

TeleCo Corner

Enterprise now hiring senior staff

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In this issue of the *Spilyay*, you will find the first three jobs that the Warm Springs Telecom has posted for this new company.

For many of you, it may seem like a tribally owned telecom is a recent idea. But in fact, it is the result of more than 10 years of work by tribal leadership and staff to upgrade the tribes' telecommunications services and networks.

This article will give you an idea of what has gone into the process to make this tribal teleco a reality.

Needs assessment.

The first step that was taken was to hire a consultant to do a "needs assessment" to better understand what problems existed on the reservation.

This study quickly indicated that telecommunications service was limited and it was critical for the tribes to upgrade telecommunications on the reservation.

Community Connect Grant

Instead of letting the study gather dust on a bookshelf, the tribes decided to take the lead towards better telecommunications by applying for the USDA Rural Utility Service Community Connect grant.

This grant, which the tribes received, enabled the CTWS to build a small fiber optic network to connect administrative and other tribal buildings together, as well as build a technology center with 24 computers, now the Teepee Deli, to give tribal

members broadband Internet access.

The network was connected to the outside world through a new microwave radio link to Madras. The grant also provided some funding for small amount of wireless residential internet access.

The "Telecom Steering Group" or "TSG"

The Community Connect grant showed what might be possible if the tribe took matters into their own hands. But there wasn't an umbrella tribal organization that could prioritize and coordinate these activities.

Early on, it became clear that a group of all tribal agencies and businesses that used telecommunications would be necessary to discuss the issues and solve problems facing tribal telecommunications. That is when the TSG was created.

Since then, the TSG has been meeting regularly for many years.

The group includes tribal administration, police, Fire & Safety, the BIA, IHS, KWSO, Natural Resources, Public Utilities, Power Enterprises, Land Use, Kah-Nee-Tah, Warm Springs Ventures, Fire Management and Eagle Tech.

The TSG discusses issues and problems and has been the source of ideas for improving telecommunications services on the Reservation. This group has been an important component to the planning process on the Reservation.

Strategic plan

One of the first tasks of the TSG was the creation of the

Telecommunications Strategic Plan.

The plan formed a blueprint of how to develop and prioritize telecommunication on the reservation.

This strategic plan was created by the TSG and approved by Tribal Council in 2006. The plan prioritized the top three issues to work on: Public safety radio including cell phone access, internet access and basic telephone.

Public safety radio is the two-way radio system used by the Public Safety Branch to communicate on the reservation during any incident, and at the time of the plan, coverage was limited to the core Agency area.

Since then, the tribes have made a lot of progress with public safety radio, including new radio consoles, new radio repeaters, new frequencies and a new tower on Miller Flat.

This has all been funded through Homeland Security Grants.

The TSG has also been focused on improving cell service on the reservation and was successful in getting two new cell sites installed by Verizon, one at Kah-Nee-Ta and the other on Eagle Butte (US Cellular is now sharing that same tower).

Improving internet access and basic phone service on the reservation has been the biggest and most challenging goal.

First, the tribes secured federal funding to research tribally owned telephone companies. After much research, a tribal delegation went to Washington, D.C. to meet with the federal agencies for telecommunica-

tions.

Later, tribal leaders went to Fort Mojave Telecom to see its tribal teleco's operations and to better understand the complex issues of starting and operating a telecom company as well as the impact that this company has had for the tribe.

Finally, the Tribal Council authorized the creation of the Warm Springs Telecommunications Company.

Thanks to the newly created Warm Springs Telecommunications Company, telephone and internet access were two issues in the Strategic Plan that are now part of the same solution.

The future

The Tribal Telco is now starting to hire the senior staff.

Once these people are in place and trained, a full staff will be hired.

Remodeling of the central office and customer service center is nearing completion.

Plus, as long as all the details come together as planned (some are out of our hands), service should begin to be offered this coming fall.

As for public safety radio, the tribe has secured a grant to build a new radio tower in Seekseequa and has just applied for a new grant to expand two-way radio coverage into Simnasho.

And the TSG continues to work with cell providers to expand coverage, particularly in the northern end of the reservation.

