

Staff Senate

Monthly Meeting Agenda

December 11th, 12:00 pm

Zoom

Facilitator: Detric Robinson

Invited attendees: Marti McCaleb, Associate Vice Chancellor, EOIX

Minutes:

Agenda

12:00 Call to Session (Detric)

12:05 Check-In (All Senators)

12:15 Decoding Sand Creek (Chico)

Remembering the Sand Creek Massacre

Chico led a discussion on the importance of remembering the Sand Creek Massacre, which occurred on November 29th, 1864. He emphasized the significance of the 150th (2014) and 160th remembrance of the massacre in 2024. Chico also highlighted the role of Dr. Angela Parker and the John Evans report in raising awareness about the massacre. He then shared a poem he wrote about the massacre, emphasizing the importance of remembering the flags that were raised to signal peace but were ignored by the attackers. The reason why his poem references a white flag and American flag, is because the Cheyenne and Arapaho were flying both flags at Sand Creek to signal peace. This came from the advice of Colorado Territorial Governor John Evans. Chico also discussed the ongoing impact of the massacre on the descendants of the victims, who are still present in the Front Range area. In addition to other descendants living in Wyoming, Montana, and Oklahoma today. He ended the conversation by discussing the importance of a community agreement when discussing difficult subject matter like the Sand Creek Massacre.

Sand Creek Massacre and Historical Context

Chico discussed the historical context of the Sand Creek Massacre, emphasizing the role of John Evans, the founder of the University of Denver, who was also the second governor of Colorado Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Chico highlighted the two proclamations issued by Evans in 1864, which fostered an environment for the massacre to occur in November of 1864. The first proclamation called for Native Americans to gather in a specific area, while the second authorized citizens to pursue and kill

hostile Indians. Chico also mentioned the meeting at Camp Weld, where Native American Chiefs and Tribal members met with Governor John Evans and Colonel John Chivington to talk about peace. However, the massacre still occurred after this talk. Chico also referenced a painting by the late Eugene Ridgley, Sr that depicted the massacre from a Native American perspective. Finally, Chico shared with us a film clip from the 2013 film *Iron Man 3* which compared the villains (The Mandarin) attack on Ali Al- Salem Air Base in Kuwait to the Sand Creek Massacre, decoding what the scene was communicating. Chico also asked us to reflect on the ongoing current issue of land vulnerability experienced across the world.

Sand Creek Massacre and Healing Efforts

Chico discussed the complex history of the Sand Creek Massacre, highlighting the roles of John Chivington, Captain Silas Soule, and John Evans. The peacemaking Chief Black Kettle and Chief White Antelope had brought forward was shared and the outcome said peacemaking had. He emphasized the need for healing and understanding, referencing the John Evans Report and the importance of reading the letter written by Silas Soule . Chico also mentioned the founding of the University of Denver in 1864, the same year as the massacre, and the subsequent publication of the Evans report in 2014. He led a healing exercise and discussed the importance of collaboration in healing. Chico also mentioned the recent Creators Game he participated in (the healing game of lacrosse) for the remembrance of all that have been impacted by Sand Creek Massacre.

Link to Silas Soule Letter

<https://kclonewolf.com/sand-creek-documents-soule-to-wynkoop-12-14-64.html>

Indigenous Peoples' Day Resolution Discussion

Chico presented a resolution to make Indigenous Peoples' Day a university holiday at the University of Denver, citing the 160th anniversary of the Sand Creek Massacre. He emphasized the need for a collaborative effort and healing at the trustee and chancellor levels. As everyone needs to heal and be together. Dr. Stevie Lee was recommended for support and partnership for Native American initiatives. Jon inquired about the status of the Sand Creek on Campus Memorial, which Chico explained was still in the works but had been delayed due to Covid with no recent updates provided to our DU community about the status of the memorial. Dr. Detric Robinson suggested working with Chico to draft the resolution. Jason proposed assigning a committee to draft the resolution, with Chico's input. Aleesha suggested creating a special committee for this initiative, but Dr. Detric Robinson suggested working with the existing committees. Chico proposed involving descendants of the Sand Creek Massacre in the drafting process.

12:50 Break

1:00 Treasure & Secretary Elections (Detric)

After a brief break, the meeting resumed with the voting for the nominated secretary and treasurer positions. Maggie Heyduk and Adela Smith were confirmed for these positions.

1:10 Resolutions Breakout (Detric)

The meeting then moved on to discuss the resolutions and action items, with a focus on six ideas submitted by the senators. The senators were divided into breakout rooms to discuss these ideas, focusing on four key questions: the most urgent issues, how the idea could foster a more inclusive and supportive workplace, potential short-term and long-term outcomes, and how the idea could enhance staff morale, engagement, and professional development. The conversation ended with a call for each breakout room to provide a debrief of their discussions.

Budget Transparency and Communication Concerns

In the meeting, various groups discussed their insights and concerns regarding budget transparency, communication, and staff morale. Chico's group emphasized the importance of budget transparency and more natural, unscripted town halls. Melissa's group discussed the need for better communication and the potential for a shared governance model. Darlene's group suggested a minimum requirement for interdepartmental communication and the creation of a Change Management Office. Aleesha's group focused on budget transparency and the potential consequences of disseminating budget information. John's group discussed the need for better communication and transparency in compensation and benefits, as well as the impact of budget cuts on staff retention. Maggie's group discussed the need for understanding and trust within the community, and suggested creating an organizational chart to clarify decision-making processes. Allison's group discussed the creation of an elections code and the need for a new chair for the Elections Committee. Dr. ended the conversation by thanking everyone and promising to share the insights with leadership.

2:00 Adjourn Session (Detric)

Action Items

- **Review Nomination Statements**
- **Review Resolutions Recommendations**