

Coffee: Helping the longhouses through sales

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Theo already had some experience, as Theo had published and sells his popular children’s book, *Celeste Goes to Warm Springs*. The book in fact provided the start-up money for the coffee project.

For the new project, he decided the coffee would come from companies based in Bend and Maupin, using locally-roasted coffee. For the packaging Theo made the design himself, based on traditional Native patterns and themes.

The sales for now are done on line; or you can stop by Commodities, or at events like the recent holiday bazaar, where Theo sold out a whole sup-



Traditional Blend.

ply.

He is working on getting the product onto retail store shelves, such as in Bend, and Macy’s Market.

The first of the Theo’s Longhouse Strong Coffees was the ‘Traditional Blend.’ As sales grew, he added the medium ‘Pow-Wow Blend,’ and the light roast ‘Tribal Blend.’ The coffee, of excellent quality and flavor, comes ground or whole bean, as coffee pods and instant.

For marketing, the longhouse elders and others help get the word out. And Theo gives the profits from the sales to the longhouses—Agency, Simnasho and HeHe—for the feasts.

When it comes to the financial part of Theo’s Longhouse Strong Coffee, “I’m 100 percent transparent,” he says. The proceeds so far have paid for longhouse feast First

Foods, for food carts and aprons for the cooks, as examples.

Back when he first presented his contribution to the elders, they were very grateful, of course, and surprised. “That was the most gratifying part of this, when they heard about it,” Theo says.

His website has the information on the coffee product and purchasing information, along with other items that Theo has created to help the community: theoperezcreations.net

The website also begins with a great phrase that pretty much summarizes Theo’s approach to his business ideas: *Changing the community one sale at a time.*

— Dave McMechan

Judge: Other tribes can’t stop process on Medford casino

A federal district court judge denied a bid by three tribes to block the U.S. Department of the Interior from issuing a determination that would greenlight a casino project in Medford.

The ruling says the environmental impact statement for the project does not constitute a final agency action.

Earlier, three tribes filed a lawsuit in a Washington, D.C., federal court, seeking a temporary restraining order against the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The three tribes are the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, Karuk Tribe, and Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation.

Their suit is aimed at halting the proposed casino in Medford by the Coquille Indian Tribe. In their complaint they cite violations of the U.S. Constitution, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, and federal tribal consultation policies.

The three tribes have argued that the proposed casino, which the BIA recently advanced through a



A conceptual drawing of the proposed Medford casino, that would be housed in a building that had been a bowling alley.

Final Environmental Impact Study, threatens their cultural, economic, and environmental well-being.

The lawsuit claims that the Interior Department failed to uphold its obligations to consult with the affected tribes and violated established legal and procedural standards governing off-reservation casinos.

“This legal action is our option of last resort after being denied repeated requests for consultation,” said Carla Keene, Chairman of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe.

“The administration has failed in its responsibility to consult with us about a project that prioritizes one tribe over many others.”

The Cow Creek Umpqua Tribe, operates the Seven Feathers Casino Resort in Canyonville

alongside the Karuk and Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nations.

The Cow Creek Umpqua has raised concerns that the Medford casino will harm regional tribes economically. The Coquille’s proposal, they argue, would cannibalize gaming revenues that support critical tribal services, including healthcare, housing, elder care, and education.

The lawsuit also addresses the violation of Oregon’s long-standing ‘One Tribe, One Casino’ policy, which would be bypassed by allowing the Medford casino to operate more than 160 miles from the Coquille’s ancestral lands.

Additionally, Oregon’s Senators and Governor have voiced strong opposition to the project.

The tribes were seeking

judicial intervention to prevent the approval of the Medford casino, arguing that the BIA’s actions have ignored the impacts on other tribes and failed to conduct the necessary consultation required by law.

The lawsuit underscores the importance of protecting tribal sovereignty, cultural integrity, and the economic welfare of all affected tribes.

The tribes involved in the lawsuit are calling on the BIA to halt the project until proper consultation has been conducted, and all legal requirements have been met.

However, a Washington, D.C. federal district court judge denied the bid by the three tribes to block the Department of the Interior from issuing a determination that would okay the project.

Summary of Tribal Council

The following is a summary of Tribal Council from December:

December 9, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jonathan W. Smith, Sr. Roll call: James ‘Jim’ Manion, Chief Jefferson Greene, Alvis Smith III, Vice Chairman Raymond ‘Captain’ Moody (9:05), Rosa Graybael, Wilson Wewa Jr., Carlos Calica. Minnie Yahtin, Recorder.

Secretary-Treasurer update with Robert Brunoe.

• 2025 Tribal Council agenda:

Motion by Alvis approving the meeting agenda, as amended. Second by Jefferson. Question: Jim/yes, Captain/yes, Alvis/yes, Wilson/yes, Jefferson/yes, Rosa/yes, 6/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• Draft resolutions: Executive session with

tribal attorneys, 11:36 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

• Union Pacific Railroad settlement agreement:

Motion by Alvis adopting Resolution No. 13,202, that the Tribal Council conditionally consents and agrees to the submission of a USACE permit application for the project, which is located in the tribe’s ceded lands; By the Tribal Council that its consent and agreement to UPRC’s submission of a USACE permit application for the project is expressly conditioned on the reservation of its rights to continue conferring with UPRC regarding the project; Confering with the Union Pacific Railroad Company regarding the project.

