

# Tribal Housing Authority can help with home upgrades

■ Indian Health Services grant enables Housing Authority to install water.

By Brent Merrill

The Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority, through an Indian Health Services (IHS) grant, can help Tribal members get water and sewer hookups in the Tribe's Six County Service Area.

The hookup fees will be covered by the IHS grant in Polk, Yamhill, Tillamook, Marion, Multnomah and Washington Counties.

"This is an entitlement program for Native Americans," said Housing Authority Director Linda Layden. "This program is for Tribal members who need a new well, a new septic tank or are putting in a new house and need to get connected to their local water system."

Layden said Tribal members getting any kind of water or sewer systems, whether it is repairs to their

current system or a new or replacement system, are entitled to have this service provided. She said the funding is through the IHS grant dollars, but the program is administered through the Housing Authority. Layden said there is no income requirements for the IHS money.

Housing Improvement Specialist Lonnie Leno said Tribal members who are looking at buying property that already has water and sewer hookups are spending more than they need to if they qualify for this program. Leno said property buyers could look at purchasing land without current water and sewer hookups and then pursue the IHS funding.

Leno said the process can be pretty quick when water and sewer are already on a site. But, he said it takes

longer when a well has to be dug and sewer lines installed. Leno said the process can be slow at times while trying to meet all the program requirements, but he said home buyers could save as much as \$20,000.

Tribal Elder Marce Norwest received water and sewer hookups at his home through the IHS grant program and couldn't be happier about it.

"They (the Tribal Housing Authority) helped me out a lot," said Norwest. "In my time of need they were there for me. The things they have done for my wife and I, we appreciate it as Elders. I want them to know that. Linda (Layden), Lonnie (Leno), Nancy (Holmes — administrative assistant), and Bryan (Langley — occupancy specialist) have always been real respectful to me.

They told me what they could do and that was the way it was. I appreciated that. I would like to thank them."

Norwest said he intends to return the favor when people visit his new home.

"If someone comes to my house, I hope I can treat them like they treated me there," said Norwest.

Layden said, "We want people to know these services are available, that funding is available."



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## Twenty-four nominated for Council at General meeting

By Brent Merrill

The May General Council meeting was held on Sunday, May 7. Here are the highlights.

▶ The Tribe's Chief Financial Officer Bob Saunders, asked the general membership to consider voting on a transfer of funds from a Governmental Trust Fund to other sources. Saunders explained that the money was a "rainy day" fund set aside in case of emergencies. He said the recent success of the Tribe's capital ventures would enable that money to be transferred to other Tribal sources and "freeing it up."

"Prior to the creation of the Governmental Trust Fund in 1990, the Tribe was dependent on indirect income from Federal sources to fund essential governmental services and wanted to ensure that there was another guaranteed source of funding," explained Saunders. "The initial target for the fund was \$6 million and increased to \$20 million. The intent was to provide annual funding of between \$1.6 million and \$1.8 million. At the end of 1999 the Governmental Trust Fund had a balance of \$10 million.

"Since the creation of the Governmental Trust Fund, the Tribe has experienced tremendous growth and has developed other revenue sources to fund governmental services and the need for the Governmental Trust Fund as an alternative revenue source is no longer required," said Saunders. He pointed to the example of the Tribe's investment earnings of \$15 million in 1999 as a reason for the possibility of transferring the Governmental Trust Fund balance to other sources.

Saunders said the Tribe's other trust funds still need to be funded fully.

"The need for the other trust funds has not been eliminated and one of the highest Tribal priorities is to fully fund Education, Health, Elder Pension, Housing and Burial Assistance Trust Funds," said Saunders. "Once these trust funds are fully funded, the annual income from these funds will be sufficient to fund the current level of services. Based upon the current level of contributions all trust funds would be fully funded by the year 2004.

