

Tribal Council votes to add 23 names to Restoration Roll

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

The Grand Ronde Tribe's effort to ensure that all Tribal members who should have been on the Restoration Roll are eventually placed on the historically important list continued as Tribal Council approved adding 23 more names to it during its Wednesday, Sept. 2, meeting.

The addition of 23 more names brings the total for this year to 78 additions to the Restoration Roll. In 2019, Tribal Council added 204 Tribal members to the roll.

The Restoration Roll was the first roll compiled of Grand Ronde Tribal members after Nov. 22, 1983. However, because the membership had become so dispersed during the 29 years of Termination, all those who should have been included could not be identified at the time or were unaware that they should have had their names on the roll.

The current process, which requires Tribal members apply for addition to the Restoration Roll, allows a Tribal member who was living on Aug. 13, 1954, and born to a member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to be added.

In November 2018, Tribal Council approved a resolution that established criteria for consistently applying the phrase "entitled to be on the membership roll of the Tribe on Aug. 13, 1954" as meaning that the person was entitled to be on the roll if that person was alive on that date and born to a Tribal member.

The 23 names now move forward to the Department of the Interior for approval.

Tribal Council also approved the agenda for the Sunday, Sept. 13, General Council meeting that was held remotely using Zoom. Spirit Mountain Casino General Manager Stan Dillon delivered his annual report in executive session.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved a \$209,223 contract with Scholten Construction of Willamina to expand the arbor at uyxat Powwow Grounds off Hebo Road. Tribal Council member Kathleen George said during the

Tuesday, Sept. 1, Legislative Action Committee hearing that the expansion of the dancing circle is the first phase of a larger project to make the powwow grounds big enough to accommodate the crowds that participate during the August Contest Powwow;

- Approved an emergency amendment to the Tribal Housing Ordinance that will allow the Tribe to use a Housing & Urban Development program to expedite the foreclosure process for homes in Grand Meadows should a tenant be in default of their lease at the 36-lot manufactured home subdivision;
- Approved the Sawtooth timber harvest as presented by the Natural Resources Department that is projected to net the Tribe approximately \$302,000 after expenses and fees;
- And approved the enrollment of one infant into the Tribe because he or she meets the requirements outlined in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance. Also included in the Sept. 2 Tribal Council packet were approved authorizations to proceed that:

- Allows Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe to petition the Indian Health Service to expand the Tribe's Contract Health Service Delivery Area to include Clackamas County, which is home to 170 enrolled Tribal members;
- Allows the hiring of a temporary position within the Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department that will be dedicated to patrolling Tribal lands;
- Hires Reece and Associates of Albany for engineering, design and construction services on the home ownership project;
- And approves the hiring of 11 Education Department staff members and funding the positions with CARES Act monies through the end of the year.

To watch the entire meeting, visit the Tribal government's website at www.grandronde.org and click on the Government tab and Videos. ■

Tribal Council OKs three fall rounds of virus relief payments

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Adult Tribal members will see another series of three virus relief payments totaling \$1,800 from September through November.

Because of extreme fire danger in western Oregon that closed the Tribal Government Center for five consecutive days, Tribal Council met virtually and approved a fourth supplemental budget on Wednesday, Sept. 9, that will allocate \$7.5 million that the Tribe received in federal funding to pay for the virus relief payments.

The approximately 4,500 adult Tribal members will receive \$600 each month.

The funding comes from the Tribe's share of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act monies. Although the Tribe has not disclosed exactly how much it has received in CARES Act funding, a Harvard study estimated the amount is approximately \$33 million based on the U.S. Treasury's public formula for determining allocations to Tribes.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier announced the extension of the Tribe's COVID-19 Payment Relief Program during the Wednesday, Aug. 19, Tribal Council meeting. Using CARES Act funding, the Tribe will have dispersed \$4,400 in relief funding to adult Tribal members since

March, which is \$250 less than all of the per capita payments distributed in 2019.

Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez said Tribal members will have to fill out another application to receive the October and November payments and that the application will be available in mid- to late September.

The fall disbursements will bring the total number of coronavirus relief payments to eight and help Tribal members affected by the pandemic and the absence of June and September per capita distributions because Spirit Mountain Casino was closed from mid-March through May 31.

The payments are classified as general welfare disbursements and are not taxable.

Tribal Council approved the first supplemental \$1.8 million budget on April 23 and \$400 payments were mailed out and deposited directly into Tribal members' bank accounts on April 29.

Tribal Council approved a second \$1.9 million supplemental budget on May 21 that sent another \$400 virus relief payment to adult Tribal members.

The third \$8.1 million supplemental budget was approved on June 18 and allocated \$600 to each adult Tribal member in June, July and August. ■

General Council briefed on Spirit Mountain Casino in virtual executive session

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Spirit Mountain Casino General Manager Stan Dillon and Spirit Mountain Casino Executive Marketing Director Shawna Ridgebear gave the first presentation of the new General Council meeting cycle on Sunday, Sept. 13, via the Zoom teleconferencing program.

The presentation before approximately 80 Tribal members was in executive session, which *Smoke Signals* was not allowed to attend.

Spirit Mountain Casino, the Tribe's primary economic engine, has been open since June 1 following an unprecedented 74-day closure that started in mid-March.

September's meeting marked the second time that General Council has been held virtually. The April General Council meeting scheduled to be held in Eugene was canceled after the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic erupted in Oregon and the May General Council meeting was held using Zoom.

Large indoor gatherings are


still being discouraged because of the continuing COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

In other action, Election Board Vice Chair Michael Mercier delivered the Tribal Council election results from Saturday, Sept. 12, that saw all three incumbents – Chris Mercier, Michael Langley and Lisa Leno – re-elected to three-year terms.

The next General Council meeting will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 4, in the Tribal Community Center or, more likely, using the Zoom teleconferencing program.

General Council opened with an invocation delivered by Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George.

The non-executive session portion of the meeting can be viewed by visiting the Tribal government's website at www.grandronde.org and clicking on the Government tab and then Videos. Tribal members wanting to see the executive session portion should contact Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez at stacia.martin@grandronde.org or by calling 503-879-2304. ■



CULTURAL EDUCATION

❖❖❖❖❖❖

Are you missing out on what Cultural Education has to offer? Follow us on Facebook to get detailed class information, photos from events, and updates.

Plus, check out the tribal calendar for a quick glance of upcoming events and classes.

Open to Tribal and Community members. Join us!

❖❖❖❖❖❖

[Search Facebook for Grand Ronde Cultural Education](#)
[Tribal Calendar // www.grandronde.org/tribal-calendar](http://www.grandronde.org/tribal-calendar)