

## Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Parks for All 2021 Comprehensive Plan

### Virtual Park Summit—Indigenous Land, People and Nations Acknowledgement at MPRB

6/15/2020

4:00-6:00pm

**Panel:** Sean Sherman: Oglala Sioux Tribe (Lakota), Franky Jackson: Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate (Dakota), Mattie Harper DeCarlo: Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe (Ojibwe), Kate Beane: Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe (Dakota), and Carly Bad Heart Bull: Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe (Dakota)

**CAC Present:** Several of the CAC members were present but there wasn't a formal tally of who was present

**Public Present:** Approximately 70 attendees

#### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The meeting started around 4:00pm. Carrie Christensen welcomed everyone in the virtual room. Carrie is a Senior Planner at the Park Board and is working on the Comprehensive Planning process. This conversation in part was convened as a part of the Park Summit which is the midpoint in that planning process. This panel is part of the conversation around the next 10 years of policy, priorities and work that are all housed in the Comprehensive Plan. Carrie shared the schedule for the next week of the Park Summit.

In early June, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board postponed the Parks for All Virtual Park Summit. We are outraged and grief-stricken about the death of George Floyd. We also know that racism and violence are systemic issues that we need to address, now and into the future. We hope you are safe, with your loved ones, and able to show up for community in whatever way feels right to you.

Initially planned to close on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, we plan to now close the Park Summit on June 19<sup>th</sup>. The recent events have made it clear that there is great urgency for us to move forward in our work to untangle systemic racism from our systems. One of the key ways that we need to do that is by crafting new policies that address the root causes of those issues. Thank you for doing that with us by being a part of these conversations.

Carrie introduced Kate Lamers, a Landscape Architect at the MPRB and Carly Bad Heart Bull, a local leader who is also involved in the Comprehensive Plan, serving as the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Chair.

Kate Lamers took over and explained she would be co-moderating the meeting with Carly. Kate outlined the ground rules for the online meeting.

Kate went on to explain that this panel is a contributor to creating a culture around inclusion of Indigenous land, people and nations around all work done by the MPRB. Issues and questions continue to come up during individual projects and transcend every project. Staff want to come up with a process that individual projects can build on, rather than starting from scratch with every project. Want to move these conversations forward. Kate went on to read a statement, but first iterated that part of the work today is to create a culture and practice of acknowledgement that goes far beyond statements.

Kate passed the mic over to Carly Bad Heart Bull to begin introductions. Carly welcomed everyone in Dakota, expressing her gratitude for seeing everyone at the meeting. Carly is the Executive Director of Native Ways Federation and has served on CAC's previously, and currently chairs the Comprehensive Plan CAC. Coming together tonight to have a conversation around land acknowledgement. Have to recognize that this can come in many forms, that land acknowledgement statements are a wonderful starting point. Continue work to celebrate and honor the people and nations that initially inhabited these places and spaces, those who continue to live here and provide innumerable contributions to the community. Tonight is meant to help provide insight and guidance to make sure that acknowledgements are effective and go beyond statements. Think about how to direct statements to action, how to live out the values that are portrayed in the acknowledgement that respects and honors these places, people and nations on a day to day basis. Understand that a statement needs to be more than something that is read at the beginning of events. This is a broader conversation around the importance of undoing systemic racism. Part of that large and complex conversation is how in everyday work the MPRB can think of indigenous people and space via acknowledgement, celebration, and the uplifting of these voices.

### **Panelist Introductions**

**Sean Sherman: Oglala Sioux Tribe (Lakota):** Own a company with their partner called Sioux Chef, and also operate a nonprofit. Working with the MPRB at the Waterworks site to open a Dakota focused food business which would offer indigenous foods. Having conversations around how to also bring deeper awareness and understanding of the land and its history. Think about how everyone can see benefits from the land through the perspective of Indigenous food systems.