So again, stay tuned for the changes to telecommunications on the reservation in the near future.

State measure recognizes tribal police authority

The Oregon Legislature voted June 29 to recognize off-reservation tribal police authority. The vote came despite objections from some county sheriffs who said the measure would open the door to lawsuits.

Jefferson County Sheriff Jim Adkins supported the tribal position on the bill, recognizing tribal police authority. Tribal officers have to meet the same requirements as other law enforcement officers, so their authority should be equally recognized, Adkins said.

The state measure now goes to Gov. John Kitzhaber who has said he supports the bill.

Off tribal land

The new law would give tribal officers limited authority off reservations for two years, including the power to continue pursuing suspects who leave tribal land and to take action when a crime is committed in front of them.

Beginning in 2013, the measure then expands the authority of tribal officers, giving them full police authority through 2015.

Republicans Andy Olson of Albany, Greg Smith of Heppner and Matt Wingard of Wilsonville joined all 30 Democrats in approving the measure in the House on a 33-25 vote. The Senate approved 19-10.

Question arose in W.S.

The Oregon Supreme Court ruled this year that tribal officers can make an arrest off the reservation if they're in "hot pursuit." The decision stemmed from a 2005 police chase that began on the Warm Springs Reservation and ended in Jefferson County.

A Warm Springs officer who was not certified by the state law enforcement academy or deputized by the county sheriff made the stop.

The suspect appealed his conviction, arguing that the tribal officer did not have the authority to make the stop. The state Court of Appeals agreed with the suspect, but the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that the tribal officer did have authority.

House co-speaker Arnie Roblan, D-Coos Bay, said the Supreme Court ruling is a good start, but the bill is necessary for tribal officers who encounter other kinds of crimes.

"If they stopped an assault, they would have to go back to Supreme Court to see if they could make that arrest," Roblan said.

Under the measure, tribal police officers would be granted limited police authority if they obtain certification from the state Department of Public Safety Standards and Training and the tribe agrees to certain rules of insurance, tort liability and evidence.

Solution to underage drinking begins at home

A message from the
Warm Springs Office
of the Prevention Coordinator

Youth listen to their parents. We asked students, "How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to drink beer, wine or hard liquor regularly?"

Eighth-graders who said their parents think it is "wrong or very wrong" were two and a half times less likely to drink, and four times less likely to binge than those who said their parents think it is "a little bit or not wrong at all."

More than 60 percent of eighth-graders and three-fourths of eleventh-graders say it is easy or somewhat easy to get beer, wine, or hard liquor. And they most often get alcohol at parties, from friends or by taking it from their homes.

Parents can prevent underage drinking by:

Telling their children not to drink, knowing their children's whereabouts, and ensuring parties are alcohol-free and supervised by adults.

What schools can do

Youth who drink are at greater risk of academic failure.

Alcohol use during adolescence is associated with significant and possibly irreversible damage to memory and learning. In Oregon, one in twelve youth, who said they drank alcohol in the past 30 days, also reported missing school or class because of drinking alcohol.

School can help by:

Providing lessons about the effects of alcohol in elementary, middle and high school;

Establishing and enforcing strict policies against alcohol use,

and

Providing information to parents about the consequences alcohol use can have on their children.

Community attitudes about underage drinking must support the efforts of parents and schools.

Eighth graders who believe most adults think it is "wrong or very wrong" for someone their age to drink alcohol are half as likely to drink when compared to youth who believe adults think it "a little wrong or not wrong at all."

Letter to the Editor

Stolen items

I am writing this letter in regards to items stolen from my home on April 22 to June 2. I went to Pendleton for a funeral for atwai Earl "Lil' Man" Spino and I received a teal green Pendleton shawl with long teal green fringe, a black Pendleton shawl with med length black fringe, and a red Pendleton blanket with "Let'er Buck" and a bronc rider on the blanket.

I would like these items returned to me. I have turned this into the Jefferson County Sheriff and Tribal Police. Please return these items to me. I am very hurt and angry that these items were stolen from me. Please return to me.

Brenda B. Strom, PO Box 672, 2490 Sunset Lane, Warm Springs, OR 97761



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