

February General Council Meeting Held In Portland

■ Public Affairs Director, Portland Satellite staff give reports to members.

By Ron Karten

The February General Council meeting was held on Sunday, February 12, at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Portland. Here are the highlights:

Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle Kennedy called the meeting to order; Tribal member Jon George offered the invocation.

Siobhan Taylor, Tribal Public Affairs Director, presented an overview of Tribal business in 2005. She said that the Tribal glass "is brimming over," but described a future with "still a way to go."

Much of the presentation for this Portland audience reviewed the program contributions that she described in January to the Grand Ronde audience.

She described the work of Member Services, including per capita and timber payments, Elders pensions along with Social Security Insurance and Disability payments. She described Medicare offerings and tax preparation services available to Tribal Elders.

She described many of the Cultural Resources Department's projects and programs, including the success of the Maori visit and used a photo of the proposed Cultural Center to describe this developing project.

When she described the *Chinook Wawa* immersion program, she added, "What a gift to hear a pre-schooler conversing with an Elder in *Chinook Wawa*."

She also cited the Fort Yamhill Park project as a success story in process.

"We're working with the state Parks Department to be sure that our story is never forgotten," said Taylor.

She described the Education Division's "lifelong learning" approach to education and said that it fosters a "sense of community in Grand Ronde" because it serves Tribal members and members of the community.

"Love and respect" for Tribal Elders translates into "much going on in the community that others could learn from," said Taylor. Elders are also valued "for what they still continue to teach us."

Also from the Education Division, Taylor cited programs that bring interns to New York to work with the Museum of Natural History each year; college preparation classes, the Media Center, and a successful federal review of the program.

The growing Tribal Library in 2005 received 2,500 patron visits, 3,000-plus items in circulation, with 4,000 items on hand, and new items still coming in.

She said that Tribal Council member Chris Mercier often gives his books to the library after reading them, and said, "Just think if all Tribal members read a good book and then gave it to the library."

She talked about the Elder Foster Care homes nearing completion, the Eugene office, grants like the Meth Task Force grant, the Tribal mentorship program with both professional and non-professional tracks.

She thanked Tribal member and Public Works Director John Mercier for the "safe, comfortable, well-lit places that Tribal members and El-

ders have to live and work in. She noted the public benches now all over campus for those who need a rest while walking, or just want to sit outside and have lunch. She expressed appreciation that Tribal members are doing much of the Tribe's work themselves, and among those projects, noted the remodel of the Community Center bathrooms last year.

Engineering and Community Development work coming out of Eric Scott's office include parts of the Fort Yamhill project, the new pow-wow grounds, the day use park and the many other road and water projects.

For the Public Affairs office, she promised "improved communication among all members. Help us tell your story to the rest of the world." She described the addition of the new

and Culture classes, along with providing applications and assistance for electricity support for low income Tribal members. Vocational rehabilitation services also serve Tribal members in Clackamas County.

"They do everything," said Taylor. "The work that goes on there is incredible."

Sixty three Tribal members sought help with employment from the Portland office last year, said Taylor, and 16, so far, have worked at jobs for at least 90 days.

There also is room in the Adult Education program in Portland for more students.

Cultural Resources programs in Portland include hand drum making, beading, carving, eel gathering along with a program describing Lifeways

seeking election to Tribal Council, but Tribal attorney Rob Greene said that requirements for office are written into the Constitution and a Constitutional amendment would be necessary to change that. Currently, the only requirements for running for the Tribal Council are that the person be a Tribal member and be 18 years old or older.

Tribal member Klairice A. Westley requested help in the form of emergency preparation from the Tribal Council, and expressed dissatisfaction with her experiences in Tribal employment and the Social Services department.

"We need to let go of bureaucracy," she said, "and work with people."

The Tribe currently has a disaster preparedness plan, said Chairwoman Kennedy, but it does not currently extend beyond the Grand Ronde

area.

Westley also suggested that the Tribe fund its own police force.

Chairwoman Kennedy said that there are not enough funds to hire a Tribal police force. "I wish we could do it all," she said.

There was a suggestion that the Tribe may need a separate newspaper to cover health issues.

