

Budget Meetings Rouse Interest

The General Council meetings regarding the 1977 budget held on November 23rd and 30th at Warm Springs and the November 30th District meeting at Simnasho were hailed as the "best ever" by members of the Tribal Council and Tribal administration staff.

Not only did an unprecedented number of people show up, but the meetings were orderly, participants stayed with the matter at hand, and many good questions were asked, according to Olney Patt, Sr.

Some, however, voiced criticism because the district meeting at Simnasho was scheduled the same night as the November 30th General Council meeting in Warm Springs since it split up members of the Tribal Council and management personnel for that evening.

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THE AGENCY MEETINGS

The first general council in Warm Springs found an estimated 150 - 200 people crowding the Longhouse to hear General Manager Ken Smith and the branch managers present facts and figures relating to expenditures under the 1977 budget. An array of charts, architectural drawings and other visual aids supplemented the presentation. Department heads were on hand to field the numerous comments and questions raised by tribal members.

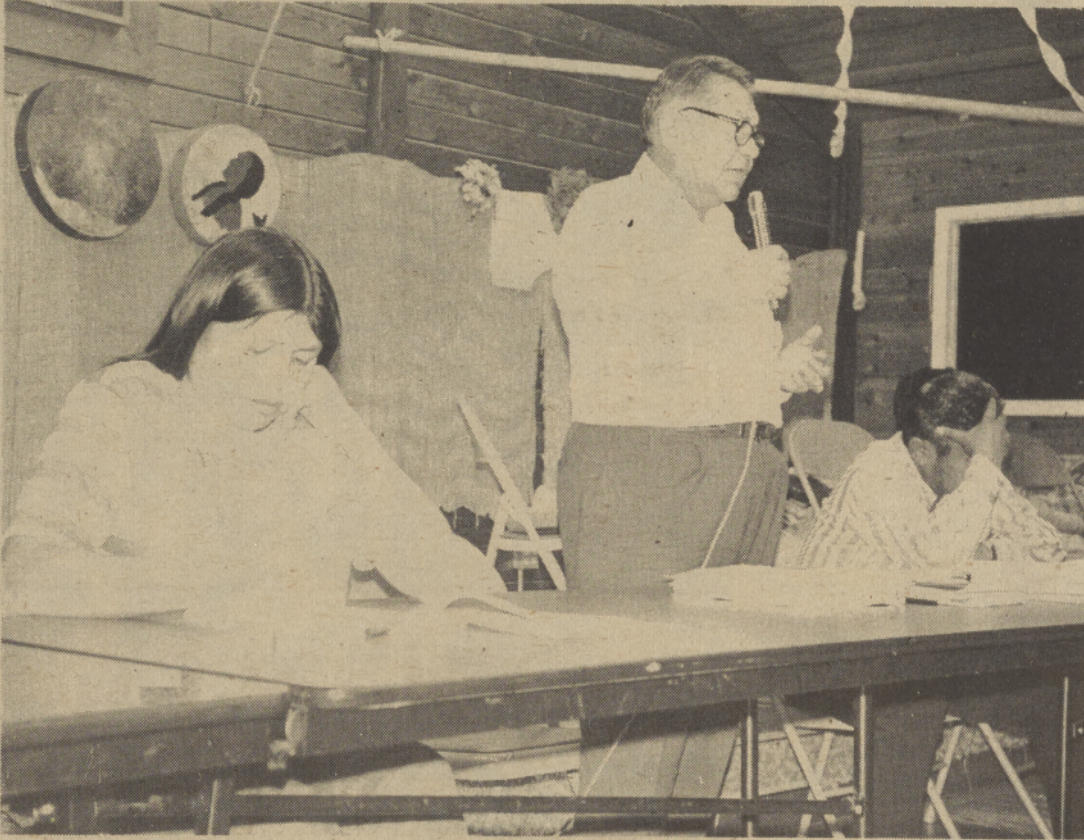
Although about half the number of people attended the second meeting, which was chaired by Zane Jackson, discussion was just as abundant and productive.

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Ken Smith explained that the addition of new programs and positions in many branches and the culprit inflation caused the overall 1977 budget to increase 23 percent over 1976 despite attempts to keep it to 6 percent.

Tribal funds will account for 66 percent of the nearly \$6 million gross budget, with 23 percent of the funding from federal sources and 11 percent from Tribal enterprises. The long-range goal, according to Smith, is to decrease Tribal outlay and place more of the burden on federal and enterprise sources. As part of this effort the Planning Department is adding a special grants sections.

