



**Virginia Indian Advisory Board
Recognition Workgroup
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, August 25 2022

Time: 6:00pm-8:00pm

Location: Virtual – Teams

Committee Members Present:

**Buck Woodard
Brad Hatch
Pam Ross
Greg Smithers
Jean Kelley**

Committee Members Absent:

None

Non-Members in Attendance:

**Chief Terry Price
Gary Price
Ashley Spivey
Annette Price
Cami Adkins
Erik Conyers
Pamela D'Angelo
Brandon Custalow
Bill Hurd**

Committee Business:

- **Old Business**
 - **Approval of July 14 minutes.**
 - **Greg moves to approve, Buck seconds. Motion carries.**
 - **Communication with petitioner, letter of 8/11/22.**
 - **Buck: digital format left Secretary of Commonwealth on 8/11 along with a snail mail version. This letter concerned Criteria 4-6, but mostly 5 and 6 as we were waiting on Jean's review of Criterion 4. Buck summarizes content of letter.**
 - **Greg: this was a well-crafted letter, kudos Buck!**
 - **Overview of August 23 VIAB meeting.**
 - **Buck: attended this meeting to provide update of communication with petitioner and review. VIAB reviewed timelines and our deadlines for**



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reports. Our report needs to be delivered by the last week (Thanksgiving week) of November. Based on starting December 2021. VIAB identified January as their deadline for a decision to the petitioner. VIAB would like to have a member present at every one of their meetings until the work group's job is done. VIAB's meetings are on Tuesdays.

- **Brad:** what times on Tuesdays?
- **Buck:** Usually in morning or early afternoon.
- **Jean:** can make Tuesdays and Thursdays work.
- **Buck:** will send around a poll to get everybody's schedules in terms of being able to attend VIAB meetings and make presentation on recognition criteria.
- **Greg:** Not teaching, but has a lot of travel. Only bad days are Thursdays, but overall schedule is variable. Would be good to have sense of VIAB schedule if possible.
- **Buck:** when presentation time comes (October or November), making time after work hours could be good to prevent work conflicts. VIAB expressed concerns about workgroup communication protocols with the petitioner. They wanted to assure transparency in communications between workgroup and board, so are planning on drafting a letter outlining what they would like to see. Hoping that documenting all of this helps to create a precedent since this is a new process. Library of Virginia has offered their services to Jean if she needs things.

- New Business

- **Communication with VIAB, schedule of Workgroup meetings and presentations, timelines of state recognition process. See discussion above.**
- **Discussion with Jean about criterion 4.**
 - **Jean:** has worked to produce a documented genealogy. She can't evaluate the petition as given because it doesn't have enough documents in terms of censuses, tax, lists, etc. The people in the genealogy, as it stands, are mostly accurate, but there are some hiccups as you go further back. She has questions about names, parents, etc. Has been doing online research through ancestry, fold three, digital archives (including tax lists), NC state archives, moving from present membership back in time. Price family is very well-sourced in late 18th and 19th centuries in old Ashe County, all uniformly identified as white on censuses. Families obtained and sold lands as white citizens. Counties in this area had few free people of color. Military service records list petitioner's family as white. Milam and Turner families located in western and southwestern VA, Tazewell, Montgomery, Augusta, all uniformly identified as white on



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censuses and taxes. Military records note that these people are white. Cherokee records do not indicate connection with the family of the petitioner. All Cherokee applications denied, no association with Cherokee found in these applications. Theory on maintenance of oral tradition from families about Indian heritage, perhaps related to woman taken/kidnapped by intertribal raiding party (Delaware, Seneca, Cayuga). Use of phrase “my mother said we were kin to the Indians” in 1908 applications, may indicate something different than descended from.

- **Buck:** were you able to determine which ancestor they trace Indian heritage to?
- **Jean:** petitioner identifies these people on genealogical charts. One is Abigail Roark, identified as free white on census, but Jean has not been able to identify her maiden name, ancestry charts can’t substantiate her identity.
- **Buck:** where does the captive woman come into this line?
- **Jean:** she is born in Lancaster PA, she marries Peter Graybill and they come south to VA.
- **Buck:** the captive wasn’t identified as petitioner as being Indian.
- **Jean:** oral tradition has become conflated to suggest Indian ancestors. This happened a lot on the frontier. This episode related to Graybill happens around mid-18th century.
- **Buck:** what about Brock and Davis family?
- **Jean:** Question about Susannah, not sure where surname Davis comes from. No connection between Sizemores and Indian community.
- **Buck:** Any insight into Sizemore situation?
- **Jean:** Ned Sizemore often mentioned with Catawba, but can’t get to those records online.
- **Buck:** Catawba and coalescence of multiple communities.
- **Jean:** Sizemores have been a question mark, but documentation for Indian heritage is not there.
- **Buck:** Any progress on #114 and #115?
- **Jean:** can’t get anyone back to Gabriel Arthur.
- **Buck:** between 1750 and 1820 is there a period when the different starred individuals are living in the same area?
- **Jean:** Families coalesce around 1810, but mostly in NC, some in SW VA, but then begin to move out.
- **Buck:** What about Lester Indians?
- **Jean:** Miller could find no evidence of them being Eastern Cherokee. Majority of applicants to Cherokee claims were rejected.
- **Buck:** just because they were rejected from Eastern Cherokee may not mean they were not Indian from some other group.



