

\$1.6 million already allocated to Tribe



Photo by Ron Karten

Kim Rogers, Tribal Planning and Grants Manager, speaks to the Tribal membership at the April 5 General Council meeting.

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Most notices for proposals are just now coming out, and Rogers said that the Tribe is taking advantage of these opportunities.

The Tribe also is looking for possible stimulus funding sources to help site leftover Federal Emergency Management Agency trailers from the December 2007 Vernonia flood.

Tribal representatives plan to look over the trailers and evaluate their condition, said Tribal Council member Valorie Sheker. In fact, the Tribe already has looked into using some of these trailers as transitional housing for Tribal members who are homeless or otherwise in transition, she said.

Tribal member Perri McDaniel asked about the Tribe's use of renewable energy technology, particularly related to Tribal construction funded by federal stimulus funds.

"The Tribal Housing Authority is in the process of retrofitting the Housing Authority office with solar panels to help evaluate their value to use in the future on our rental projects here in town," Sheker said.

"We are looking at putting solar panels in Elder Rentals Phase II, which will benefit from getting the bugs out of any maintenance or operational problems that may arise from the Housing Authority project."

The Tribe has been allocated \$301,000 for energy efficiency and conservation, Rogers said. The Tribe is reviewing how best to use those funds, but no decision has yet been made.

Tribal Elder and former Tribal Council member Wesley Buddy West asked why the Tribe hasn't applied for federal funds available for using alternative energy.

"There's a lot of potential that we could take advantage of," West said. "The money is there" for renewable projects, said Tribal member Bryan Mercier, who works as a Tribal Account Executive for the Bonneville Power Administration. "Through the stimulus, they have \$5 billion looking for projects."

Tribal member Ashton Castle, a "venture capital broker," gave a short presentation, including a video about HydraCool, an emerging company seeking a partner in the Tribe. HydraCool makes "zero emission" cooling systems for refrigerator trucks and other cooling uses, and with a Tribal investment could generate 20 jobs for the Tribe, Castle said.

"We're moving forward with our economic development package," Kennedy said, "with an analysis of what investments would be best for the Tribe." The Tribe also is currently considering investment proposals from the Bend area and from California.

Renewables questions also applied to Rodney Ferguson, Spirit Mountain Gaming chief executive officer, who attended to greet the community. In an interview after the meeting, Ferguson said that as systems wear out at the casino, they look at money- and energy-saving alternatives, but due diligence efforts are necessary for every proposal to prevent big money mistakes.

Tribal member Debi Bernando asked about broadcasting Tribal Council meetings to the Portland and Eugene offices.

A related project on the Tribe's list is one to extend the current network infrastructure in the Grand Ronde community, Rogers said. Broadcasting is not part of the proposed project.

"We expect more money coming along," Rogers said, "and we're trying to position ourselves to be ready."

"What are we doing to keep the rivers clean?" Tribal Elder and Culture Committee member Carol Logan asked.

"Tribal members sit on many boards responsible for keeping the water clean and the land clean," Kennedy said. "We have a great presence on the Willamette River (cleanup)," she added, naming Natural Resources and Cultural Resources staff members as participants. "It's a great shared responsibility."

"We can reach the same goals without pollution," said Tribal Council Secretary Jack Giffen Jr. "Our task is educating the public that 'You can clean up, or maintain production levels, without pollutants.' We've proved it. The water leaving the reservation is clean."

"The Tribe has a great story to tell," said Tribal Vice Chair Reyn Leno. "We've really changed the Yamhill (River). Fish are coming back. We did it right."

"I would like to see us grow organic food on the free land here," said Tribal Elder CeCe Kneeland. She asked why the Tribe interprets federal guidelines in ways that hurt Tribal members.

"Let's re-look at the federal regulations," she said, with an eye toward finding ways to benefit Tribal

Grand Ronde stimulus funding

Stimulus formula funding already (or soon to be) allocated to the Tribe: \$1.96 million.

