

Tribal Council Meeting 10-15-2022

Present: Ugu Elect Sharon Carter Cloud Panther
Deputy Chief John Stephenson Laughing Bear
Eastern District Chief Ramona TePaske Yellow Buffalo Calf Woman
At-Large District Chief William Hoff Crazy Bear
Treaty District Chief Jennifer Forest Spirit Wolf
Central District Chief Kassa Willingham Wolf Eagle
Justice Council Person Janice Hall Turtle Leggings
Justice Council Person Brenda Sheridan Nature Woman
Head War Woman Linda Trussell Bear Heart
Approximately 60+ tribal citizens

Present by Proxy: Southern district Chief John Garcia Big Sky proxy given to Chief William Hoff Crazy Bear

Absent with no Proxy: Pacific Northwest District Chief Chet McVay

Upon opening Meeting Chief Ramona TePaske spoke on and introduced the talking stick for us in the meeting. Talking stick was made and gifted to the tribe by Aaron Boyes.

Council meeting opened by Deputy Chief John Stephenson, as acting Ugu.

Opening Prayer given by Head War Woman Linda Trussell.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson brought business from a council email discussion on Polly Ramos' request to be a Tsalagiyi Nvdagi artisan. He said he approves, and work shows good taste, and we need to vote on that. Chief Wiliam Hoff explained who she is and that she is from California. Then Deputy Chief John Stephenson said that piece of business is taken care of and moved on.

NOTE: This was discussed previously by the full tribal council via email and was voted on there and it was agreed upon that, yes, Polly Ramos can be considered a Tslagiyi Nvdagi Artisan.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson brought forth discussion on road and land. He thanked Jack Sheridan for the work he has done and for the use of his trailer when they cut limbs from the roadside. Said Jack Sheridan is meeting with officials to get chip to fix our road. said spoke to neighbors and they are willing to sign a petition if needed. Spoke on the garden and the previous results. Deputy Chief John Stephenson said he had discussed with certain members sealing the tank with cedar so will hold water, building a wheelchair accessible bridge over ravine, having scout troops out to obtain merit badges in

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trade for work on land, and mentioned the large number of appliances and other garbage that was dumped on land before our purchase of it. Deputy Chief John Stephenson said, "if we could make improvements on the land for our people, the scouts, and the community, it would be in our best interest to make nice, nice and let them know we are here in a positive way and open and willing to share."

Deputy Chief John Stephenson brought up the memorial garden. Said Brenda Sheridan had been working on gathering names of members who have moved on but there were many, so she suggested to him the use of PERMANENT benches with small memorial plaques on them. Said this was her idea but she was open to suggestions.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson then brought forth next on agenda, tribal teaching and growth.

Chief Willaim Hoff spoke up and asked if we were going to be able to discuss things as we go or would we have to wait until end of meeting for the good of the tribe? Deputy Chief John Stephenson said if you have input then go ahead. Chief William Hoff then spoke saying 'In my opinion and in the opinion of others I have spoken with, as well as Ugu Black Eagle, the land needs to be in a trust for the whole tribe, not in one person's name. Needs to be in a trust because does not need to be held over our heads or used as a bargaining chip. It is not our way. Ugu Hicks and Ugu Black Eagle told everyone this is all our land.

Linda Trussell spoke: "the reason was put in Ron Trussell's name was because we could not put it in a tribal name. I don't know the whys and such but that is why it was put in Ron Trussell's name."

Chief William Hoff advised you could.

Linda Trussell reiterated why land was put in Ron Trussell's name and then said "In Ron's will, which is sitting in probate right now, he willed the land to me. I agree, this is... But when 2 or 3 people come in and say we are going to do this, we want to do that and talking to the whole tribe and including all.

Chief William Hoff asked Linda Trussell if she was saying she would put the land in a tribal trust, she responded she would if she could. She was advised by Chief William Hoff that she could, Linda Trussell then responded she would have to do research. She was asked same question again about putting land in a tribal trust and she responded she would do what Creator asks her to do.

Then Chief Ramona TePaske spoke up. She spoke on the tension and arguing in the meeting. "From the beginning this land has been tsalagiyi nvdagi. White man says we must put in a trust, maybe because we don't trust each other. We will not injure the tribe because of non-knowledge of a person who has passed. We will not injure a person's name. The research you do has to be with a heart for the people, no matter what happened to the dirt you are standing on. This is Tsalagi Land."

Deputy Chief John Stephenson opened the floor for further discussion.

Chief Jennifer Forest spoke on moving pass the hurt and anger.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson then spoke on the land issue, the purchase of the land, the process and his understanding of why we could not put it in a trust or in Tsalagiyi Nvdagi name. moving on, he spoke on water saying "women are water. They are the life blood of our people. Without them we are

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nothing.” He made comments on Ugu Hicks and Ugu Black Eagle, spoke on their ideas for the land, the payment history of the land from the point of purchase until the point it was paid in full. Also mentioned a lawsuit in 1993 and another one as well.

