSTIN KAMBIC:** Thank you all for your time. I appreciate it.

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## **ITEM #2 – INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE UPDATE**

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Good morning everyone. Thanks for having me today. I handed out a copy to all the council members for our March 2024 report from the Northern Cheyenne Service Unit. The remaining 3 pages are a copy of our vacancy announcements right now that are out on USA Jobs. So, we'll take a minute at the end of my report to go through those before questions. So, if we take a look at the operations summary for March's report you can see from total visits by service. Break down the last 3 months and essentially everything is fairly normal. We did have over a thousand visits again through our Urgent Care clinic in the month of February which is notable. That is something that we're addressing to try to shift some of our operational capability in terms of how many providers and nurses are on staff. So, just so you are aware, that is some of the, I guess, implications of this data and what we do with it. Our clinic visits totals for the month of February were 1,906. PRC, which is also going to be a topic that we'll talk about after we get through this report, the data report. But, the PRC funding, we are still operating at our normal medical priority level of a four. We've issued, year to date, so far, almost 2,000 referrals out of the facility and spent almost 2 million dollars on those total.

Moving into 3<sup>rd</sup> party collections, there's nothing out of abnormal, I guess, per say, in those areas. If you take a look at the variance column, you'll see where we're projected through, basically the middle of this fiscal year. Medicaid and private insurance funding are just on track. Medicaid is a little bit higher for this time of the fiscal year. Staffing, we have a total of 179 total positions funded at our facility. 68 of which are currently vacant. That is a hard vacancy rate of 37%. We are currently filling 18 of those positions with contractors. All of which are direct service medical staff which takes our adjusted vacancy rate to 27% overall. Our next governing body meeting will actually be at the end of April but I haven't received the day yet. I'll send that out to you, President, as soon as I receive that. I guess the only thing I'll also list on this reporting, data report, is we're currently onboarding a new dentist. She should be starting, we're hoping by the end of the month and she will be replacing Dr. Kumbah, who recently left. We are conducting interviews for the clinical director position, I just seen that last week. And, currently conducting interviews for the CEO and Deputy CEO positions. All of those are being handled by Bryce Redgrave, the Area Director and the Area Office Administrative staff.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** I'd like to ask. I know there was a date set to go through the CEO applications and I think you were interviewing too.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Yes.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** What happen with those?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERMAN:** So, they chose to re-advertise the position to solicit additional applicants. So, when you have less than three qualified, Indian Preference applicants on a roster that you receive for any position, you do have the availability to re-announce it or re-advertise it to try to solicit more applicants. To have a bigger pool, basically, to select from. Currently that is the process that is being followed. Just for clarity, I was not on the interview panel or I was not being interviewed for the position.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Ok. You had 2 people apply for it.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Yes. We had 2 applicants.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** So, will the be on your next roster?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Yes. They remain on the panel. Any Indian Preference applicant that shows up on a panel, remains on the panel. No matter how many times we re-advertise or try to solicit additional applicants, they remain on the panel. They won't have to submit any additional information, make changes to their applications or anything. They remain valid on the roster.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Registration going any smoother with people checking in?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** I think so. I can tell you that the complaints decreased from the patient regs process. I do know that we still got some kinks to work out for sure but I

think the best feedback that I received is that it's a lot quicker. You know, I think that our new staff in that new department have finally kind of settled in and started to get the hang of things. We've had a lot of our patients that are updated now so it's not requiring as much time at the patient reg area. I think all of those things, we knew it was going to be really hard in the beginning but what we're starting to see is what we thought it was going to start getting easier once we got a lot of our patients updated.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Easier as we go because that's our complaint we hear from the community.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Time? Yes, and we hear it from the medical staff, as well, because then we have patients that are running late for appointments. It sets the day back and it has a snowball effect. I think, as far as I'm aware, it's generally getting better. I frequently go through the front as well. I haven't seen any big lines or anything so I think the process is working and it should, hopefully, just continue to get better.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** Is there a process for expedited services to those that are like senior citizens, like elderly? Because I hear comments about I have to wait and wait and wait. I think there should be some consideration given to those that are within that age group and need to go to the clinic but they don't want to sit there all day.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** So, we do have a policy and I'm speaking just about the walk-in clinic actually Norma. So, this would be somebody who doesn't have an appointment, of course, but they came in and they wanted to see a provider for an acute illness or something that came up. We have a policy that's actually priority built in for elders which we consider anybody age 55 or older and young newborns under the age of 6 months. The newborn portion is typically because often times babies can be very ill and you're not immediately aware of it until you triage them, you know, receive their vitals and stuff like that. We try to expedite the triage process for those patients to make sure that, I guess, that's part of the expediting, the care but if there's an emergency in the back, for example, there's only one provider on currently and so, after being triaged and assessed and making sure that somebody else isn't experiencing an emergency, the staff is going to allot their time and energy to taking care of that patient. I hope that elders especially, aren't waiting a long time. I imagine if they are, that's probably the case. There's an emergency or something critical in the emergent care that the provider is tending to. Does that answer your question a little bit Norma?

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** Not really but I guess if there's an effort to service that age group and you're aware of it, that's good. One of the recommendations that someone made was that if they could set aside like a certain day, certain hours that they prioritize elders so that they can come in during that time and not have to wait. That was a suggestion someone made to me.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Sure. I can take that back with me.



**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** I thought that would be good because then the community would know on a certain day if I go in as an elder that I'm going to be seen right away instead of having to wait there.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** If they couldn't get an appointment or whatever the case may be.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** It's hard to get an appointment too. I mean, like even for me, I call and I can't get an appointment. Today is March, I'll be lucky if I get one for the end of April or early May.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** I'll take that back to the group and talk about it. I think that's definitely an idea.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** Ok. Thank you.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Especially when our access is limited, like you mentioned. Having limited primary care services. It's hard to get an appointment.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** I think we're finding too that a lot of people or a lot of tribal members have issues. They have health issues but they don't want to go to the clinic. They don't want to sit there and wait. Then when it gets really bad, they go and sometimes it's too late to do anything for them other than just try to relieve their pain. So, I think that we need to maybe focus a little bit more on prevention stuff. That's even with our side, Tribal Health part of it. I really believe in prevention and if we could get people to understand that the sooner you go in and get yourself checked and get referred to physical therapy to get you moving again. Those kinds of things will help people but right now the way I see it, I mean, I see it in my own sisters, they'll wait until they just can't deal with the pain anymore or by then, you know, it's become a major health issue instead of going in when it was just a minor thing.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** And catching it early.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** The problem is they don't like to sit down there and wait and wait. That's why I'm saying that if there was certain amount of time or hours set aside for seniors, that may make a difference. Thank you.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Yeah. Thank you, Norma.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** As far as like prevention goes and I know like our Tribal Health and our CHR's and PHN's can help but if we could get something set up with your staff to provide both male and female screenings of different kinds and the other question I had was on the dental. Is there still no surgical referrals being made?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Actually, the day after I was here talking with you all, when we had the postpone meeting, the day after that they did get that contract re-initiated. So, we actually have 2 oral surgery offices in Billings that are currently receiving our referrals.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Ok.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** So, thankfully that got re-established. We did have some patients that were on a waiting list so those patients were notified. Their referrals were approved and their appointments were initiated. Hopefully people didn't have to wait too long but that did get done.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** The ones that go to Crow hospital, are they being taken in as. Are they being seen over there? Because our shares are still there.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Do you mean. For what services?

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** If they're getting referred out from here and if that's even just to Crow, are they being seen over there?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** We do. So, what we call it is a consult. So, we consult with Crow. Because we are like a shared service, basically. They are a hospital. You're absolutely right.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Yeah.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** In that it's the Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital so our patients have the right to services there as well. The only difference is our patients their PFC rights are through Lame Deer so they come out of our budget. So, that is something really, I guess, pertinent to mention is that, I think, our patients get confused. What I hear a lot is that we have patients that go to dental over in Crow and they'll tell them, we'll make you an appointment; we'll schedule you a referral to go to Billings to have this done. I've heard braces for one. They'll say, we'll refer you out to get your braces put on your teenager and that patient, their PRC referral actually gets sent back to Lame Deer because that's the process. They are actually a Lame Deer patient. In the ----- coverage, they fall under us and they're Northern Cheyenne so they're our patient. So, what happens is we don't cover braces because we don't have a budget for it. There's a lot of other reasons why. It's actually under the Chief Dental Officer. There's been a lot of reason why we don't cover braces here in Lame Deer. A lot of places don't. So, what happens is, that patient gets a notice that says your dental referral was denied because Northern Cheyenne does not cover this service. So, now the patient is confused because they just had a dentist in Crow tell them that they were getting referred for these braces but they get this letter in the mail that says no. So, I guess just to clarify for everybody, the reason is PRC program at Northern Cheyenne, we operate under our own functions just like Crow does theirs, Ft. Washakie does theirs. All the service units. We all, independently, have our own budget and we have our own operations. So, we determine what we can and cannot cover based on the money, based on the funding resources, everything. That's a major source of confusion and I've tried and I can definitely try again working with the clinical director in Crow to have them train their staff on what to say and what not to say because it's very confusing.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** So, with that being said. Do they have that kind of funding? Do they have that kind of, do they have a budget? Is anything that they get, as far as funding, do they include our name? Because on the front of the building it says Crow/Northern Cheyenne hospital. Is any of this funding that you're talking about where they are able to provide this service for their people, is any of that coming because of our name being on that hospital?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Technically no. The majority of their funding is actually. Their appropriations are based on the Crow population. So, when we talk about appropriated money versus the money that they used to build that building, that's where our name came in. They used our population to justify. They needed the whole number from the Crow reservation and the Northern Cheyenne to justify that size of a hospital. The staffing and the inpatient beds and all that were allotted on that population. Appropriated money that they get from Congress, for example, that's based on servicing the Crow reservation. So, that's our funding is for servicing Northern Cheyenne. So, that's kind of how that's broken apart. Where they do get money is when our patients go to their service unit because they are using that service. They are receiving the funding for those visits and whatever procedures and whatever else that entails. The possibly third-party re-imburement would be considerable for that. We really do want our patients to choose us and that's something I've been saying repeatedly for the last 6 months. We don't want to be the only place that our patients want to come because we're the closest. We want our patients to come here because they want to come here. We want to be their first choice. Patients that have Medicaid; patients that have other resources, they can go anywhere. So, why are they going to come here. That's really what we are trying to target is quality. Trying to improve quality care because right now we don't have quantity. We're short on providers in multiple areas but what can we do with that. You know, if we don't have the numbers right now, which we're working on. We've got to really focus on quality and making sure that the care that people are being provided is adequate plus and that the things we are doing are above and beyond so that people are choosing to come back. That's really how a health system should run is by putting the value of services first. Anyway, does that answer your question.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Yes. It does and I want to tell you how much I appreciate you having a steel answer to that question because I've seen it asked by my colleges throughout the last year, several times, to the CEO of the IHS previously. He never, never had a straight answer like that. I really wish that you would apply for the position to be permanent because you provide with things that just have not been provided to us and it's a breath of fresh air. Hopefully the person who takes over the position takes it as seriously as you do. So, thank you.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** I agree but the good thing is, I'm going to be there in some capacity.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Sable, we have 2 questions.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** There's a couple things. When he first talked about the relationships between the Crows and Cheyenne with the hospital money how they used our name for surplus. I also heard that when there are referrals that there is an agreement or ----- agreement. I don't care how you put it. In order for them to make any referrals out from Crow,