"Because gaming revenue is the primary funding source for the trust funds and because of potential pressures on gaming income, it would be prudent to reduce the time required to fully fund the trust funds," said Saunders. He used the example of potential competition from other gaming Tribes and the potential for future anti-gaming ballot measures as reasons for freeing up the funds. "If the balance of \$10 million in the Governmental Trust Fund was transferred to the Pension Trust Fund, all trust funds with the exception of health would be funded in 2002. Health would be funded in 2003. This time frame would be consistent with when competition from casinos in Washington would be anticipated."

Considerable discussion was held on the transfer of funds and several Tribal members said they would like more time to educate themselves on what the transfer means to them individually.

Members said they wanted health to be a priority for future funding. Members said they wanted more comprehensive health coverage and that they wanted to see fewer people falling through the cracks in health insurance coverage.

Saunders explained the reason the vote was being brought before the membership now, was that the General Membership would not be assembled again until September's General Council meeting. A vote by show of hands indicated the membership wanted to wait until September's meeting to vote on the issue.

▶ Tribal members Dawn Brinson, Bryce Mercier and Frank Hostler all won \$50 in door prize drawings. Tribal Council member Earl "Butch" LaBonte also won \$50 but put his ticket back in the drawing. Margo Mercier won the \$100 door prize drawing.

▶ Tribal Council nominations for the Tribal election were made at the General Council meeting.

Albert Peters nominated **Leon "Chip" Tom**. Tom accepted.  
Leon "Chip" Tom nominated **Bob Mercier**. Mercier accepted.  
Arlene Beck nominated **Les Houck**. Houck accepted.  
Mike Bolton nominated **Steve Rife**. Rife accepted.  
Steve Rife nominated **Tom Leno**. Leno accepted.  
Eugene Hudson nominated **Cheryle Kennedy**. Kennedy accepted.  
Charlotte Gray nominated **Lottie Child**. Child accepted.  
Cheri Butler nominated **Margaret Provost**. Provost accepted.  
Lila Musso nominated **Marcia Bolton**. Bolton accepted.  
Heather Jeffers nominated **Leona Jeffers**. Jeffers accepted.  
Jake McKnight nominated **Rick McKnight**. McKnight accepted.  
Marion Davidson nominated **Wesley West**. West accepted.  
Wesley West nominated **Wilbur West**. West accepted.  
April Campbell nominated **Ed Pearsall**. Pearsall accepted.  
Ed Haller nominated **Jan Reibach, Sr.** Reibach accepted.  
Beryle Contreras nominated **Loren Holmes**. Holmes accepted.  
Sharon Hanson nominated **Shelley Hanson**. Hanson accepted.  
Lonnie Leno nominated **Tim Holmes**. Holmes accepted.  
William Kellog nominated **Eugene LaBonte**. LaBonte accepted.  
Annabelle Hamm nominated **Claudette Parazoo**. Parazoo accepted.  
Belden Jeffers nominated **Albert Jeffers**. Jeffers accepted.  
Candy Robertson nominated **Diana George**. George accepted.  
Barbara Lake nominated **Val Grout**. Grout accepted.  
Bryce Mercier nominated **Mark Mercier**. Mercier accepted.  
Margo Mercier moved to close the nominations.

### Member Benefit Fund DISTRIBUTION

Tribal Council passed a resolution allocating **\$1,500** to each member through the Member Benefit program. For those eligible, **withdrawal requests** received **by June 5, 2000** will generate checks to be mailed on June 20, 2000. Withdrawal requests postmarked June 5, 2000 will not meet the deadline, they must be in our offices by that date. If you choose not to make a withdrawal at this time, or miss the June 5 deadline, the next payment date will be July 10, 2000. In order to be mailed a check on July 10, you must have your application to us no later than June 30, 2000. The total Member Benefit program allocation for 2000 is \$1,500 for each member.

- If you did not receive your application
- Need to change your address
- Have questions on the application process
- Have questions regarding your beneficiary

Call 1-800-422-0232  
Liz Leno, ext. 2082  
Amy Justen, ext. 2223

With any other questions,  
contact Chris Leno at  
1-800-422-0232, ext. 2340.