**Dr. Mattie Harper DeCarlo: Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe (Ojibwe):** Works as the Assistant Director for Tribal State Relations in the Governor's Office. Has been there for a few months. Right now working mostly with the COVID crisis, working with 11 tribal nations in the state. Previous was at the Minnesota Historical Society as a Senior Historian. Worked on the [Our Home Native Minnesota](#) exhibit at the Minnesota History Center with Dr. Kate Beane. Has a doctorate in Ethnic Studies, specializes in the history of the Great Lakes region mainly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Dr. Kate Beane Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe (Dakota):** Director of Native American Initiatives at the Minnesota Historical Society. Her work centers around American Indian Peoples in the Minnesota region and the larger surrounding territories (recognizing that state borders are not the same as Native borders). She works as professor, public historian, works on historic preservation. Co-developer of the [Our Home Native Minnesota](#) exhibit. Worked with her family to champion the cause of restoring the Dakota name Bde Maka Ska (from Lake Calhoun) in her ancestral homeland of Bde Ota (Minneapolis).

### **PANEL DISCUSSION**

Carly Bad Heart Bull let folks know that the conversation being held was not going to be an in-depth history lesson. She encouraged folks to do that research on their own to find more context for themselves; but the purpose of the discussion this evening was to focus on talking about how to lift up and celebrate Native stories and voices. Carly let everyone know that she and Kate would be moderating the chat box throughout the evening.

- Carly asked the first question, directing it first toward Dr. Beane who took action toward the restoration of the name Bde Maka Ska. Carly expressed that she hears interest in continued Indigenous name reclamation. Questions come up around this process and how to approach this

effectively and respectfully. **How do the panelists see MPRB staff approaching naming respectfully? Any tips or suggestions?**

(Dr. Beane) When it comes to name restoration, the processes are all different depending on the space that you're in. The lack of standardized process prevents proper clarity, and highlights the fact that processes have often been put in place as a barrier to have voices heard. One thing that would be helpful at every level would be to clarify process and to have respect for the community processes that have already been taking place. Don't place a higher value on institutional process, recognize that direct action has taken place because people are tired of having to wait for these institutional processes to affect change. The process needs to be do-able, accessible and clear. When talking about acknowledgement have to make sure that the work is more than just words. We are all living in a time where we want to see words turn into action. It is our jobs to utilize our own platforms and relationships with communities to support work that they are doing. Make sure that you are doing your homework, we're not doing a history 101 lesson tonight, but make sure you know that lesson. Understand the history of the places in which we are living, and know how to support the community led efforts already occurring.

(Dr. Mattie) Great advice from Dr. Beane. Hearing her talk about respecting community process, thinking about the important step even before land acknowledgement which is community relations. It's important for the MPRB to learn about the communities where their project sites are. Cultivate relationships, get to know who people are, don't just reach out with questions and expect these communities to do the work for you. There are lots of people who reach out just to ask for a land acknowledgement script. Don't be this. Build relationships in respectful manners, don't expect it to be the work of Indigenous communities.

(Sean Sherman) When it comes to naming, one of the things that he's excited about is where the MPRB is at with plants. Gave the specific example of Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden. As you walk through the wildflower garden you see the beautiful plant names, and it's a wonderful tool for teaching people to spot plants and identify them. Would love to see more work moving forward, adding Dakota plant names to signs. We are fortunate to have retained these plant names, to be able to understand how ancestors viewed the land. Feels comfortable to move around and BE in spaces that reflect his language. No reason why we shouldn't have Dakota names on signs because that is the land that we're on, and that needs to be acknowledged.

(Dr. Beane) We can have a conversation about naming, but we also need to talk about this idea of multilingual signage. There is a large opportunity to add languages that signs that already exist; that doesn't require an official change.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) Learned from the Bde Maka Ska process the importance of, and the power in sharing names. The large scale issues rooted in systemic/institutional racism come down to being a good relative to one another. Within the Dakota language (which is descriptive and visible), when you read the words it helps you feel more connected to the space and more connected to one another, which is an incredible gift. Looking forward to see how this work will continue.

