

# New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs

(RSA- 12-A:14-a)

## Legislative Report for 2013-2017



Submitted to

His Excellency, Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor

The Honorable Gene G. Chandler  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

The Honorable Chuck Morse  
President of the Senate

Sarah L. Stewart  
Commissioner of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Michael C. York  
State Librarian for the New Hampshire State Library

Prepared by Kathleen Blake, Chair, NHCNAA



# New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs

The NH Commission on Native American Affairs (NHCNAA) was founded in 2010 to recognize the historic and cultural contributions of Native Americans throughout the state, to strengthen and promote NH Native peoples' heritage and to represent Native American interests through state policy and programming. The Commission is composed of 15 members including 4 state appointed positions and 11 members appointed by the Governor from the Native American communities throughout the state. The NHCNAA is mandated by New Hampshire [RSA 12-A:14-a](#).

Commission on Native American Affairs  
New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources  
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## **COMMISSION MEMBERS (As of 12/31/2017)**

1. Kathleen Blake, Chair (November 22, 2018)
2. Shawn O’Leary, Vice Chair (appointed by the Director of the Dartmouth Native American Program)
3. Kris Neilsen, Treasurer (appointed by NH Division of Travel and Tourism Development))
4. Kayla Schweitzer, Secretary (appointed by the director of the NH State Council on the Arts)
5. Bronwyn Asplund-Walsh (November 20, 2020)
6. Sheila Charles (appointed by the director of the NH Division of Historical Resources)
7. Vacant
8. Vacant
9. Vacant
10. Vacant
11. Vacant
12. Vacant
13. Vacant
14. Vacant
15. Vacant

## **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Arts and Crafts: Kayla Schweitzer, Kris Neilsen and Shawn O’Leary

Education: Kayla Schweitzer, Kris Neilsen and Shawn O’Leary

Nominations: Kathleen Blake and Bronwyn Asplund-Walsh

Protection and Preservation: Kathleen Blake and Sheila Charles

Social Services: Kayla Schweitzer, Kris Neilsen and Shawn O’Leary

## LIST OF MEETINGS FOR 2013-2017

### 2013

February 19, 2013  
May 21, 2013  
August 20, 2013  
December 10, 2013

### 2014

February 11, 2014  
May 20, 2014  
July 15, 2014  
September 16, 2014

### 2015

January 20, 2015  
March 17, 2015  
May 18, 2015  
July 21, 2015  
September 15, 2015

### 2016

March 22, 2016  
May 10, 2016  
September 13, 2016  
November 15, 2016

### 2017

January 10, 2017  
April 11, 2-17  
July 11, 2017  
October 10, 2017

Link to online meeting minutes: <https://www.nh.gov/nhculture/cnaa/index.htm>

## **2013-2017 Issues that has been addressed by the New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs:**

- 1.** Protection and Preservation Committee regarding input to the NH State Archaeologist regarding human remains and sacred sites: commission agreed to generate standardized procedure to respond. This project is on-going and current.
- 2.** Nominations Committee: membership and quorum requirements are an ongoing issue. Commission members are actively seeking new members through outreach efforts online, at powwows and related events and with the plan by the DHR to solicit new members via a letter to tribal groups and families in NH.
- 3.** Chief Al Gauvin, of the New Hampshire Intertribal Native American Council, was honored by the Grace River Church of Claremont. Abenaki Chief Toussa was murdered in Claremont in 1854. In the healing ceremony, the church honored Chief Al Gauvin, asked for forgiveness for this crime, and peace was made.
- 4.** The NCNAA, due to sunset in 2015, was updated and its term extended.
- 5.** The NCNAA was contacted by community members regarding the Durham Post Office Mural, viewed by them as derogatory to Native Americans. Several meetings have occurred with town officials and the USPS. This situation is on-going and current.
- 6.** The NCNAA was contacted by the town of Durham requesting advice on a topic raised by community member Neal Ferris. Reverend Ferris wishes the town to adopt “Indigenous Peoples Day” in Durham. After several meetings and a great deal of discussion between the town and the NCNAA, the town council adopted “Indigenous Peoples Day.” Additionally, they have petitioned the State of New Hampshire to do the same.
- 7.** It was brought to NHCNAA’s attention that the Hanover Richmond Middle School was implementing an outdated curriculum that had sixth grade students acting as colonists. It was the consensus of the class that they

needed to plan an attack against the Native Americans to gain life sustaining resources. This class activity negatively impacted a currently enrolled Native American student at the school. He did not feel comfortable attending future classes while his classmates further explored their colonist roles in the attack against the thriving Native Americans. A meeting was held and assurances made that a new curriculum would be implemented. This commission has requested more information and is awaiting a response from the district as the commission believes that this is highly inappropriate, perpetuates a negative stereotype and is out of place in our diverse society that includes indigenous people who have inhabited this land for over 13,000 years, and who continue to inhabit it today.