

Tribe holds Spring General Council Meeting on April 1

Photos by Brent Merrill

■ Legislative Commission on Indian Services, Spirit Mountain Community Fund, Spirit Mountain Development Corporation and the Tribal Intergovernmental Affairs department make presentations to the General Tribal membership.

By Brent Merrill

The April General Council meeting was held on Sunday, April 1 at the Tribe's Community Center in Grand Ronde. Here are the highlights:

■ Legislative Commission on Indian Services

Karen Quigley of the Legislative Commission on Indian Services visited Grand Ronde and informed the membership that this is the 25-year anniversary of the commission that was brought into reality by former Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh.

Quigley explained that Atiyeh was very instrumental in the founding of the commission.

She said the commission is essentially the liaison office for the state and the Oregon Tribes and Indian communities.

There are 13 members on the commission — one from each of the Oregon Tribes, two legislators (one member of the House and one member of the Senate) and two Native Americans that represent the non-reservation communities — the Portland urban area and the Willamette Valley area.

"I am so pleased to be able to serve this commission," said Quigley. "It is a great, great honor and I want you to know that this is a commission that the rest of the nation is looking at and trying to model."

Quigley thinks she was selected to head the commission because of her background as an attorney. She said she is familiar with how the state works.

"I have served as a committee counsel on a number of committees, in 1993 I served as counsel to the Senate Judiciary Committee," said Quigley. "I think I am the only federal employee in the nation that was interviewed and hired by Tribal leaders. I think they were impressed that I had a lot of opportunities to travel and live in a lot of other countries — Europe, Asia and Africa. I truly, truly appreciate the value of cultural differences."

The commission is set up to monitor how state and Tribal relations are going. And then to access the status of that relationship and to advise and make recommendations for its improvement."

She said that in discussions on protocol issues, she finds herself educating government officials.

"It is about relationship building and it has to do with communication," said Quigley. "I think improvement and the tool of the Legislative Commission on Indian Services can help to smooth out the communication or miscommunication and hopefully things are getting better and better. The (Governor Kitzhaber's) Executive Order (recognizing and directing state leaders to deal with Tribes on a government-to-government basis) is going to be put into statute so the directive to state agencies is to get trained and have key contacts to deal with Tribes on Tribal issues and to consult with Tribes. Hopefully this will become part of Oregon law and we will all see incredible benefits in the near future."

■ Spirit Mountain Community Fund

Grand Ronde Tribal member and Spirit Mountain Community Fund Administrator Angela Ellis gave a presentation to the membership regarding the creation, scope and guidelines of the Tribe's charitable extension to public organizations.



Selected — Karen Quigley is the head of the Legislative Commission on Indian Services. Quigley educates government officials on issues of protocol regarding Native American Tribes in Oregon. Quigley was interviewed and hired for her position by Tribal leaders.

Ellis began her presentation by thanking the Tribal Council for creating the fund and allowing her to steward it.

"The spirit of the Community Fund was really born back in the 1980s during the Tribe's Restoration efforts," explained Ellis. "The Tribe offered to set up the Community Fund back in 1997 in negotiations with the Governor's office. It (the fund agreement) formalized giving that was already taking place."

Ellis explained the basics of the fund.

"We have specific categories in specific counties," said Ellis. "The Community Fund is made up of six percent of gaming profits. The Tribal Council takes the 94 percent and they allocate that between all of the Tribal programs in the budget process."

"Six percent is reserved for non-Tribal, charitable programs in 11 Western Oregon counties," said Ellis. "That six percent fund serves seven different categories of giving. The seven categories are arts and culture, education, environment, historic preservation, health, public safety and problem gaming."

"Some examples of recent giving over the last couple of years — the (Polk County) Sheriff's substation here in Grand Ronde that is funded through the Spirit Mountain Community Fund and prior to the creation of the Community Fund it was funded through the Tribal Council," said Ellis. "We also funded the Oregon Health University Foundation that provides training for health care providers throughout the State of Oregon in clinical breast examination. With our help through the Community Fund, this training will be provided throughout the State of Oregon including our health clinic here in Grand Ronde. The Oregon Food Bank is another recent example. Although located in Portland, it serves all food banks in Oregon — including the food bank in Grand Ronde. The grant allowed the food bank to distribute four million more pounds of food last year."