- Kate Lamers asked the next question, directing it first toward Dr. DeCarlo. The MPRB knows the organization has to move far beyond giving statements. MPRB is having larger conversations about building a culture and a practice expressed in all work areas (hiring, staff training, etc)

Want to develop language for elected officials, within that there needs to be a bit of history 101 because people need that baseline. **How can we think about improving statements, what should we consider, what resources should we look to?**

(Dr. DeCarlo) Need to add specificity. Learn more about the specific treaties that are linked to the land that the institution/organization is located on. A lot of institutions haven't taken this step, or struggle with moving past it once they learn about it. It's important to learn what mechanisms allowed for the land to be transferred from Indigenous hands to settler's hands. It's difficult to generalize about this history, that's part of the struggle of teaching it. People expect a blanket history 101 statement, but there is a lot of variation both over time and within groups. Give people the opportunity to explore specific parts of history. Learn about specific Native communities and how they are still connected to that land today, even if it's not through legal ownership. Look to communities. Common mistakes that are made in community relations are: superficially addressing treaties (not providing in-depth, diverse perspective of history and further reinforcing the presumed legality of these treaties); leaving pieces of treaties out; expecting the community to do the majority of the work; using statements as placeholders at events (gestures to show awareness but that do nothing to say specifically what an organization has done or will do to work toward de-colonizing). Make sure that acknowledgements aren't read as formulaic. They should be something more than a statement that is performed. Think about your audience, what you will be talking about, what work you can be engaged in.

(Dr. Beane) Acknowledgement statements can be used as powerful tools of self-reflection. If you don't feel comfortable making a land acknowledgement, need to think about WHY. Use that reflection to strengthen relationships, to understand the places in which you live and work. Have an understanding of WHERE and WHEN you are at. Educate yourself and others about what the historical references mean, understand that those historical references and the presence of language mean something very powerful STILL for people who are descendants of these spaces. Reach out to the people who hold significance in these spaces. Be specific.

(Sean Sherman) Recognize that this is a very recent history also. Recognize that the true history and Native languages aren't taught in the school system. It is only when these histories and languages are seen do communities begin to heal. Can't remain invisible in histories, need to put a priority into understand the land and the history of it. By looking at history we can begin to understand how to make it better.

- Carly asked the next question, first directed at Sean Sherman. **There has been a lot of community and staff excitement expressed about using outdoor spaces as a classroom, and specifically as a space to support and promote teaching of Indigenous culture and language. What might that look like to the panelists?**

(Sean Sherman) Excited to be working with the Waterworks project. It's an opportunity to work with the MPRB to really think about what plants will be going into the site and what the new park may come to look like and what the opportunities for programming the space are. With the addition of Dakota based names there are opportunities for walking tours for anyone who wants to join in and learn. There are opportunities all around the city to learn about Native history by providing information about plants and their uses. Indigenous people see a direct connection to Earth and to nature. Plants have purpose, and the knowledge of those purposes have been handed down. We should continue to help develop and maintain that indigenous perspective in education. We should teach people knowledge that will last,

helping them recognize their landscapes, and hopefully help people understand how to live sustainably in connection with the Earth.

(Dr. Beane) When thinking about programming these kinds of outdoor classrooms we need to make sure that these are community led programs so that way no one is exploited. This ties in again to relationship building being incredible important and imperative. Should work to create spaces where children are able to see and hear their own languages. These spaces are what kids, teachers, and parents are missing. There need to be inclusive gardening and harvesting spaces that can serve as educational tools. These are important for kids because they need to see that they belong; they need to see themselves reflected in these spaces through language. There is so much pride in being able to see that one belongs.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) This conversation is speaking directly to something that is appearing in the chat; that visual representation is incredibly important because Indigenous people are considered invisible. Stories haven't been lifted up. Haven't often been at the table. Not in the curriculum. Language and culture aren't often out there in popular culture.

