

**May**

- Sunday, May 3 – General Council meeting, 11 a.m. Tribal members can participate remotely through the Zoom website. 503-879-2304.
- Wednesday, May 13 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Monday, May 25 – Memorial Day. Tribal offices closed.
- Wednesday, May 27 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304

(Editor's note: All events are tentative depending on the status of the Tribe's COVID-19 coronavirus response going into May and June.)

Grand Floral Parade postponed

PORTLAND – The Spirit Mountain Casino Grand Floral Parade has been postponed from its Saturday, June 6, date.

“The health of our community and our friends around the world is the most important thing,” a statement at www.rosefestival.org says. “We have postponed but not canceled the 2020 Rose Festival. We’re hopeful that eventually we’ll all come out the other side of this pandemic, healthy and happy – and ready to celebrate together!”

The Spirit Mountain Casino, which is currently closed, has been the parade’s sponsor for nine years. ■

Name changes in court

Tribal Court provides both minor and adult name changes to enrolled members for a filing fee of only \$30. If you have any questions or would like to request a packet, contact Tribal Court at 503-879-2303. ■

Comments Requested on Plans for Grand Ronde Veterans Memorial Improvements

The Grand Ronde Tribe’s Veterans Memorial was built in 2001 and a couple of the four service branch pillars are running out of space. The Tribe is planning on acquiring two more pillars and incorporating them into the current memorial in a complementary manner. If you would like to comment on this planned project, please contact Tribal Council. You may e-mail them through Shannon.Ham-Teixeira@grandronde.org. You may also call Tribal Council staff at 503-879-2301. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has a Veterans and War Memorial Grant program. The Tribe is applying for funding to help afford the cost of the needed expansion. ■

Official Tribal Facebook pages

- **Smoke Signals:** www.facebook.com/SmokeSignalsCTGR/
- **The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde:** www.facebook.com/CTGRgov
- **Spirit Mountain Community Fund:** www.facebook.com/SpiritMountainCommunityFund
- **Grand Ronde Health & Wellness:** www.facebook.com/GRHWC
- **Grand Ronde Station:** www.facebook.com/GrandRondeStation
- **Grand Ronde Royalty:** www.facebook.com/CTGRRoyalty
- **Grand Ronde Education Programs:** www.facebook.com/CTGREducation/
- **Grand Ronde Community Garden:** www.facebook.com/GrandRondeCommunityGarden
- **Grand Ronde Food Bank:** www.facebook.com/GrandRondeFoodBank
- **Grand Ronde Youth Council:** www.facebook.com/CTGRYouthCouncil
- **Grand Ronde Social Services Department:** www.facebook.com/CTGRSocialservices/
- **Grand Ronde Children & Family Services:** www.facebook.com/CTGRCFS/
- **Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department:** www.facebook.com/Grand-Ronde-Tribal-Police-Department
- **Grand Ronde Cultural Education:** www.facebook.com/Grand-Ronde-Cultural-Education



Tribe extends 80 more PTO hours to its employees

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

With the partial closure of the Grand Ronde Tribal government and total closure of Spirit Mountain Casino stretching into May, the Tribe announced on Thursday, April 23, that it will grant all employees another 80 hours of paid time off.

After another meeting between the Grand Ronde Tribal Council and Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. Board of Directors held Wednesday, April 22, it was decided to grant more hours to ensure employees continue to get paid into May.

Tribal Council initially authorized 120 hours – three weeks – of paid time off for all casino and government employees. For casino employees, the Tribe is paying their standard rate with additional consideration for tips.

On Wednesday, April 1, it was announced that all Tribal employees would receive another 120 hours to compensate for the continued closure of the casino and partial closure of the Tribal government.

With the additional 80 hours, employees have been granted a total of eight weeks of paid time off since the closures started in mid-March.

Tribal Council members and Tribal administrators have consistently stated that the Tribe will take care of its Tribal family, which includes casino and governmental employees, through the trying economic times caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

“We continue to work closely with our board of directors and Grand Ronde Tribal Council to monitor the ever-changing situation and have begun the process of preparing a detailed re-opening plan,” said Spirit Mountain Casino General Manager Stan Dillon. “This plan will include extensive sanitation best practices while ensuring the outstanding guest service we are known for is intact for all aspects of the guest experience in all venues once we are able to open our doors.”

Tribal General Manager David Fullerton announced the additional PTO hours to governmental employees in an e-mail on Thursday, April 23, and added that the goal is to open the Tribal government sometime in May.



“We are moving from managing this event to preparing to open,” he said during a Wednesday, April 22, Facebook Live event.

There has been no announced target date for re-opening Spirit Mountain Casino.

In an unprecedented move, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde announced an initial two-week closure of its primary economic engine, Spirit Mountain Casino, beginning at 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, March 18, to help combat spread of the coronavirus in Oregon.

Preliminary estimates projected having the casino and its approximately 1,100 employees being idle beginning at midnight Thursday, March 19, through Wednesday, April 1.

After a meeting between the Grand Ronde Tribal Council and Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. Board of Directors on Wednesday, March 25, it was decided to keep the casino closed until at least Thursday, April 9. After another meeting, it was announced the casino would remain closed until it was safe to re-open.

However, the number of coronavirus cases in Oregon and the United States continues to increase unabated and suggested national social distancing guidelines were extended through the end of April by the federal government. Government estimates say that hundreds of thousands of Americans could die from the virus if stay-at-home and social distancing recommendations are not followed. The nationwide death toll is currently more than 50,000.

Spirit Mountain Casino opened in October 1995 and has been the primary funding source for Tribal governmental operations and myriad benefits to Tribal members, including health care, Elders’ pensions, per capita payments and educational funding. It also was Oregon’s No. 1 tourist destination for a time and became one of the largest employers in Yamhill and Polk counties. ■

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 Tyee Road. Its chair is Simone Auger.

For more information, contact the Housing Department at 503-879-2401. ■