they have to meet your approval. I think that they should be able to make referrals because theirs a doctor and he should be able to make that referral to Billings. That's my opinion. You're here to service the people not make up policies to block them from their healthcare. Another thing I want to talk about is the ambulances. I was sent out on an ambulance 9 o'clock at night, give or take. I was released 2:30 in the morning. Now, if you don't have someone to go after you, you are stranded. That needs to improve. You don't leave patients. That happened to my boy too. Luckily, I didn't get in the ambulance. They wanted me to. For some odd reason I said no, I'll take my own transportation. Had I not, I'd have been stranded in Billings. Same thing happens to my boy. He's going to be released right now. A two-hour, give or take, drive. I said hey, give me a break, I'm 71 years old. I'll be up there as soon as possible. Leave him in the hospital. Oh, you're going to just release him out into the cold? So, you need to improve that relationship so a lot of Cheyenne's are not stranded at the hospital. As far as your new little who are you and what are you doing, what's your name, what's your birthday, blah, blah, blah. You need one person doing that. You have one person in registration, then you go over to the nurse's station, they re-do it, then you get to the doctor, they re-do it. I went in there to do physical therapy. I jumped through the hoops, get there with my little band on and all of sudden they go, did you check in? I said, yes, I did. He said, well you know there's a lot of blah, blah, blah putting down Cheyenne people that we are trying to see in there. Why are they trying to sneak in there because it's time consuming? Everybody's time is precious. I think one person for patient registration is fine in there but to make it sound like all Indians, Cheyenne's are out to get you or whatever and go through 3 layers of referrals or 2 layers of who are you information, that needs to be improved. I said, you know, I didn't come here for you to do this. I came here because I am hurt. I need to know what I can do to improve besides, here's a band. He said, well, people are cutting them and re-using them. Do I care? I'm in there to take care of a medical problem. That was really unprofessional. On another occasion, I asked for pain killers. I fell and they couldn't figure out what was wrong with my shoulder. They said, well you know, we'll have to do a drug test on you. I said, bring it on. They didn't do a drug test on me and I didn't get any painkillers. I went in for ibuprofen and acetaphetamine and they gave me ibuprofen but not the other one. When I asked, hey, I didn't get this one. They said, we gave it to you. I said, no, you didn't. Simple medicines. From what I understand, they want to go generic and they get some sort of feedback from generic if they give people generic medicine. They should have a choice. When we came here with the agreement with the Unites States Government, one of the choices was health and yet we're being just drug around like we don't have any feelings. The relationship between the patient and the hospital staff needs to be improved. I've seen when you walk in, the security guard acts like you are going to break into something. You know, we're not a military hospital. We are under that at the beginning of the reservation period. We're no longer there. We should expand relationships where you treat people, patients with dignity and respect. Thank you.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Thank you Amanda.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Let me clarify really quick. So, just for Amanda's clarification. You talked about, one of the things you mentioned was Crow not being able to put

in referrals until they check. Just so you know, they do put the referrals in. What happens is when the referrals get routed for payment, that's when it's issued as a denial. So, just to clarify.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Yeah. You need to make better relationship than that. I started going to Crow because I couldn't get help here. 6 months with a broken shoulder.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** I'm hoping that things are improving. Like I said, that's one of the things that we are working on. I appreciate your feedback.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Thank you. Appreciate it.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** You said you guys could help with implants and all that stuff. You guys got procedures on helping people if you need help on cavities?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** In dental?

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** I feel like everything should be computerized. Everything is computerized to stop getting people through. We wait and wait around all the time. Have to get on the computer and wait around, like she said. So, do you guys help with implants up there for people who want implants.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Oh, in Billings?

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** Yeah. Or in Crow.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** So, currently we do not and one thing I will tell you just so everybody is aware. I know there's been some misconception about or misunderstanding, I think, about what Crow will refer out and pay for and what we will based on funding. I will tell you there is a good reason for that and I think Crow is finding that reason out right now, unfortunately. So, currently, right now, we don't cover implants out of the Northern Cheyenne Service Unit.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** Can anybody be transferred to Crow Service Unit.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** So, no because if you are covered under PRC through here, out of Northern Cheyenne, we do not currently cover implants out of PRC.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** Where will they cover it to? Which place in Billings or Crow?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Crow. So, Crow was. They actually, I believe, just recently stopped doing it. They were paying for it for patients that came out of their Crow PRC money.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** From there they would go to Billings?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Yeah. Yeah. Usually they would go to Billings. They would get transferred to Billings or referred to Billings for that.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Merlin, but right now she said there's no funding for implants.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** You guys don't do that no more?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Not right now and I'm pretty sure Crow discontinued it as well.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** What about Medicaid?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Medicaid does not cover it. It's considered cosmetic.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** When will there be help for that again for implants?

**COUNCILMAN LIMBERHAND:** He wants to know if there will be funding that's going to be coming through the clinic to

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** In the future?

**COUNCILMAN LIMBERHAND:** Yeah. In the future to help.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Possibly. I don't want to rule anything out. I think anything definitely is an option that we'll look at. Yeah.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** How about in the future to help the people. Is that money going to be received in the future?

**COUNCILMAN LIMBERHAND:** He wants to know when the time is. The timeframe on when

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** I don't know. I can't say for sure but it would definitely be a time when we gotta have more funding and more appropriations.

**MERLIN CRAZYMULE:** Ok. Thank you.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Thank you. The last I just wanted to mention a few things. I've been getting some questions about PRC. I just got some questions out in the audience while I was waiting. Just so everybody is aware, the staffing shortage that's occurring across the country. Really not just in Indian Health Service. I'm sure anybody that reads the paper, any sort of journal, can tell you that healthcare and education have been staggeringly hit with staffing shortages across the country. Just starting to try to rebuild out of that. I've been telling all of you this for the last 6 months. What we're seeing though is that also in some of our non-healthcare related positions, those are really areas that took a hit. Some of our clerical, staff assistant roles, were vacated. By our, I do not just mean in Lane Deer but as an organization,

I.H.S. has a staggering amount of clerical positions that are left open. What that does is the paperwork volume or the work load of completing some of our, on the back end of care tasks, are what's being hit right now. So, many of you are probably seeing that in regard to the PRC Program. We have a lot of patients that have called and they are receiving bills. They are receiving collections notices. I've had several brought to me personally from our patients here. So, we are aware of it and communicating those concerns and things up through the chain starting at area office to try to figure out how we can better expedite our claims and referrals that are being processed, patients are getting the care. Then on the back end they are getting a bill or receiving some sort of notice for non-payment. We are trying to work with our big hospitals, which would be St. V's, Billings Clinic, Crow, obviously, Hardin Hospital to try to make sure that their billing offices are aware that I.H.S. is short staffed and that we're basically taking longer to process some of those claims and pay out. Everybody has been pretty open to understanding and they've also acknowledged this situation that they're in. The bottom line is I just wanted to make sure that everybody was aware that that is occurring and we're aware of it and we're trying to address it. Hopefully, one of the positions on this chart that I passed out to everybody, the office automation clerk is actually a PRC position and we had no applicants on our last advertisement. We are going to be re-advertising that. Hopefully by the end of this week it will be out on USA Jobs. Anybody can go and take a look. We have all these positions. There's actually, currently, there's I want to say 17 advertised on USA Jobs for Lame Deer specifically. We're working on advertising, hopefully over the next 3 weeks, we'll have at least 10 more out on the streets. There's a lot of job opportunity anywhere from something that requires a license; something that requires a certificate or something that requires a high school education. So, if you have proof of a high school transcript, a GED or a diploma, I encourage you to please get out there and look on that USA Jobs site. Part of addressing this short staffing issue here locally is by having good people from here apply. I can say it until I am blue in the face but once again we didn't have any applicants for that PRC job. It's a base requirement, high school diploma, GED, on the job training; you know, great benefits. So, I would just like to implore anyone out there, please let your family know, let your friends know we have jobs on the website that are open. On that end, with recruitment, we're hosting some career days. The first one is in Colstrip this Thursday. In the afternoon we have 6 different employees from different disciplines going to basically give a short presentation on what the Indian Health Service has to offer for health positions and that's going to be targeted at the I.H.S. scholarship and I.H.S. loan repayment programs. So, we'll be providing all the students there, grades 9 through 12, the whole high school with that information. I've reached out to Sherri Foote from Lame Deer, I haven't heard back yet and also at Labre, we plan on doing the same thing there.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** We established a workforce development group. I can have Shandi add you to the list.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Yeah. That'll be great.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Someone can represent from I.H.S. As council, we're trying to figure out where we can best use our resources. Like to send some people to training. They have a career fair planned for the 17<sup>th</sup> of April. I believe it's up here at the high school but Shandi will have more information on that.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** That would be great if you could do that. One other question that I had come up was about the Billings Clinic Midwifery Program. I just wanted to let everybody know or clarify some confusion. I don't know if everybody read in the newspaper but actually the Billings Clinic Midwife Program was, I don't want to say discontinued. I don't think it was on Billings Clinic's behalf but all of their midwives left the service at Billings Clinic about 3 weeks ago. It was in the Billings Gazette. There was an article about it but I think they had a differing in opinion on how things were supposed to operate. Billings Clinic is moving towards a more Doctor driven program and so they're wanting their OB-GYN Md's to actually take on the, I guess, labor and delivery aspect of the care for patients and the midwives were going to be a supplement to that. They did not, apparently, think that was how they wanted to practice so they all left. What that did was our contract with Midwifery is actually through St. V's and it's through Billings Clinic. That's who our contracts are with. They are not with any individual practitioners. So, we did lose our Billings Clinic contract because there are not midwives that work there now. Once they hire midwives then we will look at re-establishing that contract. Currently, right now, we have a contract with St. Vincent Healthcare and so, we're trying to get them to provide additional days to make up for the patient load that we lost with Billings Clinic. I'll keep you posted on our progress with that because we hoping to get them to come 2 days a week. Currently, before we had Billings Clinic that would come on Tuesdays and St. V's would come on Thursday. So, we are trying to get St. V's to do Tuesday / Thursday and fill both of those days every week. We did have the volume of pre-natal patients to support that.

**MARIAH SOLDIERWOLF:** If we are referred or have an elder that is referred to like the hospital and from there they are referred to an assisted living, does I.H.S. help with care from there? Or, do you guys have contracts with any nursing homes?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** So, I have 2 answers for you. The first is before a month ago. So, previously, there was a very defined thing that we could help with and it was called Skilled Nursing Care. It was a snif stay, SNF. We could provide for a short time for somebody that had to go to, like, skilled rehab or something before they were safe to go home. So, they weren't in the hospital but they would go to Advance Care. For example, Advance Care hospital or somewhere where they need higher lever nursing care but they weren't quite ready to go home yet. We would be able to cover up to 30 days of that care. Now, the PRC's, the medical levels of care just changed about a month ago. A part of that is it actually expanded what we can cover. Now, what I'm finding out is we're actually going to be able to cover more services out of the hospital than before. The problem is I don't really know exactly how that lines out because it's still not technically nursing home care. It might be that we can provide SNF stay coverage for longer. So, more days. 60 days. We haven't been able to really pair down what the criteria is going to be. So, I don't have a clear answer for you at this time with the new changes that just came out. What I do see is the opportunity to provide more. It's going to be more in some way. I just don't know if it's going to be nursing home per say. Does that make sense?

