

Tribe, Wood Village discussing sale of part of racetrack property

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and city of Wood Village are in negotiations to possibly sell 4.6 acres of the 31.5-acre former Multnomah Greyhound Park property.

The Tribe purchased the former racetrack in east Multnomah County in 2015 and announced in August 2018 that it intended not to develop the property, but instead put it on the market.

The Wood Village City Council voted unanimously on Jan. 22 for City Manager Bill Peterson to enter into negotiations to purchase the land near the intersection of Wood Village Boulevard and Arata Road.

City plans are to transform the property into a public park, with the recreation area named on behalf of the Grand Ronde Tribe. The site contains mostly wetlands, which cannot be developed.

Since negotiations are ongoing, a sale price has not been released. *The Gresham Outlook* reported that Wood Village has approximately \$650,000 in parks systems development charges available that may be used to purchase park land.

Tribal Council meet in executive session to discuss an offer from



Wood Village on Monday, March 4, but the issue has not been brought up in Legislative Action Committee or a Tribal Council meeting yet.

Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez said during

the Other Business portion of the Wednesday, March 20, Tribal Council meeting that the Tribe is re-assessing its decision to sell the property because it is in an Opportunity Zone.

“We are revisiting plans right

now and currently under some evaluations at the moment,” she said. “We are working with the city of Wood Village to sell them a portion of the wetlands, which should hopefully satisfy some of the open-space requirements on the property, which is good news for any developer that potentially might be interested.”

Hernandez said the Tribe has received interest in the property, but that it has not been actively marketed because of the re-evaluation about what the Tribe wants to do with the property.

The Tribe hired Bruce Thomas as its new Economic Development Department director in November 2018.

The Tribe purchased the property in December 2015. The dilapidated site, which had not been used for dog racing since 2004, was listed for sale at \$11.2 million. The Tribe purchased the property at less than listed value and was attempting to sell it for \$17.9 million.

In addition to the purchase price, the Tribe signed an almost \$900,000 contract with Konell Construction & Demolition Corp. of Sandy in April 2016 to demolish and clear structures on the site. ■

Tribal Council was unified in its support of the amendment

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parent(s) who were enrolled before Sept. 14, 1999, and who meet pre-1999 constitutional enrollment requirements. Applicants also would have had to meet the five-year relinquishment requirement if they enrolled in another Tribe.

Tribal Council was unified in its support of the amendment, with all nine members appearing in videos posted on Facebook and six members submitting commentaries that were published in the March *Tilixam Wawa*. In addition, there was no divisive debate about bundled vs. unbundled since it was a single issue trying to be remedied.

In February 2008, almost 61 percent of Tribal voters favored eliminating the parent on the roll requirement. In June 2012, almost

Date	Yes	No	% yes	Topic
July '99	757	292	72.1	Enrollment
Feb. '08	636	513	55	Grand Ronde blood
Feb. '08	700	450	60.9	Parent on the roll
Feb. '08	880	277	76	Relinquishment period
Nov. '11	457	536	46	Enrollment
June '12	407	222	64.7	Primary election
March '15	391	220	64	Term limits
March '15	230	381	37.6	Remove BIA
July '16	382	670	36.3	Initiatives, etc.
July '16	412	639	39.2	Enrollment
March '19	601	345	63.5	Split siblings

(Bold signifies successful amendment elections)

65 percent of Tribal voters favored establishing a primary in Tribal elections. In March 2015, 64 percent of Tribal voters favored a Tribal Council term limit proposal. None of those proposals amended the Tribal Constitution because they failed to

garner the 66.7 percent majority.

Tribal member Angela Criss vented her frustration at the two-thirds majority requirement on the Tribal government's official Facebook page.

“Whatever happened to the majority vote?” she said. “It’s my opinion that having to have a 66 percent approval is not right. And why didn’t everyone that registered to vote actually vote? Very disappointing results here. We basically just told our children that one sibling has more value than their other siblings. Shameful results.”

In the Tribe’s history, only two constitutional amendment pro-

posals have ever received the two-thirds majority of those who voted – the July 1999 enrollment requirements that created the current split-family situation and in February 2008 when Tribal voters increased the required relinquishment period from one to five years.

Twenty-six percent of eligible Tribal adults registered with the BIA to vote in the split-sibling election.

“We are truly disheartened by the results of Friday’s constitutional election on split families,” Tribal Council said in a collective statement released on Monday, March 25. “As we reflect on the election results, that more than 63 percent of voters supported, our thoughts turn to concern for our Tribal families who will continue to live with the impacts of Friday’s election and the hurt that they must feel. We are grateful to the brave families that came forward with the courage to share their stories. Your leadership inspired us, and a community, to come together.

“We need to consider what our hopes are for our Tribe and a responsibility to create the future we want to see. We need to become the Tribe that we want to be and we can only do that by moving forward and supporting each other. Our work is not done.” ■

Grand Ronde Housing Department

Board seeks community input

The Grand Ronde Housing Board is inviting Tribal members and Tribal housing residents to provide input to assist its members in carrying out its advisory role to the Housing Department and Tribal Council regarding policy guidance. The Housing Board meets at 3 p.m. the third Thursday of each month in the Housing Department conference room, 28450 Tye Road. Its chair is Kristy Criss-Lawson. For more information, contact the Housing Department at 503-879-2401. ■

LIHEAP program open in service area

The Tribal Social Service’s LIHEAP – Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program – is open to eligible Tribal members in the six-county service area and Clackamas County.

This is a first-come, first-served program and income criteria applies. LIHEAP is federally funded through the Department of Health and Human Services and is designed to help low-income households with home heating costs.

For more information, contact Social Services at 503-879-2034. ■