

New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs

(RSA- 12-A:14-a)

2020 Annual Report



Submitted to

His Excellency, Christopher T. Sununu
Governor

The Honorable Sherman Packard
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 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
19 Pillsbury Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301
USA

https://www.dncr.nh.gov/commission_on_native_american_affairs/

nhcnativeamericanaffairs@gmail.com

COMMISSION MEMBERS (As of 12/31/2020)

1. Kathleen Blake, Chair (appointed through 11/22/2021)
2. Shawn O’Leary, Vice Chair (appointed by the director of the Dartmouth Native American Program)
3. Kayla Schweitzer, Secretary (appointed by the director of the NH State Council on the Arts)
4. Garrett Chapman, Treasurer (appointed through 6/20/2021)
5. Barbara Shea (appointed by the director of the NH Division of Travel and Tourism Development)
6. Daniel Howard (appointed through 2/21/2021)
7. Anne Jennison (appointed through 10/2/2022)
8. Peter Kenney (appointed through 6/20/2021)
9. Denise Pouliot (appointed through 2/21/2021)
10. Madeleine Wright (appointed through 2/21/2021)
11. Sheila Charles (appointed by the director of the NH Division of Historical Resources)
12. Vacant
13. Vacant
14. Vacant
15. Vacant

COMMITTEE CHAIRS (As of 12/31/2020)

Arts and Crafts: Madeleine Wright
Education: Denise Pouliot
Nominations: Kris Neilsen
Protection and Preservation: Denise Pouliot
Social Services: Shawn O’Leary

LIST OF MEETINGS FOR 2020

Date: January 29, 2020

Time: 1 p.m.

Location: NH Department of Transportation, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord

Date: July 7, 2020

Time: 1 p.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting

Date: September 17, 2020

Time: 1 p.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting

Date: October 29, 2020

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting

Date: December 3, 2020

Time: 1 p.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting

Link to online meeting minutes:

https://www.dncr.nh.gov/commission_on_native_american_affairs/minutes_reports/

2020 Action Items:

Due to the COVID pandemic, the New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs was limited in their ability to conduct business as usual.

The NHCNAA has worked to update its "Rules of Decorum." In consultation with our DOJ advisor, this should be completed in June 2021.

Discussions have been held regarding recommendations to our state archeologist regarding repatriations of indigenous remains and grave goods. Those discussions have continued into the year 2021.

The NHCNAA has had on-going discussions regarding the use of racist mascots in the state of New Hampshire. A letter was sent to Governor Sununu urging him to put an end to "Indian mascots" in our schools, citing studies that have demonstrated that they are harmful to Native American children and their families.

The Commission was informed of a collaborative effort in progress at the Hannah Dustin Historical Site. There was a proposal to make updates to create an all-inclusive, historical site including additional contextualization signage, an additional monument, river and transportation history signage. The NHCNAA endorsed this effort.

The NHCNAA attended a presentation by Attorney Michael Haley of the Department of Justice regarding RSA 91-A, Right to Know.

The Commission was informed that Franklin Pierce University will be undergoing NAGPRA for indigenous remains and grave goods that are at the university. We continued to express our on-going concern with this situation.

The NHCNAA has consulted with the NH Historical Marker Program about historical road markers that are of concern to Native Americans.

The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources requested input from the NHCNAA regarding their five-year Preservation Plan. We invited Brandee Loughlin and Megan Rupnik from NHDHR to speak on the 2021-2025 statewide historic preservation plan, and provided input to them in a meeting.

Committee Reports

Arts and Crafts Committee Report

We had planned to do a traveling exhibit using the display we had created for the New Hampshire Fire Academy. Unfortunately, COVID-19 made it impossible this year.

Respectfully submitted:

Madeleine Wright
Arts and Crafts Committee Chair

Protection and Preservation Committee Report

No repatriations were conducted during the year 2020.

In November, an exploratory site test was conducted on a rock formation in collaboration with NH State Archeologist Mark Doperalski and the Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook Abenaki People. The testing was endorsed by the NHCNAA. The test performed was OSL testing, which is a multiple-aliquot quartz luminescence output test. The OSL test will take a year to register and to compile the data needed for completion, with additional time to process the results.

