

Council finalizes enrollment ordinance amendment

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

After more than a year of work, Tribal Council amended the Enrollment Ordinance at the June 2 meeting with the changes becoming effective after June 23.

The amendment includes five parts.

First, it brings the ordinance into compliance with the 2008 Constitutional amendment requiring potential Tribal members to have relinquished membership in another Tribe for five years before being eligible for membership with the Grand Ronde Tribe.

Second, the amendment increases the number of times the Enrollment Committee can meet on enrollment applications from two to four times a year.

Third, the amendment codifies current procedures for making corrections or changes to the Tribal Membership Roll.

For non-blood degree corrections,

such as misprint or name change, the Enrollment Department manager is empowered to do the job.

For blood quantum changes, Enrollment staff or Tribal members may initiate blood degree corrections to the Tribal Membership Roll. The new amendment requires a Tribal Council resolution to approve a blood degree change.

Fourth, the amendment allows limited use of Tribal member identifying information, such as name, address, telephone number, roll number and Social Security number by Tribal departments, programs and enterprises as needed to provide benefits and services to members.

The amendment first identifies what Enrollment records are, and then allows for identifying information to be shared among Tribal government and other programs providing services and benefits to members.

The amendment also specifies punishment for misuse of the in-

formation: up to and including termination for a Tribal employee, recall of an elected Tribal official and cause for removing a Tribal committee member.

The fifth part of the amendment establishes procedures for correcting the Restoration Roll.

The Constitution as amended in 1999 requires applicants for Tribal membership to have 1/16th Grand Ronde blood, which is defined as all Indian blood derived from an ancestor whose name appears on the Restoration Roll. The ordinance amendment provides a process to correct the Restoration Roll. The amendment allows changes in two different circumstances.

First, a procedure is set up for typographic, spelling or blood quantum errors.

Second, a procedure is established

to add names of individuals who met the Restoration Act requirements for being on the Restoration Roll, but were left off.

To add a name, the person must be a current Tribal member or a deceased individual who met the requirements for inclusion on the Restoration Roll as defined in the Restoration Act.

The Restoration Act requirements for inclusion on the Restoration Roll are that an individual be living at the time the Restoration Roll was established and either: (1) Be named on the final membership roll in April 1956; or (2) Entitled to be on the Tribal membership roll on Aug. 13, 1954 (the date of the Termination Act) but were not listed; or (3) Be a descendant of someone in (1) or (2) and have at least one-fourth blood of members of the Tribe. ■

CULTURAL GATHERINGS

■ JUNE 18-20: 40TH ANNUAL CITY OF ROSES DELTA PARK POWWOW AND ENCAMPMENT. East Delta Park, N. Whitaker Road & Union Ct. PORTLAND, OR. 503-380-6595.

■ JUNE 25-27: PIUMSHA CELEBRATION. Piumsha Grounds, Piumsha Lane. WARM SPRINGS, OR. 541-460-0772.

■ JULY 9-11: CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE VETERANS' POWWOW. Uyxat Powwow Grounds. GRAND RONDE, OR. 503-883-3610.

■ JULY 16-18: 20TH ANNUAL TAMKALIKS CELEBRATION. Nez Perce Homeland Site, 70956 Whiskey Creek Road. WALLOWA, OR. www.wallowanezperce.org.

■ JULY 31: 6TH ANNUAL MNI WICONI WACIPI POWWOW. Aldersgate Conference Center, 7790 Marion Road S.E. TURNER, OR. office@wiconi.com.

If you or anyone you know has information on cultural events happening, Smoke Signals would be glad to list it in our Cultural Gatherings. Please e-mail news@grandronde.org or write to Smoke Signals, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

CTGR Higher Education Program

Applications are now available online for all CTGR Higher Education programs. Visit the Tribal Web page at www.grandronde.org/depts/education/ to learn more about the various funding programs.

Call Education at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2275, if you need assistance determining which program application to submit.

