

Tribe honors Juneteenth commemoration as holiday

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde honored the Black Lives Matter movement by granting its governmental employees the day off on Friday, June 19, and encouraging them to reflect on the racial divisions currently occurring in the country.

General Manager David Fullerton announced the day off on Tuesday, June 16.

“Juneteenth ... has been celebrated by African-Americans since the late 1800s,” Fullerton said. “But, in recent years, and particularly following nationwide protests over the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and other African-Americans this year, there is a renewed interest in the day that celebrates freedom. This year’s celebration may resonate in new ways, given the sweeping changes and widespread protests across the U.S.”

“In honor of celebrating freedom and an opportunity for all to reflect, Tribal Council has declared Friday, June 19, 2020, Juneteenth a holiday for the Tribal government.”

The idea of the Grand Ronde Tribe honoring Juneteenth was mentioned by Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. during the Tuesday, June 16, Legislative Action Committee meeting. He said he had been contacted by several people regarding the issue.

“I’ve been contacted a couple of times regarding the proclamation of the abolishment of slavery,” Bobb said. “I’ve been asked if I would support a statement made by council in support of this proclamation. I was just wondering if that was something we could do ... and our support means that we are painfully aware of prejudice and hate as a Tribal people throughout the centuries. I

would like to see us support it.”

Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said it is hypocritical of the U.S. government to assert that Black Lives Matter protestors are overreacting when the history of the country is rife with instances of killing minorities, such as Native Americans and African-Americans, and stealing Native lands.

“Of course we’ll support that,” she said.

Juneteenth celebrates when the last slaves found out about the Emancipation Proclamation on June 19, 1865. The day commemorates the end of slavery in the United States.

Tribal Council released an official statement on social justice that said, in part, “As a Tribe, we stand for equality and condemn the systematic racism and oppression facing so many. These recent events remind us that injustice, violence and dehumanizing policies can still be found in every corner of this country. At times, confronting these injustices can seem too daunting a task. But our ancestors who were targeted by the anti-Indian policies of the federal government guided us through our own struggles. They taught us that there is strength on the other side of this struggle. There is hope when we all stand together. We are all someone’s son or daughter. Many of us are mothers and fathers. But most importantly, we are all human.”

“To those still struggling under the systematic racism found in this country, please know that there is strength beyond this struggle. The Grand Ronde Tribe stands with you.”

The city of Portland formally recognized June 19 as a paid holiday as well on Wednesday, June 17. ■

Grand Ronde Editorial Board position openings

The Grand Ronde Editorial Board, a Tribal board assigned the duty by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (“Grand Ronde”) of overseeing its independent Tribal press (*Smoke Signals*), invites applications to serve on the **Grand Ronde Editorial Board**. There are two open board positions: one is a full three-year term that expires in March 2023 and the other is to serve out the remainder of a term of a board member who resigned that expires in March 2022.

The five-member Grand Ronde Editorial Board is responsible to the Grand Ronde Tribal Council. It oversees the editor of *Smoke Signals* to ensure the independent Tribal press reports news free from any undue influence and free from any political interest, and that Tribal news employees adhere to the highest ethical journalistic standards.

The Editorial Board meets monthly. From time to time, additional special meetings may be held. Board members are expected to attend all meetings in person, although participation by telephone or video will be permitted on occasion. Each board member receives a monthly stipend for attending meetings. Travel reimbursement is limited to travel within the six counties of Polk, Yamhill, Marion, Tillamook, Multnomah and Washington.

Board members must be 18 years of age, have qualified experience in management and/or publications, be of good character and integrity, and certify that he or she will adhere to the standards of accepted ethics of journalism as defined by the Society of Professional Journalists and endorsed by the Native American Journalists Association. Experience with and knowledge of Native American organizations is also preferred, as well as dedication to protecting and advancing a free press for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

Applicants will be interviewed by the Grand Ronde Editorial Board before a recommendation is forwarded to Tribal Council for official appointment.

Preference will be given to qualified Tribal members.

Submission deadline: Friday, July 10, 2020

Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest describing their qualifications, a résumé and three references to:

Grand Ronde Editorial Board
c/o *Smoke Signals*
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
9615 Grand Ronde Road
Grand Ronde, OR 97347
Phone: 503.879.1463
E-mail: editorial.board@grandronde.org

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- Sponsored by Grand Ronde Children & Family Services
- You will need a computer or smart phone to access Google Classroom

Children & Family SERVICES

For more information, contact Joanna Brisbois at 503-879-2148

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