

**NIHSDA  
Board of Directors Meeting  
December 11, 2008**

**Call to Order:** Danny Wells, President, called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. PST.

**Roll Call:** Roll call was taken by the Secretary, Mavany Verdugo. A quorum of the Board of Directors was established.

PRESENT	NOTIFIED	NOT NOTIFIED
President – Danny Wells Immediate Past Pres – Ann Belleau Treasurer – Gil Gonzales Secretary – Mavany Verdugo Region 1 – Frances Maney Region 3– Sara Young Bird, Alt. Region 5– William Maes, Alt Region 6 – - Pat Foster Region 8 – Vikki Bishop – Viola Wood, alt. Region 9 – Jackie Haight – Patty Eningowuk, Alt. Region 10 – Albert Rhinehart	Region 5 – Kathleen Sando Region 3 – Hilda Marshall	Region 2 – John Pavek Region 2 – Kevin Hedstrom, Alt. Region 4 – Mike Williamson Region 4 – Stephanie Carr, Alt Region 6 – Amanda Sharpe, Alt.

**Others Present:** Kathryn Helsel, Toni Dobrec, and Kristi Bentkowski, from the MCS were present. Renee Perthuis and Nina McFadden from OHS joined the call for planned discussion, and Greg Smith gave an update on the Obama Transition Committee meeting.

**Update on AIAN office:** Renee Perthuis introduced the new AIAN Regional Manager to the board. Nina McFadden thanked us for the opportunity to meet with us and offered us her information

*Nina McFadden is a graduate of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo and holds a Masters of Social Work from Michigan State University in East Lansing. Further, she has taken additional professional training such as Program on Negotiation for Senior Executives at the Harvard Law School, Fundamentals of Finance for the Technical Executive at the MIT/Sloan Management and Harvard University as well as the Executive Leadership Development Program with the DHHS/Indian Health Service. She has been an Adjunct Professor, Bemidji State University in the Social Work Department and been on the Practitioners Advisory Council.*

*Nina, an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and affiliated with the Little Traverse Band of Odawa Indians, has been the Director of the Office of Self-Determination for the Bemidji Area Indian Health Service, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) since 1996. Nina has extensive career experience in working with the Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal leadership served by the Bemidji Area. In the capacity as Director of Self-Determination, she*

*was responsible for a wide range of regional functions, including consultation, policy development and planning, administration, and the evaluation of all aspects in the implementation of the Indian Self-Determination & Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA), that are critical to the relationship HIS has with Tribal leaders, organizations and other American Indian and Alaska Native groups. During her tenure, she administered and directed the Contracting, Acquisition and Grants, Statistical and Program Evaluation; Urban, Self-Governance and Title I Contracting programs including management of the contract support costs awarded to Tribes and Tribal Organizations.*

*Prior to joining IHS, she worked for many years in the social work field as a Clinical Social Worker for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and the Eastern Upper Peninsula Mental Health Agency as well as case manager for persons with mental illnesses. Additionally, Nina also worked in the field of Indian Child Welfare, providing foster care, foster home licensing and adoption services, as a caseworker and caseworker supervisor for the Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency, which was created shortly after the Indian Child Welfare Act was passed into law.*

*Throughout her tenure, Nina has been the recipient of numerous performance awards from IHS including the HHS Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service.*

Renee let us know that Nina has been leading the Risk Assessment meetings solo over the phone and is eager to meet us in person. Renee is both thrilled to turn over the reins to Nina but also saddened to leave Indian Head Start. She is excited about Nina's new organization skills. Nina spoke about challenges ahead, the difficulty of being located in D.C. She is going to focus on turning things to the positive and work on expanding our resources.

Nina has met with AED and stressed the importance of technical assistance for compliance in our programs. She let us know that Laura Syron is committed to meet our needs and strengthen our relationships.

We shared with Nina our take on the roles of tribal councils and Head start Directors. Nina recognizes that Head start is foundational to tribes and costs a lot of money. She met with David Kaden and let us know that a joint work plan is being developed. The goal is to have applications processed and grants awarded 30 days prior to the end of the cycle. Of course we are encouraged to submit fundable applications as soon as possible to assist in the process.

