

**APPROVED**

**Utah Geographic Names Committee Meeting  
August 4, 2022  
Held virtually, via Zoom**

**ATTENDEES:**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Claire DeVaughan  
Rob White  
Gregory Thompson  
John Larsen  
Grant Willis  
Kelli Bacon  
Gen Green  
Zachary Beck

**STAFF:**

Arie Leeflang  
Jennifer Ortiz  
Kevin Fayles

**PUBLIC:**

Jenny Runyon  
James Toledo  
Matt O'Donnell  
Shane Wright  
Thomas Powell

**WELCOME**

Jennifer Ortiz welcomed everyone to the meeting. She informed the committee that Chair Dan White is rotating off the committee. A thank you gift will be sent to him. In place of Dan, Rob White will serve as Interim Chair.

Rob White thanked Jennifer and the committee for attending today's meeting. He read the electronic meeting statement.

**APPROVAL OF MAY 5, 2022 UTAH COMMITTEE ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES**

Claire DeVaughan and Grant Willis noted some typo on the minutes. Claire made a motion to approve the minutes with the changes noted. John Larsen seconded the meeting. Alycia Rowley did a roll call.

Claire DeVaughan, aye; Rob White, aye; Gregory Thompson, aye; John Larsen, aye; Grant Willis, aye; Kelli Bacon, aye; Gen Green, aye; Zachary Beck, aye. The motion passed unanimously.

### **MOKI ARCH PROPOSAL**

John Larsen commented that we should not move forward on this agenda item without Arie. He feels uncomfortable without Arie Leeflang's opinion. Greg Thompson agreed. Rob White proposed that we table it until Arie is in attendance.

### **EAGLE MOUNTAIN UPDATE**

This agenda item was also tabled until Arie Leeflang can join the meeting.

### **SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR UPDATE**

Jenny Runyun provided an update of Secretary's Order 3404. The Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force has identified 653 names to date. The Board of Geographic Names (BGN) has found seven out of the 653 refer to communities and populated places. None of these places are in Utah. After some discussion with the Dept. of Interior, those seven places will go through a more vigorous review, followed by six months to do more outreach. The list cannot be shared yet, but it will be sometime between now and the end of September. There was a 90-day public comment period between January and April, along with a tribal comment period and three days of tribal listening sessions. There will be no further input from communities. The names will be changed.

Greg Thompson commented that Arie said 54 names are in Utah. John Larsen asked if we will need to do a query to get the names out for all of the Utah GIS specialists and other geographic names' sources to refer to these names? Is there anything to update that process besides going to the webpage and downloading the information? Jennifer Runyun commented that BGN will update its database and is not aware of anything else. Jenny suggested that perhaps the Dept. of the Interior will provide a press release but is not sure about what other outreach activities will take place.

Claire DeVaughan provided an overview of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) conference that will be held Sept. 13 to 16<sup>th</sup> in Maryland and is being hosted by the Maryland States' Geographic Names Board. This committee are members of COGNA by default. Kevin Fayles will be attending. USBGN holds its monthly meeting during that week of the conference. The conference includes presentations and workshops. There will be a session on Secretarial Order 3404 on the Sq\_\_\_\_\_ names changes and a session on tribal issues. On Friday, there will be a tour of local place names.

Claire added that she has attended 10 of these conferences since 1999. They are always a great experience. The conversations with people from other states is very productive. A small number are of people from around the country.

Jenny Runyon encouraged committee members to attend and provided a link to the conference website.

### **MOKI ARCH PROPOSAL**

Arie Leeflang joined the meeting. He apologized. He had internet issues. He provided a background on the proposal about the arch on SITLA lands. We discussed last time whether it qualifies as an arch or not and decided that it didn't matter. We were waiting on an additional opinion from the Hopi. The Utah Division of Indian Affairs also tried to reach out to the Hopi. It's a small hole-style arch. The landowner (SITLA) had no opinion. The County is supportive of the name change. We never received an opinion

from the tribes. During the last committee meeting, we discussed how much time we should give the tribes above the 60 day U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) time limit. Arie asked if anyone else had something to add.

John Larsen commented that we had a long conversation about this with the individual who represented the tribal councils. He said that Moki was a derogatory name, and he wanted to hold off on making any kind of name request. We agreed at the last meeting. Arie had not heard any more feedback from the tribe on this. Have we received any new information from Mika? Not sure if that is his name. Greg Thompson asked if Mika is still an intern? James said that he is still an intern. James will follow up with him.