**MARIAH SOLDIERWOLF:** Yeah. I have a family member. She was admitted to the hospital and from there she was put in a nursing facility. It was kind of a double edge because they were saying she needed the assistance because she couldn't perform her daily stuff. She couldn't even take herself to the bathroom. On the other side, they were saying they weren't getting any kind



of payment for her being there. So, on Friday, I believe it was, she checked herself out. Left AMA from there and I.H.S. provided transportation for her to leave when we were all trying to keep here there because she needed the help. I know ----- was saying that when the driver's transport, they are not supposed to help. Well, the driver had to help her out of the vehicle because she couldn't even walk from the vehicle. I guess my question is, is that allowable now?

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** So, no, it's not. Transportation also doesn't provide service to patients that leave AMA. I'd have to look into it, honestly Mariah, because a couple of things in there don't sound like a standard protocol that we follow. I will say that if it was SNF stay or something that was related to that level of care, like your describing, it should be covered under I.H.S. PRC. If you get me that information today, I can look into it and see exactly. A lot of times what's presented is not, you know, there's seven different ways to get to the truth. I'd like to look into it though.

**MARIAH SOLDIERWOLF:** Ok.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Thanks.

**HUBERT BLACKWOLF:** With I.H.S., I always do a lot of things for I.H.S. when they ask me. I asked you and before Killsback left I asked him too. When they built the new clinic, for years and years, they didn't honor him, my dad, for blessing that building. I asked Killsback to do that. Now, you're the third one. Me and my family just want to know when you guys are going to honor my dad. ----- Who's paying the bill for his stay at the nursing home in Crow.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Ok. I can definitely look into it Hubert. About your dad, I know we had spoken several times, right, about the plaque and the photo and that stuff out front. That's something I can definitely make sure I do before I am maybe out of this acting seat so we can make sure that he gets acknowledged. I'll put this on my to-do for at least the next couple of months to try to make sure that we do that. I agree, it's important. He was a big part of the initial start of that facility and it's deserved. So, thank you.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LITTLEMOUTH, SR.:** Diabetes is on the rise on the reservation. Still having a dialysis center. Any plans of that.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** Yeah. So, I'm actually. I was attending the meetings. I actually wasn't the lead on it. I believe that was Kayla Grinsell. She was facilitating. Right, Silver? I haven't received an invite, I want to say for this month. The last meeting that I attended, I actually talked with Terry, who was the coordinator for Soaring Eagle about 2 months ago. That was the last I heard about it, Ernest. The last I heard we were still on progress toward planning for it. The land had been, I guess, identified where it was going to be and we had made it that far in the I.H.S. portion of the plan.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LITTLEMOUTH, SR.:** Ok. That's good to hear.

**ACTING CEO, SABLE KERZMAN:** That was all I had for today. Anything else? Oh, I have one thing. Sorry. We had talked, the last time I was here, about identifying someone to serve, or a couple of people to serve on a retention or recruitment effort and we were going to look at a cultural planning committee or something like that if you recall. We talked about, you know, what are some things we can do to bring people here since we are in the middle of nowhere. We are really isolated. We are really rural. You know, here to us, this place is home and it means a lot. To other people coming in, for instance, doctors. How do we get them here? How do we lure them here? To leave these big cities. To leave these other I.H.S. facilities that have all these amenities, that have these amazing places and come out here to Lame Deer, Montana, you know, to live in our world. That is a big ask so one of the areas, I think, we can target is cultural immersion. I'm just reiterating this Deb because not everybody was here. I think that if we try to market a part of what we are, which is who we are, in being Northern Cheyenne and we use that to try to entice people to really get them to see what life is like for us here and how it's so unique and really just that uniqueness of who we are and what this place is. If we use that, I feel like that's something that no one else can compete with. So, I'd like to start there with developing a work group. I guess what I'm asking is I'd like to see maybe 2 tribal council members that are identified for that and then maybe if there's any community involvement. If anybody wants to serve I'd love to have that so we can try make this a more community wide effort in recruiting healthcare folks and recruiting people to the clinic. What I found is that it's really, really hard for us to just do internally. To me, as a tribal member and a community member, it's all of our problem. It's all of our concern to get good doctors here and to get good nurses and good healthcare staff. So, I just really want to see more community wide involvement in how we can do this and how can address it. It can start with cultural immersion and we can definitely expand on it but I think we at least start there and I need all of your help in that. Thank you.

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### **ITEM #3 – ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES FOR THE TRIBE**

**ED JOINER:** Good morning. Thanks for having us. I wanted to introduce you to a couple of guys that are into economic development. Right now, there's a lot of money floating around for grants and things that usually weren't in the past. As a county, Rosebud County, actually have, I'm not sure right now, numerous grants that we got years ago. We never even thought about getting a grant but a lot of them have been pretty easy to get. There's a lot of money out there. I think it's important for the Tribe to know it and it's important for us to make contact and for you guys to have a contact person that these guys can get ahold of to get some of this stuff going. We had a meeting a couple weeks ago on highway 212 and it was brought that it might be a good idea to turn 212 into a scenic highway. What that'll do is take all the interstate semi traffic off of the road. I kind of don't think that's going to be a real good possibility but the next day I talked to somebody, I won't mention any names, but I talked to somebody from Busby and he said, we don't want to do that because we're thinking about putting in a travel plaza up for trucks and if there's no trucks then the travel plaza won't go through. So, people kind of need to know which way the Tribe wants to go with some of this stuff. Like I said, there is a lot of money out there that people are eligible to get. So, I know we talked about before the travel plaza thing, the different ventures to go through. These guys kind of need to know a contact person or group to get ahold of and able to get the information that their doing through to the Tribe. I know Jim's

been working on a feasibility study for the truck plaza. It's got a lot of support but we kind of hit a snag because there's not like a true contact person for the Tribe to follow up on it that these guys know about yet. I'm just going to turn it over to them. Like I said, there is a lot of money out there now and I think it's important the Tribe gets involved. Even like for the Coal Board grants. The Coal Board has quit a bit of money and according to the date regulations about the Coal Board, Tribes are eligible for at least 17% of that money. I don't think the Tribe's applied for a Coal Board grant for a couple years even. So, there's a lot of money out there just sitting there. We just need to figure out how to go get it. I'll turn it over to Jim Atchinson and let him go.

**JIM ATCHINSON:** Thank you Ed.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Just really quick. This whole presentation, we met with Canon and then, there was already discussion for the travel plaza that took place years ago. So, there's plans we just discussed by phone some priorities. There was an email sent. I had Canon speak with Brian. He sent an email this morning. I just wanted to give that update.

**ED JOINER:** Some of that stuff is in the process but like the grant Canon's talking about is up to 50 million dollars, which is a lot of money and it's divided up between 3 counties and the Tribe. There is only a 5% match to that. I was talking to one of the Tribal members, I forgot his name now, but he said they're looking at community center for Lame Deer and they had plans for it and everything. A \$150,000 building which would be really nice but a 5% match on that is \$17,500. That should be pretty easy to come up with for a nice project like that. We're kind of in the works of doing stuff but we're kind of spinning our wheels too. Need to put the chains on and get some grip and head forward.

**JIM ATCHINSON:** Thank you Ed. Good morning everybody, Madam President, members of the Council. For the record, I am Jim Atchinson, Executive Director of Southeastern Montana Development Corporation. Our organization is a regional nonprofit economic development group that does whatever we can to create economic development and community development within the 4 counties of Custer, Rosebud, Powder River and Treasure, including the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation portion in Rosebud County. Our organization has been around since 1997 and I've been there for 23 years, going on 23 years already and just having the time of my life. I have a lot passion for what we do because we get to actually help people. So, we've done that for quit a few years. We have basically tools in our tool box for tools and I'll just briefly mention those. Business counseling. We help businesses get started and of course stay in business. We also have financing. We work with banks. We work with community development which is basically grants like Ed was mentioning. A lot of grants and also planning. We worked with Mariah and Colton on your comprehensive economic development strategy or what we call it is a SEDS plan. That revision was just recently completed. Like Ed mentioned, we're also involved with the highway 212 task force with grant writing and staff personnel involvement there. We're also working with Colton and Mariah on the travel plaza feasibility study as well. So, lots of projects that we're working on in this area. The big one right now is what we call just like valuated Ag, we're very excited about valuated energy opportunities within the region, whether it's green energy or traditional. Finding other alternatives to current energy opportunities within the area including transmission. Before I turn

it over to Canon on the TSED grant details, I just wanted to mention that our organization has a Board Director vacancy position also Madam President at Southeastern Montana that we have earmarked for the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council. So, with that I will turn it over to Canon Luerkens with the Montana Department of Commerce.

**CANON LUERKENS:** Hi everyone. Canon Luerkens. I'm the Industry Development Manager at the Montana Department of Commerce. I have a one-page handout. This is just a presentation that I gave to the Coal Board a couple days ago but all the information about this is really relevant. It's relevant to this project that we're talking about. A little bit of background. There's a company that's working on a transmission line upgrade that connects Colstrip to North Dakota. It's a big giant project that they're working on and they've got, I think, 9 regional utilities signed on for that. They are going to try to build, I think their estimate is a \$3.7-billion-dollar upgrade to the transmission line which is a huge, huge deal. Since they are planning to build this interstate transmission line, the department of energy has created a grant to help the communities that are going to be impacted by this construction and upgrade. That's called the TSED Grant. It's Transmission Siting and Economic Development. That's the opportunity that I kind of want to talk to you guys about today. So, that grant is a maximum of \$50 million dollars. That's the maximum that the State could apply for. That grant would go to help communities in Fallon, Custer, and Rosebud County and Northern Cheyenne within Rosebud County. We've been working with the County Commissioners to figure out kind of an equitable way to distribute that and find the match that's necessary right now to apply for it. That grant is due the first week of April. We're hoping to have our application completed by the end of this week so that timeline is coming up really quick. Our number one goal at this point is to capture that full 50 million dollars in the grant which is a pretty ambitious goal but it's going to be a huge deal for the region. We've been contact with other States in other groups and it feels like we have, so far, really, really good ground work put in to build out this application. I think we've identified 62 projects in the region that this could potentially benefit. The types of projects that it would benefit are things like roads, sewer, water. A lot of kind of the nuts and bolts infrastructure that is vitally important for any area. What we're doing in this application right now is taking one project from each of the areas, highlight that to the Department of Energy to show them that, hey these are four really good projects that we have although we have 60 other projects that could be funded. I think we put together somewhere around 300 million dollars in potential needs. So, again our whole goal right now is to submit this application to the Department of Energy and say, if all you can give us is 50 million that's fine, we have 300 million dollars' worth of things we would like to fund and we're just trying to go forth and get that full amount of funding. The way that we plan to that work would be if the Montana Department of Commerce gets that funding, we'll create a sub-grant program so the projects can come forward in Fallon, Custer and Rosebud Counties and then we would get that money out the door. Projects would need to just forward with 5% match which is a huge, I mean it's pretty amazing to get 95% of things paid for. So, you know, a million-dollar project would \$50 thousand dollars. It's a pretty amazing opportunity. We are really excited about this. Also, just to talk about the timeline for this. So, we are submitting our application here at the week of April. The funds won't become available until the transmission upgrade begins which is likely 2026. Could be as late as 2027. So, it is like 2 years down the road when this money would become available but that's actually, I feel like, pretty good timing for the big kind of projects that we're looking at and talking about. It gives folks plenty of time to be thinking about priority projects. It gives us plenty of time to get

that money and get this grant program set up. The hope is, at the beginning of 2026, if construction of the project starts, we can start to get that money out the door. I think we have 4 years to get the money out the door. We are just solely focused on getting that maximum amount of money and getting it out into the communities. I've been working with Melissa a little bit about this and it's been very helpful in trying to help identify some of the potential projects that could go in to this grant. We don't need the actual projects for 2 years when this is going to move forward and there's money available. It's been helpful to identify potential projects to be able to tell the Department of Energy, you know, look these are the projects that we're thinking about in the future, please do give us all that money so we can get this out the door. I would open this up for any questions that you guys have. I want to be fully transparent about what we've done, what our plans are and of course, we'd love your feedback about any of this.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** I connected Brian and Canon so they can discuss because our concern was whether or not we would be competing against the State if we had opportunity for grants. That was Canon's discussion with Brian and Brian did send an email. I'm pretty sure not everyone got to check their email today and a draft letter of support.

