

Tribe's New Recreation Coordinator And Lands Manager Report

■ Reports, raffles and many questions make for a marathon October General Council meeting.

By Ron Karten

The October General Council meeting was held on Sunday, October 10, at the Tribal Community Center in Grand Ronde. Here are the highlights:

Tribal Chairwoman Cheryl Kennedy called the meeting to order. Tribal Elder Val Grout offered the invocation.

Tribal member Lori Greenberg, recently hired as the Tribe's Recreation Coordinator, introduced herself and her first recreation initiatives to the community.

With degrees from Linfield College and Oregon State University, Greenberg described group activities — including basketball teams, recreational field trips, classes, a daily program schedule, play structures and sports camps — for kids of all ages and promised to work toward developing appropriate programs for Elders.

Long term, Greenberg said that her list includes a skate park, general use park, aquatic center, baseball/softball fields, a lacrosse field and nature trails.

She asked Tribal members: "Where do you want the recreation program to go?"

Tribal member Monty Parazoo said that the program "needs to be expanded to include kids that don't live in the area" and provide "Reservation experiences for those who don't live here."

Many questions and suggestions came up, one about the program serving children who are below the blood quantum for membership. Depending on what agency is providing funding for a project, different rules on this subject apply.

In response to questions raised at previous Tribal Council meetings, Lands Coordinator Mike Wilson provided maps and other information that Tribal members can use to learn about the Tribe's land holdings.

The Tribe now owns 10,052 acres of reservation property, 1,634 acres of fee-lands, which are equivalent to property that any other group or individual owns, requiring taxes be paid to the state and other state regulations followed, 595 acres of Tribal Trust land for a total of 12,281 acres. Of that, 2,229 acres are off the Reservation.

He described the Tribal process for

acquiring lands, starting with the search for lands that meet current and future Tribal needs, as described by the Tribal Housing Authority and others. The Lands office does the preliminary work, including cost/value assessment, environmental assessment and so on "to be sure we have a good piece of property for the Tribe," said Wilson.

Ultimately for any piece of property, the Tribal Council rules on a purchase proposal from the Lands Department. "Every purchase," said Wilson, "has a resolution."

The department also maintains a

much land back as possible."

Tribal member Frank Hostler did not fault the Tribe's acquisition of lands but suggested that the Tribe also invest in businesses that will provide jobs in the area.

"There's a lot of room for housing," he said, "but where are all the people going to work?"

Tribal member Tim Holmes asked about the Tribe's interest in wetlands mitigation as well as the idea of "banking" wetlands, a process by which an owner creates or improves a wetlands area, receives credit from the state for creating it, and

were being charged too much for Elder housing. And many signed a petition to reduce some of the monthly fees.

In seeking to provide services more equally, said Kennedy, the Tribe considers not just the 38 currently in Elder housing but also the 200-plus others who live off the reservation. She called it, "a real balancing act."

Tribal member Ann Lewis expressed frustration at still not being able to acquire the appropriate documents to evaluate Tribal losses through the financial services firm

of Strategic Wealth Management.

It was announced that Tribal member Mike Larsen has been appointed as the interim manager for the Spirit Mountain Casino. He replaces Richard Kline who resigned the previous week.

Tribal member Michael Bolton offered to let the Tribe use five of his horses for horseback riding.

Tribal member Pearl Mekemson secured the use of the old Bailey house for a class teaching basket weaving.

The Tribe is "getting close" to having medical alert

buttons in Elder housing to help secure the well-being of Elders, said Tribal General Manager Cliff Adams.

Council Chairwoman Kennedy reported that Tribal leaders had been invited to a Presidential breakfast during the opening of the Smithsonian's new Indian Museum in Washington, D.C. There, the President signed an order affirming his commitment to Tribal sovereignty.

Tribal Engineer Eric Scott said that the Grand Ronde Road project was back on track with a public meeting set for October 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the Tribe's Governance Building atrium, and construction to start in the summer of 2005.

In the days ahead, there will be a Restoration dinner and a mini pow-wow on November 21 in the Community Center.

The annual Christmas party will be on December 11 at the Community Center; and at the same time, the Tribe will host a Youth pow-wow in the gym.

The next meeting will be November 7 at 11 a.m. in the Community Center. ■



Photo by Ron Karten

Recreation On The Rez — Tribal member Lori Greenberg, the Tribe's new Recreation Coordinator, provided Tribal members with a look at her efforts and ideas for recreation programs to be offered through the Tribe.

list of Tribal properties, updated annually, that is available in a number of Tribal office locations.

On the Tribal website, information also is available by clicking on "Programs," then "Cultural Resources" and from there, click on "Map Gallery" and from there to "Tribal Lands," "Tribal Facilities Photo," "Ceded Lands" and "Current and Original Reservation."

And finally, said Wilson, he and Realty Specialist Jan Michael Reibach will be happy to respond to questions at the Tribal Lands Office at 503 879-2380, or for those out of town, call the Tribe's 800 number, 800-422-0232 and ask for extension 2380.

Tribal member Candy Robertson let the membership know that her family property at the foot of Spirit Mountain was still for sale to the Tribe. Tribal Council Chairwoman Kennedy and Tribal members agreed that the Tribe will always be interested in recouping all of the land that made up the original Reservation.

"One of our early first principles," said Kennedy, "was getting as

then either uses that credit to offset another wetlands area that may need to be filled in, or sells that credit to a developer who needs to fill in a wetlands area.

The Tribe is not now involved in such an enterprise, though Wilson noted that there is beginning to be some talk about doing it.

Winners of the \$50 raffle were Tribal members Marion Mercier, Janet Giddings and Lee Ann Huffman, and the \$100 winner was Julie Brown.

Modoc Shawnee Jackson addressed the meeting seeking a formal hearing regarding three children in her family who are enrolled with Grand Ronde but who have been made wards of the state.

"If we lose these children to the state, we'll never see them again," she said.

Tribal Elder Betty Bly asked about Tribal planning in case of another winter like last winter. Plans are still being developed, said Tribal Public Works Manager John Mercier.

A number of Tribal members raised concerns that Tribal Elders