John explained that his concern is that we give opportunities to different agencies to respond. How long do we wait? How long until we can move forward?

Rob White commented that if this was a neutral name, he'd be comfortable with moving forward, but where Moki might or might not be derogatory, he'd be opposed to moving this forward until we learn more. He can't imagine moving it forward if it could be derogatory. John agreed with his statement, but how long do we wait? We had already communicated with a liaison between the tribes and BGN.

Rob said we send it back to the applicant. We can't determine if it's offensive or not.

Claire looked at the proposal that Matt prepared that looked at the history of the name. She cited a 19<sup>th</sup> century example where it was offensive. SITLA does not have an objection. The County is in favor. The commissioner is Navajo. Why is the proponent proposing this potential name? The potential for drama if this name is accepted is large. Could the applicant submit a different name? Rob commented that there is a burden of proof shifting here. John commented that we've given the tribes ample opportunity to respond. There has to be a point where we take a stand. If we are not getting feedback from groups or individuals, then how do we handle that? Rob said we have to use our judgement in this case.

Greg Thompson supports not putting the naming of the arch as proposed forward. He made a motion to deny this proposal. Rob accepted his motion. Is there a second? John said if we are not getting a response and not getting support for the name, that is a question that we have to look at. We've contacted everyone and done our homework. We need to make a decision on this. Greg asked if he is suggesting that we make a proposal? John replied that he thinks we need to make a decision. Zach Beck second the motion. Is there any discussion?

The motion is to deny the application. "Yes" means to deny the application. Alycia Rowley did a role call: Claire Devaughan, yes; Rob White, yes; Greg Thompson, yes; Zach Beck, yes; Gen Green, yes; John Larsen, yes, Arie Leeflang, yes; and Kellie Bacon, yes. The motion passes.

The person who proposed the change can resubmit with better information. The committee is not persuaded that it is not offensive, and that's enough for us. The BGN will respond to the applicant. John would like to see more support from the individual or the groups who are focused around this. Grant Willis said that we are not getting any kind of feedback. There's a potential for derogatory.

We will put this in the minutes and share them with the BGN. The minutes will be reviewed by the BGN. Our vote is part of the case brief.

## **UPDATE OF EAGLE MOUNTAIN PROPOSAL**

Arie Leeflang has nothing new to report. The last we heard, Eagle Mountain was thinking of choosing a different feature. Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs are sorting out their differences. Jenny replied that the BGN has an active proposal. Matt O'Donnell, BGN, said about 10 days ago, that Eagle Mountain City picked a new location. It is a place where people can hike from Eagle Mountain itself. They plan to put in some benches and a sign. Eagle Mountain says that Saratoga Spring agrees with them. The letter that Saratoga Sprints submitted says that they support naming the highest peak. Matt wants to confirm with Saratoga Springs. The name is the same in the proposal from Eagle Mountain.

Matt commented that by the time the committee meets next, we should have something further to discuss. John asked if anyone has reached out to them. Do Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs know that we use these geographic names for emergency purposes? Matt said that the name changes fit with the BGN bylaws. Eagle Mountain wants to select a location so that citizens can hike. He said you can reach out to BGN if you want or share specific feedback to him.

## **DIVISION OF STATE HISTORY DIRECTOR DISCUSSION**

Jennifer Ortiz would like the committee to have a discussion regarding the proactive and reactive nature of this committee. As she has learned more about the committee's scope of work, she feels that we have a duty to uphold in passing recommendations or not to the BGN. Is there a potential for communities and Division of State History employees, with committee support, to have more proactive discussions regarding geographic features with indigenous names? What does this committee feel? Arie Leeflang has done an amazing job with the committee, even with being stretched so thin. Now we are able to absorb this work into State History. This committee has always been sort of an arm of State History, and we would like to do a better job of having this committee fully integrated with State History's work and formalize the needs of this committee.

What are some thoughts about having proactive versus reactive work? John commented that the Geographic Names Committee is just a recommendation. We investigate proposals and determine if they are viable to move forward. We give our recommendations to the BGN, which overlooks our investigations, and it makes the final decision. When we look at naming or renaming a feature, we have bylaws that we go by. We need to uphold those laws. That is our responsibility. We need to meet the criteria of the proposal.

Jennifer commented that what she means by proactive, is she would like to see additional membership in the future that includes tribal representative to be able to vote. She wants the committee membership to be reflective of the people who live here. She thinks State History staff could facilitate conversations on changing features. For example, could we have facilitated the conversation with Moki Arch. We can provide historical context.