The Community Fund is administered by a board of trustees, which consists of three Tribal Council members (Chair Kathryn Harrison, June Sell-Sherer and Ed Pearsall). There is one gubernatorial representative — Polk County Commissioner Ron Dodge. State Senator Kate Brown, who is the Senate Minority Leader in Oregon, is on the

The Fund that Keeps on Giving



— Tribal member Angela Ellis is the Administrator of the Tribe's Spirit Mountain Community Fund. Ellis works with the Tribal Council and a Board of Trustees to determine which deserving organizations will receive grants from the Community Fund. The Community Fund distributes six percent of the Tribe's profits from Spirit Mountain Casino to worthy organizations in 11 Oregon counties.

board of trustees as is Portland businessmen Len Bergstein and Sho Dozono.

The Tribal Council selects the appointees, with the exception of one person who is selected by the Governor.

"The (grant) applications are reviewed by my office," explained Ellis. "We make recommendations to the Tribal Council and bring all of those requests to council. The board is the final say on who gets a grant and how much they get."

"Council selected the categories (of giving) so that it would be in line with Tribal goals," said Ellis of the contribution guidelines. "Those are all Tribal traditions, Tribal values that they wanted to continue."

The scope of the Tribe's generosity is unprecedented in Oregon and has the attention of the nation.

"Last month we celebrated that over the first four years of the fund's existence we have given away \$10 million," announced Ellis. "Our goal this year is about \$3 to \$3.5 million for 2001."

In response to a question from a Tribal member, Ellis said that the Community Fund will work with an organization even if they do not approve a grant for them right away. She said sometimes they have to work with a worthy organization for a while to find a way to give to them. Ellis said they have to find a way for the request to fit into the fund's scope of giving.

"If an organization comes and makes a request that is not exactly appropriate for what we might give for, we help them review what their needs are and determine which of their needs would be in alignment with our scope of giving," said Ellis. "The grant money is reserved for non-governmental agencies. If they (organizations) are non-governmental in any county and they are charitable 501C3s they are eligible. Within Polk and Yamhill Counties only, governmental entities are eligible to apply."

Ellis said the fund was set up that way to help the Tribe help local government and the local community by providing funding for entities like the Polk County Sheriff's substation and the Willamina Fire Department among others.

■ Spirit Mountain Development Corporation Update

Tribal member Jan Michael Reibach, the chairman of SMDC, introduced the newest board members Diana George, Jim Willis and Pete Wakeland to the membership. Reibach also introduced SMDC's new Chief Executive Officer Eugene Hill to the membership and Hill explained the scope of his new position and the direction of the Tribe's development corporation.

Reibach said he is happy to have Hill on board because of his skills in leadership.

Hill also answered questions from Tribal members about the investment philosophy the development corporation would use in trying to build wealth for the Tribe through business and real estate investments.

"Currently, we are analyzing the corporation's situation," explained Reibach. "We want to get some answers and improve our performance. There is

nothing confidential to you the Tribal members."

Hill started his presentation by saying that he is excited to be in Grand Ronde and working for the Tribe.

Hill said the main priorities for SMDC would be to maintain the Tribe's current wealth, create more wealth and help the Tribe achieve self-sufficiency. Maintaining the Tribe's heritage and culture is a priority said Hill and he said that SMDC must earn the trust and respect of the Tribal membership.

Creating investment guidelines, policies and goals and establishing an open line of communication are keys to SMDC's success said Hill.

After his presentation, Hill welcomed more questions and said he would be willing to schedule interviews in the Governance Center on Thursday evenings for people to ask questions about the Tribe's investment picture.

■ Intergovernmental Affairs Update

Tribal member and Intergovernmental Affairs Director Justin Martin gave an update on what has been happening with the Intergovernmental Affairs department during the current Legislative session in the State's Capital.

Martin said it was the vision of Tribal Council four and a half years ago that created the Intergovernmental Affairs department.

Martin said the main goal of the department is to protect the interests of Tribal members in the Legislative arena. Martin introduced his assistant Nichol Holmes to the membership and said that she is an important part of the Tribe's two-person office in Salem. Holmes worked for State Representative Terry Thompson during the 1995 Legislative session.

The Tribe hired Martin in 1997 after he studied Public Administration and Public Policy at Western Oregon University in Monmouth. Martin also worked for Terry Thompson in the 1995 Legislative session.

"As we continue to get stronger over the years in our department we are better able to use our resources to protect our investments," said Martin to begin his presentation to membership.

Martin explained the relationship between the creation of Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber's Executive Order and the creation of the Tribe's Intergovernmental Affairs office.

