



# Spilyay Tym

Coyote News, est. 1976

December 18, 2019 - Vol. 43, No. 26  
December - Nch'i-An - Winter - Yiyam

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## Federal legislation to help tribal water service

A lot happened on the reservation over the past year—a new Tribal Council took office, Education developed the tribal public school curriculum, federal lawmakers introduced legislation to nullify the Huntington ‘treaty’—to name just some of the news.

In Warm Springs, though, the year 2019 will be remembered as the year of the water crisis. During the months-long crisis, Agency area households could not use domestic water without first boiling it; and some residents had low or at times no water pressure.

The community worked together, with help from many people and organizations, and endured; yet this was something no one should have to contend with, or even worry about. The seriousness of the situation is evident in the response of the state legislature, and now the U.S. Congress.

A state law in July approved \$7.8 million to the Confederated Tribes for three key water projects on the reservation. The law—a first of its kind—was sponsored by the state senator and representative whose districts include the

reservation: Sen. Cliff Bentz and Rep. Daniel Bonham.

Then last week federal lawmakers weighed in: U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley introduced federal legislation to improve water quality and services for tribal communities in Oregon. The senators mentioned the Warm Springs water crisis in particular as a reason and need for the bill.

Tribes in Oregon, and across the West, are suffering from inadequate water infrastructure, the lawmakers said. In a precise characterization of what happened this

*“ This legislation would throw a lifeline to tribes like Warm Springs that are in dire need of water infrastructure improvements... ”*

Tribal Council Chairman  
Raymond Tsumpti

past spring and summer in Warm Springs, the senators added: “Aging drinking water treatment and distribution systems are subjecting

these communities to serious problems such as failed pressure relief valves, burst pipes and unsafe drinking water.”

Wyden and Merkley’s *Western Tribal Water Infrastructure Act* would help move these communities out of the cycle of temporary and emergency fixes by ensuring stable and reliable federal investments in water infrastructure projects. “Access to clean and safe drinking water is a basic human right,” Senator Wyden said.

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At Tribal Council in December Indian Head Casino general manager Jeffrey Carstensen announced a new five-year agreement between the casino and Swire Coca Cola, USA. The company has also made a \$5,000 donation to the tribes’ general fund, knowing of challenges facing the tribes’ water system. Presenting the check were Sharon Shwetter, Noel Coulson, Linda McDonald and David Thiessen (back from left) of the Swire Coca Cola, USA Bend office. Council chairman Raymond Tsumpti and Secretary-Treasurer Michele Stacona accepted the very welcome donation.



Courtesy Lewis Pitt/CTWS Governmental Affairs

## Wrapping up 2019 business at Tribal Council

The Twenty-Eighth Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes is concluding its first calendar year in office. Council met this Monday for its last scheduled meeting of 2019.

The morning session saw passage of the 2020 Scholarship resolution, as introduced by Valerie Switzler, general manager of the Education branch, and Secretary-Treasurer Michele Stacona. Council also approved the Health and Human Services 2020 fund 122 resolution, and the JHC resolution, as presented by Caroline Cruz, branch general manager.

Lucille Suppach-Samson, director of Vital Statistics, gave a final enrollments presentation of 2019; and Judge Lomas and court administrator Eliah Sorrelhorse presented the 2020 master jury list, and discussed the need for a pro tempore judge.

Concluding the morning session, Hyllis Dauphinais, chief executive officer of the Indian Health Service Warm Springs clinic, gave an update on the IHS modernization project.

Council next worked on the January 2020 agenda with the Secretary-Treasurer; and reviewed the tribal organization chart. They discussed the management plan, and then heard an update from Warm Springs Ventures.

Regarding the IHS clinic modernization project:

### IHS clinic modernization

For the past four years IHS and the Warm Springs clinic staff have been planning a modernization project.

The project is now almost ready for the design phase, said Yvonne Iverson of IHS, who has been working on the project since its inception.

The clinic planning group began work on the project in 2015, as Tribal Council requested a review

of adequate space for all of the health programs, IHS and tribal. Community and planning meeting began in 2015 and continued into 2016. The team developed three options:

Expand services to an existing building; build a new facility for expansion; or pursue a hybrid option involving new space and modernization of the existing facility.

Weighing all the options, and with community discussion, the team decided on construction of a new facility to house some departments currently in the existing clinic building. This would then create more space in the current, which could be modernized.

The project has an estimated budget of \$16 million, funded through collections by IHS billing to Medicaid and Medicare. The new facility would be 16,000-square-foot in size located across the parking lot from the clinic proper. The modernization and remodel of the current clinic would include an additional 7,000 square feet.

