



Spilyay Tymoo

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December - Nch'i-An - Winter - Yiyam

At Council in December

The following are some of the items coming up on the Tribal Council agenda for December (subject to change at Council discretion):

Thursday, December 2: Central Oregon Inter-governmental Council meeting, virtual.

Monday, December 6

9 a.m.: Bureau of Indian Affairs update with Brenda Bremner, superintendent.

9:30: Office of Special Trustee phone update with Kevin Moore, Umatilla Agency BIA.

10: Indian Health Service update with Hyllis Dauphinais, clinic chief executive officer.

10:30: Covid update with the Response Team.

1:30 p.m.: Legislative update calls, federal and state.

2:30: Tribal attorney update.

Friday, December 10

9 a.m.: Blue Stone strategy group follow-up session.

Monday, December 13

9 a.m.: Secretary-Treasurer update with Glendon Smith.

9:30: January 2022 agenda, and review minutes.

10: Draft resolutions.

11: Covid update with the Response Team.

1:30 p.m.: Legislative update calls, federal and state.

2:30: Enrollments with Lucille Suppach-Samson, Vital Stats.

3: O-Life Network with Matthew Klebes.

4: Willamette Falls Trust update with Gerard Rodriguez.

Tuesday, December 14

9 a.m.: Workshop on Columbia River housing.

1:30 p.m.: Akana update.

Wednesday, December 15:

Government to government meeting on Columbia River housing with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

Thursday and Friday, December 16-17: Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission meeting, virtual.

Community update

There were 20 people on the reservation with active Covid-19, as of Tuesday of this week, according to the most recent update from the Warm Springs covid Response Team.

The early part of the week saw three new cases from 64 tests administered by Warm Springs IHS. Community Health and IHS were monitoring 13 close contacts, as of earlier this week. Call 541-553-2131 to schedule a vaccination.

• Warm Springs IHS has conducted 16,341 covid tests since the pandemic began.

There have been 1,258 confirmed cases among the tribal community since the pandemic began, according to the latest report.

New districts and question of political equity

The Warm Springs Reservation next year will become part of the large and rural Oregon voting District 57. Meanwhile, the city of Madras—where many tribal members live, shop, work, go to school, etc.—will be part of District 59.

This separation dilutes the voting equity of the Confederated Tribes, said Jaylyn Suppah. She spoke earlier this fall at a Oregon redistricting hearing before the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians.

With the reservation separated from Madras and moved into the larger District 57, including eastern Oregon, Indigenous representation is broken up, and thereby weakened.

An example is Ms. Suppah herself. She had considered a candidacy for state office in District 59. With the reservation part of District 57, she is less likely to run.

Like on the reservation, she knows the people and issues of Madras, Jefferson County, and District 59. This is not as true of

District 57, making a candidacy less tenable.

“I wouldn’t feel comfortable trying to represent folks I don’t know,” Ms. Suppah, an education advocate, has said. She is less familiar with communities of the new District 57, and this is the problem.

As summarized in a recent *Indian Country Today* feature:

“Tribal advocates who submitted maps or worked to increase engagement with the process in Indian Country say the new districts will make it nearly impossible to

elect candidates representative of those communities at a time when voter-engagement efforts were beginning to make that a possibility.”

The state approved the new Oregon district maps in September. In comparison, the state of Washington earlier this year drew its new maps, prompting tribal communities to speak in opposition. Washington then redrew its maps to address the concerns. In Oregon the new maps brought a lawsuit by Republicans, though this was dismissed recently by the state Supreme Court.

As the Warm Springs Prevention team believes: Culture is Prevention. Toward this belief in November the team hosted a drum making class for community members of all ages. The class was one of their events celebrating Native Heritage Month.

In terms of Culture, the Drum is among the most essential, a living tradition as vibrant today as ever. The wood of the drum itself is a living entity.

Drums are central to all the of many Native tribes. And while the styles of construction may vary greatly from tribe to tribe, there is a shared foundation among all of them.

For information on drum making, or classes that may be upcoming, Warm Springs Prevention can be reached at 541-615-0036.



Participants in the drum class at Prevention.



Photos courtesy Scott Kalama/Prevention

Omicron and vaccine

The latest covid ‘variant of concern’ is the omicron.

This variant may be even more contagious than the delta variant.

As of earlier this week at least, scientists were not sure whether the omicron is present in the U.S.: If it is already, then it surely will be.

And it is still too soon to know whether the current covid vaccines are fully effective against the omicron. This should be known in the coming days and weeks.

Yet the best advice for now, until more is known about omicron, is to get vaccinated and get the booster when available, the health experts agree.

Reach the Warm Springs IHS clinic vaccine line at 541-553-2131 for information or an appointment.

The omicron was first reported in South Africa and its neighboring countries, though the variant is now found in many other countries, including Canada.

A Year in Review ~ 2021 ~

The following are some of the memorable news events during 2021 on the reservation, as reported in the Spilyay Tymoo.

January

The year 2021 began with students of the reservation and school district still taking their **classes online** from home.

In early January 2021, though, the district conducted a survey of families and students, asking whether they would like to return to in-person learning in the classroom.

The purpose of the survey: If enough families respond in the affirmative, the in-person learning could resume by late January or early February.

As the survey was complete, the overwhelming response was



Scene in February 2021, the first day students returned to in-person classroom learning. The schools had been closed since March of 2020 because of the covid.

in favor of returning to class.

So in response, the school district and individual schools adopted Covid-19 health precautions.

In January, for instance, as pri-

ority workers, the teachers and school staff received their Covid-19 vaccines. This was through the Oregon Health Authority and the county health programs.

The January plan called for the return to the classroom by February, about one year since schools first closed due to covid.

In other January 2021 news:

A small private business **jet crashed** in the Mutton Mountains on the reservation. The pilot of the Cessna Citation jet and the one passenger on board were killed. And elsewhere:

By mid January, the Warm Springs Health and Wellness Center had administered all 400 **Covid-19 vaccines** the clinic had received in its December 2020 delivery.

As the month continued, Health and Wellness administered several hundred more vaccines. And this:

The year 2021 will see some significant **water infrastructure** improvements on the reservation.

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