Program deadlines:

Bachelor Degree & Adult Vocational Programs

July 1: Fall Term/Semester

Nov. 1: Winter Term/Spring Semester

Feb. 1: Spring Term

Competitive scholarship (all categories)

April 30 each year

Part-time college

Ten days prior to first day of class

Non-credit program

Ten days prior to the first day of the class, training or conference

FAFSA (required for all Bachelor Degree & Adult Vocational Program students)

By Feb. 15 to the Tribal office each year. ■

Kennedy appoints Tom to succeed herself

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a more than three-hour Tribal Council meeting held May 19, during which Tribal Council listened to General Membership testimony and then tabled the issue for further discussions.

Kennedy said at the beginning of the June 2 meeting that Tom's seat on Tribal Council was vacated, and then cited the Tribal Constitution that allows the Tribal chair to nominate a Tribal member to serve out Tom's term, which expires in September 2011.

Kennedy appointed Tom to succeed herself on Tribal Council and asked for a roll call vote.

The vote was six in favor of returning Tom to Tribal Council with Tribal Vice Chair Reyn Leno and Tribal Council member June Sell-Sherer abstaining.

Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. said he struggled with the issue immensely and the oath he took to uphold the Tribal Constitution.

"This has been a nightmare for everybody," Bobb said, adding that he was going to vote for peace and healing as he supported putting Tom back on Tribal Council.

Leno acknowledged Tribal Coun-

cil for vacating Tom's seat and protecting the integrity of the Tribal Constitution, but said he disagreed with quickly making a decision on who should serve out the remainder of Tom's term without at least holding one work session to consider other candidates.

Tom received the most votes in the 2008 Tribal Council election, garnering 530 votes, 14.52 percent of the 1,349 votes cast.

Tribal Council member Toby McClary said that he never wavered on his interpretation of the Tribal Constitution, but did not think that someone being out on medical leave is worthy of losing their seat on Tribal Council.

"I think that this is a reasonable solution," McClary said.

Tribal Council member Chris Mercier also supported returning Tom to Tribal Council, saying that he hopes the issue will help Tribal Council improve how it conducts business.

"We could definitely improve," Mercier said.

Mercier also thanked Kennedy, Bobb and McClary for helping the Tribal Council avoid gridlock and move forward by "doing the right thing."

Sell-Sherer, however, said she had "grave concerns" about quickly re-

appointing Tom to Tribal Council.

"Tribal Council needs to be held accountable to the membership regarding attendance at these meetings," Sell-Sherer said in a prepared statement. "This subverts the intent of the Tribal Constitution."

Sell-Sherer also repeated her concern that Tribal Council members have never been allowed to see Tom's medical note submitted to Kennedy.

Tribal Council member Valorie Sheker said she did not agree with the proceedings because she thought that Tom had done nothing wrong.

"I don't believe she was unexcused," Sheker said. "I don't believe this is a necessary step to uphold the Constitution. This is a person looking at the Constitution and twisting it to meet their own personal feelings for this person."

Sheker also said that the Tribal Constitution does not address the re-appointment process.

"It doesn't say that we cannot re-appoint," Sheker said. "This is perfectly legal. ... We have to find peace, move along, have to get along and support each other. This was our fault, not hers."

Tribal Council member Wink Soderberg said that he always believed that Tom had done nothing

wrong. "I never had my doubts. ... She was guilty of nothing," he said.

Finally, Kennedy said that through the 26.5 years of Tribal Council, there have been other Tribal Council members absent for three consecutive meetings or more because of medical issues that were never excused.

"I certainly agree that healing is what needs to be done here," Kennedy said. "I fully believe that. ... This kind of discord in our family is just awful."

After the 6-0-2 vote, Soderberg nominated Tom to once again be Tribal Council secretary and Sheker seconded it. Sell-Sherer then nominated McClary, who declined the nomination.

Tom was re-installed as Tribal Council secretary by a 6-2-1 vote, with Leno and Bobb voting no and Sell-Sherer abstaining.

"I want to thank the audience for bearing with us in going through this ordeal and for their support for the Tribe," Kennedy said.

"I'm really sorry that the Tribal membership had to go through this ordeal," Tom said. "I hope and pray that we can start moving forward and doing the business at hand — taking care of the more than 5,000 Tribal members." ■