

Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community

1351 Sibley Memorial Hwy
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Date: May 7, 2018

To: MNHS Executive Leadership Team; MNHS Governing Board;
Andrea Kajer – Senior Director, External Relations.

Cc: MMDTC Tribal Council: Sharon Lennartson - Tribal Chairwoman;
John LeClaire - Vice Chairman;
Perry Altendorfer - Historian;
Marlene Dixon - Secretary / Treasurer;
Lon Navarre - Member at Large;
Chris Antiel - Member at Large;
Jim Anderson - Cultural Advisor;

Subject: Current practice by MNHS of lack of Engagement and Inclusion of the Mendota
Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community.

We are Lineal Descendants of “Cetan Wakuwa Mani” (Little Crow) and are proud that his blood runs thru us. In his spirit, we will stand up for our rights, and never let anyone tell us what we can do or not do.

We are an honest Native American Community with good hearts. Recently, we have heard the words and seen people trying to disrespect our community. The below are a list of grievances and concerns we have, that need to be addressed. The below list was compiled at the meeting of the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community on April 29th, 2018.

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We would like to open a line of communication with someone higher up at the MNHS and to have a mediator who can help with the discussion. We will bring an eagle feather as we speak to ensure everyone has a chance to be heard. Some of the below grievances are questions that need to be answered. Others are comments or concerns which will require more time to rectify.

Dupuis Family Home

1. Why do we need a person from the MNHS to be at all our meetings? We haven't had an overseer for 7 years. Save the tax payer money. We don't need a baby sitter. Who made this decision and Why?
2. Who at the MNHS made the decision that we could not have a key, cook, or have an office at our Ancestral Home?
3. Why can't we use the kitchen? We used it for over 22 years off and on. We use to use the kitchen for Mendota Days in the past at least 5 or 6 times and other events. Who made that decision and why?
4. Why can't we cook fry bread outside? We did before? Who made that decision?
5. Why can't we burn sage? Just turn off the fire alarm, like we did for years? Who made that decision?
6. The MNHS has told us we cannot burn sage in our Ancestral home, yet this is what our ceremonies require.
7. For safety reasons, we should have access to the fire alarm code.
8. Why does the Fur Rendezvous get to cook by historical house and we can't? Who made that decision?
9. We pay for a \$3,000,000 insurance policy to use the Inipi.
10. DuPuis Home should be open to use the bathrooms after every Inipi. Would you turn your people way from using the bathroom every time they need to use it?
11. Currently, it is only available when it is convenient for others to allow us in.
12. We have to call the MNHS to schedule a religious ceremony and other healing events? Why do we have to give a 10 day to 2 weeks notice?
13. If we had a key, we could have our ceremonies without needing to get permission from the MNHS.
14. We get harassed on occasion. We were approached by a woman who said she was with the MNHS who came and said she hates us, take down the teepee, we don't want you here etc. She called the police and took down our license plate numbers. This behavior needs to stop.
15. The director at the MNHS 4 years ago told us we would never use the DuPuis property for our Inipi? Why?
16. On May 2, 2018 MNHS started digging up our sacred Burial Mound located on our Ancestral Dupuis Home property without talking to the Mendota Community? We were

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told that Joe Horse Capture from the DCC made this decision. When? and Why?
Explain the expedited timeline?

DCC and its Mission:

1. What is it the "DCC" is going to provide that couldn't be done under the pre-existing and current local Dakota representation?
2. What is the "DCC" Mission and Vision?
3. What are the eight areas of focus?
4. Do they include sacred sites such as our sacred worship rock "In Yan Sa" or "Wakan-Ti-Pi" also called "Carvers Cave" our sacred cave located at our Kaposia village in St. Paul?
5. What specifically are the programs that are the focus of implementation?
6. Do any of these locations and programs being implemented fall within our Kaposia Reservation area from the Great Falls of Minneapolis to the St. Croix River?
7. We have been told that we don't matter because we don't have Federal Recognition. Yet our families are on the same Indian Census rolls as our Indian cousins located at their reservations in Shakopee; Prairie Island; Morton; Upper Sioux; Santee; and Flandrau. We can prove our descendancy. The only difference between us is that we always lived here in our Kaposia Reservation which encompasses Dakota County; Ramsey County; Hennepin County; and Washington County. We would have been harmed by our cousins on their reservations if we were all forced to move to the reservations after the 1862 uprising on the western Minnesota prairie which was actually started by other Mdewakanton Dakota.
8. We were told by Joe Horse Capture that our ancestors did not suffer enough? We strongly disagree with this statement. This statement is highly offensive and should not have been said. We feel we deserve an apology for this statement? It is obvious that representatives of the MNHS have not reviewed our Dakota history located on our webpage at www.mendotadakota.com. We are still suffering today!
9. At our first meeting and interaction to the "DCC", the first thing said was an order to take down our Inipi. This was a very bad start to a relationship and has only gone down from there.
10. Did not like what Joe Horse Capture said about Robert Minish. He said that Robert did not tell the truth in the newsletter. That shows you what kind of a person Joe is.
11. We trust and believe in Robert Minish 110%.
12. Joe is not DAKOTA! He should not be here telling Dakota people what to do, especially us.
13. We recognize that we are a small community. We have been told that we are too small to matter. Why does size matter? This should not be a reason to silence our existence. Our Mendota community continues to suffer.
14. We were told our history does not matter. This is highly offensive.

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15. Why is the Mendota Kaposia Community not represented?

MNHS:

1. Why is it that the MNHS is not properly representing the Dupuis family home and property?
2. We have been told that white people can't go into a sweat. WHAT? We believe in the 4 colors of man and that all people should be able to go into a Inipi.
3. Why did Ben not want us to have a Tipi at the Fur Rendezvous last year?
4. The interpretive Dupuis Family history traveling panels were going fine for a while. Then Ben changed his mind. We had to finish the project with our funds. Ben never communicated that he was going back on his agreement with us to fund the project that was to benefit the MNHS. Why?
5. Who made the decision to muffle our Kaposia history? MNHS or "DCC"?
6. Broken promises, MNHS said they would help with our rent for a few years at another site. They only helped us one year. We know this was a way to keep us out of the Dupuis family home. Who made this decision?
7. In the past it was Nina Archabal who in 2005 sent a memo stating not to help the Mendota people. This treatment continues.

Our Indigenous Kaposia Rights:

1. We do have Treaty Rights.
2. Our Great Kaposia Chief "Little Crow" Was signer of the 1805 Treaty with Pike. This area includes Minneapolis and St. Paul. ***Any other claims to ownership/claim or relationships needs to be approved by us the descendents of the Kaposia People. All signage promoting this area should be approved by our Dakota community.***
3. Mendota as correctly spelled "Mdote" It is the center of our Reservation.
4. Why do Indians have to be told they must be Federally Recognition by a white man?
5. Our own Dakota people at other Dakota communities and MNHS are doing what whites did to them. They want to eliminate us.
6. We are tired of having to prove who we are over and over, year after year.
7. We will **never** give in, or stop the fighting for our Heritage and Cultural Identity and ownership our Dupuis Family ancestral home.

Enough is enough!

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The above issues were expressed strongly by Tribal members. We want to work with the MNHS and the State of Minnesota to address the issues to come to joint peaceful solutions. However, we feel strongly about the issues and that if a joint solution cannot be found, we are willing to get a civil rights attorney, contact the press, and protest. We have many groups that share our view and will protest with us. Our Veterans of Peace will help us protest, they also are not happy with MNHS. We look forward to your response.

Pidamaya ye
Good Thunder Woman

Sharon Lennartson