**CANON LUERKENS:** Ok. That's fantastic. I understand that there could be a little bit of concern that is you are supporting this TSED grant that that could hurt possibilities for other grants. I do not believe that is the case. I've reached out to the Department of Energy to get clarification about that. I do not think that there's any way that this would preclude you from getting any other grants or affect them in any way but we're going to try to get official word back from the Department of Energy about that to make sure.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** Did he explain that we are applying for grants that are set aside for the State and County. We're also going to apply for those funds that are set aside for Tribes and we don't want to jeopardize that if we're supporting this project.

**CANON LUERKENS:** Yeah. Brian did explain that to me and from my perspective, I also don't want you to jeopardize those chances in any way, as well. If they are large pots of money to help with some of the projects that you guys have, I mean, I think that is fantastic and you should pursue whatever the best potential is. If somehow supporting this grant would preclude you from those other grants or hurt your chances in any way then I would honestly say, please don't support this grant. You should go forward with the best opportunities that you have. I do not think that is the case and I want to be very clear that I am trying to figure out if that is the case at all.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** But you are not the decision maker for DOE. That's why I feel it's important for us that we hear that from DOE that it won't jeopardize the funding that we're seeking through the set aside and not jeopardize that. I think we need a little bit more clarification from DOE before we support this.

**CANON LUERKENS:** Yup. I spoke to Brian on Friday. I emailed the Department of Energy over the weekend to ask that specific question to see if they could give us some guidance on that. As of this meeting, they have not replied to me yet. So, I totally understand if you want to wait to get clarification from them because, again, I don't want to hurt your chances for these other

grants. There is, as Ed said, a lot of money available these days and I think it's really important that you guys, that the State of Montana, that all of the economic development groups are kind of working together to figure out what makes the most sense and try to capture as much of that money as possible. As soon as we hear word back from DOE I will, of course, let you guys know that. Our timeline is pretty short on this so we're hoping to submit our application in 2 weeks. We're hoping to have our application completed at the end of this week, have a week to review it and then submit it the following week. That's our plan. It's a pretty short timeline. I understand if you guys can't make a decision to support this by that point. That completely makes sense.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** We may be able to learn sooner. What you're requesting is a letter from the President. So, if we get something from our attorney that says DOE says that it won't jeopardize what we're doing then we're ok with that but until then I can't support anything like that today.

**CANON LUERKENS:** Yup. I completely understand that. I'll just say, as I said, I'm going to try to press the submit button two weeks from today. So, our timeline is pretty short. If we can get clarification from DOE and Brian Chestnut, is that something that could be, if everybody signs off on that, is that something that the Tribal Council would support? Or the President would support if everyone thinks that is a positive thing? I'm just asking.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Once we get that, we'll review it. We'd make our decision and if it's a go then we'll provide the President with our letter.

**CANON LUERKENS:** Ok. Ok. Any other questions or concerns about this? I actually just want to say one more thing. I fully understand that people approach the Tribe for support because that looks good to the Federal Government and I fully acknowledge that that has surely happened before. I also want to say that is not my intentions in this in any way. I would love to have your support and the reality is, that does help our application. I'll be very honest about that but I also want this to directly benefit your community because it is an unprecedented opportunity for money to invest and to help grow economic development and to help with the real needs of the communities. I just wanted to say that I fully acknowledge that and I want to work closely with you throughout this.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Well, we thank you for your words and what you said about the Tribe. Appreciate that. We're here to protect the best of the Tribe also so thank you.

**CANON LUERKENS:** Yup. Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Thank you for reaching our Canon and Jim.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Within this grant, is there any room for employment or training?

**CANON LUERKENS:** Yes. Definitely. The grant is pretty wide open. They say economic development and that could be. We've been focusing on sewer, water, roads, that sort of stuff because it's some real nuts and bolts stuff that we could say, these are x amount years old and

they're beyond capacity. We can make a strong argument to the DOE that they should fund us because of that but this could help, workforce training, anything like that, definitely. If you want Chief Dull Knife College to be more incorporated with this and create some sort of certificate or training programs, that would be a fantastic use of these funds as well. So, it's very wide open in what this can be use for. I would say, when you read through it, it feels extremely wide open. Anything that can help with economic development. Which would, of course, include training, work force development, education. All sorts of things like that.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Ok. Another thing. The roads really need it. We have a truck route through 212. It's really dangerous. A lot of people have been dying on it. There're houses galore up and down the we probably need a third road or lane. People that live in the house right off the road can just go into the lane. I could be going 65 and be able to turn. A lot of us go on the side of the road because we can't really slow down when trucks are tailgating. Another thing is policing. Is that possibility?

**CANON LUERKENS:** Yeah. You know, I mentioned roads and sewer and water, that sort of thing. But another one of the key parts that we're focusing on is building up emergency services needs and that could be purchasing police cars, ambulances; creating a fire hall or something like that. So, emergency services are a big portion of what we're looking at as well as energy independence; green energy, that sort of thing. Those are some of the big things that we're focused on but emergency services would definitely count for this and I would say, as you mentioned, road safety. I mean, roads are not the most exciting use of money because they're so expensive but that's a perfect use for this grant is these really big, expensive projects that are hard to fund but are so important for community safety and for infrastructure.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Any other questions?

**CANON LUERKENS:** I would say, please reach out to me anytime for any questions. The paper that I just handed out, my email is on there but also my cell phone. Like, really, feel free to call me anytime. Text me anytime. I want to have a close working relationship on this and I think that there are great benefits in the future. I would also say, this is a great application. We're going for it. We think we have a really good chance of getting it but I think that there will be future opportunities down the road. If we don't get this, I want to work on other things in the future. Please, call, text absolutely anytime. I always have my cell phone on me and I try to pick up every phone call possible.

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#### **ITEM #4 – DISTRICT UPDATES**

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** Good morning. I don't have to many updates other than our Easter party. Our Easter egg hunt is supposed to be on Sunday but the weather said we're going to get a bunch of snow on Friday. So, depending what it looks like on Friday, we'll see if we're going to

have it on Sunday or not. Then I'll reschedule it. I guess I have a question for you Debbie on the stuff for the hall, for the metal and all that. I see that the budgets are not on the agenda.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Yeah. Everybody was out and we didn't get to have a meeting so we'll have to get together and meet.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** Our contractor can't do anything because we are waiting for that. So, do you have a timeline? Because he wanted to order metal today.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** That's what I was just telling her. We didn't do it yet so we'll have to get to it this week.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** So, like another 2 more weeks now? Tell Tommy to wait or like the next council meeting.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** I'd say, well, our next council meeting isn't until the 1st but if we do budgets, we can always have an emergency council meeting. We'll just get signatures and pass budgets.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** Because our hall is being on hold until that gets done. I believe he wants to do whatever order he is going in, he wants to get the shell done.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** We'll get on that as soon as we can since everybody is back in the office.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** Ok. I guess that's it. I just had an Easter announcement. Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** I don't see anybody from Ashland but we're kind of in that same boat. I'll just speak a little bit. We did get the funding for the Easter egg hunt. I was able to pick up all of the items. We wanted to have ours on Friday, the 29<sup>th</sup>. Right now, weather permitting because weather forecast shows snow again for the rest of the week after Wednesday. I guess we will just play it by ear with the weather. Not really sure about any other activities but I know that's in the works for the district. Nobody is here from Busby and nobody is here from Birney. We do have 2 individuals, again, here for Lame Deer. So, I'm not sure. What is your thoughts President?

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** When they came to see me, I just referred them down to Kayla because Kristi wasn't here. I don't know if they. Did it get approved?

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Haven't seen it.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** I spoke with them in the hallway too and made some suggestions but I'm not sure what to do.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** Has Lame Deer district appointed a district chairman?



**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Yeah. The last one was Hubert and he did have all of his paperwork to Kayla.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** But you are going to recognize Hubert as the Lame Deer district.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** I am not recognizing anyone because I think that it should come from the Treasurer after she looks at their plan of operations and their budget.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** It has to come from the district. The district has to come together.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Yes. I agree with her. You're saying that there is more than one district chair yet your referring them to finance to either expand or approve the money. I don't think so. If there's two districts, there's a dispute and you can't favor one over the other unless they go by the plan of operation.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** So, in the hallway I spoke to Hubert's group and they do have a document that served every past chairperson or every chairperson, four or more. They do have a notarized statement that they were personally served an agenda to the meeting to try to get all of the past chairs into one room so that they can take care of the issue. I believe that documentation they have. Was it submitted to finance?

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** That's legally binding but I never got served and I am one of the district chairs. So, I never got served so I don't know what you're talking about. Number one. Number two. They need to go to the regularly and what authority do you have to serve me? To my understanding, that isn't legal. That's an interpretation and I refused to take it as legal unless it's a court of law.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** The court of law here on the reservation did say that they do have jurisdiction over this and it did not accept the case. So, there's nothing that the Court will do to help the situation. So, I think that it's something that needs to be resolved because we don't have any charity and there are hundreds of Lame Deer district members here that are in need of assistance for food, for necessities, for help with electricity. There is just so much need in this community that something needs to be done. This issue needs to be resolved and I don't think it's the secretary's position to resolve it or to acknowledge it. I think that it's the people in this district and it's the adults that are saying I'm the chair person that need to come together and have this discussion because it's the people of Lame Deer that are suffering.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** If you read the plan of operations, it will tell you that group is illegal.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** I'm sure that there's been plenty of time for people to come together to get this resolved and I think that something needs to be done about it today. These people are coming to us for help and we have to turn them down because we don't the money to help them or we have to send them to the next person with PR because we don't have charity.

Now I know a lot of my colleagues have depleted their PR accounts helping the people because they're not able to go to their district and get the help.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** The next legally binding election will be this year at the same time as they elect a president. Tribal elections.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Go ahead Connie. Do you have something to say?

