

Rosemary Landis' Council Report for June & July

Tribal Council's June 4th meeting was spent on priorities planning. This session targeted items that Council needs to focus in on. Working toward Health Services for all Tribal Members is one of the top four goals. The Oregon Health Plan, National Health Care Reform, Indian Health and our own Self-Insurance Funding Package for employees, should give us ample opportunity to become pro-active and find the best avenue to improve Tribal Health Care.

The next day I traveled to Sea-Tac for Indian Health Negotiations specifically for the Portland Area. Sometimes the conversations get heated, but IHS and the Tribes always manage to remember that "negotiations" means give and take for both sides. Self-Governance Coordinator, Judy Muschamp and Brenda Bremner, Assistant CEO, comprised our negotiation team for the meeting. The Portland Area Indian Health seems to be progressive and interested in mutual planning for the Area.

Our June 10th Health Committee meeting was rescheduled for June 15th, which gave me the opportunity to accept the invitation to attend the Springfield Headstart Graduation Ceremony on my time. Lillie Butler and I enjoyed the children's songs and the drumming of the "Dancing Again Singers". The hard work over the year, by the dedicated teachers and parents, was very evident by the evenings performances.

The next morning, on my time, I accepted the Community Development Corporation's invitation to Council to attend a strategic planning workshop with Don Lindly, Lincoln County Commissioner; Mayor of Siletz, Mike Hart; the Toledo City Attorney; and CDC Commissioners. Jobs, water, roads, police, and zoning were some of the topics discussed.

Monday, June 13th, I was asked by Oregon Indian Education Symposium, to say the closing prayer. Our Chairman, Dee Pigsley, was one of the panelists. This educational conference brings together university presidents, parents, students, Elders, legislators, tribal leaders, school board members, and the private sector. Bob Tom, our Higher Ed Specialist, helps plan these yearly meetings. The Willamette University was an excellent host.

On June 15th, Siletz was the site for our Health Committee meeting. The Oregon Plan and IHS Self-Governance planning at the Staff Retreat were a couple of the topics discussed.

The next day was spent in Salem for a full day of interviews for the Part-time JTPA Clerical Assistant and Part-time Education Clerk.

Our Regular Council meeting on the 18th covered a huge range of topics. The Tribal Council Secretary, Connie Plagmann, will put your name on the mailing list for the minutes if you call her and make the request.

I attended the first day of the Staff Retreat on June 20th, because it was dealing with IHS Self-Governance planning. Every work group was interesting. I was pleased to see the employees engage in the Q&A sessions. I heard good comments and suggestions in the department meetings.

The NARA (Native American Rehabilitation Association), in Portland, held

their Quarterly Board meeting, on July 22nd. It was my first meeting since being appointed by Council last July. NARA is a Native American Residential Treatment Program, funded by IHS and other sources. Alex McCloud, Executive Director, oversees the Residential Treatment, Family/Youth Services, Out-Patient Treatment and Health Clinic Services. Our Tribal Member, Ron Hudson, is the Health Clinic Director, for NARA.

Yearly the Council attends Pi-Ume-Sha-Days. This year was the Silver Anniversary. Warm Springs was very supportive of our Tribe being restored. My family and I watched the parade, Pow Wow dancing, and the Slo Pitch Tournament. The Siletz Team took 2nd Place. I remember the days, when Jim Macy and Kenny "Scabby" Robe, used to win all of the contests, and the "Wide Spot in the Road" drummers kept our toes tapping.

The Council was invited to Tour the Cougar Rock Special Interest Area, in Sweet Home Ranger District, on Monday, June 27th. JoAnn Miller, Tom Downey, Robert Kentta, Selene Rilatos, a friend of hers, Lillie Butler, two Forest Service Personnel, and myself toured the site. The Cougar Rock Area is part of the Aboriginal Trade and Gathering Trail for our Molalla people. Talk to Robert Kentta or Mike Kennedy if you have any questions about this Cultural Area.

The Council was invited to attend the Salem Area Office all-Area Elder Dinner at the Chemawa Salem Head Start Building, on June 28th. I attended on my own time. There was good company and good food. Our Elders know how to have a good time!!! I thank all the area staffs for making the day so enjoyable. Many of the Elders will be attending a conference in Spokane, in August.

A Portland Area Tribal meeting on IHS Restructuring, sponsored by the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, was held on June 29th, in Portland. Review and discussion of the report of the IHS Quality Management Work Group on Restructuring was on the agenda. Further comments will be accepted at the (NPAIHB) meeting in Lewiston, ID., in July.

At 3:15 I left that meeting to attend our BIA negotiation meeting in Salem at 4:30. Our Tribal Chairman, Dee Pigsley; CEO, Nelson Witt; Assistant CEO, Brenda Bremner; and Administrative Manager, Sharon Edenfield, BIA Representative, Nick Longely; and Office of Self-Governance person, Tom Shirella conducted negotiations.

The last day of the month, on my own time, I attended a NARA Clinic function in Portland. The Clinic Staff seemed very dedicated to providing Health Care Services to the Indian Community in Portland.

I can be reached at (503) 622-4270 or at the Portland Area Office (503) 255-3510 for messages.

See you next month!

"Change your life today. Don't gamble on the future; act now, without delay."

—Simone de Beauvoir

Chairman's Report

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As an outgrowth of that discussion, a meeting was held in Salem on July 22nd with Cris Rodgers, the new U.S. Attorney representing the Department of Justice, who is based in Portland. Participating in the meeting for the Tribe in addition to myself were Lillie Butler, Council Member; Nelsen Witt, CEO; and Craig Dorsay, tribal attorney.

We covered a wide range of issues. Of great importance to us was the U.S. Attorney's understanding of and commitment to the principle of the federal government's trust responsibility.

* The evening following our meeting with the U.S. Attorney, Nelsen Witt, Craig Dorsay and I flew to Washington, D.C., to meet with the staffs of our congressional delegation and to attend the NIGA/NAI Task Force meeting.

At our request, meetings were scheduled with the staffs of Senators Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood and Congresswoman Elizabeth Furse and Congressman Mike Kopetski. We also met with Tad Johnson, staff director of the House Committee on Indian Affairs. We were able to cover a number of critical issues facing the Siletz Tribe including our technical amendments bill, the land acquisition bill, the Yaquina Head issue, BIA Agency funding and staffing problems.

* We were able to attend only portions of the NIGA/NAI Task Force meeting but the Tribe's concerns were well represented by Jessie Davis who has been an active member of that Task Force for the past year. (Her report on the status of Siletz Gaming can be found on page 15). As Jessie points out in her report, the activities and issues involving the development of our gaming enterprise have kept the Tribal Council and Ad Hoc Gaming Commission extremely busy.

*Work on the expansion of the clinic is progressing with completion targeted for October. The facility will almost double in size when completed. Although we have a large backlog of people in need of medical care, the enlarged clinic will enhance services to our people. A dentist has been hired to replace Dr. Cayous and is expected to be on board in the near future.

*Blood quantum continues to be a major issue of concern to our tribal members - one that is of critical importance to the present and the future of our Tribe. It is a controversial issue that has generated strong opinions on all sides - an issue that will not be resolved to the satisfaction of everyone. But it is an issue that we, as a Tribe - as a sovereign entity - must address. (Please refer to our CEO Nelsen Witt's statement on this matter on page 15.)

These are but a few of the activities and issues in which we were involved last month. August, of course, is pow-wow month. Our pow-wow has become known as one of the best in the Northwest! See you there!