- Kate Lamers asked the next **question about developing a common language, ideas for staff trainings, how to maintain a culture of acknowledgement, how to provide real purpose among staff?**

(Dr. DeCarlo) Glad to know MPRB is already thinking about next steps and about creating a CULTURE of land acknowledgement. Needs to be a well-rounded approach that is woven into the institutions work. Staff trainings are one important piece of that; get everyone on board to understand why land acknowledgement is important and how it informs all of the work that's already being done. Make sure to ask staff about their ideas, what relationships they have with the community, bring everything together to make the conversations more effective. Connect the conversations more broadly to the larger project of decolonization and reconciliation. MPRB and other institutions have their own missions and their own work, but also need to work with one other, look for connections across sectors. Gave the example of Minnesota Historical Society trainings on Land Acknowledgements: connected to other work in the organization, hosted a book club, allowed people to spend time having conversations about race and colonialism and how we ended up in the moment that we're at now. Need to have conversations around how race works, how white privilege works and where it is present. It's important to utilize staff trainings to get people to think about their own positionality. Push people to think intellectually and emotionally about these topics. Make sure trainings aren't singular events or one offs. Make additional plans, provide speaker series, continue to provide safe spaces for people to have discussions about their OWN roles. Provide opportunities for people to talk about their own experiences regardless of their race or ethnicity.

(Dr. Beane) It is important to recognize that needs to be an ongoing process. Everyone is at a different part in their own education. Need to set up spaces so that people know that it's okay if they don't know something, they don't have to feel ashamed, but they should take ownership. Encourage people to look for their own answers, to value other's perspectives. Build empathy so people will listen and respect the fact that there are multiple perspectives and experiences. There is not one single Indigenous narrative, it's a complex history. Encouraged people to check out Minnesota Historical Society and Our Home Native Minnesota homepage to look for some resources. Make sure again not to expect Native communities to do this work for the MPRB. If the MPRB does seek help from Native professionals make

sure to be respectful of their time, pay them, and don't exploit their time and energy. Seek to understand where the MPRB is at, how it relates to other systems, what the history of these places and spaces are. Make space to acknowledge people's privileges and places within this history.

(Sean Sherman) This is a slow road, and obviously this is a right step in the right direction. Have to be moving through this, have to be inclusive. There is a learning curve for some, but seeking those answers is an important step for all. There is some really great information available for people. Can all do this together, learn together, by understanding the land and sharing histories.

(Dr. Beane) Often times people don't want to be uncomfortable, but it is important for people to step into that space of discomfort and share it. Native communities have been uncomfortable for a long time, and people shouldn't be afraid to take that on and share in the discomfort. Let people know they'll make mistakes and that it's okay; mistakes are how we learn. We have to give one another grace.

- Carly asked the next **question about rights to harvest and gather on park land. How can MPRB support Native folks' rights to harvest and to gather, and in addition to that, be more respectful of gatherings in general on Park Board land?**

(Sean Sherman) This is a tricky subject, being that we are in an era where there are a lot of strict rules around public space and what can and cannot be utilized. There are so many different friends of the land that we are able to harvest from, and so many uses of wild foods (ex. cedar tea). COVID has shown how vulnerable our food systems are because of our reliance on processed foods and unsustainable big agriculture. The future is in regional food systems. There are a lot of natural areas with edible/usable plants in them, but people cannot access them. In the future the MPRB should think about what kinds of plants are in the system that could be harvested that typically just grow and die. Need to continue to work on how to utilize the land better, take old lots that aren't doing anything and use them to grow foods for communities that need them. Utilize the land to address food insecurity. Can work toward a better future by planting vegetation that will be really beneficial for people. Humans have the ability to landscape any way we want, and that allows us to maintain some beautiful spaces, but can spaces be better than just beautiful? Need to address solutions on how we can use these spaces better; utilizing some areas for the gathering of medicines and foods, but also making sure to protect some areas. Need to think also about what areas are being protected and why. There are spaces of spiritual significance for people that aren't protected, that get disrespected. This is an issue of education, people don't know enough about the spaces they're inhabiting. There is a lot of work to be done to continue to foster a sense of community in these spaces and how to use them as a community.