**HUBERT BLACKWOLF:** All you Tribal Council members. I am trying to do the right thing for our community. All these old people came to our meeting. I'm going by the book. Going by the ----- speakers. None of you guys, the Tribal Council, has nothing to do with this district. Our people are hurting out there. I'm going to read a couple of things that we all signed during that meeting. Lame Deer district secretary, Connie Sanchez. To whom it may concern, on 12/22/24, we the Lame Deer district, held a meeting to bring forth to the acting director chair as follows: Nellie Whiteshield, Vernon Small, Amanda Whiteshirt, Joyce Woundedeye, Alvin Strangeowl. We wanted to remove them all at that time. We, the Lame Deer district, served Vernon Small, Amanda Whiteshirt (acting chair). They were in the area but refused to come to the meeting. I have given time to attend any district meetings hosted by the Lame Deer district. The chairs that attended the meeting made the meeting legally. We removed by 15 to 0 votes. 1 abstained. 2 kindly stepped down; Nellie Whiteshield and Joyce Woundedeye. Including the remaining chair by motion. We have removed any and all former chairs. We gave them equal time to resolve the issue. The Lame Deer district would like to remove ---- kind and would like to help our people during this time, crisis. Those who need the charity to help from the Lame Deer district. In kind regard, we would all agree to assure this has been resolved. Thank you from the district chair Hubert Blackwolf; Vice Chair, Nolan Limberhand; Secretary, Connie Sanchez; Youth committee, Julia Blackwolf; Youth, Steve Whiteshield; Youth Committee, Vitor Mexican Cheyenne; Elderly Committee, Malinda Spottedwolf; Elderly Committee, Donald Seminole; Higher Ed, LaVonna Littlebird-Graham; Higher Ed Committee, Mitch Littlebird. That's the letter from when we had our meeting signed by all the chairs; by all the people that come to our meeting. We gave out all the letters for our meeting. We went by everything, step by step. This is all the numbers, budget for all the committees that we did. The packet went to finance. All the meetings. All the letter from people that spoke. We wrote down everything. I just want you guys to know and understand that we are trying to help our people. Help the elderly. All the elderly people came to our meeting. If it wasn't for them elderly, the youth we're trying to help. You guys don't realize how people we have on our reservation. Trying to help. I don't want to bicker and fight with other people. The people put me in this spot as a chair person and I want to help our people. One this is that our money is still in there. I'm not going to the President. I don't go to the council. It's up to the people. There was 3 or 4 other chair persons. We gave them a lot of time to come to our meetings. Then they want to have their own meetings. I'm getting tired. We all want to help our people because our people are hurting. So, all this stuff they should put aside and continue moving forward because I want to help my people. None of this hearsay. It's always all right here in black and white. The budget, everything. Because I went back, long time ago. Who were all on there? Who signed all those. You know, you guys, it's hilarious. All these ----- that were given out a couple years back. People signed. Somebody wasn't even serious. Giving out money like candy. You need to follow the policy that's on what we have to follow to help our people. I have to sign that. Me and the vice chairman have to sign those papers or checks or whatever because

it's a lot of money that's going out there. 10 or 12 thousand. It's not going to last too long guys because the heat, the wood. All that costs. Our people need a building. Lame Deer district has a lot of people. Muddy has a building. Ashland has a building. Birney. Us guys don't have no building. You guys need to figure out. Are we going to have a building for our district? We're getting tired of having our meetings here, outside. We can't have our meetings at the Head Start. We can't even have our meetings at the Catholic Church. We have to have appointment here, when this is open, to have our meetings here. I go by what you guys always tell me. But, just to let you guys know, this is the letter that we gave all the people. You always say, come together, work together but we don't. We always fight, bicker. I chose all those people that are on this list to help our youth, education and old people. I chose them to go out there and talk to the community. These old people, I hear their voices, what they want. They're the ones that want to see something change. They want something different. That's why old people come first. Our youth and education for activities. Holidays are coming up. I want to get some activities out there for Lame Deer. It could do good for our people. A'ho.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** I would like to speak, if I may. I gave every one of you council people a plan of operations and asked you to read it. It gives the way you run the district. What I don't understand is why, when I tried to talk the last time, I got a lot of flack from that. So, I'm really glad that you are showing a little bit less hostility today. Court of law, Lame Deer district, our meetings are open. We give them every second Monday of every month according to the plan of operations. A secretary of the district cannot hold a meeting to elect new officials. Our meetings are open and they have never tried to come and deal with what they think their problem is. I have been trying to get it re-opened. We had just closed it to re-calculate how much money was in there and what we were going to spend it for. All of sudden, next thing we knew, it was closed. I want to emphasis again, Lame Deer district secretaries cannot hold meetings. So, essentially, that was an illegal meeting. As far as my name is concerned, I found out about them using my name when I looked on a poster without having the courtesy, the respect to tell me that my name was on there. Also, other so-called district chairs have also mentioned that they were not notified. This is the first letter that I got from this group. We took out a petition and got over 300 signatures that recognize me as chair. If you'd like to see them, we'll get you a copy but they were really happy that someone stable was now running it and that the money didn't just go to certain families. As far as giving out money like candy, that's a matter of opinion. If you want to get along with people, you don't start by bickering or saying how bad the opposite party is that you don't happen to like or agree with. Whatever the case may be. As far as Busby Head Start building is concerned, I had the resolution and I'll look for it again, when it first turned over to Head Start, it said that that building could used as a community hall. The next thing I know, when we went and tried to get it, it was said that they didn't want us in there due to some sort of friction. Now, that was before my time. I was not chair at that time yet I was getting blamed for having some sort of friction in that building. That was when 2 individuals, the secretary and the president were fighting. That's about all that I got to say but our meetings are open and the election will be in January. Legally binding not just fly by night elections.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** I have a question. Do you have somebody that coordinates your community events? Like if you guys wanted to have a sit down with the community, get everyone

together. I think it would alleviate all of this if you just did a vote with everybody there. I mean, the only reason I say that is because in all actuality, everything that you guys are saying should be falling on deaf ears because we have nothing to do with this. We are autonomous from the district committees. You guys get your budgets and you figure all that out. You have your own treasurer, your own secretaries. So, how hard would it be to actually. You know, if there is one thing that I think that you guys should all try to push for, as far as trying to work together, is ultimately a community meeting where everybody is there. Where all of potential district chairs or the chairs. All of the officers that are saying they are elected, right, that want to be recognized as officers of each district committee. I think that the public would ultimately bring the decision to you guys as far as who they want there. So, in my opinion and my suggestion to you guys is regardless of whether the bickering and whatever, come together for this one meeting, with our public, get them all together. Do whatever you can to get them all there. Do everything you can to be there and let the public decide, once and for all, so that you guys can start having these community events. So that you can start working, I brought up a potential community hall. Geez, it seems like a year ago.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** We had a meeting on that.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** That ended up not even, just because of. The President brought up that she had money set aside for a district hall for you guys. I don't know what came about from that. It kind of ended the idea that I had. Then come to find out that the Commodity Program wanted to stay in that building. But, there is money for your guys' community building, your community center. We have been working on it a lot. I just feel like the only hold up is that there's not an actual district committee chair recognized by either side that we can work with as far as getting that going. Whatever the President has as far as funding and stuff like that. I'd like to see this resolved. I have no, I'm not picking a side. Whoever the community decides and I think it should all be in one place. Everybody should be there. Everybody can speak their case. Just like right now, both parties of two of the groups got to say what they had to say. But, I do feel like, I wish this was in front of your community.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** I agree one hundred percent with you. In that respect, it should be at the district meeting and our meetings are open. You shouldn't name people when they are not here to defend themselves. Well, another person said the same thing and he's supposedly on one of these chairs. He's supposedly a chair too. Had it originally, when it was brought into council, had they said, take it back to the district, it might have eliminated a lot of this. So, I am not putting blame on anybody but I'm saying that you want us to follow rules and regulations, well, you do the same. Because then, it's a lot stronger. We both know where we stand but when you take a plan of operations and do anything you want with it and say we're legal, I think that that should be given a second consideration. Thank you so much for letting me have my say. Like I said, we went up and down and we didn't even finish the petition and I'm sure we can twice as much on it. But they just said the money that was there, and it seems to be all about money, is only given to certain families. They we so thankful. A lot of them said we have never gotten any help from the committee, Lame Deer district before. I was really happy to hear that. That it's getting out to the people, however, I believe that the money should still be stopped until it's solved. All these little sneaking over there and saying this and that doesn't work. Should not work. They should go to the district meetings. As far as telling me and giving me letter saying I need to be there, that has not occurred. This is the first, second letter I've gotten so far. The first one was when they down

to a meeting and slammed it on my, where I was sitting. I don't know about you but I demand a little bit of respect and dignity. I don't ----- from the ones giving it but I do expect them to have a little bit of respect and dignity both for themselves and for me. Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you.

**ITEM #5 – MINUTES**

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** A few typos. Page 17; just object; missing a c. Then on page 21, Kathy Knoblock is with a H. I make a motion to approve with those corrections.

**A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 20, 2024 WITH CORRECTIONS.**

Motion made by Melissa Lonebear. Second by Melissa Fisher.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>8 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>1 Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**ADD 2 ITEMS TO THE AGENDA**

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Real quick before we move on. There were 2 resolutions that were emailed to Edina by Brian that are not on the agenda so I would like to make a motion to add the approval of participation in the coalition.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** I'll second the addition. Those 2 Brian sent. Right, there's 2?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Yeah. Can we add them both at the same time?

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Let's do them both.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok. The second one is the resolution approving the contract for the law and order consultant. That is my motion to add those.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** I'll second.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** What was the 2<sup>nd</sup> one?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> one is that consultant one.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Ok.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** The 1<sup>st</sup> one is the participation one and the 2<sup>nd</sup> one is the consultant one. We have a motion and a second on the floor.

**A MOTION TO ADD 2 RESOLUTIONS; 1. PARTICIPATION IN COALITION AND THE SECOND IS THE CONTRACT WITH LAW AND ORDER CONSULTANT.**

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Melissa Lonebear.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>9 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**ITEM #6 – FY’24 ATTORNEY FEES PROPOSAL**

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Jason is not here but I make a motion to approve this contract.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok. We have a motion and a second to approve number 7, the attorney fees.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** It’s for Jeanne Whiting who has been an attorney for years.

**RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL APPROVING A REQUEST TO THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS FOR ATTORNEY FEES FUNDS FOR WATER RIGHTS MATTERS FOR FY 2024**

Motion made by Melissa Lonebear. Second by Debra Charette.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
<b>Melissa Lonebear</b>	X			

<b>Debra Charette</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Norma Gourneau</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Eva Foote</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Nizhoni Friesz</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice President</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Torrey Davie</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Donavin Limberhand</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Silver Little Eagle</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Gwen Spottedhorse</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Melissa Fisher</b>	<b>X</b>			

<b>9 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**ITEM #7 – MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (SOAR)**

**JOHN GRINSELL:** You have a resolution before you which is the safe on all roads. The grant that we use to get child seats and hand out. We had a vacancy for quit a while, however, we just hire somebody for that. The SOAR Grant starts today. We're pretty excited for that person. That's all I have.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, SAFE ON ALL ROADS (SOAR) GRANT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 GRANT YEAR**

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Melissa Lonebear.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>9 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**ITEM #8 – MEMBERSHIP TO RED SHIELD 8 NATIONS, INC.**

**KIM DAHLE:** Good morning. So, you have a resolution before you to establish the founding membership with the Red Shield 8 Nations, Inc. which will improve our access to substance abuse disorder treatment, provide coordinated services and other culturally competent care to tribal members. Just asking for authorizing Torrey Davie as the Northern Cheyenne Tribe’s Primary Director to execute the Articles of Incorporation and Alternate Director would be Debra Charette.

**RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH FOUNDING MEMBERSHIP TO THE RED SHIELD 8 NATIONS, INC.**

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Melissa Lonebear.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>5 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>4 Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** So, I just want to make a comment. Abstentions are if it’s a conflict of interest for you. You vote yes or you vote no. It’s not because of the person, your personal feelings toward a person or the cause.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LITTLEMOUTH, SR.:** Exactly. Me, I don’t know what it’s about so that’s why I abstained.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** You are invited to every meeting. You need to educate yourself. Abstentions are for conflict of interest.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LITTLEMOUTH, SR.:** I don’t know what you’re trying to say here.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Ok. So, what’s the vote? This is historic.

**SECRETARY REDSTAR:** 5 yes and 4 abstained.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Ok. It passed.

**ITEM #9 – AMEND THE LAW & ORDER CODE (FIREARMS)**



**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Colleagues, Council, Madam President, Mr. Vice-President, Madam Secretary, I have before you. You have before you a resolution/ordinance to amend some parts of the Law and Order Code concerning firearm offenses on the reservation. The reason why I did this was because we decided that the penalty for discharging a firearm within the town limits or in public was not harsh enough. We all know that we've been through enough meetings to understand that the BIA is only arresting people and detaining them for Class A offenses which is basically the reservations felony. The harshest crimes are under the Class A offense code. The previous code was called Firing of a firearm offense. The wording in it was quite prehistoric, for lack of a better word. We cleaned it up and made it a harsher penalty. I would like to point out that Councilwoman Little Eagle did ask if it pertained to compressed air weapons, like BB guns, pellet guns, stuff like that. It doesn't. Simply because fire is not a part of their function. Later on, if she doesn't mind or if the council would like to work on clarifying that, as well, because there are assaults that take place that involve air, less than lethal, is what I think you would call it. So, we could work on that, as well, doing an amendment and adding that to the Law and Order Code as well. This is, I'll start with the second whereas where it says:

**WHEREAS** the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council is empowered to protect the general welfare of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe and provide for the maintenance of law and order under Article IV, Sections 1(i) and 1(m) of the Constitution of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe as amended in 1996; and

**WHEREAS**, gun violence has become prevalent within the Reservation boundaries and BIA-OJS' breaches of fiduciary of duty and underenforcement necessitates a reclassification of the firearms offense as a Class A offense requiring immediate arrest in order to maintain law and order; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tribal Council wishes to amend Section 7-7-4, Firing of a Firearm Offense, and Section 7-7-5, Breach of Peace or Disorderly Conduct, of the Law & Order Code; and **THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, that the following replaces Section 7-7-4 in its entirety:

Discharging of a Firearm

- A. A person is guilty of Discharging of a Firearm in Public if he/she: Knowingly or willfully shoots or fires off a rifle, pistol, or any firearm within the limits of any town, community, village, or any public or private enclosure, or shoots from any vehicle, or fires across any roadway within the exterior boundaries of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.
- B. Discharging of a Firearm is a Class A Offense and will warrant immediate search and seizure of the firearm, and immediate arrest and detainment.

**BE IT FINALLY ORDAINED**, that Part 4. Discharging Firearms, from Section A of Law & Order Code 7-7-5 Breach of Peace or Disorderly Conduct is stricken in its entirety. That is my motion.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** One quick question.

**COUNCILWOMAN FOOTE:** I have a question for you Torrie. Changing the Law and Order Code here interfere with the different branches? Judicial, legislative, executive.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** What's the question?

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** No. That's what we're here for. We're lawmakers. First and foremost, the reason why I brought this on the floor, the Court does have a law firm that is working

on revision of the law and order code. It's taking entirely too long and to be honest with you, I'm getting sick of having to tell people that I can't do anything about this because there is somebody else doing my job for me. This is my job. This is our job. This is what is part of our duties as councilmen and this is an emergency. It needs to be done right away. Right now. We've had a rash of people firing guns; threatening people with guns; we've had shootings; we've had people getting shot in the Lane Deer community. I do want to point out one thing. This does not affect your amendment right. You still have the right to bear arms. You still have the right to protect yourself. It's just that in any situation where a gun is involved, it needs to be taken, the people need to be taken in. If they can prove their innocence, that's another whole other story but right now, we've got people firing off guns and BIA doesn't even go over there and investigate the situation unless someone actually gets shot. So, it's just a matter of time before. You know, we have families, we have elders around the places that have been getting shot at, guns have been fired, that people have fired guns in front of the depot. This is ridiculous and the reason why it continues to happen is because the penalty is not stiff enough for the crime. It does not fit the crime. If you are going to shoot a gun on the reservation, in public, you are going to go to jail. You're going to get your firearm confiscated and if you can prove that you were protecting yourself and if you can prove that the firearm belongs to you and is registered to you then I'm sure that Law Enforcement will have no problem in releasing you and giving you back your property. Until that is done, investigations need to be made and by considering it a Class A offense instead of a Class B offense that puts it's on the BIA/OJS. I'm not going to go confiscate somebody's gun. I'm not going to go arrest somebody and bring them to the tribal building and put them in the basement or whatever everybody expects. This needs to be done by BIA/OJS. This is another situation where we have to hold them accountable for what they are doing. I've had people tell me, in the last month or so, that doing this is useless because, at one point, the whole law and order code was made Class A offenses. Which I don't know if that is true or not but obviously it wasn't followed up on because the BIA/OJS is not aware of that. Nobody is aware of that. So, if that's the case then I'd like to see the resolution and I'll go down there to the Chief of Police and I'll put it on his desk because we still have them dropping people off at the shelter. We still have them letting people go that are committing crimes where they should be detained. This right here is important. I got people who are in direct cross fire of these situations every single time it happens. People that I know directly; that I know personally. It's not something that we should take lightly. Our people need to be protected. This is going to put the onus on the people that should be protecting them. They need to do their job. I appreciate your guys' support.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** We have a motion and a second on the floor.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** The only recommendation that I have is to add that disclaimer in there if you don't mind Torrie. That anything that

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Oh, the infamous disclaimer.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBER:** Yes.

**COUNCILWOMAN DAVIE:** Yes.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** If you agree with that. So, we'll just add it on the end there.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Yes. That's the, if there's any other legislation that

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** If there's anything that conflicts

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** It's rescinding everything else.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** I'm ok with it.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** I just have a quick question. Did you talk to the Judge about it?

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** I haven't. I know what he's going to say. He's going to say that they have somebody working on it. This was actually looked over by Brian and he did do a few corrections to it. It's basically just stuff where I doubled things up as far as like

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** We can take it with us when we go to Billings.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Ok. Yeah. I think that would be good.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LITTLEMOUTH, SR.:** Torrie, thank you for bringing this up because just the other week, in front of the depot, my wife and grandkids seen something like this. A guy pulled out a pistol and almost shot another guy in a car. My grandkids were traumatized.

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FIREARM OFFENSES (SECTIONS 7-7-4 and 7-7-5) OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE LAW & ORDER CODE**

Motion made by Torrey Davie. Second by Melissa Fisher.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>8 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>1 vote No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** When you get this finished Edina, if you could forward it to the Tribal Court and Law Enforcement.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Thank you guys.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Can I speak. I know you already voted on it but one thing I am really curious about is non-tribal members that come in here because you cannot arrest white on this reservation. I don't believe in dual jurisdiction and if it has to be the case then the Indians lead it. Say just for instance the BIA Police that if they need re-enforcements then they may work with Rosebud. That's the way it used to be a long time ago and vice versa. If you were chasing somebody off the reservation into white territory, they took over, you were second in command and vice versa. We do not need non-tribal members. We have enough law and order stuff that we don't need Rosebud cops, just for instance, coming in here harassing the people. But, I would sure like to see what we can do in Congress. I asked a group of people, one of them was, I think there was like 3 tribes that went there and I asked what can we do? They said, give us the power to arrest white people, non-tribal members. They said they would work on that. I would really like one of you guys to have the lawyer of yours to look it up and see where it stands because that would give us more power over what abuses they do when they take shots at people and claim their innocence. Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** So, just a quick response to that comment. We have actually met with the county attorney to figure out how they can help. Her initial response was, if the crime is not against another non-native that they can't but we met with local law enforcement again and they are reaching out to the County Attorney to try to get clarification. They are both passing the buck.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** When they do arrest somebody, they keep them in jail and then take them to Forsyth or whatever but now my understanding is once they get to Forsyth, they are released so what are they doing? What has been solved. I thought this law would also include, correct me if I'm wrong, if the got so much against them, throw them off the reservation. What is that called?

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** We visited that.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** That is something that has been discussed and I have pushed for it.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Something needs to be done.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** I've pushed for it. Right now, we are all in agreeance with you. There are some things that need to be done as far as safety of our people, as far as safety of this building. There's a lot of deficiency here within this tribal building whereas if we were to make a decision like that, there could be potential violence and I guess, people could come over here and do something. Our security guard isn't even armed. There's not a metal detector at the door. We don't have any of those things here which is another thing that a couple of us council have brought up to each other trying to fix that. It's a big part of the reason why we feel we can't take those steps. Everybody can say, oh Torrey you're supposed to be here for the kids and the people and protecting them and yes, we are. There're also people getting paid \$80,000 dollars, \$60,000 dollars that have 401k, that have life insurance, that have all these things to take care of their 3 kids that they have at home and their wife when they get shot to death because they floated somebody without law enforcement to get them off the reservation. It's really a touchy situation.

I mean, the day that that situation happened with the non-member threatening and shooting towards kids in a van, I wanted to take action that night. Once that was brought up to me the potential ramifications that could come from making a rash decision like that without being properly prepared for the repercussions for the backlash from the people being accused of these things. You know, I understand people's fears and why they would want to make sure that certain things are in place before we make a decision like that. It's something that needs to be done.

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** Yes, it certainly does. Another thing that I would really like to stress is what is on your agenda at the beginning. Murders in Indigenous Women. A lot of them is non-members. You can say Cheyenne's this and that but a lot of them are non-members and you can't touch them. We are a misdemeanor court guys. We can't go over \$500. Perhaps changing that and get trained judges in there that know what they are doing.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok. We are on the next

**AMANDA WHITESHIRT:** To know what they can charge and what they can't charge. Thank you.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok. Next item, #10, Melissa.

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#### **ITEM #10 – 638 RANGE**

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Ok. We are going to try to do this again. It's to 638 the Range program and before I make my motion I just want to stress the importance of our right to 638 programs is. It's self-determination. We would like to be stable enough to take every governmental program but we are doing it piece by piece. So, my motion, I'll read the resolution into record once again. A resolution of the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council authorizing the Northern Cheyenne Tribe's intent to enter into a Public Law 93-638 Self Determination contract with the United States Government to administer the Agriculture Program on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation for FY 2024 and subsequent years. The other thing I want to mention. I think there's information given out that has been misconstrued. But, if we had this program still under the Tribe, we would have, most likely, prevented what happen with that white guy with the trespassing. There're so many other things that are connected to this but that's my motion.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** I'll second her motion. Also, the people need to know that this is a revenue generating for our general fund. Without this revenue there is no other revenue coming in so this is an important piece to our general fund.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** It always has been.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** The people need to be notified of the right, the accurate information.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Yeah. I'd like to just say something too. There're a couple things that I have a problem with. One thing the council should be aware of is that we have no place for it because Natural Resource moved into their area. So, we gotta make sure that we know that if, I'm sure they're not going to deny us. They are going to probably start working on it as soon as possible but we don't have a place. That's where they were and they were pretty much all set up there but Natural Resources had to leave from their previous station and they moved into that area. I just want you guys to think about that. The other thing is that usually myself, the President of the Tribe and the attorney are usually the ones that go through this and make sure that everything is legal and everything but we're not a part of this. This resolution.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** So, those were your concerns?