"One of the instigators of the Intergovernmental Affairs department was Governor Kitzhaber's Executive Order 9630 in 1996," said Martin. "The Governor signed an Executive Order that promotes state agencies and Tribal agencies to cooperate

with each other to better our relationships over the coming years."

Martin said Kitzhaber had a unique vision in the creation of the Executive Order.

"Indian Tribes, especially Grand Ronde, have become such a dominant part of today's new diversified economy," said Martin. "He (Kitzhaber) saw the role of Tribes to be that much more enhanced over the future. We are currently working on legislation at the state level that will insti-



The Man on the Inside — Intergovernmental Affairs Director and Tribal member Justin Martin updated the Tribal membership on the current Legislative session in Salem. Martin also explained the history of the Intergovernmental Affairs program and said that his job is to protect the interests of the Tribe throughout the different levels of government. Martin has used his education and experience to get inside the circle of trust within the halls of government and used that position to build relationships with key political figures.

tutionalize that so that it will go beyond the Kitzhaber administration regardless of who the Governor is there — that process will be in place."

Martin paid tribute to the Tribal Council of the present and the past for the creation of an environment of cooperation that led to this working agreement.

"These intergovernmental relationships were a vision and a viewpoint that this Tribal Council and other Tribal Council members like Mark Mercier, Val Grout, Margaret Provost, Leon "Chips" Tom who really saw the need to enhance these relationships at all levels — that is the federal level, the state level, the local and at the Tribal level in dealing with the eight other recognized Tribes here in Oregon," said Martin.

Martin also pointed to the Tribe's relationships with other Tribes on a national level through the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and the National Congress of American Indians as an example of good government for all Indians.

The Intergovernmental Affairs office has a mission of establishing trust, building credibility and educating our governmental leaders to the ways of Indian Country.

"We analyze state and federal legislation," explained Martin. "We establish relationships with all levels of government."

According to Martin, the Tribe has established a plan for success at the government level.

"We are successful because we have built a very, very strong internal framework — this includes the Intergovernmental Affairs department, this includes the legal team, this includes the Public Information office, this includes the legislative work group of all the division and department managers," said Martin. "This regards that true vision of Tribal Council to become stronger internally. We have also blended that internal framework with a strong external framework of outside professionals. We have brought on board people that have that knowledge and that ability and we have not only been able to contract out those services, but we have been able to study and train and learn and use that as guidance so that in the future we are not so heavily dependant on people from the outside world."

Martin said he works with and relies on the expertise of all the Tribal departments while dealing with individual issues in government.

Martin introduced Dave and Tom Barrows from Barrows and Associates to the membership and explained the importance of the relationship that has been established with the Barrows — a lobby-

ing firm in Salem — over the last four years.

"We in our office have been very fortunate to work with someone with that much credibility and that much insight," said Martin of the Barrows. "They have given a part of their firm to help and train us so that in the future we are able to offer the same type of credibility and insight within this respected field."

Dave Barrows explained that he has a wealth of experience in lobbying government officials — experience he now lends to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

"We are a lobbying firm," said Barrows of he and his son Tom who share office space with Martin and Holmes in Salem. "I have been working in the Capital for 46 years and been involved in lobbying for 43 years so I'm starting to catch on a little bit. We have worked with this organization (the Tribe) since 1996."

"We were brought on board primarily because of a concern the Tribal Council had about individuals at the legislature who were very much committed to getting the state out of the lottery business," explained Barrows. "If and when that ever happens — they can't just separate out the state lottery games and leave you (the Tribe and its casino) in place. If the State of Oregon ever banned the lottery altogether it would also take all the machines out of your casino. Since that is the profit center for the casino, we were brought on board to work on that issue."

Barrows said he and his son enjoy the relationship they have built with the Tribe over the last few years.

"We enjoy very much working with you and we are honored to be part of the team," said Barrows.

■ Drawings

Linda LaChance won a special Elder's drawing for a fruit basket. Jess Robertson, Anthony Gagliardo and Ed Pearsall won the three drawings for \$50 each. Pearsall donated his winnings to the Royalty girls. Arch Blye won the drawing for \$100.

■ Tribal Council Nominations

The next General Council meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 6 at the Community Center, starting at 11:30 a.m.

Anyone interested in making a nomination must be 18 years old; an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde; and must make the nomination in person at the meeting.

Tribal members accepting a nomination for Tribal Council must be present at the meeting.