(Dr. Beane) Shared her and her families personal experience about harvesting. Her children are Lakota and Dakota; when they go their father's ancestral Oglala lands, they can harvest foods like chokecherries and that they are safe to eat. It is a much different experience in Dr. Beane's ancestral homelands (the Twin Cities metro area). There is some supported harvesting in Minneapolis, but it feels like some of the trees and plants are just for show. She had an experience where the Park Police stopped her and her family from picking plums on park land. The plums that they were allowed to take had been treated with pesticides. It was a particularly disappointing experience as a mother, trying to pass on this knowledge to her children, how to support themselves, and eat from the land on their own ancestral lands, but there were too many levels of barriers. Think about how to provide those teachable moments, how to make the land welcoming. There are several steps to take to move forward. Have conversations around

community safety, and how police interact with the community, increase respect toward community. Look at where pesticides are sprayed on medicines and foods that we have a right to be able to harvest.

(Sean Sherman) There is a lot of opportunity for education about harvesting. Has a friend in the [Muckleshoot](#) area (Washington State, south of Seattle), who goes out into the community and leads tours, teaching the names of plants, where and when to gather them, how to process them into medicines, etc. They even created a community medicine cabinet using local plants around them. MPRB could offer programming like this. Some of these protected Park Board spots could be incredibly helpful by carrying education further, providing a community medicine cabinet for people so they can get medicines that help them. Should provide Indigenous focus education, learn about the solutions communities have to live sustainably while also utilizing these spaces for good of others.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) Often there is pushback because of concerns about overharvesting. Thinking about how we might counter those; think about Pipestone National Park where Indigenous people are allowed to quarry for Pipestone (there is criteria/process for this). It is a limited resource that is still utilized because it has incredible significance in ceremony. Maybe the Park Board could create some kind of program like this, and partner to create a broader understanding of what having access to traditional medicines looks like. This isn't just an issue for the Park Board to address on its own.

(Sean Sherman) Part of the overharvesting concern is embedded in that educational piece. Part of the education is about sustainable harvest. What parts do you harvest, when do you harvest, how do the plants themselves grow and live and work? How much do you take and what should you leave? These questions are all educational opportunities to share with others. We will see overharvesting for sure if we don't address these questions right away and teach people to value the plants.

(Dr. Beane) Remembers a lot of stories in communities that teach the proper ways to harvest. When kids are learning about science and history and other topics, they should be able to go out and interact with the land, and learn how to harvest, how things grow. Education is imperative to this. We need to be respectful to communities and learn about the different opportunities that are present.

- Kate Lamers asked the next question. A lot of **questions about giving the land back, recognize that this means many different things depending on who you ask. Any thoughts or advice on how to get that conversation started, or what giving the land back might mean to you?**

(Dr. Beane) When it comes to talking about giving the land back, we're really talking about reparations; we have to have open and honest conversations about how we move into the future together. Can't acknowledge past injustices without doing something about it. The best possible case scenario would be getting the land back; but there are so many complex questions to navigate within that. Even just to say "giving the land back to the Dakota", well which tribe are you talking about? This is an ongoing process of understanding when talking about reparations and land return. This can take many other forms outside of physical land return. Also use of that land, sharing of the resources. Think about what about the space can be shared, the MPRB can contribute to this.

