

# Last Of The Community Meetings Included Federal Way And Portland

## Federal Way Community Meeting

By Siobhan Taylor  
Public Affairs Director

A full house was present at the Sunday, May 21 Community Meeting held in Federal Way, Washington. Tribal members and their families attended from Nisqually, Mukilteo, Auburn and the Olympia area. The head count, including Tribal Council and staff was 70; just enough to fill the meeting room of the LaQuinta Inn. Council member Wesley "Buddy" West opened the meeting with an invocation. Chairwoman Cheryl Kennedy launched the meeting and Tribal members evaluated how to spend their "dollars" on programs and services. After the first hour, and an adjournment for lunch, the meeting reconvened as members and staff met in breakout sessions to discuss Tribal programs and their progress for The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Then, it was time to spend those final "dollars."

After door prizes were awarded the floor was opened up for public comment.

Tracy Meyers took the opportunity to thank Tribal Council for making the community meeting possible. She also expressed her frustration with perceived inequities in Tribal policy when it comes to housing assistance and the Sophia LaBonte Fund.

Tribal Chairwoman, Cheryl Kennedy assured Meyers that all of Tribal Council understood her concerns and were listening. Council members Wesley "Buddy" West and Kathleen Tom echoed Chairwoman Kennedy's assurances.

Meyers concluded her statement by telling council to make sure they respond to their email and stated, "You guys are doing a tremendous job. There's no more progressive Tribe than the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde."

Tribal member Jeanie Snyder told the assembly that she lived in California most of her life and is now trying her best to educate herself about her Tribe. She shared her concern that as an Elder she



Photo by Siobhan Taylor

**Grand Ronde Tillicum** — Tribal members from the Federal Way area listen to presentations put on by Tribal Council and Tribal officials on Sunday, May 21. 70 people attended the Washington meeting.

still doesn't feel connected to the Tribe and asked if there might be a volunteer program where she, and members like her, can volunteer to help the Tribe and in turn learn more about her Tribe. Snyder stated she appreciated the opportunity to meet other Tribal members and Tribal Council and give her input.

A rough tally of the voting was presented before adjournment. The lead categories winning the most votes were per capita, endowments, member health benefits and member services. Kim Rogers will present a final review of the voting and comments from all the community meetings in the next month. ■



Photo by Siobhan Taylor

**Community Approach** — Tribal Council member Wink Soderberg, left, discusses the Tribe's financial priorities with Tribal members. Tribal members in Federal Way were most concerned with per capita, endowments, member health benefits and member services.

## Portland Community Meeting

By Ron Karten

About 25 Tribal members from the Portland area joined about the same number of Tribal Council members, Tribal Elders and staffers from Grand Ronde for the final Community Meeting on May 22. Five Community Meetings were held across

the region during May.

As in other meetings, per capitas, Tribal member health insurance and endowments topped the list of services to be funded in the coming year. The votes are only advisory to the Tribal Council.

The Enrollment Requirements Ad

Hoc Committee expects to have its recommendations completed at the end of July for a September presentation to Tribal Council, said Tribal member and Tribal Risk Manager Debby Larsen.

"The Tribal Council formed the Enrollment group last September," she said. "All of the members had different ideas when they started.

We're on the same page, now."

Tribal member Regan Reichle wanted to be sure that the membership would get to see the full report.

Other Tribal members raised the hardship of having one child a Tribal member and another not.

"Our ancestors suffered," said Tribal member Adrainne Llanaez, "and it's because of our ancestors' suffering that we are here today. We cannot deny those that are in our biological lineage."

Tribal member Perri McDaniel worried that sparsely attended meetings like this one were driving Tribal policy. To improve participation, she suggested that timber revenues be offered a week or two early for Tribal members who attend these meetings.

Tribal Council member Wink Soderberg said that in a recent trip to San Diego, he met with Indians who worked for Merrill Lynch, the investment firm. The Tribe invited them out for a visit, and when they came and were shown around, he said, one told him, "We go all over the country and Grand Ronde has got to be the flagship for all of Indian Country." ■



Photo by Ron Karten

Spirit Mountain Community Fund Director Shelley Hanson (black shirt) leads a discussion of Tribal priorities in Portland.