

Letters to the Editor

General Council,

I decided to write this letter because there seems to be a growing frustration in the Tribe. The increase in revenue in the last two years has given us opportunities that were never possible before. With this growth and increased revenue it has also created the need to make decisions that we have never had to make before. It appears that most decisions are supported by tribal members, but there are also those who will disagree. The more decisions we make, the more likely some tribal members will disagree with our decisions. Disagreement will happen even if decisions are accepted by the majority of tribal members.

There is nothing wrong with disagreement — it is a natural result of a democratic process. However, the important thing is to find a way to resolve disagreements in a way that does not damage the Tribe. It is important that we attack the problem — not the people. While we may occasionally disagree on particular issues, we need to work together to achieve our common goal, which is to help the Tribe and its members for the future.

Over the next few months we need to have constructive discussions about the following issues and concerns:

- The appropriate level of expansion of our Tribal Administration in order to assure that the cost of programs do not exceed their benefits.**
- Develop programs that benefit all tribal members fairly — both in the Grand Ronde area and outside the area.**
- How much should we defer spending to assure that there will be funding for programs in the future?**
- How do we find a balance in our programs between building long term self sufficiency and satisfying tribal members immediate needs?**
- Should our programs meet the needs of only the neediest tribal members before others receive benefits?**
- Casino revenue is here now! It may not be here in the future. How do we prepare to ensure that we have a future?**

This is only a partial list of the general questions that Tribal Council has to deal with. As you can imagine, there are different opinions on each of these issues, with no real right answer, but requires surmountable information to make an informed decision.

I encourage each of you to seek out as much information as you need to make decisions on all issues facing the Tribe. The Tribe will be better off if more tribal members take the time to be informed, to get involved, and help us answer these questions. We will not make decisions for the majority of the membership if only we hear from a vocal minority, or if members form opinions without adequate information. There are several ways to seek information which I strongly suggest to all:

- Call the Tribe (1-800-422-0232) and ask to speak to any Tribal Council member.**
- Read your *Smoke Signals* — call your editor, Tracy Dugan at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2254. Give her your ideas and suggestions to improve future *Smoke Signals* publications.**
- The Tribal Council will be conducting more community meetings this spring in Oregon's major cities. Watch for scheduled times and destinations in your *Smoke Signals*, so that you can attend the meeting closest to you.**

- Volunteer to serve on more committees the Tribe has established to oversee various programs. Even if you can't serve, you can attend the meetings or participate in other ways.**

In conclusion, the Tribe has been fortunate and we are now able to achieve even greater things for our members. The way to do this is to communicate and work together in a positive way.

Respectfully yours,

Ed Pearsall, Tribal Council Secretary

Dear tribal members,

Pearl Langley Lyon, daughter of Hugh Langley (James), and Cindy Gullede are searching for a picture of grandmother Mary LaChance Langley Barker.

Do any of you happen to have a picture of her? If you do, please call collect.

Thank you,

Pearl Lyon at (503) 864-2441

Cindy Gullede at (503) 864-4303

To the Editor,

I would like to respond to the lady's letter on greedy and ugly people who seem to want to share in some or any part of the revenues from Spirit Mountain Casino.

The truth is only a small group reap substantial benefits from Casino revenue, the group that run it, and some three hundred Elders, that leaves some thirty-five hundred that receive nothing from Spirit Mountain revenue.

In the last survey, 70% of the tribal members were living at or below poverty level. With these many millions of dollars it seems this small group could share a small percent to help all tribal members raise their standard of living.

I am an Elder so I am benefiting, but I don't want my children and grandchildren to have to wait twenty or thirty years to benefit from Spirit Mountain Casino.

This small group want no change, and say no sharing as long as Spirit Mountain owe's money.

Now they are going into investment and development, which I believe they know nothing of. You can call me greedy, but I still know what is right and what is wrong.

Edward R. Haller, Roll # 221

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to the Housing Survey the Tribe mailed to all tribal households in 1993, approximately 25% of tribal members live below the poverty line, not 70%.

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS: *Smoke Signals* is a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon. We have established an Editorial Policy to encourage input from readers about stories printed in *Smoke Signals*, as well as other tribal issues. However, all letters must be received at the newspaper office with author's signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication. *Smoke Signals* reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain libelous statements or personal attacks. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Smoke Signals*, tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

Recent Council actions

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1997

The meeting was called to order by Kathryn Harrison. Margaret Provost and Bob Mercier were excused. All other Council members were present.

The Health and Human Services Subcommittee recommended the re-appointments of Jon George as Secretary and Patti Tom-Martin as Vice-Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee. Val Grout moved, Ed Larsen seconded a motion to approve the recommendation for re-appointments. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

The Government, Management, and Budget Subcommittee recommended Tribal Council authorize membership in the National Tribal Gaming Commissioners/Regulators Association, designating the Grand Ronde Gaming Commission's Chairman, Bob Watson, as the Tribe's representative. Mark Mercier moved, Ed Pearsall seconded a motion to adopt Resolution number 100-97 authorizing membership, Bob Watson as the representative, and a membership fee of \$500. The motion carried by a vote of 6 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstentions.

The subcommittee also recommends Council approve enrollment for two applicants whose files were inadvertently overlooked. Both files were reviewed by the Enrollment Committee and recommended for tribal membership. In addition to membership, it was further recommended that the two applicants receive the 1997 Benefit Trust Fund since they had met the initial enrollment deadline. Val Grout moved, Ed Larsen seconded to approve the recommendation by adopting Resolution number 101-97. The motion carried by a vote of 6 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstentions.

Rob Greene was recommended by the subcommittee to fill the Attorney position with the Tribe and was asked if he would be interested in accepting the position. Following Rob's acceptance, Ed Pearsall moved, and Chip Tom seconded a motion to adopt Resolution number 102-97, offering the position to Rob Greene. The motion carried by a vote of 5 yes, 0 no, and 1 abstention. The abstention was made by Mark Mercier.

Finally, the subcommittee recommended the adoption of a policy establishing and governing the Tribal Revenue Fund, which would segregate and administer those revenues which have their original source from lands in Trust status. Following a brief explanation by Pat Mercier, Ed Pearsall moved, and Chip Tom seconded a motion to adopt Resolution number 102-97, adopting this policy. The motion carried by a vote of 6 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstentions.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1997

The Council meeting was called to order by Kathryn Harrison. All members were present.

Pat Mercier and Rob Greene reviewed the Bond Offering process for Council. Rob noted revisions, tribal court restrictions, and the Tribe's limited sovereign immunity waiver. Pat stated that all but one of the bonds have been taken and that the rate secured is better than the rate for building the clinic. Ed Pearsall moved, Mark Mercier seconded a motion to adopt Resolution number 106-97, approving the Bond Offering for a new Administration Building as presented. The motion carried by a vote of 8 yes, 0 no; and 0 abstentions.

Ed Larsen asked if Council would consider supporting Paula Wallace for a Project Manager position in a grant for Oregon Regional Strategies. Council consensus was to support her for the position.