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Casino: The Tribe would be responsible for extra funds

Continued from page 5

The casino would be the first one built off-reservation in the state, a situation that has dealt the governor's office a unique hand in negotiating with the tribe. Even so, there's no sure bet the U.S. Department of the Interior, which has veto power because the casino is off-reservation, will approve the plan.

The Oregonian reported Sunday that federal law clearly prohibits the state from taxing tribal casino gambling. In an attempt to avoid breaking that law, the governor and the Warm Springs tribe agreed that money will be transferred to the state's control through the creation of the Oregon Benefit Fund, a nonprofit fund run by an independent board, rather than being transferred as a tax. If the federal government perceives the payment as a tax, the agreement will likely be denied.

"The Tribe has agreed to share, on a sovereign government-to-government basis, a portion of its revenues from the Gaming Facility," states the compact between the tribe and the state.

The casino would require additional investments from the tribe as well. The press release stated that the tribe would be required to close its casino at the Kah-Nee-Ta resort on the Warm Springs reservation if the Cascade Locks casino is built in order to obey the state's one-casino-per-tribe rule, and the tribe would be responsible for paying all costs associated with the installation of a

new highway interchange on Interstate 84. Six percent of the facility's net income would go to a Tribal Community Benefit Fund on top of the money headed for the Oregon Benefit Fund.

The Cascade Locks land is only 42 miles east of Portland, and the compact recognizes that the tribe will enjoy a "significant economic benefit" and an "economically desirable location."

"I think it's wonderful as folks consider this option for Oregon that they remember the education costs for the needy population,"

Margie Lowe, Oregon Student Assistance Commission executive director

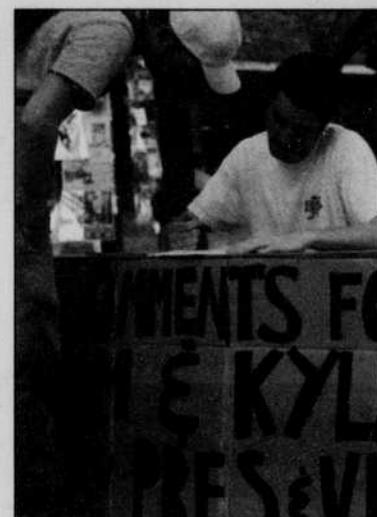
Locks and the people of Oregon," Kulongoski said in the press release. "Everyone will reap the advantages of new jobs, increased access to education, enhancement of the Gorge environment and economic development."

Representatives from the University, ASUO and OUS all said they were paying attention to the casino deal but believed it was too early in the process to take a position.

"I think it's wonderful as folks consider this option for Oregon that they remember the education costs for the needy population," Lowe said.

The compact states that for the first eight years of gaming, the casino would donate 6 percent of the first \$160 million of its net win, 12 percent of the next \$40 million and 17 percent of all net win more than \$200 million. After the first eight years, the tribe would pay 17 percent of all its net winnings.

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LAUREN WIMER | SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

ASUO President elect Adam Walsh speaks with junior Nick Harvick at a booth in the heart of campus Wednesday afternoon.

IN BRIEF

Walsh booth encourages student questions, ideas

ASUO President elect Adam Walsh said he and Vice President elect Kyla Coy have been "happily surprised that a lot of students have been stopping by and asking questions."

"It's been going surprisingly well, given the interest that students had during the election," he said. "It's nice to be able to be visible to the student body. A lot of students appreciate the fact that we're there, even if they don't have a question or a comment."

He said students have suggested ideas from larger desks to a piñata day.

"Even some ideas that kind of seem silly at first ... could possibly turn out to be something that would work," he said.

The booth was stationed at East 13th Avenue and University Street on Wednesday and Thursday.

Walsh said he plans to make the booth a regular occurrence next year to make the Executive more visible.

— Parker Howell



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