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- **Brad:** lots of information to think about and digest.
- **Greg:** lots of work, tends to fit with broader historiography, particularly related to captive family members and the growth of vernacular histories related to family ties with Indian communities. Phrase “kin to” a critical piece of evidence. A form of fictive kin, not biologically descended but may have responsibilities to that community. Common in the Appalachian region of the US with Cherokee, Shawnee, and other groups.
- **Buck:** what kind of timeline might you need for submitting a report on this genealogy?
- **Jean:** Can have it done by the first part of October. Does VIAB want a presentation on this at their September meeting?
- **Bill Hurd:** would like to have the genealogy to review and respond to.
- **Buck:** we can put together a draft of this in a formal letter otherwise it might push us too close to the deadline.
- **Bill Hurd:** would like a copy of the recording so we have all of the details.
- **Buck:** good suggestion, defer to Erik Conyers.
- **Erik:** will need to verify and get back on it.
- **Buck:** curious all starred ancestors seem to be a dead end.
- **Jean:** women are hard to find information for before 1850.
- **Buck:** critical to look at criterion and what the language is.
- **Review of petition evidence in shared folder.**
 - **Buck:** Petitioner has until September to put material into these folders. Has anybody looked at this?
 - **Brad:** might be useful to break new narrative into separate criteria or revise criteria narratives to encompass new information. Good to see some of the same documents in multiple folders.
 - **Jean:** agrees.
 - **Greg:** agrees, some narrative is counterproductive.
 - **Buck:** would like to be directed as to how new evidence supports petition and it should be explicit to guide us as the workgroup in terms of how it is significant. Don’t want to make assumptions.
 - **Jean:** perhaps hyperlinks to the exhibit would be helpful.
 - **Pam:** agrees about organization and not wanting to make assumptions about evidence and how it relates to different criteria.
 - **Bill Hurd:** will be providing more materials to drive next week.
 - **Buck:** Do we need to write a letter about the organization of the drive?
 - **Bill Hurd:** organized to address criteria. **Pam:** an extension of your petition.
- **Review of exterior comments regarding petition process.**



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- **Buck:** request from the board to review exterior comments. Agreed we would not entertain exterior comments until work on the petition was done in the last meeting.
- **Pam:** has the board given direction on this?
- **Buck:** Cami suggested being careful about language used to describe exterior exhibits. But, the exhibits are an anti-petition. VIAB suggested that this exterior exhibit may provide clarity on some of our questions.
- **Pam:** are the people submitting the counter petition people who are referenced in the genealogy of the petition?
- **Buck:** it is relevant, but it's not in the petition. We should give the petition due process before entertaining anything else.
- **Jean:** prefer that we evaluate the petition first so we aren't drawn into interfamily politics.
- **Pam:** will the information in the counter petition be shown through the research that is being done in relation to the petition anyway? If so, we should continue with what we are doing.
- **Ashley Spivey:** There is no time limit put on the review of the counter petition, but should be considered prior to final report.
- **Jean:** do we need to have additional reports on counter petition?
- **Ashley Spivey:** maybe nothing in depth, but just an initial response.
- **Greg:** our job is to write a report that informs VIAB. Don't see any legal problem as including this external document in our report as an appendix.
- **Buck:** can get into it after we finish up petition. We want to give the petitioner preference as we come up on a deadline.
- **Public comment**
 - **Annette Price:** Thank Jean for hard work. Got the letter about 4-6. People in tribe who worked for tribal businesses added to Google Drive. Cherokee traditions in tribal community added. Fixed wording in bylaws to satisfy Criterion 6. Commentary on counter petition and how it adds to much with looming deadline. Ned Sizemore as a Cherokee who lived on the Catawba reservation, but from Virginia.
 - **Chief Terry Price:** will be sending more material next week.
- **Announcements and polling for next meeting**
 - **Next Meeting Thursday, September 22 6-8 PM**
- **Meeting adjourned 8:04 pm**