

Finance Branch

The Finance branch plays an important role in tribal government. It protects Tribal assets while providing accurate financial information and support services. Twenty-eight people are employed in the branch with a \$1.3 million budget. Sixty percent of the staff is tribal members.

With downsizing, the Finance branch has upgraded its software to become more efficient. Chief Financial Officer Rawleigh White says if the budget shortfall continues at the current pace, certain services will be delayed, and there will be changes in how the services are provided. "One example is the branch now cut accounts payable checks twice a week instead of three times a week," White stated.

Over the last two years, the branch has enjoyed a number of accomplishments. The branch maintained high reporting standards during the downsizing and received their 7th consecutive Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the highest form of recognition in government accounting.

Other accomplishments include implementing an upgraded software package with limited disruption to the Organization; implementing an approved cash and investment management processes to enable a higher return on cash and investments; and working with Warm Springs Power Enterprise, the Tribal Council, and Portland General Electric to obtain the financing to purchase one-third interest in the Pelton Hydroelectric project.

In the future, White said the branch had some specific goals to help the Organiza-

tion. He said they would like to coordinate revenue forecasts and expenses within the organization, helping tribal departments understand their monthly budget reports. Another goal is to maximize investment returns in a low return environment through appropriate investment policies and cash flow analysis. White also said he thought there was a need to provide quarterly training to the operational departments.

The branch will continue to gain efficiency from the accounting software to help offset the downsizing effects over the next four to five years. Another goal is to maintain good working relations with enterprises of the tribes.

The Finance Branch provides the tools to management, so they can properly allocate their limited resources to assist in attaining Tribal Council priorities.

When asked about the branch's biggest challenge in the next decade, White said the biggest challenge is to communicate effectively and assist other departments in financial training so there will be a more efficient organization throughout tribal government.

On a sad note, former Chief Financial Officer Norma Smith passed away November 25, 2001, at her home at Upper Dry Creek in Warm Springs. She was 63. Ms. Smith was the second woman from the Confederated Tribes to earn her college diploma. She graduated from Lewis & Clark College in 1961. She was employed by the tribes for over 39 years and was the chief financial officer for the tribes when she was placed on Medical Leave status in mid 1999.

Internal Audit/ Compliance Office

This small branch performs reviews of the capability of internal control systems and the effectiveness of program delivery systems to determine whether goals, objectives and the desired results of the organization are achieved in an effective and practical manner.

This small two-person entity operates with a budget of \$160,000. The budget downsizing that the Organization has been undergoing in recent years has affected the operation of this branch in a couple of ways. One is the freezing of a position that isn't being filled. This affects the number of internal audits that can be performed. In turn, this limits the asset protection function that is part of the scope of duties and responsibilities.

In the last couple of years, the Internal Audit/Compliance branch developed an annual audit and compliance plan to assist in their efforts to review Organization delivery systems. They have evaluated programs as to how they relate to the organizational strategic plans. The branch also has provided assistance to branch managers on internal control issues, and completed a number of audits of various departments and programs.

Looking to the future, until another source of tribal income is available, the budget situation will continue to erode away the services that are being provided by this small branch. It will affect the qual-

ity and quantity of work being provided.

However, the staff still pursues significant goals like providing systematic reviews and independent appraisals of the internal control systems, reviewing and appraising all department, operations and programs for the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems of control.

Other goals are to assist management in providing assurances that the operations are effective and efficient; identifying the strength and weakness in management policies, practices, and internal controls; providing assistance to external auditors; reviewing the integrity of financial and operational information.

If revenue short falls continue to build it will affect the ability of the program to be effective in the protection of tribal financial and human assets. The implementation and maintenance of internal controls will need to be strengthened.

Compliance officer Jeff Sanders says that staff training and accreditation must be a higher priority to continue the growth and integrity of the Internal audit/compliance functions.

Although this is a small branch with only two employees, it does a big job in protecting tribal assets and sovereignty. It also enhances and protects the well being of tribal members.

Governmental Affairs

The mission statement for this branch outlines an ambitious agenda that is of great importance to the Tribe and Tribal Council. The branch has four departments, which includes Planning, Vital Statistics, Records and Legislative coordination.

The oldest department in the branch is Vital Statistics. The department is responsible for the records for the membership back to the 1940s, along with Per Capita rolls which started in 1943; Census Rolls which date back to 1880; Tribal Election Records from 1938 and birth and death records dating back to the 1930's. Supervisor Madeline J.

Queahpama-Spino has worked in the department for 28 years. Along with Enrollment Officer Carla T. Conner-Greene and Secretary Melva Charley, the three women bring a combined 49 years of experience to perform a multitude of important tasks.

The Vital Statistics department is responsible for; (1) coordinating and distributing the Senior Citizen Pension (2) coordinating and distributing the Tribal Per Capita and December Bonus Per Capita checks that are returned because of outdated addresses (3) administering Minors Trust Payments to the US Bank, and the distribution of the Minors

Trust Fund bi-annually (4) assembling and providing proper documentation for enrollments and adoptions; so the Tribal Council can determine the eligibility of enrollment of applicants (5) advise and recommend to the Tribal Council the trends and history of enrollments and adoptions (6) coordinate, conduct and assist the Tribal Elections Committee with all Tribal elections (7) assist the BIA with Secretarial Elections (8) Administer and distribute Funeral Grants and Fire Donations (9) issue Privilege Tax Permits (sellers permits) (10) provide demographic data for the Reservation to the Tribal Organization and agen-

cies for grants, reports, etc. (11) assist the tribal membership with verification of enrollment to IHS, BIA, ECE, Schools, and other agencies, so that the membership may qualify for benefits.