Questions came up about the decision to end bingo at the Spirit Mountain Casino.

"It was not a spur of the moment decision," said Tribal Council member Jan Reibach. Consultants to the Tribe described threats to the Spirit Mountain Casino from the east

and the north, said Reibach.

Tribal member Jade Unger, who has earned a Mechanical Engineering degree from Portland State University and is now pursuing a second degree in Physics, thanked the Tribe for the help he received in his education. He invited Chairwoman Kennedy to give the opening presentation in an upcoming American Indian Engineering Students event. Unger also heads up a suicide prevention group at his school called, No More Fallen Feathers.

Vice Chair Angie Blackwell thanked him for "taking leadership roles."

A question came up about the Tribe building or purchasing apartments in Portland for Tribal members. Tribal Housing Authority Director Carina Kistler Ginter said that there has been talk about this for a few years but apartments in Portland remain too expensive.

A request that casino customers be allowed to carry alcoholic drinks around the casino is now being considered by Tribal Council, according to Vice Chairwoman Blackwell.

Tribal member Eric Fernando asked if the Tribe was doing anything to improve the job picture in Grand Ronde.

Tribal positions offer preference to Tribal members, said Chairwoman Kennedy but the area doesn't have many other job opportunities.

Tribal Elder and Employment Specialist Patsy Pullin said that the federal 477 program uses federal funds to open up job opportunities for Tribal members.

The next General Tribal Council meeting will be held in Grand Ronde on March 5. ■



Photo by Ron Karten

City of Roses Hosts Tribal Leadership — Tribal Council Secretary Chris Mercier, Chairwoman, Cheryle Kennedy and Vice Chair Angie Blackwell (from left) were among the full Tribal Council presiding over last month's General Tribal Council meeting held in Portland.

Tribal member-only paper called *Tilicum Wawa*, bringing news directly from Tribal Council members to the membership. She said the department was developing a public issues management team.

Taylor praised the Information Systems Department for its "complete redesign of the Tribal website."

The Social Services Department last year offered parent training, the annual Youth Conference, a Youth Health Awareness program and a Blue Ribbon Award from the state's Supreme Court.

The Tribal Housing Authority offers the Home Repair program, home ownership grants, an Elder Activity Center with new housing options coming with 72 units, including 36 for low-income families.

Natural Resources has provided environmental studies for each of the Tribe's building projects, has provided fire fighters for forest fires and other projects including the search for parts of the Space Shuttle Columbia that exploded in space in 2003.

"We talk about preparing for seven generations out," said Taylor. "Natural Resources is working for (that) future."

The Portland Satellite Office also gave a report.

Tribal members Jon George and Lisa Archuleta, along with Social Services Employment Specialist Chris Garcia and Adult Education Coordinator Joanne Carr staff or work part time out of the Portland office.

The office serves Washington and Multnomah counties with employment and training, adult education,

of the Lower Columbia.

Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle Kennedy gave a presentation describing Tribal projects in the Portland area. They include 1) a Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Wildlife Mitigation project in which the Tribe will work with BPA to acquire funds to purchase lands for wildlife mitigation; 2) a Clackamas River hydroelectric project which the Tribe has negotiated a settlement agreement with Portland General Electric and other interested parties to balance the need for hydropower with environmental, wildlife and recreational values; 3) a Columbia River project to solve traffic problems on I-5 over the river in a way that does not disturb many important Indian sites along the river; 4) Site protection for Columbia River South Shore burial sites; 5) Consulting for Portland Harbor Superfund Sites; including 6) the McCormick and Baxter site, one of the Portland Harbor Superfund sites; and 7) Fish passage improvements for the Willamette Falls, where Tribal members gather lamprey each year.

Tribal members Sean Beauchamp, Jackie Leno Grant and Antoine Auger each won \$50 in the door prize drawings. Tribal member and interim Director of Operations Pete Wakeland won \$100. Tribal member Marjorie Scheese won a beaded necklace donated by the Portland office, and Tribal member Rebecca Crocker won a gift basket donated by the Health & Wellness Center.

There was some discussion about adding provisions for candidates