Copeland Collection- Franklin Pierce University has not responded to our numerous requests for information about human remains and grave goods being held within the college's archeological collections. The NHCNAA was informed by the attorneys for Franklin Pierce that the NAGPRA process is now underway. We have asked them to keep this Commission informed of their progress. We have not heard anything else since the initial correspondence from the Franklin Pierce attorneys.

Respectfully submitted:

Denise Pouliot
Protection and Preservation Committee Chair

Education Committee Report

Due to COVID – 19 no public outreach or work was conducted.

NHCNAA has continued its working relationship with Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective (INHCC). You can visit the INHCC interactive map and blog at: indigenousoh.com.

Respectfully submitted:

Denise Pouliot
Education Committee Chair

New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs



New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs
New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources
20 Park Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

August 12, 2020

The Office of Governor Chris Sununu
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu,

With the social justice events of 2020, and systemic racism being exposed to many New Hampshire residents for the first time, our commission is reminded of our duty to inform you that as a state we can be doing much better for our indigenous population. We have an opportunity in to begin to end a history of white supremacist policies against the New Hampshire indigenous community with a simple, but courageous, act. Like our neighbors in Maine, we are advising you to end Native mascots in our New Hampshire school systems. The New Hampshire State Board of Education issued a resolution in 2002 to do end mascot use, yet there are still “Indian mascots” in our state. There is a growing momentum in America behind this action and it is time to add the *State of New Hampshire* to the list of 1500+ organizations and tribes who support the removal of Native mascots and imagery.

As a commission, we are unanimously opposed to the use of Native figures, names, and other culturally appropriated items in educational spaces, and anywhere, as symbols or mascots. As white citizens of this state and country are awaking to the system of racism that has existed since the arrival of the first colonists, it is our job as a commission to inform you that Native school mascots are a component of that long history of systematic racism. The effects of Native school mascots may be perceived as small by some, but numerous research studies suggest that the negative impacts on indigenous people, most specifically our youth, are deep and highly disparaging. There are also adverse sociological effects of Native mascots on non-Natives.

Dr. Stephanie Fryberg, *University of Michigan Diversity and Social Transformation Professor of Psychology* and a member of the *Tulaiip Tribes of Washington*, has dedicated much of her professional research to the negative effects of Native mascots on indigenous people. Her studies have shown that contemporary Native mascots lower self-esteem, future outlook and impact community among Native youth and

beyond. It is widely accepted among psychologists that strength of identity of an individual is a predictor for many variables such as success in the classroom. Native mascots work to weaken the identities of indigenous people and lead to poorer outcomes of those variables. Her work suggests that we need to be active in our approach to show indigenous communities and people as productive members of contemporary society and not as the racially charged, romanticized versions we are used to seeing in mascots. Dr. Fryberg recently stated at the National Native Town Hall in regards to the movement against Native mascots, "The data reveals that when Native mascots are present, our children are more likely to experience discrimination in school and feel personally and psychologically harmed."

Many Americans who self-identify as white claim to never have interacted with an indigenous person. With the lack of personal relationships existing with indigenous people, often items like Native mascots help shape opinions and ideals of what a Native person is or should be. It is harmful for a non-Native person to lack a modern view of an indigenous person. It helps mold a viewpoint that is idealized and false of a group of people. When Native people are not shown as contributing members of society, there are real consequences to the Native community. We repeatedly hear white Americans say, "We are honoring the Indians." As indigenous citizens, we are clearly stating that this is NOT an honor for us.

As our state population hopefully awakens and begins to learn of the racial injustices under-represented groups face, while unlearning centuries of systems design to oppress, we are reminded of a quote by the writer, poet and activist Clint Smith, "It's easy to look back at the past and say what you should have done or would have done. It's harder to look at the present and say what you are going to do." We implore you Governor Sununu to summon the strength to do what is right and end Native school mascots for good in this state. It is critical to protect our Native children living in this state and to take an active role to end the racism that they face.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen A. Blake

Chair

New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs