

Lac Vieux Desert Band Of Lake Superior Chippewa Tribal Government

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Tuesday, July 26, 2022

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LAC VIEUX DESERT BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA INDIANS Says, “NO MORE”!! Action taken to implement “Zero Tolerance” policy for drug related activity on the Reservation and in the Community

In the spring of 2021, the Lac Vieux Desert and Watersmeet communities experienced an uptick in drug abuse, especially the use of methamphetamine. On March 24, 2021, the Lac Vieux Desert Tribal Government declared a “State of Emergency Because of the Abuse of Prescription, Synthetic and Illegal Drugs.” This state of emergency prompted Tribal Council to enact policies to curtail the use of dangerous illegal drugs within and around the Lac Vieux Desert Reservation and Watersmeet, Michigan.

Drug activity has once again reached a boiling point and this time with a bad batch of heroin causing numerous overdoses which, thankfully, have not led to any deaths. There is also an increased use of methamphetamine, poisoning the minds and bodies of users and negatively affecting precious housing resources. Once again, the Tribal Government must take immediate action to rid the community of these destructive substances.

On Friday, July 22, the Tribal Council announced the “Take Back Our Community Campaign”, designed to join forces with the residents of Watersmeet to take back the community from drug abuse and replace the pain of addiction with practices based on Lac Vieux Desert’s traditional values of Respect, Truth, Wisdom, Honesty, Humility, Courage, and Love. ‘I have no magic wand, said Tribal Chairman James Williams, Jr., but I know if we work together as a community, we can save lives and make our people healthy again.’

During the Community Meeting held the same day, some LVD members shared their struggle with drugs and drug use in Lac Vieux Desert and Watersmeet and how this has affected them, their friends, and their loved ones. The Tribal Government received input from concerned Tribal Community Members about steps needed to push back against drug use, using traditional values to help those in the depths of addiction and rid the community of persons who bring poisons to the people of LVD and Watersmeet.

July 26, 2022 – Press Release – Take Back the Community Campaign

The Tribal Government took these recommendations and has determined short and long-term goals and actions to push back against the drugs and drug traffickers attempting to take hold in the community. On Monday, July 25, the Tribal Government decided by motion to:

Exclude any non-LVD member from the lands of the Band who is identified as, or comes to be known, as a known drug dealer/user or who is otherwise excluded from any Tribal business now, or in the future, for drug-related activity resulting in the enactment of a resolution related to each identified person containing the specific timeframe for exclusion, special considerations, potential consequences and the process for reconsideration.

Along with this motion, the Tribal Government authorized the public release of the names of those who are currently excluded from any Tribal business for drug related activity and those who are known drug traffickers or users in the community. The list of excluded persons may be found at www.lvd-nsn.gov and on the Tribe's Official Facebook Page. The list is not exhaustive and will be updated regularly to reflect current events. The Tribal Government cautions those who view the list that a person's inclusion on the list does not mean that the person has been adjudicated by a court of law, merely that the Tribal Government has found that it is in the best interest of the Tribe to exclude the person from Tribal Lands and to make that information known to the public.

The Tribal Government will continue to meet with community members over the coming weeks and months, developing and implementing new strategies to "Take Back Our Community" and rid our area of drugs.

Inquiries regarding the campaign can be directed to James Williams, Jr., Tribal Chairman.

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