

DOI SELF-GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

c/o Self-Governance Communication & Education Tribal Consortium
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August 19, 2020

The Honorable Tara Mac Lean Sweeney
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
Room 4660 Main Interior Building
1849 C Street
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Follow-up Items from the Department of the Interior Self-Governance Advisory Committee (DOI-SGAC) July 14, 2020 Virtual Meeting and Invite to Next Meeting

Dear Assistant Secretary Sweeney –

On behalf of the Department of the Interior Self-Governance Advisory Committee (DOI-SGAC), I write to share issues discussed during the SGAC Quarterly Virtual Meeting held on Tuesday, July 14, 2020. We ask that you follow-up on these issues as noted. In addition, we invite you to participate in the **next SGAC Quarterly Virtual Meeting on Monday, September 28, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.**

The SGAC was formally sanctioned by the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs in 1998 and continues to serve a vital role in effectuating the policy recommendations to implement the Tribal Self-Governance statute and authorities within the Department of the Interior under Title IV of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) P.L. 93-638 as amended. These meetings serve as a forum for strengthening our Tribal/Federal partnership and addressing issues of mutual concern, resolving issues in dispute, building trust and respect and strengthening communication. While we value the presence of your esteemed senior staff, we cannot stress enough how critical your presence and participation at these meetings are to Tribal leadership.

Overall, there was a breakdown in communication between Central Office Leadership and Tribal Leaders throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. The absence of communication and guidance from DOI leadership led to confusion regarding the utilization of funding and the timeframe for expending funds. Tribal Leaders submitted numerous requests for consultation but to no avail. If Tribes had been consulted from the beginning and if open and consistent communication with Central Office leadership had taken place it may have alleviated a lot of the confusion and allowed for a more fluid process. However, given the breakdown in communication guidance on the use of the funding was not even provided until three months after the funding had been distributed to the Tribes. If additional

funding is provided to Tribes in the next pandemic relief package, we would urge leadership to consult with Tribal leaders and maintain communication with Tribes on a more consistent basis.

A summary of the issues and action items discussed is attached for your review and comments. A copy of the agenda for the next virtual meeting is a work in progress and will be shared with you in a few days. If you have any questions and/or concerns I can be reached via email at rallen@jamestowntribe.org or by phone 206-369-6699.

Sincerely,



W. Ron Allen, Tribal Chairman/CEO
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribes and
Chairman, DOI-SGAC

Cc: SGAC and Technical Workgroup Members
Mark Cruz, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Policy and Economic Development, DOI
Sharee Freeman, Director, Office of Self-Governance, DOI