The Vital Stats department supervised three elections held in the year 2000, and three in 2001. Out of the six elections, two were invalid due to a shortage of voters. There were 33 deaths in 2000. Twenty-five adults, 3 children and 2 non-member spouses, 2 non-member children and one community member. There were 37 deaths in 2001.

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"Working with the Tribal Councils"

By Madeline J. Queahpama Spino, Director of Vital Statistics

The first Tribal Council I worked for was the May 1971-April 1974 Council. Olney Patt Sr. was the Chair, Delbert Frank Sr. was the Vice-Chair, and Zane Jackson was the Second Vice-Chair.

Amos Simtustus Sr. was the Warm Springs Chief, Raymond Johnson Sr. was the Paiute Chief, and Nelson Wallulatum was the Wasco Chief. The other members were Elmer Quinn, Harold Culpus, Robert Macy, Rita Squiemphen and Orin Johnson. Kenneth Smith was the Secretary-Treasurer, and at that time I worked for Juanita Bourland. This was when it was called Steno Pool.

I enjoyed working with this era of Tribal Councils, because it was a new beginning for some members such as Robert Macy, Roger Suppah and Rita Squiemphen. There were a lot of questions, and the older Council members were very good teachers.

It took me a while to get used to the story telling, because I thought we were supposed to be doing business. I learned that this was their way of teaching, because it gave a history of the business on the table. I learned a lot about old politics during that time because once the Tribal Council got used to me, they loved to



Melva Charley, Madeline J. Queahpama-Spino, Carla T. Conner-Greene, of Vital Statistics.

tease me. I loved the sense of humor of each of the Tribal Council members, because when I began I was scared of the "Tribal Council."

One morning the heat went out in the building so Juanita asked me to make coffee in one of the 40-cup pots. I proceeded to put in 40 tablespoons of coffee because that's what the directions said. A fire was built in the fireplace and when the Tribal Council came in, they were all teasing me about making them feel at home with my Cowboy Coffee. Needless to say, I was fired from making coffee.

As time went forward, I re-

newed my friendship with Larry Calica, who later became my boss. I enjoyed the time I worked with Larry because we could analyze anything that was going on with the Tribe just by bantering about it until something made sense. Sometimes he would one-up me, and sometimes I would one-up him. I have lost many dear friends during my time working for the Tribe, but Larry was like a mentor to me. He was always pushing me to do my best, and when I thought I was doing my best he would push me harder. He believed in our tribal members, and we lost a good leader

when we lost Larry.

When Edith Danzuka hired me as the enrollment officer in 1974, I was honored to work for her.

I had always admired her because she had worked for the Tribe so long. Who would know that I would be sitting in her seat 28 years later.

I have enjoyed working with all of the Tribal Councils I have worked with.

Each Council has its own personality, as does each individual Tribal Council member. This has made for some interesting changes in the trends of enrollments and adoptions.

The Personnel Department

branch took on the added responsibility of managing the Tribes' Rose Garden Suite without any additional funding.

This project was transferred from Tribal management. In 2001, there were 141 events at the Rose Garden that were attended by over 2,200 tribal members/employees.

The branch offers a multitude of computer classes through Central Oregon Community College. Courses in Federal Employment laws, Family Leave Medical Act, Executive Management training, and specific vocation courses with some offices are also offered. In their normal course of work, the branch processed over 2,300 personnel transactions for the year. There were a total of 767 urine analysis samples taken, of which 6% or 49 tested positive.

Looking to the future, Benson Heath said they would strive to maintain the status quo with a small work force. In different capacities, Heath has been in Personnel since June 1, 1983. Heath mentioned

the need for an update of the personnel Policy to be current with legislative and judicial changes that affect the Tribe as an employer.

He would eventually like to produce an employee handbook for each Tribal employee. This would increase their level of awareness of the personnel manual.

When funding is available, Personnel will transfer employee personnel files to a Human Resource Inventory System. Plans are to have electronic employment application on the Internet that the job-seeking public can use.

The functions of Personnel are varied and support the Tribal Council goals in a number of ways. Recruitment, staffing, and compliance with company policy of the Personnel Manual are all critical. Other areas of stewardship include the Tribal Member Preference Policy, Drug Free Workplace policy and compliance with applicable Federal Employment laws.

When asked about the next five to ten years, the Personnel

Director said the Tribe must trim the workforce and at the same time maintain or enhance work skills. Within the next three years, about fifty employees will be eliminated from the Tribal budget. Offices will be streamlined or consolidated.

"This reduction-in-force will require a dislocation package for affected employees that include severance, training, relocation, and transition into other jobs," Heath said. According to Heath, both current employees and the job-seeking group need to enhance and diversify their current job skills. "As an employer, we must re-evaluate the workforce skills bank, by identifying key skills and competencies. We need to revive the employee performance appraisal. We need to integrate skills and competency inventory for training and succession planning. The salary table must catch up with inflation, as we are losing valued professional and technical staff to other employers who pay more. This 'brain drain' has a negative impact on the Tribe," Heath said.