



Spilyay Tymoo

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Council weighs reform measure

By Maren Cohn
Warm Springs Ventures

Tribal Council met for a long and productive day in continuation of its efforts to address the need for improved tribal governance.

The meeting explored a system of Council self-management through the creation of three internal committees. If adopted, the committee structure would enable Council to keep better tabs on both itself and its appointed officers through a system of checks and balances.

Nine Council members attended the meeting, which the OSU extension team of Clint Jacks and Teresa Hogue facilitated. The consulting firm Hamstreet & Associates presented the committee system and explained its operation.

Council expressed serious interest in the proposal and agreed to consider it further in a future session.

"These committees will *not* mean adding a whole new layer of positions or paid personnel," said Clyde Hamstreet in response to a Council question.

"These are not new tribal committees. Rather, they would be a part of Council and consist of Council members only. The only exception might be a non-voting financial expert to serve on the audit committee, which would oversee the Tribe's financial affairs. The purpose of the committees is to help Council manage itself better and be more accountable in doing its job."

The governance meeting, held Jan. 29, marked Council's fourth special session for addressing issues raised in last summer's opinion survey. In its initial two-day workshop last October, Council passed resolutions directing different reservation groups to cooperate in drafting a new economic strategy and provide recommendations regarding an administrative reorganization.

With the February 15 deadline for submission of those plans approaching, Council continues to work on governance as the third prong of its reform efforts.

Strong desire for change

The recent meeting opened with a review of the governance reform process to date. Several Council members stressed the need for Council, tribal committee members and other personnel do a better job of conforming to the tribe's constitution, bylaws, laws and regulations.

The desire for greater accountability was on nearly everyone's lips the entire day.

Some councilors voiced frustration at the sheer size of the problems facing the tribes and feeling powerless to find solutions.

At the same time, nearly everyone present spoke passionately about the need to come up with ideas that would benefit the people.

Despite some ruffling of feathers, there was widespread agreement that positive change had to begin at home, i.e., with Council itself.

The group appeared to accept the view that, while better governance might not lead automatically to improved economic and social conditions, those conditions were unlikely to get better without it.

See COUNCIL on 13

Celilo Village hosting 50-year commemoration

Celilo Village will host a two-day commemoration of Celilo Falls. The events begin on Saturday, March 10, the 50-year anniversary of the inundation of the falls by The Dalles dam. Events continue through Sunday, March 11.

Events include a canoe ceremony on the banks of the Columbia. Celilo Park, across the freeway from Celilo Village, will be the setting for the Wy-Kan-Ush-Pum Village. The village will be set up on the banks of the Columbia, and will include at least a half dozen tepees and a canvas longhouse.

Inside each tepee will be tribal, museum and environmental organization exhibits highlighting the his-

tory and importance of Celilo Falls, tribal salmon culture, and Columbia River health. The following is a schedule of events:

Saturday, March 10

9:30 a.m.: Canoe ceremony - Celilo Village chief will greet a Puyallup canoe group on the banks of the Columbia River.

10 a.m.: Opening ceremony at Celilo Longhouse.

11 a.m.: Honoring ceremony at longhouse.

3 p.m.: Traditional salmon dinner

6 p.m.: Celilo Legacy Powwow and stick games.

All-day: Celilo Falls history exhibit and tribal, salmon and river displays at the Wy-Kan-Ush-Pum Village in Celilo

Park.

Sunday, March 11:

10 a.m.: Traditional Washat service (invitation only)

Noon: Traditional salmon dinner.

3 p.m.: Remembering Celilo: Elders share their memories and recollections of Celilo Falls and Celilo Village

All-day: Celilo Falls history exhibit and tribal, salmon, and river displays at the Wy-Kan-Ush-Pum Village in Celilo Park.

Additional teepees can be accommodated in this area for other arts and crafts vendors. The Celilo Longhouse, as the heart of Celilo Village, will be the center for all official and ceremonial aspects of the commemoration. The opening ceremony, dignitaries'

speeches, salmon feast, and the powwow will take place inside the longhouse on Saturday.

