

Tribal Council OKs grant applications to get fire department running

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved three grant applications during its Wednesday, March 10, meeting that seek funds to help transition the local fire station at McPherson and Grand Ronde roads from West Valley Fire District supervision to Tribal control.

The first, and largest, grant application is for \$2.89 million that would fund 12 firefighters for three years. The grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency would fund six firefighters who are also paramedics and six firefighter/emergency medical technicians.

Emergency Operations Coordinator Steve Warden said during the Tuesday, March 9, Legislative Action Committee hearing that the grant would bring on Tribal staff faster and better prepare the Tribe to assume firefighting and emergency medical response calls in the Grand Ronde area once the transition is complete.

The second grant would pay for a full-time position with the Tribe for four years. The \$501,731 FEMA grant would fund a volunteer coordinator and trainer within the Tribe's Emergency Services Department who would help analyze volunteer firefighting trends and recruit volunteer firefighters.

The third grant is requesting \$200,000 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration to fund rural emergency medical services training that would be held in the Grand Ronde area. Warden said it is sometimes difficult for rural fire departments to send their employees far away for training.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will be responsible for fire and emergency medical response in the community by 2025, according to a five-year transition

Tribe's new Small Loan Program has already received 17 applications since March 8.

plan approved by Tribal Council in July 2020.

As early as December 2019, the Tribe expressed its desire to add fire to its growing list of sovereign nation public safety responsibilities that currently include operating its own police department and emergency management office.

Tribal Council approved an authorization to proceed that instructed General Manager David Fullerton to renegotiate a memorandum of understanding with the West Valley Fire District to include a "comprehensive transition plan" for the Grand Ronde Tribe to assume operations of the fire station.

Fullerton also was directed to oversee the transition plan and re-organize the Emergency Management Program now located at the Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department to assume fire station operations.

The Tribe and West Valley Fire District signed an intergovernmental agreement in July 2009 to build and operate the fire station in Grand Ronde. The \$1 million fire station opened in June 2010, substantially reducing response times for fire and medical emergencies in the Grand Ronde area.

The Tribe has already applied for several federal grants that would help purchase myriad firefighting equipment and an ambulance for the local fire station.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved a purchase and sale agreement for the Tribe to buy the 108-acre Takilth property at the confluence of Mill and Goose

neck creeks in Polk County. The land will be purchased as part of the Bonneville Power Administration's Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program and bring the total number of conservation property acres the Tribe has obtained since 2012 to 1,993. "This is a really great property for our conservation efforts," Tribal Lands Manager Jan Michael Reibach said during the Tuesday, March 9, Legislative Action Committee meeting;

- Approved a \$1 million grant agreement for continued COVID-19 response funding from the state of Oregon. The Oregon Legislative Emergency Board allocated \$1 million to each of the state's nine federally recognized Tribes for needs arising out of the pandemic and associated economic hardships;
- Approved a second amendment on a contract with the Environmental Protection Agency that would add a maximum \$126,000 to an already approved \$100,000 that funds the Tribe's work as a technical consultant regarding Portland Harbor superfund site cleanup;
- Approved a Tribal application to the State Fire Marshal's Office that would award a wildland urban interface grant that would cover supplies, training, equipment and communications equipment. Planning & Grants Manager Kim Rogers said the grant is worth \$25,500 per fire engine for a maximum of three engines;

- Approved a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Northwest Region that will reimburse the Natural Resources Department for wildland fire services and support through Dec. 31, 2025;
- Approved a memorandum of understanding with the Yamhill County Housing Authority that will provide one housing voucher per month to a participant involved in the Tribe's Warriors of Hope Program, which assists victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse;
- And approved the enrollment of one infant into the Tribe because he or she meets the requirements outlined in the Enrollment Ordinance and Tribal Constitution.

Also included in the March 10 Tribal Council packet was an approved authorization to proceed directing the Natural Resources Department to submit an application to the Bonneville Power Administration's Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program to acquire the 80-acre Chahalpam 4 conservation property in Marion County. The Tribe already has acquired three other Chahalpam properties through the program that total 548 acres.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier also said that the Tribe's new Small Loan Program, which started on Monday, March 8, has already received 17 applications. The program allows Tribal members to borrow up to \$1,000 from the Tribe with two years to pay the loan back. The program was created to give Tribal members an option besides going to predatory, high-interest loan providers.

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



ANGEL BOOKKEEPING LLC

Karen Case 971-237-1230
 930 SW Bales Ave., Willamina, OR 97396
angelbookkeepingllc@gmail.com

UPDATE FROM:
ANGEL BOOKKEEPING LLC – Karen Case

The Federal Tax Deadline to file is April 15, 2021

You are valued and please be assured we continue to be available to care for all your tax needs during this time of encouraged social distancing.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, we will not be scheduling any appointments in person at the Confederated Tribes in Grand Ronde, but will be available in the Willamina home office location.

We will continue to be doing taxes and accepting your documents via email, mail, drop-off, or by appointment at the Willamina home office location.

We are sorry for this inconvenience and encourage you to stay safe and healthy.

You may contact us at 971-237-1230

ANGEL BOOKKEEPING LLC
 Karen Case
 930 SW Bales Ave.
 Willamina, OR 97396
angelbookkeepingllc@gmail.com

T-SHIRT DESIGN

Contest

Accepting Submissions
Until...
March 31st

Submit a drawing or sketch
of what you feel best
represents a
Wellness Warrior!

SHOW US YOUR
CREATIVITY

WINNER WILL RECEIVE A
\$50 GIFT CARD & A
HOODIE WITH THEIR
DESIGN ON IT!



Submit your design to Youth Empowerment and Prevention:
angey.rideout@grandronde.org

Questions call Angey
503.879.4533

The winning design will be printed the hoodies that will be given out at the Mental Health Awareness Walk in May, and used through the next year!