Tribal Planner Ray Rangila reviewed the ongoing and



AT THE DISTRICT meeting requested by Simnasho residents on November 30, aspects of the 1977 budget are explained in the Warm Springs language by Olney Patt, Sr., at the Simnasho Longhouse. Photo by Sandy Rangila

tentative projects which are changing the face of the reservation. Already or soon-to-be funded by a variety of sources, are: HUD Housing (including 15 homes, 20 apartments and the new Mobile Home Park), the Administration Center, Greenville clearance, the Visitors Information Center (to be operational in the coming tourist season), fencing cemeteries, the second phase of the Community Park along the creek by the Community Center (including a second Little League field), a day use area for Kah-Nee-Ta, the Juvenile Detention Center and an addition to the Group Home.

Tentative projects being discussed are: the shopping center, the industrial park (including Tribal Garage and vehicle pool), a new Day Care - Head Start facility, a store and gas station at Kah-Nee-Ta, an expanded Community Center, an expanded Agency Longhouse, the second phase of cemetery fencing, an addition to the Dry Creek Subdivision, an improved water system for Simnasho, jail improvements, and a safer Warm Springs - Kah-Nee-Ta intersection on Highway 26.

Health and Social Services announced the biggest increase. As manager Noel Day described it, this branch is receiving "the lion's share of new positions". An expanded Parole and Probation Program and a restructured Alcohol Program with a full treatment and after-care component, are partly responsible. Family and Children's Services are growing to meet the needs, with seven new and better defined positions added and a Foster Care Program in the works.

Despite the dramatic increase in this branch, people at the Warm Springs meeting did not challenge the appropri-

ations except to note that in some cases the services did not seem to be reaching the people who really need them. Improved services to the elderly and the handicapped were suggested.

Much of the discussion at the first meeting revolved around housing, with questions posed about the location, ownership and financing of the HUD units. Enterprise Manager Ed Manion responded that HUD houses must be grouped together in one area for maintenance reasons, that renters

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will have an option to buy some of the units through a hopefully expanded loan program, and that the Tribe is moving toward buying up the HUD housing on the reservation.

Education was another concern that prompted much discussion at both meetings, especially relating to scholarships for college students.

Two elderly people raised thought-provoking issues. One woman spoke of the "forgotten people" of Simnasho who seem to be overlooked when new projects are planned. Living conditions are crowded and police and fire protection are minimal, she said.

An elderly man commented that many of the older people did not understand the budget information as presented. More of an attempt should be made to clarify budget issues to those older people for whom language is a barrier and figures on paper mean nothing, he said. In addition, perhaps committees and departments

should report back to the tribal members more regularly, not just once a year.

Ken Smith recognized that communication could be improved between the tribal administration and service structure and the general population.

Many appeared to be pleased with the level of communication at the two general council meetings in Warm Springs.

THE SIMNASHO MEETING

The meetings at Warm Springs and Simnasho differed substantially in that about half the Simnasho meeting was conducted in the Warm Springs language with Olney Patt, Sr. translating. Though the Simnasho session drew considerably fewer people than did the General Council meetings at Warm Springs, those in attendance were attentive and posed varied and thoughtful questions.

The Simnasho District meeting on November 30 provided an opportunity for tribal members to hear the budget presentation, budget explanations, and to ask and have questions answered in other than the English language. So many questions were asked, in fact, that Olney Patt, Sr. may have felt a bit hoarse by the time the meeting drew to a close.

Questions were raised as to the availability of health and social service programs. It was felt that perhaps tribal members are unaware of many of the programs and that some may be afraid to utilize those services provided for them.

The Tribal Health and Social Services Branch has undergone considerable change dur-

The aim is to better meet the needs of Tribal Members.

ing the past year, both in the form of new services and in the restructuring of existing programs. The aim is to better meet the needs of tribal members.

Concern was expressed regarding the condition of the Kah-Nee-Ta bathhouse for tribal members. It was requested that the bathhouse should be improved and enlarged and that sanitary conditions should be examined.

Individuals were advised that the matter has been brought up to the Tribal Council during a Kah-Nee-Ta monthly report and that a proposal to remedy the situation is being drawn up for Council approval. (See separate story)

Simnasho residents also brought up the question of police protection there. They are concerned because they are covered by only one patrolman at night and have virtually no protection during the day. In addition, their night protection is often pulled away for emergency situations elsewhere, it was claimed.

When asked why the Tribes are not getting financial support for the police department from the BIA, Clayton Earl (acting superintendent) answered by saying that the money is budgeted but has just not been received. He suggested that the Tribes need to bring pressure to stir this money loose. He said that this could be accomplished by letters to Congress and by going through members of the Tribal Council.

"The budget," said Olney Patt, Sr., "is one way of controlling expenditures." He further stated that everyone should take a good hard look at it, and anytime someone sees an omission or has a different opinion, he should speak up.

Regarding any possible additional budget expenditures, he said that a good feasibility study is the main safeguard as far as Tribal Council responsibility is concerned. It is a method of checks and balances within the system - the system is set up that way."

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