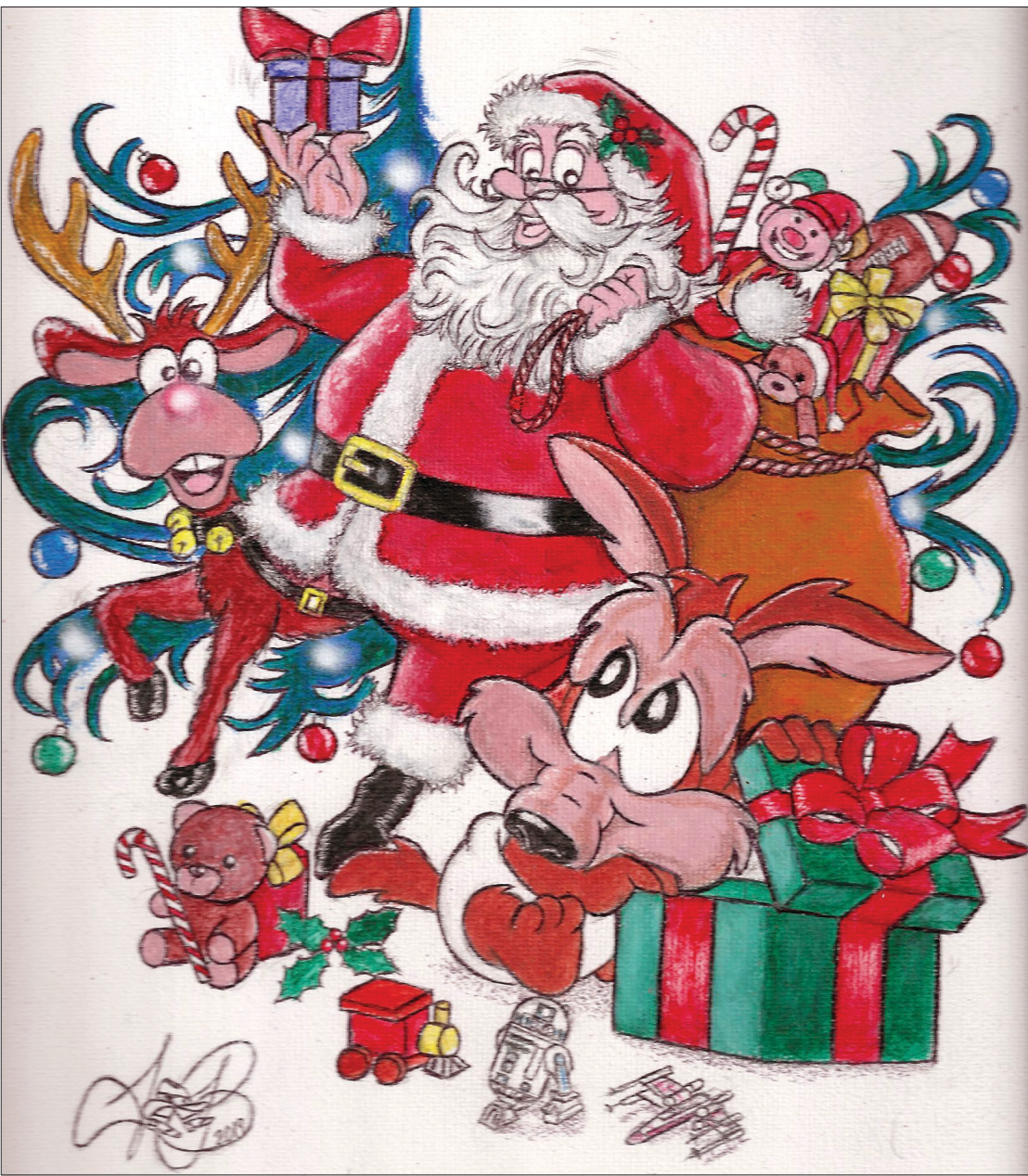
The project is on a three-and-one-half year timeline, with the design phase being the next step toward the modernization.

### Ventures CP Enterprise

In other business, Tribal Council agreed that 5 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31 would be the deadline to submit a resume and letter of interest to serve on the CP Enterprise board of directors.

The CP Enterprise is the cannabis project board under Warm Springs Ventures.

You can submit a resume and letter of interest to: Michele Stacona, Secretary-Treasurer Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs PO Box C Warm Springs, OR 97761



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