

Tiny powwow dancers



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

2017-18 Portland State University Ms. Naimuma Keeli Nehani Littleleaf Kotchik dances with Hallie Brewer during the Youth Powwow held in the Tribal gym on Thursday, Dec. 21. The powwow was hosted by the Cultural Education Program and Health & Wellness Center, and Grand Ronde Royalty helped serve dinner.



Ezri Bailey dances during the Youth Powwow held in the Tribal gym on Thursday, Dec. 21.

Committee & Special Event Board meeting days and times

Below is the most current information on the meeting days and times for Tribal Committees and Special Event Boards:

- **Ceremonial Hunting Board** meets as needed. Chair: Marline Groshong.
- **Culture Committee** meets at 5:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at the Grand Ronde Food Bank/iskam mək'mək haws, 9675 Grand Ronde Road. Chair: Francene Ambrose.
- **Editorial Board** meets at 10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 12, in Room 204 in the Tribal Governance Center. Chair: Siobhan Taylor.
- **Education Committee** meets at 5:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month in the Adult Education building. Chair: Tammy Cook.
- **Elders Committee** meets at 10 a.m. the third Wednesday of the month in the Elders Activity Center. Chair: Gladys Hobbs.
- **Enrollment Board** meets quarterly in Room 204 of the Governance Center. Chair: Michael Mercier.
- **Fish & Wildlife Committee** meets at 5:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at the Natural Resources building off Hebo Road. Chair: Tyson Mercier.
- **Health Committee** meets at 10 a.m. the second Monday of the month in the Health & Wellness Center. Chair: Patti Tom-Martin.
- **Housing Board** meets at 3 p.m. the third Thursday of the month in the Housing Department conference room. Chair: Matt Thomas.
- **Powwow Special Event Board** meets monthly at noon at the Community Center. Dates vary. Contact Dana Ainam at 503-879-2037. Chair: Dana Ainam.
- **Timber Committee** meets at 5 p.m. the second Thursday of the month at the Natural Resources building off Hebo Road. Chair: Bob Mercier.
- **Veterans Special Event Board** meets at 5:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month in the old Elders Craft House. Chair: Steve Bobb Sr.

To update information on this list, contact Publications Coordinator Dean Rhodes at 503-879-1463 or dean.rhodes@grandronde.org.

Tribal Council OKs 2018 budget

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved the Tribe's 2018 budget that includes a 36.8 percent projected increase in gaming dividend over last year's conservative revenue estimate during its final meeting of the year on Wednesday, Dec. 27.

With the April 2017 opening of the Cowlitz casino approximately 15 miles north of the Vancouver-Portland metropolitan area in mind, the Tribe expected deep decreases in gaming revenue in 2017 and subsequently budgeted for those anticipated shortfalls last November.

However, after nine months of competition from the Cowlitz facility, the shortfalls are not as substantial as projected a year ago and the Tribe has increased its projected gaming dividend revenue for 2018 by almost 37 percent.

The 2018 budget also plans for a 4.1 percent increase in total spending over 2017's budget.

The 2018 budget allocates 75 cents out of every gaming dividend dollar earned to either direct member payments and benefits or transfers to reserves. The remaining 25 cents is allocated to operation of Tribal governmental programs.

The 2018 budget was sent out to the Tribal membership in the November *Tilixam Wawa* and was the topic of the November General Council meeting held in executive session.

During the Tuesday, Dec. 26, Legislative Action Committee meeting, Finance Officer Chris Leno said the Tribe received four written comments about the proposed spending plan between the Nov. 5 General Council meeting and the deadline to submit comments, which was Dec. 4.

He said those comments will be addressed in the February *Tilixam Wawa*, which is traditionally the publication of the final budget for the coming year.

"Reflecting on the 2017 budget gives the Tribe reason to believe that Spirit Mountain Casino remains competitive and the impact of the newly opened casino will not significantly affect our gaming revenue," Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said in her November *Tilixam Wawa* statement to the membership.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved the agenda for the 11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 7, General Council meeting that will be held in the Tribal Community Center. The program report will be from the Health & Wellness Center;
- Approved new guidelines for Spirit Mountain Gaming Board

of Directors compensation that allow non-Tribal Council members to be compensated for attendance at up to 12 regular monthly board meetings per year;

- Approved up to \$3.3 million in a capital contribution to Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. for approved capital projects, such as new slot machines and information technology, facilities and security projects;
- Approved a credit card for Health & Wellness Business Office Manager Tresa Mercier and two generic credit cards for the Procurement Department;
- Appointed Simone Auger to the Housing Grievance Board with a term expiring in March 2019;
- Approved General Manager David Fullerton entering into inter-governmental agreements and memoranda of understanding that continue necessary operations at the Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department, such as mutual aid agreements, deadly force plans and jailing agreements;
- And approved the enrollment of eight non-infants and one infant into the Tribe because they meet the provisions outlined in the Enrollment Ordinance and the Tribal Constitution.

Also included in the Dec. 27 Tribal Council packet were authorizations to proceed and staff directives that:

- Donated \$5,000 from Tribal Council to the Grand Ronde Food Bank for holiday food box supplies;
- Approved charging wage and fringe expenses for the senior administrative assistant at Adult Foster Care to a third party, saving the Tribe \$60,000 in gaming dollars in 2017;
- Approved forming a work team to develop a plan to delineate and describe the rights of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon;
- Approved a \$25,000 budget for an All Employee Holiday Luncheon or Dinner in 2018;
- Approved a \$50,000 budget increase for the Home Repair Match Grant Program;
- And approved a 2.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment for Tribal employees in 2018. A proposed 3.5 percent adjustment did not receive sufficient support from Tribal Council.

Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George and his son, Tynan, joined Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier and Cultural Resources Department Manager David Harrelson in performing the cultural drumming and singing to open the meeting. ■

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