(Sean Sherman) These conversations are happening all over the U.S. Currently living in a situation where land ownership inequality is astounding. More than 98% of land in this country is owned by White Americans. We all need to be aware of this inequality. This is a massive topic, with so many groups and histories involved. Even within Minneapolis there is complication. Part of what giving the land back looks

like to him is dedicating Park Board land to better uses. Consider the situation of food insecurity; help move toward permaculture; provide indigenous orchards for food for community. Will continue to have a growing population, facing massive economic disparities and hardships. Food and water situations are dire. Need to value human life above the economic value of land. Land masses could be benefitting so many. This issue is bigger than the MPRB as a whole, Industrial Agriculture and farmland are harming our lands further.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) Since the MPRB is a local governing agency, how are they working in partnership with the Native Nations, what is the understanding of what it means to be a Native Nation. When conversations around land happen, are the proper authorities, those Native Nations being contacted? There is a lack of understanding of Native people in general and what it means to be Native Nation (sovereign nation that can govern and own its own land). MPRB Staff, Commissioners, as an organization as a whole, can support that knowledge, and do that homework. Support asking those bigger questions. Address who is at the table and who has been excluded and why.

- Carly Bad Heart Bull asked the next question. **What is the best way to engage with the 11 tribes in Minnesota? How do we make sure the proper questions get asked at every level of the planning process, and within all the work the MPRB does?**

(Dr. Beane) Work with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs), develop relationships, work with individuals, share authority, don't prioritize institutional process over the work that has already been done by others. When we think about this this work and this history, the way that lands were "protected" at the expense of Native people have access. We have to acknowledge this reality and then we can work together to think about how to change that. How do we share ownership and authority and try to work together more? Can get on the agenda for the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (present projects, ask questions, get feedback from the Elders present there)

(Dr. DeCarlo) When reaching out to specific tribal governments you have to understand that they don't all look identical, there are different types of staffing, offices, etc. based on the structure. This is why it's important to develop individual relationships. It's also important to remember that tribal governments are very busy and often under resourced. Part of building relationships and trust isn't just writing an email and saying that you tried to reach out, it's reaching out over and over again in different ways; but you need that relationship and trust built out in order to be able to take the appropriate action.

(Dr. Beane) The MPRB as a whole needs to look at its staffing and diversify its staffing. Within community relations is there a specific person or group of people that have relationships and work with tribes?

(Dr. DeCarlo) Think about variance in different populations of Native people as well. Have to navigate outreach with some complexity.

- Kate Lamers asked the next **question about streamlining processes within the broader agency; instead of having staff reach out about questions on individual projects, building relationships within the agency as a whole.**

(Dr. DeCarlo) Part of the way that this was accomplished at the Minnesota Historical Society was through the creation of the Native American Initiatives Department. Before the creation of this department there were people working across the institution on their own projects, with all these



individual contacts, and attempts to engage with the community, but they weren't talking with one another. The creation of a more centralized Native engagement team helped to consolidate the efforts being done by individuals and allowed for a broader agenda.

(Dr. Beane) Part of what this department does is lead some engagement efforts; but they also work really hard to support staff across the institution. It is a collaborative effort, everyone needs to do the engagement work. Work to empower people, help them learn and develop relationships, so that everyone is doing the work and it's not just a team of Native people in a larger organization. How do we continue to think about doing this work together, to have relationships, to understand when we are over-asking? Have a team of people that have a relationship with the community, that the community can recognize and trust. That way people feel comfortable reaching out to someone.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) Hearing a lot about the importance of relationships and building relationships; having Native staff and figuring out how to incorporate and support folks across the agency. Relationships themselves will have a large influence on how work is done. Need to look across boundaries at history and systems as a whole. All need to work together on this.

(Dr. Beane) Can't speak to anyone agency/organization/institution who is doing this exactly right; but can speak to own experience where confusion has arisen. There are a lot of projects happening along the riverfront, and it's confusing for many who are being asked for feedback. Gave the example of Fort Snelling. Working in these spaces is also often difficult because landowners, agencies, etc. aren't in clear communication with ONE ANOTHER let alone tribes. Different owners of properties come together to have discussions and only ask for feedback at certain points, excluding Indigenous people from the entirety of the process.