Chief William Hoff said he had one more thing to add “Number 1, we are a tribe. Not an LLC, Not a non-profit. We HAVE an LLC and non-profit that is supposed to raise funds and support the tribe. A non-profit has a board of directors, and a tribe has a tribal council. These should be separate, and we do not have that.”

Deputy Chief John Stephenson said “yes, we are a tribe made up of many people. But when dealing with the government we still have to abide by their rules. “We are not a nation. We are not a sovereign nation. Not a dependent nation, not an independent nation. We are a tribe who has links to other tribes based on our history. We must remember the name of our tribe is Tslagiyi Nvdagi so our teachings should be Tslagiyi Nvdagi in all aspects. So, if we bring other cultures in the need to learn our cultures not the other way around.”

Deputy Chief John Stephenson said that Chief John Garcia did some interesting research on Duwali. Deputy Chief John Stephenson spoke on the historical marker and land of Chief Duwali’s last home site, said he has name and contact info on the current landowners. He said on marker it says that Chief Duli, who was one of 3 chiefs, was a Chickamauga Chief who spoke Cherokee.

Jacob Carter Swift Raven stood and spoke “Being Big Sky’s name has been brought up, he had some displays with his findings and stuff he had researched and found out. And when I am told something and I’m not sure about it, I research it myself as well. And me and Big Sky sat out here for hours talking about Chief Bowles and how he IS Cherokee and not Chickamauga’

Deputy Chief John Stephenson said Duwali was called Cherokee because he spoke the language. He then spoke on his research, how the Eastern band, CNO, and Keetoowah have a marker against us and others and might be pursuing legal action for calling ourselves Cherokee. He said, “in the near future we will be a tribe in distress unless we take proactive actions which I have already initiated.”

Chief William Hoff spoke. He spoke on how the Chickamauga nation is not a nation but is a heritage group. Spoke on how Jimmy Kersh had spoken to Ron who passed on his number and they called threatening to sue us for using term Cherokee. They then wanted to know how to join NCAI and were given directions to a public page. Chief Bowles is over the hill Cherokee. Chickamauga nation is NOT our friends. He explained the difference between a heritage group and a tribe. Explained Chickamauga nation is trying to claim our 1822 Treaty as their own. Explained that we had to prove many things to be approved by NCAI and we did and are.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson said they are a federally recognized nation, recognized by congress.

Many voices said No in disagreement. Deputy Chief John Stephenson said yes they are and proceeded to explain why.

Deputy chief John Stephenson moves on to next item on agenda list, tribal teaching and growth. Spoke on various things done by the districts, on various past District chiefs, on Tom Adcox and how he held out website hostage. Then he moved on to teaching and briefly discussed the past culture camps.

Chief William Hoff brought to attention that there are also various teaching on our current website.

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Deputy Chief John Stephenson mentioned the red feather society and a warrior society and the qualifications for them. He then taught on the warrior society's participation in Pow Wows and how pow wows are set up and how the grand entry of the pow wows are done.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson then introduced Linda Trussell to bring treasurers report.

Linda Trussell said we have \$10,838.20 in our general account. And we have \$1386.20 in our scholarship fund but that was set up as a personal checking account for Ron Trussell and he is only one on it. She then spoke on how she has a lot on her plate with the passing of her parents and husband in same year. "About the land, I don't know, to be perfectly honest. Right now I am more concerned with my personal life. On the land I will be going on grandmother (grandmother redleaf) and grandfathers (Creator) time."

Deputy Chief John Stephenson said that the last \$500.00 dollars that was paid out for a scholarship actually came from Ron personally and not the scholarship account. The 990N has just been paid by John and Kassa. Was in Ron's name, now is in John's name. Chief William Hoff said it is suppose to be in Ugu's name and Kassa said next year it will be.

Member applications for Matthew Carlisle, Jessica Carlisle, and Rhonda Bass were presented for approval Chief Ramona TePaske had reviewed them already. Linda Trussell said she had others that had been given to her also. Deputy Chief John Stephenson mentioned there were several that were notarized during the gathering. Chief Jennifer Forest announced we had over 60 in attendance for culture camp and gathering.

Chief Ramona TePaske asked if there was some way to relieve some of the stress from Linda with apps and cards and such. Processes were discussed back and forth and a solution was arrived at. The applications will be sent to the new tribal address and Ugu will review them and they will be brought to council at next meeting for approval, once approved, they will then be sent to the registrar with a card signed by Ugu for the registrar to complete process of making card and adding them to the roll. Linda Trussell did also add that in the past checks have been sent for the tribe but made out to Ron Trussell so he would but it in his personal account and then write a check to the tribe for the amount. It was discussed that in future should a check come in address to anyone except Tsalagiyi Nvdagi, the person will be contacted and the check will be returned to them so they can send one made out properly.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson then moved on to another issue. He brought up Walelu township and issues with their addresses. Chief William Hoff explained that they had all moved shortly after he moved.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson then said there was one final issue. He listed the 7 sacred values and their definitions, from the 7 sacred philosophies he mentioned "all men should treat women with dignity and respect." In 7 sacred rights he mentioned elders. And he mentioned the oath we all take. He said "be truthful and honest at all times. These are all things you personally have signed Mr. Hoff. You are a liar, you do none of these things."

