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Kah-Nee-Ta Village talk at Council

Tribal Council last week heard a promising idea for future use of the Kah-Nee-Ta Village. A central element of the proposal is for use of the Village as a hydrotherapy center.

Chris James, his associate Eric Fristensky, and Dr. Edward McEachern gave the presentation. Mr. James, attorney, is a long-time advocate of the idea, as he has personal experience in seeking good quality hydrotherapy for a family member.

The hydrotherapy service his family used during this episode was

contained wholly within a hospital building, in a foreign country. The family did not leave the building for weeks—rendering the experience even more unpleasant.

Having similar services at the Village—with sunshine and clean air along with the hydrotherapy pools—would make for a unique facility. There would be the heated hydrotherapy pools, plus lodging for the patients and families, and related support services. And there would be access to all the outdoor activities at Kah-Nee-Ta.

Good health is the most impor-

tant thing in people's lives, and always will be, Mr. James said. For this reason the need for services at the Village would be "forever with no end to the market."

Dr. McEachern spoke with Council by speaker phone. The doctor is the Chief Medical Officer with Pacific Source Health Plans. Dr. McEachern confirmed the assessment that a hydrotherapy center at the Village has great potential.

Ms. James presented a revenue projection for the project through 2022, and the numbers are posi-

tive. Operation of the lodge would have to be a separate enterprise, he said.

Tribal Council members showed interest, and support for the proposal. Kah-Nee-Ta operated for 47 years, said Council Chairman Raymond Tsumpti, "And it was a good run. We now have to look at where we are today."

The hydrotherapy center has potential, Chairman Tsumpti said, "but we do have to shore this up with the membership."

Toward Tribal Vital Economies

Allen Nygard has spent 20 years studying tribal economies, over time working with 150 Native communities. "I'm not a consultant, I'm a student," Mr. Nygard said. Over time he has learned that "every tribal community is different, having developed over thousands of years."

My Nygard is now working with the Warm Springs Community Action Team on the team's Vital Tribal Economies project.

The Northwest Area Foundation—dedicated to reducing poverty in communities of the region—is a supporter of the Warm Springs Action Team. Last year the foundation provided an economic advancement grant to the action team.

The purpose of the two-year grant is to conduct a comprehensive study of the reservation economy, and develop a comprehensive economic development strategy, in partnership with the community.

Mr. Nygard, member of a North Dakota tribe, is helping with the assessment of the Warm Springs economy, the needs and assets. He spoke last week with Tribal Council, initially explaining the Vital Tribal Economies survey of earlier this year.

The survey is to get a picture of the strengths of the local situation, and areas in need of attention and improvement.

With two decades of experience studying tribal communities and economies, Mr. Nygard now realizes that every community—each one being different—begins the economic development journey from different places.

Yet there are some aspects that exist—to one extent or another—in all communities. These include qualities such as trust within the community and leadership, on the positive side; versus aspects such as the degree of lateral oppression and trauma among the members, for instance.

Some tribal communities have more to overcome on the negative side, while others start with more to work with on the positive side.

In the case of Warm Springs, he said, there is a good level of positive aspects in the community—trust, helpfulness, leadership, etc.

Based on his research, Warm Springs is given a good assessment, Nygard said; so the community is already prepared to change for the better in terms of the local economy. "You already have a lot going for you," Mr. Nygard said.

In time the answer will not be just more money, he said. Sometimes an influx of a great deal of money can actually have an adverse impact.

Reports at Council on Willamette Falls projects

Willamette Falls is one of the significant traditional fisheries of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, especially for eeling. The Falls is a usual and accustomed fishing place of the tribes from time immemorial.

Developments at Willamette Falls are of obvious importance to the tribes; and at the present time there are three separate projects happening there. Representatives of these projects met with Tribal Council last week, updating Council, the Branch of Natural Resources and legal counsel.

The projects are the Willamette Falls Heritage Area, the Willamette Falls Locks, and the Willamette Falls Legacy Project.

One aspect of developments at the Falls is the Blue Heron Mill property, now owned by the Grand Ronde tribes.

The mill closed in 2011, after nearly a century of operation. The mill property, adjacent to the Falls, is a central part of the Legacy Project—the potential "new home of the riverwalk"—the planned public access to the Falls, said Brian Moore, project manager of the Legacy Project.

The Grand Ronde purchased the mill property this year, with an agreement to cooperate in cleaning the site.



A sunny day at Willamette Falls, photo courtesy the Willamette Falls Legacy Project.

The Legacy Project involves Oregon City, Clackamas County, Metro and the State of Oregon, working with the site's private owners, the community, tribes and others. A plan with Legacy is to create a public riverwalk alongside the Willamette River, leading in time to potential new Oregon City downtown development. The plan envisions a \$35 million investment into this project.

A separate project is the Willamette Falls & Landing Heritage Area, involving 56-river-miles of the river. Jon Gustafson, president of the area coalition, described the Heritage Area last week at Council:

The goal is to share the history and culture of this area of river

with the public. Again, clearly, the tribes have a significant interest in this program.

The third component presented last week at Council is the Willamette Locks Commission. The Oregon legislature created the commission this term, with Senate Bill 256.

The goal of the commission is to advise state, local and regional government agencies on development and implementation of a plan for repair, reopen, operate and maintain the Willamette Falls navigation canal and locks.

These had been operated and maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers, who closed the locks as "non-operational" in 2011, after operating and maintaining

them since 1873. Boat traffic through the locks under the Corps of Engineers was free.

The locks commission is considering options for future maintenance and operation, and this may involve a user fee for some watercraft, such as tour boats and commerce transport.

In a worst case scenario, abandonment of the locks could be harmful to fish, another aspect of importance to the tribes, said Robert Brunoe, general manager of the tribal Branch of Natural Resources.

Tribal Council, committees and staff said they plan to be actively engaged as these three projects progress.

— Dave McMechan

New building idea for Early Childhood

The Early Childhood Education building has experienced recurring repair problems in recent years. A leaky roof is an example, and problems with the ECE kitchen are another.

Policy makers for ECE are now considering the option of having a new building for Head Start, Early Head Start and day care.

Recent work to keep ECE open and safe for children and staff has been expensive, and more work is needed. A roof repair, for instance, is an estimated \$100,000, funded through a grant.

Meanwhile, there are at least two federal grants that could help fund a new facility, said Casandra Moses, director of the Early Childhood Education Center.

One of the grant sources would be the federal Head Start program itself, and another is the Children's Care and Development Fund, Ms. Moses said.

Staff and the Policy Council have been weighing the options for the past several months, working also with Jefferson County School District 509-J. Site options for a new building may involve the

school district, while another option may involve the Health and Human Services Branch.

Rather than continue to expend resources on repairs at the existing ECE facility, the long-term practical solution could be a new facility, Ms. Moses said. Funding sources become increasingly reluctant to continue putting money into the older building, she said.

She met last week with Tribal Council, joined by Alvis Smith III and Tamera Coffee of tribal Utilities.

In other news from ECE, shared

recently with Tribal Council:

Through another grant through the Central Oregon Disability Support Network, ECE is contracting with a speech and language specialist.

This will provide students at ECE, and at the Warm Springs Academy, access to these services without the need of parents having to drive them to Redmond or Bend, as is currently the situation.

— Dave McMechan



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