



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 25, 2025**

The January 25, 2025, meeting Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) was at the County of Los Angeles Natural History Museum.

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Chairperson Shawn Imitates called the meeting to order at 10:16 A.M. and read the Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgment.

Invocation

Commissioner Ted Tenorio provided an invocation.

Roll Call

Present: Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog
Treasurer Denise Escoto
Caroline Bhalla (Joined at 10:22 A.M.)
Dr. Andrea Garcia
Dawn Jackson
Mona Morales Recalde
John Only A Chief
Ted Tenorio
Rich Toyon
Rene' Williams

Absent: Vice Chairperson Mark Villasenor (Excused)
Secretary Bryce Lewis-Smith (Excused)
Chrissie Castro (Excused)
Vivian Garcia (Excused)
Rudy Ortega Jr. (Excused)

Staff: Alexandra Valdes, LANAIC Executive Director
Heather Rigby, County of LA Department of Arts & Culture Chief Deputy

Quorum was met.

Commissioner Introductions

Commissioners provided brief introductions including their names, appointing office, and tribal affiliation.



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Public Comment

Hannah Searles (TreePeople) shared that she emailed Alexandra Valdes a presentation regarding the 5th California Climate Assessment.

Action Items

6.1 Adopt absentee excuses

A motion was made by Commissioner Rene’ Williams and seconded by Commissioner Denise Escoto to adopt Commissioner Villasenor, Castro, Ortega Jr., V. Garcia, and Lewis-Smith absentee excuses for the January 25, 2025 meeting. The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Escoto, Bhalla, A. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio, Williams
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Villasenor, Castro, Ortega Jr., V. Garcia

6.2 Adopt the November 19, 2024 Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) Unapproved Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde and seconded by Commissioner Caroline Bhalla to approve the unapproved November 19, 2024 LANAIC Meeting Minutes as presented.

The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Escoto, Bhalla, A. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio
NO	
ABSTAIN	Williams
ABSENT	Villasenor, Castro, Ortega Jr., V. Garcia



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6.3 Adopt the FY23-24 LA City/County Native American Indian Commission Annual Report

A motion was made by Commissioner Andrea Garcia and seconded by Commissioner Rene' Williams to adopt the FY23-24 LA City/County Native American Indian Commission Annual Report as presented.

The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Escoto, Bhalla, A. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio, Williams
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Villasenor, Castro, Ortega Jr., V. Garcia

6.4 Adopt letter to LA City Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson regarding ordering of annual Indigenous Peoples' Day and Native American Heritage Month Council presentations

A motion was made by Commissioner Andrea Garcia and seconded by Commissioner Rene' Williams to adopt the FY23-24 LA City/County Native American Indian Commission Annual Report with the following edit: change "we deserve" in the first paragraph to "out of respect we request."

The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Escoto, Bhalla, A. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio, Williams
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Villasenor, Castro, Ortega Jr., V. Garcia



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6.5 Establish the 50th LANAIC Anniversary Archival Project Ad Hoc Committee and 2025 Native American Heritage Month Planning Ad Hoc Committee

Chair Imitates Dog shared that there have been three meetings regarding the 50th LANAIC Anniversary Archival Project and that Professor Nancy Mithlo (UCLA) is securing funding on behalf of the LANAIC. Professor Mithlo shared that she has notes from the meetings

Heather Rigby reminded the body that no one should be soliciting funding or procuring services without first consulting with the County and insuring it all aligned with County policy. She also requested the meeting notes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde and seconded by Commissioner Denise Escoto to establish the 50th LANAIC Anniversary Archival Project Ad Hoc Committee and 2025 Native American Heritage Month Planning Ad Hoc Committee and appointee the following commissioners to each committee:

50th LANAIC Anniversary Archival Project Ad Hoc Committee

1. Mona Morales Recalde
2. Shawn Imitates Dog
3. Dawn Jackson
4. Denise Escoto
5. Caroline Bhalla

2025 Native American Heritage Month Planning Ad Hoc Committee

1. Mona Morales Recalde
2. Shawn Imitates Dog
3. Ted Tenorio
4. Dawn Jackson
5. Denise Escoto
6. Rich Toyon

The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Escoto, Bhalla, A. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio, Williams
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Villasenor, Castro, Ortega Jr., V. Garcia



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6.6 Sunset the Homelessness Standing Committee

A motion was made by Commissioner Caroline Bhalla and seconded by Commissioner Ted Tenorio to sunset the Homelessness Standing Committee and move the work back into the full Commission.

The motion passed.

YES	Imitates Dog, Escoto, Bhalla, A. Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Only A Chief, Toyon, Tenorio, Williams
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Villasenor, Castro, Ortega Jr., V. Garcia

Discussion Items

7.1 Strategic Planning for the LA City/County Native American Indian Commission

Chair Imitates Dog opened the Strategic Planning session by inviting commissioners to share how they are feeling in light of the new Trump Administration. The Commissioners had a lengthy discussion, sharing how the first few days of the new administration was impacting them personally and professionally as well as concerns and thoughts they had on how it has and will continue to impact the Native American Community in Los Angeles County and throughout the country. The Commission also discussed possible ways that the body could support the community in this unprecedented time.

Alexandra Valdes (ED) shared that Chair Imitates Dog and her had spoken about the possibility of shifting the February LANAIC meeting into an opportunity to hear back from the AIAN community regarding the catastrophic fires and the recent Executive Orders and policy changes at the Federal level. The Commission expressed enthusiasm for this idea and decided to proceed with coordinating a listening session.

A non-working lunch break was taken between 12:00 P.M. and 12:46 P.M.

Following lunch Chair Imitates Dog led the Commission through an exercise to flush out the newly adopted FY24-25 workplan through the end of 2025 as well as to add to the workplan a February Community Listening Session. The body discussed and planned out all aspects of the listening session including, the format, roles and small group questions.



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Commissioner General Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Commissioner John Only A Chief provided multiple community updates including about the 27th Annual Wildhorse Powwow that will be held on February 1st and 2nd of 2025 at El Camino College in Torrance, California and reiterating his desire to have an LA County Board of Supervisor at one commission meeting per quarter.

Announcements/Future Agenda Items

No Announcements/Future Agenda Items were provided.

Commission Adjournment

Chairperson Shawn Imitates Dog adjourned the meeting at 2:30 P.M.