Another event marking the 50-year anniversary of the loss of Celilo Falls is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 3 at the Hood River Hotel, located at 102 Oak St. in Hood River.

This event, called "An Evening To Remember Celilo Falls 50 Years Later," will feature a 27-piece full-size photo exhibit from six different collections, historic movie footage and audio from Celilo Falls, and a speaker to talk about life at the falls. The event is organized by the Columbia Riverkeeper program.

For more information contact Kim Leslie, Columbia Riverkeeper program administrator at (541) 387-3030.



Tommy Lee WhitePlume dances at the Lincoln's Birthday Powwow, held Feb. 10-12 at the Simnasho Longhouse. More powwow photos on page 8.

Election of Council coming up

Tribal members in late March or early April will elect the Twenty-Fourth Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes. The next Council will then take office on May 1.

Nominees for the Council positions will be named at upcoming district meetings, to be held in mid-March or sooner, said Madeline Queahpama-Spino, director of tribal Vital Statistics.

Tribal members will receive their ballots in the mail in March, said Queahpama-Spino.

Those voting members on the reservation can then turn their ballots in at the polling place in the Community Center. Off-reservation members vote by absentee ballot.

According to recent Vital Stats information, there are 1,429 local voting members of the Agency District, and 428 absentee. The Simnasho District has 807 local voters, and 242 absentee. And Seekseequa, 184 local and 55 absentee.

Three representatives each will be elected from Agency and Simnasho, and two from Seekseequa.

Another election that tribal members may see this year is the adoption election. An adoption election would happen after the new Council is in office, said Queahpama-Spino.

Composite Products develops global niche

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

Not many would expect to find a direct connection between a small Warm Springs factory and various countries in Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

But that is exactly what has been developed through Warm Springs Composite Products.

The successful company produces fireproofing material made of tectonite along with other product lines that are growing steadily—creating a unique opportunity for exporting.

In the last year alone, the export market revenue increased from 10 percent to 26 percent.

Add that to other revenue and Composite Products is expecting a 30 percent increase over last year's profits in 2007—a total about \$8 million.

Composite Products employs 40 people full time, and over 80 percent of the employees are tribal

members.

Their unique way of handling their employees is part of what CEO Duane Darnell says makes them so successful.

According to Darnell, it is especially important to cross-train employees. That way they are motivated to progress and move up in the company.

"I don't hire people that can't do a lot of important things," he explained.

When the company was founded in the early 90's, he said, many workers hadn't ever been taught skills required in their job.

Now, Darnell said, "We've got a good team here."

In addition to giving employees the chance to build skills, it also gives them a chance to work together.

"You've got people training other people," Darnell explained. "That model works better for us in this community."

According to Darnell, "There really isn't a lot of politics in our company."

"I want them to enjoy working here," he added.

Jacob Coochise, sales and marketing director, said, "The nice thing about our company today that you couldn't say five or six years ago is that we have a lot of tenured employees."

Coochise has firsthand experience—he originally began working for Composite Products as part of a cleanup crew.

That job eventually grew into working as a lead man, then plant manager and now as a college-educated sales and marketing director.

That sort of growth is ideal, Darnell said.

Though both men can recite uses for their products and methods of creation, there really isn't a simple answer for what makes tectonite.

It is created from diatomaceous earth—meaning that it is made of soil full of crushed organic material like recycled newspaper, fiberglass and skeletal material.

Tectonite is heat and fire resistant, and as a result it is used as a component of fire-rated doors.

In addition to materials made of

tectonite, workers at Composite Products are also producing items like repair cement, doorframes and more recently, items dealing with ballistics that are being sold for use in military vehicles.

"We've gradually developed Composite Products into a Composite company," Darnell said.

One thing that has helped the company expand is the ability to customize or complete an order of any size.

According to Coochise, "We're very open minded about things."

While larger companies are unable to provide custom orders, Coochise said Composite Products can provide orders that meet the customer's needs.

"That's where we have an advantage," he said.

Another advantage involves a series of certifications attached to their products.

According to Coochise, "Everything that we do is driven by our certifications."

See COMPOSITE on 12