



FIRST THINGS FIRST

ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Call to Order & Roll Call

A regular meeting of the First Things First (FTF) Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) Regional Partnership Council was held on Friday, Feb. 21, 2025 at District 6 Komatke Head Start, 16675 St Johns Rd, Laveen Village, AZ 85339.

Chair Bruce called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Members Present:

Leonard Bruce, Chair
Laramie Kisto, Vice Chair
Deborah Chadwick
Gleebah Enos (via Zoom)
Annette Lewis (via telephone)
Elisia Manuel (via Zoom, arrived at 10:43 a.m.)
Sandra Nasewytewa

Members Absent:

Kami Hart

Opening Prayer

Member Lewis led the regional council in an opening prayer.

Conflicts of Interest

Chair Bruce asked the regional council members if they had any conflicts of interest regarding items on the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Call to the Public

There were no calls to the public.

Approval of Jan. 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Member Enos asked if the word “could” could be changed to “would” in a sentence on page two of the meeting minutes. Chair Bruce called for a motion to approve the Jan. 21, 2025 minutes as revised. Member Nasewytewa moved to approve the meeting minutes as revised, with Member Chadwick seconding. Motion approved 6-0-0.

FTF Strategic Planning Process – Preparation for Feb. 26 Summit

Senior Regional Director Sutfin highlighted key aspects of Attachment #2 that regional council members were provided, which contained strategic planning materials. She gave an overview of four components of the packet which include: strategy area assessment reports, draft strategy area recommendations, draft foundational strategic planning guidance for regional councils and background information on the regional boundaries. She explained that the preliminary regional boundary maps are not included in the packet; however, they will be sent to regional council members prior to the Summit.

Senior Regional Director Sutfin explained that regional council members are highly encouraged to share their individual thoughts and feedback at the Summit. She shared that facilitated questions and discussions will take place during the following breakout groups: FTF Strategy Area Feedback, FTF Regional Boundary Considerations, Foundations for the Future - Legislative Process and Storytelling with FTF Government Affairs and Strategic Initiatives and Open Conversations with the FTF Board and Regional Council Members. Consultant Kelley Murphy shared that there will be a tribal boundary considerations breakout group.

Senior Regional Director Sutfin mentioned that Regional Director Tahy can coordinate a meeting for regional council members who cannot attend the Summit, pairing them with another regional council member who is attending as a way to share their feedback.

Chair Bruce asked if tribal population data will be shared at the Summit. Senior Director of Tribal Affairs Candida Hunter responded and said that it will be shared.

Member Manuel arrived at 10:43 a.m.

Regional Needs and Assets

A. Regional Needs and Assets Update

Regional Director Tahy shared that she has met with the Office of General Counsel twice in February. She explained that the decision was made to move forward with the combined 2022 and 2024 Regional Needs and Assets (RNA) report and request a separate 2026 RNA report. The Office of General Counsel also decided to revise the memorandum of agreement (MOA) that they currently have and to create an agreement that will outline the process and approval for both this RNA report and future RNA reports.

Regional Director Tahy shared that going forward, there will just be one RNA report and no longer the alternating short and long RNA reports. Senior Director of Tribal Affairs Hunter explained to the regional council members the current status of the 2022 and 2024 RNA report in the approval process.

B. Data Indicator List

Regional Director Tahy discussed Attachment #3 that regional council members were provided, which listed data indicators and sources used in the past that provided data. Regional council members suggested different data indicators that are important to consider and sources that could possibly provide data.

Regional Director Update

A. FTF State Board updates

Regional Director Tahy shared that Arizona House Bill 2778 proposed by FTF was introduced in the Arizona State Legislature. She explained that the bill proposes to implement a luxury tax on nicotine and vapor products and how the revenue generated from this tax is intended to support and enhance the early childhood system across Arizona. She explained that FTF is requesting support from organizations and businesses across Arizona, including tribal regions, by asking them to sign a letter of support. She outlined ways the regional council members can personally offer their support.

B. Pipeline List Request

Regional Director Tahy asked the regional council members to share any recommendations for organizations that could provide their influence to support FTF's effort to expand the audience for early childhood.

C. Regional Consultation Update

Regional Director Tahy mentioned that Chair Bruce sent an email to the Office of General Counsel providing an update on what FTF is doing in the community, asking who should attend the tribal consultation and what dates work best.

D. Birthdays and celebrations

Regional Director Tahy recognized Member Hart for her recent birthday.

Current Event Announcements & Future Agenda Item Requests

There were no current event announcements or future agenda item requests.

Next Meeting

Chair Bruce reminded the regional council members that the next meeting is scheduled at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 21, 2025, location to be determined.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

 FIRST THINGS FIRST

Gila River Indian Community SWOT Analysis



- How can every region get to the **goal** of: All children are **ready** to start school in each region



- Considerations of **public policy**, internal and external coordination





Strengths



- Plenty of **local knowledge**
- **Historical** partnerships
- Plenty of opportunities



- Partnerships with federal/state agencies
- Programs like Genesis and prenatal dept
- Data is **performance based** initiative



Weaknesses



- Lack of **organizations** outside of gov and enterprises



- Challenges **partnering** with state agencies
- Not enough people within the community are **aware** of FTF



- Lack of **communication** with agencies and may damage relationships
- Outside lack of **knowledge** of tribal systems or tribal sovereignty





Weaknesses



- Outside lack of **knowledge** of tribal bureaucracy



- Over reliance on **systems** instead of people



- Lack of **collaboration** with nonprofits in the community



Opportunities



- Collaboration with **local nonprofits**
- Community resource maps
- Tracking relationships with **resource members**



- **Training** in exchange for resources
- **Council engagement**, filling council seats with key partners, reimbursement for mileage as an council member



- Increase civic engagement-
- GRIC is highly **influential** in Indian Country



Threats



- **Outside norms** - entire new thinking method for data



- **Tribal bureaucracy** - may limit engagement

- **Biases** toward community members and third parties

- Conflict of interest

- Historical traditions that may prevent participation

- Community may not be **aware** of all resources available



- **Focus on legacy** instead of innovation and sustainability



Next steps



- What are our regional partnership **goals**?

- How can this SWOT analysis **help**?

- Regular check ins

- Support from each other

- Accountability

- **Who** do we need to reach?