John Larsen commented that in the past we invited people to provide input. We want tribes to be a part of the team. We are limited by our bylaws. The more insight we can get from different groups, the better. Keep in mind that all the things that we do are just an opinion. It is not the final word.

Clarie DeVaughan commented that if your staff can facilitate conversations, that could be a huge benefit. If tribal opinions could be fleshed-out more, the BGN would be supportive.

Arie Leeflang described the actions of changing the name to Grandstand Canyon. Helping to have a clear line between the committee and the actions that happen there.

Kevin Fayles suggested that perhaps State History staff could proactively provide more training to groups and communities on how to do the Geographic Names' process.

John Larsen commented that with the federal government looking at changing all derogative names now, we need to get support from different groups to get responses from different organizations. Even getting a response from the BLM can be tough (if it is not on BLM land).

Jennifer commented that as we look at our workload and decide where to spend our time and energy, having discussions on name changing is something that we could do. You all are volunteers. The expectation is not that the committee will do more work, but that our staff does more outreach or facilitates conversations. The committee can advise us.

Arie Leeflang added that through previous legislation, we were directed to coordinate better with the Utah Division of Indian Affairs (DIA). We could do better through the Utah Division of State History.

Jenny Runyon commented that this is a timely discussion and thanked Jen for letting us hear this. In theory, we have those contacts and state agencies that can do so much more. We've always hoped that our state committees would work with agencies and tribes. We send out a quarterly notice to tribes. We don't have the ability to reach out. If DIA can pick up that responsibility, we welcome all tribal outreach. BGN has discussed how much more can we do for the tribes. We have two staff and over 300 cases right now for example. Perhaps we need to discuss how best to get proposals to you sooner in the process. Perhaps having a workshop on the process would be helpful. We should have a final deadline.

Jenny commented that the "Utah Committee on Geographic Names Rules" it is a huge list. How much of that is being done? You don't contact counties. We do, right? What's the dividing line between the work load for BGN staff to do and what are you willing to do? Are these other agencies listed?

Jennifer suggested that perhaps we have a nitty gritty conversation offline. This is a great opportunity to discuss. We want to clean up the language in the old rules document. State History can do something internally and then bring it to the committee. We could hold another meeting on the division of workloads.

The 2019 Proposed Executive Order is more proactive.

James Toledo, from DIA, commented that they are happy to help. They would like further conversations on how their office can have a role with this committee and appreciate being invited. Perhaps we have an offline meeting.

Jennifer commented that this is an opportunity for our offices to be even more closely aligned. She is not assigning a new role or interest in suggesting names, but would like to help facilitate conversations on naming features. Why it may be derogatory. It is our role at State History to provide historical context. .

John commented that we have reached out and invited people to be proactive, be part of the team. It has been difficult to get them to set up and get involved with the committee. We are also stuck with our bylaws. He agrees with diversity.

Arie commented that we ensure a clear line. Kevin suggested training people on how to follow the process. Jennifer commented that she recognizes you are all volunteers and she thanks you for your time. Arie commented that SB 10 tasks DIA to help facilitate the application process for changing location names referring to American Indian terms and tasks us to act as the state's liaison with the United States Board on Geographic Names,

Claire commented that we all have a big workload. Need to determine priorities, update the committee rules to be clear on what we are doing, so we do not duplicate efforts. For example, the rules include that the committee contacts counties, but BGN contacts counties not the committee.

Jennifer would like to continue these discussions and work on some drafts to the rules to bring back to the committee

James commented that DIA is happy to assist and discuss their role in future meetings. Appreciate the invitation to attend. He is sitting in today for Dustin Jansen, Director, DIA.

Jennifer replied that she welcomed the opportunity to work with DIA and having further discussions.

### **MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2023**

Alycia Rowley proposed meeting dates for 2023. The committee generally met on the first Thursday of each quarter. Does that schedule still work well? No opposition. The 2023 dates were set for Feb 2, May 4, August 3, and November 2.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Jennifer asked if the committee creates meeting agendas or does that happen offline? Arie replied that in the past he would communicate with the Chair, and add anything the committee members would like to add. The agenda would then be posted on the public notice meeting website.

Jennifer asked committee members to please write a thank you note for Dan White and send them to Alycia Rowley to compile and include with the plaque that will be mailed to him.

Greg Thompson made motion to adjourn. Zach Beck seconded. Meeting adjourned.