

Tribal Council approves loan agreement with British Museum

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

One of the final pieces of the puzzle to bring items from the Summers Collection home to Grand Ronde was put in place by Tribal Council during its Wednesday, May 2, meeting.

Tribal Council signed off on a loan agreement with the British Museum in London that will bring 16 items from the Summers Collection to the Tribal museum Chachalu for an exhibit called "Rise of the Collectors" that will run from June 5 through May 17, 2019.

Part of the agreement states that the Grand Ronde Tribe will not invoke sovereign immunity and seize the 16 items once they are in the Tribe's possession. Any disputes that might arise between the Tribe and the British Museum will be settled in English courts, as well.

The Rev. R.W. Summers traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest in the mid-19th century, accumulating objects, personal belongings and antiquities from members of Tribes that today make up the Grand Ronde confederation.

Upon his death, the collection was donated to the British Museum by the Rev. Selwyn C. Freer. For more than a decade, the Tribe has been building a relationship with the British Museum in the hopes of eventually getting the Summers Collection returned either as a loan or permanently. However, the latter option is almost impossible

since the British Museum cannot relinquish ownership of any items in its vast collection without an act of Parliament.

Cultural Resources Department Manager David Harrelson said the items will arrive in Grand Ronde later in May and Cultural Resources Department employees will analyze the items before they officially go on display during the June 1 grand re-opening of the museum.

"The richness of the story (the items tell) is magnificent," Harrelson said during the Tuesday, May 1, Legislative Action Committee meeting.

Tribal Historic Preservation Manager Briece Edwards said the items were selected to complement cultural programming that will occur during the almost 12 months that the items are displayed in Grand Ronde.

In response to a question by Tribal Council member Denise Harvey, Harrelson said the Summers Collection items are returning to Grand Ronde because the Tribe finally has a facility that can accommodate and care for antiquities.

"This is tremendous," Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George said. "I just can't wait."

In other cultural news, Tribal Council approved a permit letter agreement with Portland General Electric that will grant the Tribe access to and across lands owned or controlled by the company at

Willamette Falls.

Fish & Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen said during the Tuesday, May 1, Legislative Action Committee meeting that signing the agreement was a "major step" in the Tribe eventually building a fishing platform at the falls because the best locations either are on PGE property or one would need to cross PGE property to build a platform.

The Tribe regained rights to ceremonially fish at Willamette Falls in 2016 from the Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission with a 15-fish catch limit per year. Dirksen estimated that a fishing platform could be constructed as early as the summer of 2019.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved a crushed rock purchasing plan that will allow the Natural Resources Department to buy material from a preferred vendor list that includes seven companies. The resolution states that it is "the most efficient method for obtaining the best value in purchases of crushed rock."
- Approved the purchase of a new bulldozer for the Natural Resources Department. Natural Resources Department Manager Michael Wilson said at the Tuesday, May 1, Legislative Action Committee meeting that the current 15-year-old bulldozer is undersized and lacks the power needed to work in the forest. The new bulldozer will cost \$157,800, which includes the trade-in value

of the current bulldozer and a 29-percent discount off the list price.

- Approved the enrollment of four infants into the Tribe because they meet the requirements outlined in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

Also included in the May 2 Tribal Council packet were approved authorizations to proceed that designated Audit Director Trudi Yoshikawa as the primary recipient of Report It concerns, approved transferring \$10,450 from contingency to cover the costs of the Institute for Conflict Management contract services for additional Tribal Council planning sessions and waived the Committee/SEB Travel Policy to allow three members of the Timber Committee to attend a timber symposium in Ocean Shores, Wash., in June.

There also was one failed authorization to proceed that would have allocated \$25,000 for enhanced security measures in Tribal Council Chambers and the Community Center meeting room. Only three Tribal Council members supported the proposed security enhancements, which included installing bullet-resistant steel plating on the inside wall of Tribal Council's bench and installing an exit door to allow for a quick exit.

The entire meeting can be viewed on the Tribal website www.grandronde.org by clicking on the News tab and then Video. ■

Memorial Day
Observance

MONDAY, MAY 28
Meal served at noon
Program begins at 1 P.M.

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Grand Ronde, OR 97347

For more information about the Memorial Day event,
call: Steve Bobb Sr. 503-876-3118 or e-mail: chelsea.clark@grandronde.org