

Tribal Council OKs five grant applications

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved applying for five separate grants during its July 17 meeting.

Among the grants, Tribal Council OK'd applying to Spirit Mountain Community Fund's Tribal Grant Program for \$66,000 for a new handicapped accessible school bus. Tribal Council also approved allocating \$33,000 in matching funds to purchase the bus.

Other grants the Tribe will be applying for include:

- A \$62,500 Oregon Emergency Management performance grant and approved the Tribe covering the 50-50 cost share match;
- Oregon Department of Transportation Special Transportation Fund and Special Operating Fund transit allocations;
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security for Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program funding;
- And applying to the Indian Health Service for \$126,571.43 allocated

to the Tribe for the fifth year of the Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative.

In other action, Tribal Council approved an environmental services agreement with Industrial Economics Inc. for technical consulting services related to the various Portland Harbor remedial and natural resources damages activities.

Tribal Council also approved the 2013-22 Natural Resources Management Plan and the enrollment of two infants into the Tribe.

Included in the July 17 Tribal Council packet were authorizations to proceed for Tribal staff to revisit and revise plans to expand the Tribal Council conference room and to transfer \$10,000 from general contingency to the Veterans Special Event Board Powwow budget to fund additional costs for the recent 2013 Veterans Powwow.

Tribal Council also directed staff to research the possibility of bringing the Food Bank back as a Tribally run program. ■

Help needed identifying plots

The Facilities Department is asking for your help identifying veteran's plots.

If your family member's or friend's plot is a veteran and we do not have a veteran's flag present on holidays, please inform us.

We will do our best to mark all plots of veterans.

Contact Adam Leno at 503-879-5525 or adam.leno@grandronde.org. ■

Maritime Heritage Festival



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Jordan Mercier educates Judy Keane of Portland on Indian hemp and its use in weaving during the Maritime Heritage Festival in St. Helens on Saturday, July 27. A Tribal information booth was staffed during the three-day event by Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor, Veterans Queen Savannah Ingram, Greg Archuleta, Debi Anderson, Eric Bernardo and Mercier. The Tribe sponsored the event, which ran July 26-28.



Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor talks with attendees of a dinner that the Tribe sponsored during the Maritime Heritage Festival in St. Helens on Saturday, July 27.

April Campbell testified in support

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along with the economy, the chances of getting the position included in the Department of Education's 2013-15 budget increased substantially during the most recent legislative session.

The position was included in the Education Department's initial budget request to the House Ways and Means Committee and Tribal representatives and Education Department employees helped keep it on the radar screen of legislators as the budget worked its way through the Oregon House and Senate, Hunt said.

Grand Ronde Tribal Education Manager April Campbell testified in support of the position on March 12.

"This position is essential to the success of our youth and will help Oregon become a model for other states," Campbell told members of the House Ways and Means Committee. "The Indian education specialist position will be devoted to Indian education issues and will collaboratively work with Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes to develop initiatives that will preserve and foster the teaching of indigenous languages, create and

implement accurate and culturally responsive curriculum and history, and develop strategies for the education of American Indian and Alaska Native students."

Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction Rob Saxton also testified in support of creating the position.

Gov. John Kitzhaber signed the department's budget on July 19.

"This is a great first step," said Grand Ronde Tribal lobbyist Justin Martin. "We look forward to working with the person who is hired. We're thankful to the governor, Rob Saxton and everyone else who worked on this.

"It's a great first step because it is a fully funded, full-time position that will focus on Native youth in the K-12 school system."

"Our Native American students and parents need more support to achieve academic success," the recruitment ad says. "Students are in need of additional educational, physical and cultural activities that pertain to their native language, culture and history. Additionally, teachers, administrators and other staff can benefit from cultural competency training to explore their understanding of the unique cultural attributes of the communities they serve, including the nine federally

recognized Tribes of Oregon."

The Indian education specialist will work with Tribes, educators and school districts to "improve the educational outcomes for Oregon's Native American students."

The Grand Ronde Tribe has long pushed for the position, mentioning it at almost every meeting Tribal Council held over the last five years with former Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo.

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno often lamented the fact that his children and grandchildren had to teach their teachers about the history of Oregon's Tribes. More often than not, Leno said, Oregon children learn more about the Sioux, Cherokee and Apache Tribes than they do about Native peoples who have lived in Oregon since time immemorial.

According to the Department of Education, graduation rates for Native American students in Oregon were 51.7 percent, 50.3 percent and 51.2 percent from 2005-06 through 2007-08, respectively.

In addition, there is a disproportionately high dropout rate for Native American students, who make up 2 percent of the high school student population in the state but represent 4.1 percent of dropouts.

"Discipline data for Native Amer-

ican youth is also alarming," the department said in a May 1 briefing paper about the need for an Indian education specialist. "The most recent data reveals that Native American students receive a disproportionate number of days of suspension compared to the total student population."

The job pays between \$61,176 and \$89,496. Minimum qualifications include a master's degree in education or a related field and five years of experience in Indian education, two years of which includes leadership positions.

The position closed Monday, July 29. Esther Mangini of the department's Human Resources Office said it usually takes a couple of weeks to cull through the applications, select interview candidates and recruit an interview panel.

David Bautista, assistant superintendent of the Department of Education's Office of Education Equity, said a Tribal representative will be invited to sit on the interview panel.

"We are so excited to have this position," Hunt added.

In appreciation of Saxton's efforts on behalf of the position, the Grand Ronde Tribal Council approved sending a letter of appreciation on July 24. ■