And to object to (or otherwise oppose) the project if the Tribal Council determines, in its sole and abso-

lute discretion, that the project harms its sovereign interests and rights, including, but not limited to, natural and cultural values or the tribe’s treaty-reserved rights;

By the Tribal Council that its consent and agreement to the submission of a USACE permit application for the Project is effective only upon similar consent or agreement from both Yakama and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation. Second by Captain. Question: Jim/yes, Captain/yes, Alvis/yes, Wilson/yes, Jefferson/yes, Carlos/yes, Rosa/yes, 7/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• **122 budget** with Taw Foltz, Michael Collins and Caroline Cruz:

Motion by Carlos adopting Resolution No. 13,203, that the Secretary-Treasurer/CEO is hereby authorized and directed to take such actions as are necessary to provide for the allocation of Health

Services Fund collections for the Calendar Year 2023 as indicated in Exhibit A, and to program such savings as are expected at the end of Calendar Year 2024 for the one-year budget plan for the year 2025. Second by Captain; Question: Jim/yes, Captain/yes, Jefferson/yes, Carlos/yes, Rosa/yes, 5/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• **Joint Health Commission** discussion with Caroline Cruz:

Motion by Jim adopting Resolution No. 13,204, that the Tribal Council Chairman is authorized to confirm Deborah Jackson to continue serving an additional three-year term, Caroline M. Cruz to finish out, Taw Foltz a two-year term on the Joint Health Commission (heather Crow-Martinez, term from September 28, 2022-September 28, 2025; Deborah Jackson, term from September 28, 2024-September 28, 2027; Al-

Community notes...

Warm Springs Public Utilities can do **snow removal** free of charge for private driveways in the Agency, Seekseequa, Sidwalter, Simnasho, Schoolie Flats and Wolfe Point areas.

For more information contact their office at 541-553-3246.

The Plaza at Warm Springs, next to Indian Head Casino, has **retail space available**.

To inquire, contact Warm Springs Property Management at 541-553-3565 or email: louie.smith@wstribes.org

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Tribal **Vocational Rehabilitation** program helps Native Americans with disabilities by providing services, support and plans for successful employment.

Voc Rehab is accepting new clients and wel-

comes folks to drop by their office to pick up an application at 1110 Wasco Street in the Education Building.

For more information call 541-553-4952.

PIRS by SriPonya will again be doing **youth sports agility camps** coached by John Charles and team of Native Youth assistant coaches.

The first camp is this Sunday from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the old elementary school gym. Camps will be every Sunday through April.

Free **covid tests** can be ordered online. Order free home tests from the USPS at: usps.com/testkits

The website also provides a link to the list of tests with extended expiration dates.

Open positions on tribal boards and committees

Tribal Council is advertising a number of positions on enterprise boards of directors and committees. The following positions are open:

Warm Springs Credit Board of Directors: Four positions, two tribal members, and two non-members.

Letters of interest and resumes of applicants interested in serving on the Credit board, submit by **5 p.m. on Friday, January 10, 2025**. Drop off at the tribal administration building addressed to the Secretary-Treasurer/CEO. By mail send to: Secretary-Treasurer/CEO, PO Box 455, Warm Springs, OR 97761.

Please sign a criminal and credit background check. Forms can be emailed or mailed to you. Information will be submitted confidentially to the S-T/CEO.

Telco Board of Directors: Three positions,

two tribal members, one non-member. (*Method and time of submitting an application and resume, same as above.*)

Warm Springs Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO) Commission: Four positions.

Any Indian 18 years and older who works or resides on the reservation is qualified to be appointed to the commission. (*Method and time of submitting an application and resume, same as above.*)

Warm Springs Composite Products Board of Directors:

Two positions, one tribal member and one non-member. (*Method and time of submitting an application and resume, same as above.*)

Education Committee: One tribal member position, and one tribal member alternate position. (*Method and time of submitting an application and resume, same as above.*)

ternates; Shilo Tippet PhD, and Tammy Wilson). Second by Jefferson; Question: Jim/yes, Captain/no, Jefferson, yes, Carlos/no, Rosa/yes, 3/2/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• **Dog Ordinance No. 36** with Dennis White III:

• Motion by Jim adopting Resolution No. 13,205, with amendments; directing the Chief of Police and/or Police Services Director, Public Safety General Manager and Tribal Health and Human Services General Manager to coordinate and collaborate with short and long term written plans and recommendations for the amended Dog Ordinance No. 36, in order to enforce this ordinance and report back to Tribal Council within ninety days

with these recommendations. Second by Jefferson. Question: Jim/yes, Captain/yes, Jefferson/yes, Carlos/yes, Rosa/yes, 5/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• **The 2025 Jury List:**

Motion by Captain adopting Resolution No. 13,206, that the attached list of potential jurors for 2025 is hereby approved. Second by Jim. Question: Jim/yes, Captain/yes, Jefferson/yes, Carlos/abstain, Rosa/yes, 4/0/1, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• Indian Health Service update with Tammy Wilson.

• Adoption discussion added to the January 2025 agenda.

Motion by Jefferson to adjourn at 2:31 p.m.