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Well, there was other concerns on here that I thought that was kind of misleading to me with the Tribal Council negotiating was one of the things. The other thing, like what she was talking about, our revenue that comes from there. It's always going to be the same but we're having a lot of problems with the operators. Mostly with Range that our landowners have complaints about. Those are things that need to be dealt with on the different issues that we have. Yeah, we can do this but we're still taking that along with it too.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** So, thank you for sharing that with us after 60 days or whatever. In the heading of this, it says the Tribe's intent. It doesn't happen immediately. When we 638 a program, there's a process to it. You have to do negotiations. The reason for the President, I guess, being left out and the attorney was because of the election coming up. It will be the tribal council after you leave your office. It'll just be continuing. The land owners. Ok, so that was the whole protest thing when we had the hearing for you was their misconception of; they think it's about cows and they think it's about ranching. It has to do with the management of that but it doesn't have anything to do with the amount of lease money that they get. That is set by BIA. That's the truth that needs to go out to these landowners. We have nothing to do with that. We set the tribal and because they went so high on the landowner's side, we balanced it out with the tribal and that was the decrease in the rates that we set for last year. If you didn't understand that all you had to do was ask.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** I've been wanting to meet on it.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** We got one letter from you. That was the only communication we got from you.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Yeah and the one when I protested the resolution. That also invited you guys to come.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Way after the fact. We have that documentation. I'm not going to argue with you. We have a motion and a second.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok. We have a motion and a second on the floor.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Can I say one thing?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Go ahead Debbie.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Natural Resources, yes, they are in that building. Natural Resources has purchased in a building. They are in the process. A modular. They are in the process of setting up their own office. They have to come and pick out a spot of where they want to put it. We've given them some suggestions so that they can have their own office space. The space that they wanted was right still in that little confined area and that gave us no room for our supplies and everything that we have going on with Land Board. So, they have to go out. We told them to take this lot that we purchased over here. We have yet to hear back from him. So, they're in the process of getting. As I understand, it's bought and paid for and they have to find a spot for it.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Well, thanks for telling me that because I wasn't aware of it.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** I'm surprised that they're not keeping you informed of what they're doing.

**PRESIDENT WETHERELT:** Yeah.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** I have a question. I think you guys had mentioned that the Ag Program is the only or the biggest funding that comes in here for the Tribe that pays for your guys' salaries and what not. I guess my point is or what I have a question on is, when you guys do 638 it and it comes back to the tribe, where is the follow through with HR in making sure that the correct people are getting the fair chances to run that kind of program that have the education and experience. It's like you guys just now said, it's the most important but why do we put uneducated people that don't qualify for those jobs in the biggest program. It's going to fail. It's going to fail because HR has failed us.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** We are not even to that point yet.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** I know but I am just expressing my concerns. I already know that you guys have your minds made up and everything with that but, like, this is my personal opinion and my personal view point of it because I've been on both sides of it. I know what happens on both sides of it but to officially run a program you need people in there that have the mindset to run that program. When we get this back and it falls back into the same trap again, we're just setting up this program for failure because we're putting people in there, like I said, that don't even qualify for it. So, how is this program going to be successful like that? I'm not saying that it's going to happen. Hopefully stuff changes. Hopefully personnel policies are followed or whatever. But, how are you going to ensure that that program is going to be successful?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Well HR is under the administration so it would fall under those.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** So, the answer to your question asked is, the supervisor of the HR is the administration. The executive side.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** Yeah, I understand that but like I've been 7 years, 7 years I applied for a job at Land Authority. 7 years. Not one interview. So, tell me how the hell does that work here. That's what I want to know.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Well we can't discuss personnel stuff here.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** I'm just giving you my personal experience and my personal thing and this program is so crazy and so political that the number one failure is communication. That's all that needs to happen is communication. But, to effectively run this program we need brand inspectors, we need an MOU with the State. Like all that kind of stuff that should be even brought up before you guys are trying to bring this up to take the whole program away. Like all the little things that need to be done to make it successful. Like none of that has ever been done that I know of or that I've heard of. I ask questions and things but like if we want it to be so successful, why are we not doing it in small steps to big steps.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** Well I would like to remind the council that the Range Program was taken back 3 years ago and in that period of time BIA has been trying to recruit and to fill those position but, in the meantime, there isn't much being done to actually manage and administer that program. Yes, Ryhal got hired over there to work for Range but then, I don't know what happened, she no longer works there. So, it's not a matter of a person being educated, it's a matter of getting the job done. I think we need to hold the BIA accountable for that. If the Tribe wants to try it again, we've learned a lot of lessons, we've learned a lot of things that should and can happen. Even you Ryhal, if you have recommendations then present them to the people that will be doing the proposed writing and actually submitting that contract on behalf of the Tribe.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** I would just like to say with that part of it, at BIA, that was real crazy because it is so ----- So, running that program you do your work and you can't do anything else beyond that. I don't know. It was crazy. Like I just see it as a failure. Like, either way, it's a failure. But, to make the Tribe successful, those are just the things that I feel that need to be changed and adjusted.

**COUNCILWOMAN GOURNEAU:** You'll have an opportunity to present your view. So, we have a motion on the floor and vote.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** Thank you.

**VICE PRESIDENT LITTLE MOUTH, SR.:** I just want to say that I didn't hear anything about the lease's. These past few years, I go out hunting, I go out berry picking and this is 99% Tribal land. When the lease's go out, the leaser's put up no trespassing signs. You guys got anything.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONE BEAR:** Right now, it is under the BIA. The non-compliance is due to BIA's neglect. That's the big picture here. The BIA has failed us over and over again.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LITTLE MOUTH, SR.:** You said this is intent.



**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Well intent and then it'll be under administration. So, to make those improvements, that's what your administration could do.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LITTLE MOUTH, SR.:** My answer is still no.

**RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBE'S INTENT TO ENTER INTO A PUBLIC LAW 93-638 SELF DETERMINATION CONTRACT WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO ADMINISTER THE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM ON THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE INDIAN RESERVATION FOR FY 2024 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS.**

Motion made by Melissa Lonebear. Second by Melissa Fisher.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>7 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>2 votes No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** I'd like to say something about this 638. I'd like to find what is so urgent in passing this. I think it should be put out to the public. They say the BIA isn't doing their part. What is going to happen once it's passed. Are they gonna run it? Are they gonna do it for their own purpose? Is it going to benefit the tribe? As far as this leasing, grazing is concerned. It don't even benefit the people as a tribe because the tribe owns the land, right? This 638 is kind of a hinderance to some people, it's only going to benefit a few people. The public doesn't even know what this 638 is. When you start a business or when you use a business plan, you know, people know what's going on. I think it's only fair to the people to let the public know because this reservation was established. I'm not trying to get, you know, go way back but this reservation was established for the benefit of the tribe. It doesn't say just for the cattlemen, just for grazing. You don't see anybody using, you know, this land besides running cattle. People should be able to use the land as they please. I think this 638 should be put out to the public like a business plan because this tribe runs on a business schedule, you know, level. I understand that the 638, when people put in their leases, it pays for the council's, you know, salaries.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** It pays for other people's salaries, as well. So, if that revenue is not coming in then we're having to lay off people. So, people are not going to have a job.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** What happens to the public anyway? You don't see people getting lease checks.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** The landowners.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** The landowners get lease checks. Their rate is set by the BIA.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** It's like laying the blame on the BIA but this council here also does it, you know, the same thing that the BIA is doing.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** This is the discussion that we had with the Grazing Board Chair and with some of the operators that were here.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** So, Delores, as part of the Grazing Board, these are concerns that can be brought to us Delores. As a Grazing Board.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** We set up meetings here before where the council was invited. The landowners were here but not one of you guys showed up.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** The only one I was invited to was a public meeting.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Yeah. We were invited to a public meeting. I've never been invited to another meeting.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** But, this is just the intent to start the negotiations.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** We're the ones that put out all those posters. Then we suggested to for each council representative should go over to their districts to explain to them what is going on but nothing has happened. We're going to try to schedule ahead of time for each district chair to go to their district to explain what is going on.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** We're not district chairs. We're council reps so it would be up to the district chair.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** I really believe that the 638 should be made to the people.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** I feel like there's a misunderstanding here. So, 638 contracts is self-determination. It's a sovereignty flex, in a sense, right? We're taking control of one of the branches that the BIA has been neglecting their duties as the people in trust to do those things. Second, from this point on, as soon as this is passed, I'm under the understanding that this program will go directly under the admin. That would be your president or vice president as the supervisor. So when people say that only certain people will benefit from it, I'm assuming that you're saying that council and the ranchers will benefit from it. The person who would actually determine, basically everything that the director does, would be the supervisor of the director. Which is the president or whoever she gives those duties to. Understand that the president of our tribe is basically the supervisor of every program director. There're very few programs under

our directive unless we Ad Hoc and become the board for that program. But, like I said, the benefit would be for the people. You're going to get people to buy the grass. You're going to get people to lease the land because there's going to be fences up instead of them being torn down and not worked on. The waters not going to be blocked. There're places where there's no water. There're places where there's no grass. We just recently had non-members trespassing and using a loop hole that's not in our ordinance. Now, we were able to enforce a confiscation and ultimately impoundment but that was just because we just so happen to have some people out there that saw this going on. They caught wind of it and saw it going on and we enforced something out of our ordinance. BIA was not trying to do anything about it. There's a loophole in there. Somebody can trespass for up to nine (9) days and if they move their cattle by that tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day to another range unit next to them, the trespass starts over. So, they're not even found guilty of trespassing. They have a ten (10) day grace period in a sense to free graze on tribal members land and get off there before they are penalized. That kind of stuff cannot be happening. Especially when it is non-members. That's just one the things where BIA provided non-members with a loophole to be able to trespass on our land and steal grass, damage fence. Just a number of things. There's just no cooperation with the BIA. With anything really. With my year and half here, I feel like they've done very little. BIA Law Enforcement. BIA Range. Only people that I think have ever done anything really was the Forestry, honestly, because it was an emergency and it was threatening everything. I feel there is some misunderstandings here. It'll be under the president or whoever she gives those duties to. It won't be under us. We're just making the decision to do it because we're the governing body that makes that decision. Also, the rate is set by BIA. They are entrusted with those rates. We cannot change those rates even if we 638 this program, we can't. We can't change those rates that's entrust with the BIA. They make the rates. That's why when we change the rates for the tribal and everybody was like, how come you don't bring down the rates for the BIA. Of course, Andy sat here and told us that they are entrusted with that. So, we can't change that. Honestly, I think we were going to if we had that power but we don't have that power. Hopefully that kind of clarifies and explains a few things to everybody as far as this stuff goes because I do feel like there is some misunderstandings about who's going to run it, where's all the money going to go. All this stuff. Who's going to enforce all these things. If things aren't being enforced under our program, our 638 program, contracted program, my hopes are that President Wetherelt is going to make the necessary changes as the director's supervisor to stop that from happening.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** There's that other thing that you said where that guy was trespassing. That wouldn't have happened if you as Land Committee, somebody should have been aware of this when that guy ran his cattle on the rez. The only way they found him out was a member of the grazing board saw those cattle and he photographed them and then he brought it to your attention.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Ultimately that should have been pointed out by BIA.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** But all of you are on the Land Committee. Somebody should at least be out there. There's another issue. I'm not trying to be argumentative. I'm just stating the facts. Like this branding. There's also another issue and it's subcontracting. Who's, you know, investigating that or who's looking into that?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Again, that compliance belongs to the BIA right now and that's why we're trying to 638 that program and bring it under the Tribe and we'll take care of the compliance. Right now, the compliance does not fall under the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. The compliance, because the program is under the BIA, the compliance should have been done by the BIA.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** But don't you coordinate with the BIA?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** No.