Chief William Hoff denied this.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson continued. He discussed Walelu township address being wrong, he brought up a 12 year old interview on a website belonging to someone other than us discussing him as

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adawehi. "Mr. Hoff, you have done some good things and you have done some bad things. And you lied to Ron."

Jacob Swift Raven Carter asked what the lie was.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson replied he hadn't gotten there yet. He then accused Chief William Hoff of disrespecting Chet McVay in reference to his religion, he brought up that the changes he said to make to website were not done in reference to the Veterans and the usage of the term adawehi. And how that he has read books and that term means white witch, shaman, and conjurer. He said one has to be born an adawehi and that is the only way to be one. He said one could be appointed and taught to be an adawehi.

Chief William Hoff said, in his defense, that all that was taken out of context. And said he was defending himself. He was told by Deputy Chief John Stephenson to wait his turn. He said on facebook he insulted Ugu Trussell, his widow, himself, and many other tribal members by stating there is no native bible.

Chief William Hoff, Chief Ramona TePaske, Chief Jennifer Forest, Ugu elect Sharon Carter, and various members of the tribe all said "there is no native bible."

Chief Jennifer Forest said it is a translation of the white man's bible into our own language to lead us from our own beliefs.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson mentioned the post being removed.

Chief William Hoff explained it was removed because Kamama asked him politely in private to remove it so he did. He also explained he never mentioned anyone's name in the post. That it was others who commented that made it specifically about Ron's funeral. There was a heated discussion. Deputy Chief John Stephenson continued with his proceedings and Chief William Hoff continued defending himself with the voices of many being heard behind him speaking in his defense.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson accused him of disrespecting women, particularly Linda and Kassa.

Linda Trussell then brought up the address change and said she contacted Chief Jennifer Forest to set up a time to sit and discuss some things but call was never returned. She mentioned conversations on the address changed and the fact she was never asked before her address was changed on website. Chief William Hoff explained it was for her safety so her address wasn't out there for anyone to see since Ugu Ron had passed. Linda Trussell then explained that she was a chief and presented a paper from Grandmother Red Leaf where she appointed her Chief head war woman.

Ugu Elect Sharon Carter speaks. She spoke on the childish bickering and how we have to get pass this. Mentioned an offer to assist Linda in bringing tribal stuff to gathering and the negative response saying all that was Ron's except the seal grandmother turtle leggings made. Ugu elect said if we have to start over we will. Linda said she suggest we start over then. Ugu elect explained we didn't want to, that she was a tribal member and we all belong together. She explained the changes around camp were not made on the wants of just 2 people but on the wants and suggestion of many tribal members. Based on conversations and feedback from the last gathering. Ugu elect said the tribe made these decisions. Linda asked "who is the tribe?" and about 20 tribal members all responded "we all are" Ugu Elect continued, stating we have got to move forward. We need to do a lot of walking and talking.

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Stacy Hightower stood and spoke explaining how she understands how Linda feels having lost so much in such a short time and how that can make even the smallest thing seem so great and how the things done about the address were done with love for her even if she is not seeing that.

David Edwards stood and spoke about how, based on our own rules these proceedings were done incorrectly and should have been done in an executive meeting and not in front of entire tribe.

Linda said she tried to speak privately.

Chief Ramona TePaske spoke. Saying this does not belong here. She spoke with and to the tribal members present asking what we can do to make it right.

Kathy Mink Crabtree spoke saying this is a bunch of personal business that needs to be worked out privately.

Guy Wilson spoke on how it is done in white man's court and asked if there was a similar way we did things.

Linkin TePaske spoke. This is all happening because people have not been speaking. This did not just happen, this has been months of not talking, not communicating. People need to go and talk.

Chief Jennifer Forest stood and apologized to Linda Trussell for not returning her call. Linda accepted and they agreed to go talk after meeting.

Linda Trussell spoke. Tribe is divided. This is not the Cherokee way. We are all one and need to stop and communicate. She then mentioned a district chief who left upset because of not communicating.

Everyone agreed we needed to get back to agenda.

Daymond Jones spoke on something his grandmother taught him which is this. Our people protect our homes from enemies. We protect each other. But when we are fighting among ourselves then our attention is on the strife within, leaving no one to let us know the enemy is coming and no one standing there to protect our people.

After some more attempts to continue the discussion, the people spoke and said this issue is over and done with.

Deputy Chief John Stephenson brought up need of another justice council member and suggested Paul McCollum for the position since he has held the position before. All were in agreement

Business: swearing in of elected officers

Ugu Sharon Carter Cloud Panther, At-Large District Chief William Hoff Crazy Bear, Treaty District Chief Jennifer Forest Spirit Wolf, Northern Towns District Chief Deanna Wood Priddy Dancing Star Woman, Central District Chief Kassa Willingham Eagle Wolf, Justice council person Janice Hall Turtle Leggings, and Justice Council person Brenda Sheridan Nature Woman.

Meeting was closed without closing prayer.