Here's the breakdown:

- \$1.09 million: Housing and Urban Development Indian Housing Block grant;
- \$509,000: Federal Highways – BIA Indian Reservation Roads (estimate);
- \$301,100: Department of Energy, energy efficiency and conservation
- \$32,000: Child Care Development Funds (estimate)
- \$8,930: Elders Meals program

Priority projects

The Tribal Council list of projects for which stimulus funding is being sought includes:

Priority Building Projects:

- **Fire Station:** Two-bay station with dormitory space for six firefighters. Estimated cost: \$1 million
- **ICW Building:** Location: East end of the Community Center, including renovation of the Community Center's office space to house the rest of the Social Services Department. Estimated cost: \$667,000, with a 2006 Indian Community Development Block grant of \$500,000 already awarded.
- **Dental Clinic addition:** Estimated cost: \$750,000. Already awarded for the project: \$500,000 from 2008 Indian Community Development Block grant and \$82,314 from 2008 IHS Medical Equipment grant. Seeking other funding to supplement the project for things like improved X-ray equipment.
- **Clinic renovation project:** Replacing the roof, carpets and HVAC system. Remodeling the entry for ADA access and the lobby for confidentiality. Estimated cost: \$821,178.
- **Governance Center roof replacement:** Estimated cost: \$260,000.
- **Recreation/Prevention and Wellness Center:** Indoor swimming and therapy pools, training rooms and counseling area; outdoor recreation area; small sports complex. Estimated cost: \$5 million. Existing and potential sources of money for this project: \$500,000 from a 2005 Indian Community Development Block grant for a neighborhood part, including baseball field, bathrooms and park area; 2004 Indian Housing Plan amendment request now pending for \$300,000.

Priority Road Projects:

- **Grand Ronde Road offset of Tribal commitments:** Estimated offset: \$870,000.
- **Grand Ronde Road Project:** South Yamhill Bridge Impact panels. To prolong the life of the road; not in original budget due to cost. Estimated cost: \$115,000.
- **Fire Station access improvement:** Excavation and grading to reshape the road bank south of McPherson Road. Estimated cost: \$70,000.
- **Agency Creek Road pavement restoration:** Regrade and pave surface. Estimated cost: \$845,259.
- **Government Center/ Tribal campus pavement overlay:** Parking lots for the clinic, Community Center and Governance Center. Estimated cost: \$366,773.
- **Reservation BIA Road maintenance projects:** Repair three bank sloughs, replace failed culverts, repair storm damage, install rubber water diverters. Estimated cost: being prepared.
- **Paving parking lots at Natural Resources Division:** Estimates being prepared.

Priority Infrastructure/Utility projects

- **Elder Housing and Family Housing:** Rerouting sewer mains to Tribal treatment systems, drain field expansion, reuse piping, lift stations and green space enhancements, including paving for parking at the Elders' Activity Center. Estimated cost: \$1.92 million.
- **Ackerson Road Sewer Pump station:** Design and build new pump station and add a backup generator. Estimated cost: \$273,080.
- **Tyee Road Sewer and utilities:** Sewer, stormwater and telecommunications for undeveloped Tribal property planned for housing and recreation; connects 36 HUD housing units and offices to Tribal sewer plant. Estimated cost: \$410,000.
- **Home ownership family housing infrastructure:** Development of infrastructure for buildable lots including excavation, roadway, sewer, water and utilities. Estimated cost: \$1.53 million.

members in terms of employment and housing, rather than penalizing them with the results of background checks and so on.

As part of an ongoing cultural contribution to General Council meetings, Tribal members and cousins Eirik Thorsgard and Greg Archuleta sang a power song. Thorsgard is Cultural Protection coordinator for the Tribe and Archuleta has provided many cultural services to the Tribe.

The Elders Committee held a 50/50 drawing with winners Tribal Elder Marcella Selwyn and Tribal member Desiree Allen each winning \$26.

The \$100 door prize went to Tribal member Dorothy Leno, and the \$50 prizes went to Tribal Elders Sylvia Fuller, Butch LaBonte and Louise Coulson.

Among announcements, Tribal Vice Chair Reyn Leno noted that his uncle, Tribal Elder Russ Leno, 81, had recently retired from his long-held job taking care of the Tribal Cemetery.

"I want to pat Uncle Russ on the back. He's been there for a lot of different people during a lot of hard times," Reyn Leno said.

Kennedy opened and closed the meeting and Tribal Elder Val Grout gave the invocation. ■