**DELORES YELLOWEYES:** You mean you guys are separated powers from the BIA to the land owners?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Yes.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** I want to say something just like on that one. A real good example

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Ok. Real quick.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** With the lease compliance check. Like on that there was no way because the Tribe had it for 5 years. Well the 5 years, in that new thing, when they did their grazing application, it didn't say that they had to do a corrected updated OMP, which is an Operating Management Plan. So, there's no way to do compliance but now there is. Well, now it's on them but before how could you do a lease compliance check when there is no operating management plan attached to the applicant's thing. So, it's like, people go out in the hills and then you say so and so says that there're cows over here and it belongs to somebody but it belongs over there. How can you tell that without an OMP? You can't. You don't have that document to compare something on. So, for the last 5 years or whatever, there wasn't a requirement in that application until this year when BIA redid it. That's like another things I just wanted to say.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** That's something that BIA redid this year. That they started doing.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** It's during the permit period. Because the program is under BIA, you have to turn in an OMP which was with your grazing application and that's what's needed when you go do compliance checks.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** I'm hoping that that doesn't change. I don't think that should change at all. That should be how it should be.

**COUNCILWOMAN CHARETTE:** Operators Management Plan. But we're talking about the ones that were trespassing. They don't have a Operators Management Plan. That's what we were specifically talking about.

**RYHAL ROWLAND:** I understand they have a grazing permit so they can

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Let's wrap it up guys. Item #11.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** We can. Self-determination. We want to be in control of everything that BIA is in control of. Ultimately, that is the goal of sovereignty and self-sustaining life here as Cheyenne people.

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**ITEM #11 – AMEND LAW & ORDER CODE / HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

**COUNCILWOMAN LITTLE EAGLE:** So, I presented this code to you guys at our initial working session and I've also worked on it with our Human Trafficking Task Force as well as tribal attorneys. This code cover sex trafficking and labor trafficking and it's modeled after the Three-Affiliated Tribes code. So, it includes labor trafficking, labor trafficking of a minor, sex trafficking, sex trafficking of a minor. Several tribes have included human trafficking codes. If this is passed, we will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tribe in Montana to have a human trafficking code. So, I'd like to make a motion to approved and ordinance amending the Northern Cheyenne Law and Order Code to enhance public health and safety and prevent human trafficking. The third whereas,

**WHEREAS,** the Northern Cheyenne Reservation is experiencing a tremendous problem with human trafficking and associated criminal activity that threatens the health, welfare, comfort and safety of the Tribe and its members;

**WHEREAS,** the Northern Cheyenne Reservation is in a region with some of the highest rates of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People cases in the United States;

**WHEREAS,** the Northern Cheyenne Tribe seeks to prevent human trafficking and related criminal conduct by approving the attached Human Trafficking Code; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED,** that the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council approves the Human Trafficking Code and instructs that it be added to Title VII of the Northern Cheyenne Law and Order Code.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Before I vote I would like to say thank you Silver for working on this.

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE LAW & ORDER CODE TO ENHANCE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY AND PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Motion made by Silver Little Eagle. Second by Melissa Lonebear.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
<b>Melissa Lonebear</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Debra Charette</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Norma Gourneau</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Eva Foote</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Nizhoni Friesz</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice President</b>	<b>X</b>			

<b>Torrey Davie</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Donavin Limberhand</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Silver Little Eagle</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Gwen Spottedhorse</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Melissa Fisher</b>	<b>X</b>			

<b>9 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** I recommend also with that, you can probably send them together to the Court and the Police Department.

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**DOROTHY JACKMAN:** Just a few brief words that I am going to say to the council which has been a huge bother to the district. All 5 districts. AT the time that you ran for candidates. What was your famous words? You are going to do great things for the youth, right? 2, elderly. Now at the time let's jump back to when you did the removal for Serena. We are going to use those 2 or those 3. What I have to say to the council. I don't believe all of you are here. Gwen is not here. At the time of candidacy, you were all running. You all stated for the youth and the elderly. We will do great things for these 2. Well, when it came time to remove Serena, or tried to, you already made one mistake. 2 mistakes. You did not listen to the elder that got up to speak. One of you councilmen, I don't know who it is yet who it is, that hushed an elderly lady/woman up. Youth and elderly, we have a voice of opinion here as elders. I'm 77 years old and I hope to be heard. A few minutes of your precious time that you got. You got 5 districts here. Youth and the elderly. 5 districts. Serena. Removal. You failed to take that to the 5 districts that you represent, each and everyone of you. The very first place that you should have gone was all 5 districts and the answer still would have been the same. No. Because, we as enrolled members of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, have the ultimate right to choose who our president will be. Who will be the council at the table here to represent all 5 districts. To speak for people. F O R. For the people not against. For the people. You did it against the people by doing that to Serena. The only right that you had was to take it to the districts. Let the people be aware of the mistakes she's making. 2. The mistakes you, as a council, are making. Failure to comply with the people. The very people that elected you to represent us here at the table. To be able to speak our voices to you in the district meeting. In the district meetings in every district, in all 5 districts and don't let it be an excuse; oh, they run us down, they call us names. No. You took the time to campaign for your district and your district seen to it that you were one of the candidates. You made it in here on the vote of the people. V O T E. The vote. Now you run amuck in here after you sit in this chair. You think you got the ultimate power to do whatever you want. No, you don't. Don't put the people under you because we are above you. And for someone that takes the ultimate goal, go to a meeting and try and try; oh, I'm the council. I'm going to, No. It is not your right. The only right you have is to see to the people. Every one of sitting in here today, is to see to those people. When you came in as a candidate and you won the vote, you got in front of that United States flag of America and the flag that we fly as the Northern Cheyenne people, you raised your right hand. It should have been the other side but you raised your right hand. I swear. What did you swear to? The constitution. The ordinances. Any amendments. Resolutions to the ordinances. All the bylaws of the Tribe. All the businesses of the Tribe. How many of you are aware of those 3 major things? How many? Probably 1 or 2

of you and that's it. Did you ever take the time to sit down and read the constitution? The Ordinances of the tribe? And don't say, well, this was the past council because the past council, whatever motion, whatever decision made carry on to you. The mistakes you make, carry on to the next one until it's settled. Phone call after phone call I got from the elderly. They didn't allow us to talk at the time of Serena's removal. How dare you as councilmen. You don't have that right. You are here, F O R, for the people. To listen with these, that Maheo blessed you with. (Speaks in Cheyenne language). That's what I say in Cheyenne. What the constitution reads. You understand Cheyenne. I don't attend council meetings all the time and I'm not out there saying I, I, I, I, I. That's all I hear from all of you. I, I, I. Why not we. Why not he or she said this. Don't do that. Remember re-election is coming up. If you made a mistake already, you will not be re-elected, the majority of you. You won't be. You think about it. You raised your right hand. To what? As soon as you dropped it, everything went out your right hand and you held out your left hand to see how much money you could get. Everything. Travel out of state. That is nice, isn't it? To take your family. To go to Las Vegas. Have you talked to the people? Do you all 5 districts, have you met with your district? Have you gone to your district? No. Have you talked to your people in your district? Just a variety of homes, at least once or twice a month, go see your people that put you in this office to sit here and look like the big chief. Go see your people. Go see what's hurting them. What is bothering them. What needs to be discussed. When you're done, you come back here again 4 years later, you'll raise your right hand again, again and again because of the people that you went to see. Don't ignore us when we come in here. And as you were discussing here, there's 6 district chairmen for Lame Deer, I understand. I understand that it's none of your business to do what Lame Deer district has to do or Birney district or whatever. But you can give some leeway, some directive for them to take so they can clear the mess up.

**COUNCILMAN DAVIE:** Actually, we can't.

**DOROTHY JACKMAN:** That money is needed for Lame Deer district. I need it. I have to travel to Mayo Clinic in Rochester because I am partially blind and today I thank them because I can see to get around, to move around. Did the tribe help me? No. I save, save and save from \$700 a month that I live on so I can have money for my CNA to pay her when we get back because I have to have a medical escort. I'm not only talking about myself. I'm talking about all the other people. The dozens of requests that are there that need to be looked at. I can go on and on but I'm not. I'm just reminding you that you raised your right hand for the people, not against the people. Next time you think of removing someone, take it to the people first. What happen to referendum vote? What happen to meeting the people? Don't be what you just did, the mistake you just made in trying to remove Serena. That was a big mistake. Don't let one person talk you into it. You're sitting here with your own brains that Maheo gave you. Think on it. Use it for the people. Don't use it for just because I like her a lot, I'm going to go her way. No. There're smarter people out here than that.

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Thank you.

**DOROTHY JACKMAN:** Thank you.

**ITEM #12 – PARTICIPATION IN COALITION**

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** An approval of participation in the coalition submitting the amicus brief held in litigation. This was one of the ones sent from Brian.

**COUNCILWOMAN LONEBEAR:** Is that your motion?

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** Yeah. I’ll make the motion.

**APPROVAL OF PARTICIPATION IN COALITION SUBMITTING AMICUS BRIEF IN HELD LITIGATION**

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Debra Charette.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>8 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>1 votes No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**ITEM #13 – CONTRACT WITH LAW AND ORDER CONSULTANT**

**COUNCILWOMAN FISHER:** The next one is a resolution approving a contract with Law and Order Consultant. I’ll make that motion to approve.

**RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL APPROVING A CONTRACT WITH LAW AND ORDER CONSULTANT.**

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Melissa Lonebear.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
<b>Melissa Lonebear</b>	X			
<b>Debra Charette</b>	X			
<b>Norma Gourneau</b>	X			
<b>Eva Foote</b>		X		
<b>Nizhoni Friesz</b>				X
<b>Ernest Littlemouth, Sr., Vice President</b>	X			



<b>Torrey Davie</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Donavin Limberhand</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Silver Little Eagle</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Gwen Spottedhorse</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Melissa Fisher</b>	<b>X</b>			

<b>8 vote(s) Yes</b>	<b>1 votes No</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**CLARICE WALKSALONG ADDRESSED THE PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT AND TRIBAL COUNCIL.**

**CHARLOTTE ROCKROADS ADDRESSED THE PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT AND TRIBAL COUNCIL.**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING**

Motion made by Melissa Fisher. Second by Melissa Lonebear.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

<b>9 votes Yes</b>	<b>0 votes No</b>	<b>0 Abstentions</b>	<b>Motion Carried</b>
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**MEETING ADJOURNED @ 1:22 P.M.**

**PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED** by the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council with 10 votes for passage and adoption, 0 votes against passage and adoption, and 0 abstention on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of May 2024.

  
 Edina Redstar, Secretary  
 Northern Cheyenne Tribe