(Dr. DeCarlo) Echoed that Fort Snelling was the first example that came to mind for her as well, also can't think of any really clear examples of who is doing this exactly right.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) The fact that there isn't an example of how to correctly engage throughout a process says something. One additional thing to think about during these conversations is the fact that when a question comes up around a piece or parcel of land, the boundaries that are being discussed are not Indigenous boundaries, and that the connection of place is often different than the site boundaries (ex. of Fort Snelling, the connection is to the larger area of land surrounding what is Fort Snelling). Have to think about consistency, not only across the Minneapolis Park System but also thinking about St. Paul, elsewhere, with other partners. Building relationships is huge when talking about Native communities, make sure to use power and circle of influence and allies to continue to host these conversations in other spheres.

(Dr. DeCarlo) Remember that we were not thinking about one place at a time, and an additional layer of that is that we were not just thinking about one time for a place. There are layered histories at different sites. For example, the Grand Rounds Historic Site is part of a larger network of sacred sites, and all of these areas are owned by other people. How do we figure out how ALL of this is managed and interpreted? There have been so many people who have lived in different areas, there are histories of migration that broaden who needs to be included and brought to the table, there are also political realities that you have to balance this with (Ex. Mille Lacs, acknowledged as Ojibwe land, Dakota have lived there as well, but there is a political reality of its status).

(Dr. Beane) This layered history is incredibly important. Make sure people are being represented. Make sure to have consistency and to reach out to as many people as possible. Just start inviting people to the table, you can continue to build on this as more is learned.

- Carly Bad Heart Bull acknowledged that all the questions in the chat box were being moderated by herself and Kate. Questions have come up around, as we are living in this pandemic reality, our gatherings are online now. **Any advice around land acknowledgements in virtual space (Regional, national, etc.)**

(Dr. Beane) First need to differentiate between a land acknowledgement and an organizational/institutional acknowledgement. When working online, you are engaging with different people than you might in person, and you might want to honor that but think about how you accomplish that. Recently had someone ask about a national scale land acknowledgement, which is far too broad, how do you acknowledge everyone? Think clearly about the intent. What you want to say is incredibly important.

(Dr. DeCarlo) Thought that tonight's example worked well in the virtually world. Were able to talk about specific history. Clear intent and purpose of the conversation.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) Have been a part of conferences that span either nationally or across multiple regions, and noticed that as engagement transitioned to being virtual, the land acknowledgement dropped off the virtual agenda. Believe that gathering in this virtual space it is even more powerful and important to acknowledge that WHEREVER you are, you're on indigenous land. Hope these statement aren't just a trendy thing, hope they are something that is fully incorporated.

(Dr. Beane) This acknowledgements need to become a part of every meeting. By starting every meeting with this, it is an excellent grounding opportunity to help people feel more comfortable. Understand the educational moment that you can take advantage of here, what can you contribute to teaching people?

(Sean Sherman) When holding these conversations on multi regional and national scales, this is an excellent learning opportunity. Can hold conversations about signage and multilingual signage. Acknowledge the language of the land you're on. Be proud of the land and the stories it carries.

- Kate Lamers asked the next **question about how the MPRB can better support Indigenous views of land**. Related to the importance of responsibilities to and relationships with the land rather than a transaction; related to the climate and environmental issues we're currently facing. Anything that can be shared around how the MPRB can support, promote, spread these views across the agency. Looking at Comprehensive Plan which will set the path for the organization for the next ten years, how can we embed those values there.

(Sean Sherman) Include indigenous history of specific sites/areas you're planning in the CAC; figure out how to include indigenous history in all projects.

