

Tribal Council OKs new public transit contracts

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved new public transit contracts on Wednesday, Nov. 29, that will change how Grand Ronde-area residents travel to Lincoln City and Salem beginning in 2018.

One of the contracts is a two-year update of the Tribe's contract with the Yamhill County Transit Area, which provides seven round trips Monday through Friday and 3.5 round trips on Saturday between McMinnville and Grand Ronde.

The other two are 18-month contracts with the Tillamook County Transportation District that will replace the soon-to-expire Grand Ronde 2X transit service that was being provided by the Salem Area Mass Transit District.

The Grand Ronde and Siletz Tribes will provide matching funds for the Tillamook County Transportation District's Network-Intercity grant with the Oregon Department of Transportation and there will be three round trips daily between Lincoln City, Grand Ronde and Salem via the Coastal Connector starting on Tuesday, Jan. 2. The Grand Ronde Tribe will be covering the cost of the weekday Grand Ronde-to-Salem portion of the service.

The other contract with the Tillamook County Transportation District will provide an additional four round trips on weekdays between Grand Ronde and Salem. The four round trips in addition to the three weekday Coastal Connector trips covered by the other contract will replace the service paid for with the Salem Area Mass Transit District, which decided to discontinue its participation as of Dec. 29 because costs

have increased and a rural carrier would be a better fit for the Tribe.

The Grand Ronde Tribe has been contracting for public transit since 2007 when the Tribe first obtained public transit funds and completed a public transit plan, Planning and Grants Manager Kim Rogers said. The Tribe receives public transit operating funds from the Oregon Department of Transportation — one direct and two federal pass-through grants -- and Tribal Transit funds directly from the Federal Transit Administration.

The Tribe also has a \$95,000 Special Transportation Fund Discretionary grant for the creation of a new Transit Plan to replace the 2007 plan and has contracted with Kittleson & Associates in Portland to work with the Tribe to develop a new plan by the summer of 2018, Rogers said.

The Coastal Connector service will cost the Tribe \$43,668 in matching funds and \$106,488 in other transit funding that was already committed to the Grand Ronde-Salem round trips. The four other round trips between Grand Ronde and Salem will cost \$265,320 and are 100 percent funded by the Tribe's transit funds as a separate service.

Rogers said the current tentative name for the new service is the Grand Ronde Express and plans include a new logo and color scheme for those buses by summer.

The round trips between the Coastal Connector and the Grand Ronde Express will be coordinated and efforts will be made to coordinate transfers with the Yamhill County Transit Area as well, he said.

The Salem Area Mass Transit District also will allow the Coastal

Connector and Grand Ronde Express to use a transit bay at the Salem Transit Mall.

"One difference between the Grand Ronde 2X and the Grand Ronde Express is that on most round trips it goes to the Tribal campus as well as Spirit Mountain Casino, but it will not run as late at nights as 2X did," Rogers said.

The current tentative schedule has the Grand Ronde Express leaving the Tribal Community Center for Salem at 8:15 a.m., 2:30 and 5:15 p.m. while the Coastal Connector leaves the Community Center for Salem at 6:44 a.m., 12:34 and 6:10 p.m. Fares from Grand Ronde to either Lincoln City or Salem will be \$3.

The updated Yamhill County Transit Area agreement has the Tribe covering operating costs between Willamina and Grand Ronde for the seven existing weekday and 3.5 Saturday round trips at a cost of \$57,308 in the first year and \$58,455 in the second year.

"So far the Tribe has been able to fund all of its public transit contracts using the Tribe's state and federal transit funds that can only be used for public transit," Rogers said. "The Tribe also can allocate some portion of its annual BIA Transportation Funds to public transit depending on the Tribe's overall transportation needs and priorities and BIA approval of the Tribe's Transportation Improvement Program."

People with questions about the transit plans can contact Rogers at 503-879-2250 or kim.rogers@grandronde.org.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Set the agenda for the Sunday, Dec. 3, General Council meeting that will be held in the Tribal

Community Center at 10 a.m. to accommodate the Tribal Council Christmas Party in the Tribal gym. The program report will be from the Tribal Lands Department.

- Sent amendments to the Burial Fund and Government Corporations ordinances out for a first reading and Tribal member input. The Burial Fund amendments would increase the burial benefit from \$5,500 to \$6,000 and the reception benefit from \$300 to \$400. Amendments to the Government Corporations Ordinance would provide that a director whose term has expired would continue to serve until a successor is elected and qualified except where the articles of incorporation provide otherwise.

- And set the number of directors on the Spirit Mountain Gaming Board at 12, up from the previous 10, and appointed Tribal Council members Brenda Tuomi and Michael Langley to the board.

Also included in the Nov. 29 Tribal Council packet were approved authorizations to proceed that set the construction budget for the Early Childhood and Youth Education Building expansion project at \$740,000 and OK'd sending a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the definition of "waters of the U.S." In addition, an approved staff directive now allows Audit Services to distribute all audit reports, including formal internal audit reports, via e-mail.

The meeting can be viewed in its entirety by visiting the Tribal website at www.grandronde.org and clicking on the News tab and then Video. ■



STOCK OUR SHELVES!

Seeking your donations for 4 organizations!

GRAND RONDE HELPING HANDS
ISKAM MƏKḂMƏK-HAWS, THE CLOTHES CLOSET, EMPOWERMENT OUTREACH MINISTRIES, AND A CAUSE FOR PAWS ARE WORKING TOGETHER






You've got it. We want it!
SATURDAY, DEC. 9, 2017
10 a.m. TO 2 p.m.

GIVE TO 4 ORGANIZATIONS IN ONE LOCATION!

***Iskam MəḂMəK-Haws** is seeking holiday food box items: yams, stuffing, gravy, cake mixes, pie shells, pudding, flour, sugar, and canned vegetables.*

***The Clothes Closet** is seeking school supplies for youth through high school students.*

***Empowerment Outreach** is seeking rain gear, boots, pants, hats, coats, gloves, tarps, sleeping bags (broken zipper ok) for homeless families.*

***A Cause for Paws** is seeking pet food, toys, and beds.*

We will take books for our lending library.

Clean out your food pantry, we'll figure out the expiration dates!

If you are not sure, bring it in or give us a call.

Iskam MəḂMəK-Haws
 9675 Grand Ronde Road
 Grand Ronde, OR 97347
 503-879-FOOD (3663)

Follow us on Facebook



Need something notarized?

Tribal Court staff is available at no charge for notaries 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday with the exception of noon to 1 p.m. Please be sure to bring a photo ID with you. If you have any questions, contact the court at 503-879-2303. ■



Now Available

Diabetic Foot Care

by trained nursing staff

Call Medical today to schedule an appointment
503-879-2002