

Council amends Tribal corporations ordinance

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

In a 7-0 vote, Tribal Council amended the Tribal governmental corporations ordinance on Dec. 12, eliminating the requirement that Tribal Council must approve compensation of director level and higher employees at Tribal business entities, such as Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc.

The ordinance was approved by Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary and Tribal Council members Kathleen Tom, Chris Mercier, Cheryle A. Kennedy, Steve Bobb Sr., June Sherer and Jon A. George.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Jack

Giffen Jr. chaired the meeting and did not vote. Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno was absent because of health-related issues.

By eliminating the requirement, Tribal Council will no longer be required to endorse or deny raises already approved by a Tribal business entity's board of directors.

Tribal Council is currently inviting Tribal member comments on the proposed amendment, which was adopted on an emergency basis at the Dec. 12 meeting.

Comments should be directed to the Tribal Attorney's Office, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347, or sent by e-mail to legal@grandronde.org by Jan. 31. ■

Education offers Chinuk Wawa classes

The Tribe's Cultural Education Department offers adult Chinuk Wawa language classes from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday in Room 207 of the Tribal Education Building. Language classes can be taken for college credit or fun. For more information, call 503-879-2249 or 503-437-4599. ■

Spirit Mountain Casino Security also on hand

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two people. That work, he said, unfolded just as police teams had practiced.

"You're getting a taste of what it's really like to be engaged," said Detective Josh Calef of the Dallas Police Department, who was participating in his second active shooter exercise. "It's invaluable, though chances are we'll never even have this happen."

Despite the unlikelihood, "Being in denial that it could happen makes it easier to happen," said Terry Miller, Training Coordinator for Oregon State Police.

This preparedness is coming at a cost, Miller added. "For years, we've told them to 'be safe, go home safe,' but now we've seen that waiting for a SWAT team can be costly. The faster we confront the shooter, the more lives we save. Guys are saying, 'This is way more risk than we signed on for.'"

Also on hand at the training was Spirit Mountain Casino Security Manager Joann Mercier, who has long worked with local police and fire, even training a fire brigade of immediate responders at the casino who handle emergency crises until state, county or local first responders arrive.

"We are here to try to help the situation until law enforcement gets here, and then to help them," said Mercier.

Grand Ronde's new Tribal police are "in the process now of getting a plan together" with the casino's security detail, said McKnight, who used a semi-automatic simulated weapon during the exercises.

The Tribe's new police chief, Al LaChance, used a simulated hand

gun during the exercises.

"I learned a couple new techniques for doing a dynamic entry into a room, the new style of active shooter," LaChance said.

He noted that the value he sees in the exercise is "the ability to train with other agencies from our area that we'll be responding with in the event of an incident, actually working with them, gives us all a better understanding of our roles and responsibilities should we have to respond. This is something that needs to be done bi-annually or, at the very least, annually.

"Hosting the event on Tribal property was a huge plus for us gaining respect in the law enforcement community. I hope to do more of that in the future."

For McKnight, the value of the exercise was "huge."

"What it does is it puts tools in our toolbox, so we'll know how to react in a situation," McKnight said.

LaChance also thanked all of the Tribal members and children who participated as role players and made the training that much more realistic.

Among them were Kailiyah Krehbiel, Kaleb Reid, Dyami Eastman, Nick Colton, Julius Roan Eagle, Dakota Ross and Marcel Allen. Education Department staff members Cultural Education Specialist Travis Mercier, High School Lead Chris Bailey, Middle School Lead Matt Zimbrick and College Intern Tahnae Baker also participated.

Parent Dustin Ross volunteered as well.

Officers all the way up to police chiefs participated from Monmouth, Independence, Dallas, Polk County, Oregon State Police and the Grand Ronde Police Department. ■

Tribal member starting Tribal-oriented blogcast

Kevin Simmons hopes to bring 'a voice to the people'

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

Radio is in Kevin Simmons' blood.

His father, the late John Simmons, was a disc jockey in Warm Springs and Portland.

"Radio has always been in my family," said Simmons, a father of five in Eugene.

He announced at the Jan. 6 General Council meeting that he is working with wife, Robin, a school psychologist in Springfield, in developing the first computer-based radio program — a blogcast — targeted at the Grand Ronde community.

"Robin and I have been prepping, talking with people, researching the topics," said Simmons.

For three or four years, when Simmons lived on the Hoopa Indian Reservation in California, he produced an educational show on the reservation station, KIDE, Hoopa Tribal Radio.

The show, "Ed Info," covered education in the valley and on the reservation, Simmons said.

Simmons also comes to the blogcast project with a freshly minted master's degree in Special Education from the University of Oregon.

On the Web site www.blogtalkradio.com/grwawaradio, the Simmonses write, "We're excited about our first show on Tuesday January 15, 2013 @ 7 PM. We are going to discuss jobs in Grand Ronde and explore the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance or TERO development in Grand Ronde. Guests to be determined in the future."

Among the first to express interest in participating was Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary.

"I feel that any time technology can be used to enhance communication, it opens up opportunities to reach a broader demographic," McClary said. "I am also very impressed with Tribal members creating innovative ways to discuss, debate and explore the 'goings-on' of our Tribe and our people."

"I also feel this is yet another way to educate communities outside Indian Country about Tribes and the issues surrounding Native Americans."

"I look forward to any opportunity I get to participate and am thankful to Mr. Simmons for his leadership and his ability to think outside the box."

"I believe folks would be interested in cultural topics and this could prove to be a learning experience," said Tribal Council member Cheryle A. Kennedy. "The public can be educated on CTGR and our history through this new venue. From the personal perspective, I want to



Kevin Simmons

enrich our community and promote diversity."

Former Mentorship and Workforce Development Coordinator Denise Harvey also has expressed interest in speaking on the show.

The technology making this all possible means that guests can participate from any place that has a telephone and an Internet-capable computer.

Simmons said his goal is "to bring a voice to the people, to get something rolling for our folks."

First thing, it took the support of the community to get it rolling.

"We wheeled it out yesterday," he said on Jan. 7 and already people have been calling in suggesting topics. "Elders have been talking about learning how to get on the computer to listen and participate."

The project also benefited from "a little bit of cash and self-initiative," he said.

Simmons said he anticipates future shows that feature Elders and youth doing good things. "Maybe some Tribal employees because you guys are part of our family, too," he said. "The next step is a show for the kids."

The bottom line, he said, is that the tone is going to be "all positive."

The program will be broadcast live with phone-ins and include news and updates from the Grand Ronde community. Tribal music also is anticipated during the 30- to 40-minute show, broadcasting from 7 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays.

"It started from a need for good dialogue and good programming for our people and for folks outside the Grand Ronde area," Simmons said. "A lot of us know what's going on, but maybe not as many outside of the res."

"I want to grow it. I don't want it to be a Kevin Simmons thing. Maybe somebody will step up for 8 o'clock." ■