(Dr. DeCarlo) Include Indigenous history, make the point that Indigenous history in Minnesota is really deep and complex. The history lessons don't have to be the same 101 overview every single time. Create an organized effort to present different pieces of more complicated and specific pieces of Indigenous history. Go beyond broad introductory pieces. Tell stories about individuals. It's one thing to understand

that we are all on Indigenous land; the next steps require more specificity, recognizing the diversity, layers, and differences in history. Tell specific stories. Include more names of Indigenous individuals. We know so many names of settlers, but then when we have statues of Indigenous people it says things like “Ojibwe man”, add specificity, add context.

(Dr. Beane) Acknowledge and communicate the recent histories as well. Indigenous communities are still here. History doesn’t just mean the past, it also has to connect to the present. Support those who are still here, be welcoming, go to Indigenous community’s meetings and ask members what they need, what is useful to them, what would support them coming to that space.

- Carly Bad Heart Bull asked the next question. **In an a primarily white institution, how can the MPRB make sure they’re supporting Native staff, CAC members, etc. (internal relationships).** Any ideas for folks at MPRB, the education piece is very important for both public and staff, but also important to support Native folks.

(Dr. Beane) In order to support solidarity and camaraderie at the Minnesota Historical Society there are employee resource groups where staff can come together to find common ground, feel and talk through issues that have come up. Help everyone feel consulted.

(Carly Bad Heart Bull) Hire more Native people, recruit more Native people to be involved on the Community Advisory Committees (CAC). Don’t just hire a couple of Native people and expect them to be the voice for all tribes.

(Dr. DeCarlo) Hiring more Native people is a great way to provide support, agree with the use of employee resource groups as well.

(Sean Sherman) Need more voices, and diversity in those voices. By having those diverse perspectives it’s a great way for an organization to hear multiple viewpoints and to be able to put that into the fabric of what is being created. Grow to be a voice, share perspective.

- Kate Lamers asked the next question; she first acknowledged that there were questions in the chat that there wouldn’t be enough time to answer this evening, but that they are being captured and will be addressed in some form. Right now, for the panelists, **asked for final words of wisdom and any resources that the panelists had to share.**

(Dr. Beane) Suggest that everyone check out ‘[Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota](#)’ by Gwen Westerman and Bruce White; ‘[The Relentless Business of Treaties](#)’ by Martin Case. “[Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations](#)” an exhibit made in partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian. There are a lot of free texts available from local libraries and the University of Minnesota that are online because of the current COVID crisis.

(Dr. DeCarlo) Recommend that people read books on specific histories of communities and tribes. There is a literature guide/research guide for the research that was done for the [Our Home Native Minnesota](#) exhibit. There are a lot of great resources out there about Minnesota History.

(Sean Sherman) Words of wisdom: expand the historical narrative. Don’t just include colonial histories of the United States. By bringing Indigenous perspective into projects this will be a good way to bring awareness to the community. Thinking of signage, the Waterworks project, additional riverfront

projects, places where it is possible to pay homage to the history of the land. Bring perspective into the city. It's important that we all feel as though we are visible and included in our communities. There is a lot of work to be done, a lot of knowledge that Indigenous communities have to share. Have to preserve and protect histories through sharing, inclusion, visibility. History is directly related to how our land spaces operate now. We have to use history to inform how we can protect the land for future generations.

### **THANKS AND NEXT STEPS**

Kate Lamers thanked everyone for joining the conversation, for submitting their questions; thanked Carly for her help moderating the meeting and thanked everyone who was on the panel. Kate acknowledged that this is not the end of the conversation, but it was important to being together a place where all these ideas could come together and be shared. Appreciate the honesty, wisdom, and information that was shared tonight.

Carly Bad Heart Bull read the Land Acknowledgement statement again—hoping that after this in-depth conversation that folks will have a richer and deeper understanding of what the statement means and what it means to put these words into action. After reading the statement, Carly expressed her gratitude to everyone for coming and spending time together this evening. Highlighted that this is the beginning stages of a larger conversation, and that we all have to take responsibility and action steps to move this work forward.

**ADJOURN: 6:03pm**