Nina also addressed concerns the categories of deficiencies and the reasons behind them. Of critical importance is decreasing the number of deficiencies. Defunding will continue to be a threat if we cannot solve the deficiency problem. Plans are under development for these two areas.

Nina also announced Brian Richmond as the new National Collaboration Director for AIAN programs. She met with him today and is excited at his enthusiasm and clear direction for moving forward to simplify the collaboration requirements.

We were invited to call anytime as she insists on maintaining an open door policy. She plans to come to the NIHSDA conference this June to meet all of us in person and get a

chance to meet many of the directors and managers from the various regions in Indian Country.

**Agenda Approval:** The agenda was reviewed. One item was added to New Business. We need to seat 3 new alternates to the board. Pat moved to accept the amended agenda, and Gil seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**Approval of the Minutes of the November 13, 2008 meeting:** The minutes were read and examined for corrections. Albert moved to approve them as submitted and William seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Gil reviewed the Check Register, Revenue Report and Expense Report. Mavany moved to accept the treasurer's report and Ann seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

**Membership Report:** Kathryn gave an overview of the Regional Membership Report. There was one new member from Wisconsin, Lac Courte Oreilles. Now Region 2 has attained 100%.

**\$3 Per Child Campaign and Regional \$2,000 Commitment:** In the \$3 per child campaign Oklahoma sent in \$2,000. Kickapoo and Washoe also sent in donations.

**Attendance Record:** Kathryn provided the Board with a copy of the new Attendance Report for their information. We had 7 absences today and only two were notified.

**Seat New Alternates:** While waiting for Greg Smith to join the call, Jacki moved that the board approve the selections for regions 6, 9, and 10 alternates. Mavany seconded the motion and the motion passes. Welcome to region 6 – Amanda Sharpe, region 9 – Patty Eningowuk, region 10 – Malinda Besett.

**Report on Obama's Transition Committee Meeting:** Greg Smith attended on our behalf the transition meeting that was held with HHS/IHS. First, Lillian Sparks the NIEA executive director has asked if NIHSDA would offer support to her for a position in HHS/OHS. She wants to be director of OHS or an administrator for ANA or a special liaison for the administration. Lillian has been useful, and helpful in reauthorization efforts. Lillian is one of the only ones with the qualifications that is Indian. Yvette Sanchez wants the same type position and she might be just as helpful. We would address such a letter of support to President Elect Obama and cc HHS transition team. Very seldom have we been asked to support a candidate. After discussion, Mavany moved that the board submit a letter of recommendation for Lillian Sparks. Ann seconded the motion. The motion passed with one nay.

Back to the transition meeting, some of the members of the transition were George Askew and Joan Lombardi. Joan has worked with AIAN programs. George, an MD, worked in OHS.

According to a Bingaman staffer, the biggest problem is poverty. Soon, there will be millions entering deep poverty. Head Start is key for these populations. Especially in Native communities, the holistic approach is appropriate.

Several areas were discussed and the need for our views to be respected. AIAN is unique, business are rare to draw from for serving on community councils. There is little research in the AIAN area to date. Right now the avenue for expertise is with NIHSDA. It is important that we maintain tribal culture and language in AIAN programs.

The transition team is overwhelmed by documents. They are requesting one-page recommendations. We should have a summary by next week.

Senator Tom Daschle of South Dakota will be a strong representative for supporting Indian issues.

On the horizon is a giant infrastructure economic stimulus idea looking for shovel-ready projects that might just take a month to start up. If any Head Start programs have projects ready but lack funds, now is the time to prepare for those facilities needs.

At Greg's office in Washington D.C there will be an inaugural party where guests can watch the parade from the office. NIHSDA will have advertisement for sponsoring some refreshments. Ann moved to provide food for the inaugural reception not to exceed \$300. Gil seconded the motion and the motion passed.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Budget Committee** – Will schedule a meeting in January.

**Education/Conference Committee** – Oklahoma is discussing how much to offer in support for breaks at the national conference, asking the cost of the banquet, and generally gathering information.

**Membership** – Met once and discussed ideas. There were no action items and they are waiting for minutes to submit to the board.

**By-Laws** – Will meet on January 7.

**Executive Committee** – Met to discuss work from the strategic plan.

**Adjournment:** Gil moved to adjourn the meeting and Ann seconded. The motion carried. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.