



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal Council approved additional funding for the continuation of restoring the Grand Ronde Rail Depot on Wednesday, April 15. The depot is the only local building on the National Register of Historic Places.

Tribal Council OKs Rail Depot work contract

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

The only building in Grand Ronde on the National Register of Historic Places will be receiving more repairs than originally anticipated. During its 10 a.m. Wednesday, April 15 meeting, Tribal Council approved a \$123,150 construction phase amendment with Scholten Construction of Willamina to perform additional repairs on the building. The Tribe received a \$75,000 Spirit Mountain Community Fund grant and a \$20,000 Oregon Parks & Recreation Preserving Oregon grant to help pay for the additional repairs. The work will help stabilize the depot structure for future renovation and use, and brings the total contract for work on the depot to \$222,336, said Engineering and Public Works Manager Jesse White during the Tuesday, April 7, Legislative Action Committee meeting. The depot was completed in 1922 and served as a hub for transportation, economic and social activity in Grand Ronde. It was built to operate the Willamina-Grand Ronde Railroad.

After the Tribe was restored in 1983, it purchased the Rail Depot building in December 1984 for office space for the new Tribal government. Regular use ended in 1997. It was named to the National Register of Historic Places in December 2012. The register is the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation by the National Park Service. The depot is a two-story, 1,040-square-foot wood frame structure clad in shiplap siding. It was built by Swiss immigrant John Albert Schuerch. In other action, Tribal Council:

- Re-appointed Deanna Johnston to the Election Board to a term that expires in March 2022;
- Accepted an agreement for \$1.2 million in funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the 2020 Tribal Transportation Program.

The entire meeting, which featured social distancing and five Tribal Council members participating by phone, can be viewed by visiting the Tribal government’s website at www.grandronde.org and clicking on the Government tab and then Videos. ■



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Tribal Council OKs 7 grant applications for pandemic aid, education and Salem clinic

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved seven grant applications during its Wednesday, April 29, meeting that included two requests for COVID-19 pandemic aid, two for the planned Salem clinic to combat opioid addiction with medication-assisted treatment and three for educational purposes. The two grant applications for coronavirus pandemic help were to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board for approximately \$63,000 in funds to treat Tribal Elders affected by the coronavirus and through the Health Resources & Services Administration for \$300,000 that would hire and train two health promotion specialists to provide outreach to Tribal Elders regarding the coronavirus.

The latter grant application is competitive and 50 Tribes will be selected, Planning & Grants Manager Kim Rogers said during the Tuesday, April 28, Legislative Action Committee meeting. Two other grant applications would help the Tribe establish a medication-assisted treatment clinic to treat opioid addiction on Commercial Street in Salem. An application to the Indian Health Service would help pay for a portion of the equipment and furniture at the clinic while an application to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Ad-

ministration would help fund staff and consultant time and supplies. Tribal Council approved a purchase and sale agreement for the Commercial Street property during its April 1 meeting. The purchase price was not disclosed. Finally, Tribal Council approved applying for three grants from the Oregon Department of Education’s Early Learning Division to help fund pre-kindergarten, preschool and early childhood programs for underserved children under the age of 5. In other action, Tribal Council approved an interim intergovernmental agreement with the Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance, which includes Marion and Polk counties, the cities of Independence, Keizer, Monmouth and Salem, the Salem-Keizer School District and the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments.

Tribal Council also OK’d the agenda for the 11 a.m. Sunday, May 3, virtual General Council meeting that will discuss emergency management and preparedness. The General Council meeting will be held via the Zoom teleconferencing program. “I guess we’re making history,” said Vice Chair Chris Mercier about the Tribe’s first virtual General Council meeting. The entire 10 a.m. Tribal Council meeting can be viewed by visiting the Tribal government’s website at www.grandronde.org and clicking on the Government icon and then Videos. ■

Tribe receives funds to support Elders’ meal delivery

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will receive \$69,410 as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act to fund meal delivery and supportive services for Native American Elders, according to Oregon U.S. Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden. “The coronavirus poses unique risks and challenges to Elders in communities across Oregon, and some of these challenges are felt the hardest among Tribal communities,” Merkley said in an April 23 press release announcing the grant awards. “The federal government is not doing enough overall to help Tribes through this crisis, but I’m glad that these grants will help keep food on the table in these communities. But in the next bill Congress and the president need to get more resources to Tribal governments so that they can meet the critical needs of their members during the pandemic and recession.” Grants also were awarded to the Umatilla Tribe’s Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center and the Warm Springs, Klamath, Coos and Lower Umpqua and Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribes. The funds are being distributed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. During a Facebook Live event held on Wednesday, April 22, Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said that the Grand Ronde Tribe has received approximately \$1.1 million in dedicated funding from the federal government to deal with the Tribal response to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. ■



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