

Facebook Live concentrates on Tribal housing projects

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's myriad efforts to provide housing to its members was the topic of the first Facebook Live event held in 2023 on Wednesday, March 22.

Moderated by Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier, the 43-minute session featured Housing Department Manager Shonn Leno, Engineering & Planning Manager Ryan Webb and Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe briefing approximately 60 viewers on Tribal efforts to provide housing and combat homelessness.

Leno said Tribal Housing currently has 85 people on waiting lists for either market rate, low-income or Elder housing availability. The largest waiting lists are for those seeking one-bedroom units with 40 people and those seeking Elder housing with 30 people 55 or older.

Webb then provided an overview of the Tribal projects currently underway or proposed to address those waiting for housing.

The Creekside Elder Housing project at the southwest corner of Hebo and Grand Ronde roads will include 24 energy-efficient units that are two-bedroom, one-bath homes of about 1,100 square feet each. Six of the units are designated for low-income Elders and the other 18 are market rate.

Webb said the first Creekside units will be complete in May and they all should be available for occupancy by September.

The Tribe's home ownership project at the east end of McPherson Road in Grand Ronde is proceeding with 20 single-family homes being built, Webb said. Five of the homes are being constructed by Tribal members with mortgage financing and 15 are being built by the Tribe after Tribal Council approved a



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

The Creekside Elder Housing project under construction at the southwest corner of Hebo and Grand Ronde roads was discussed during the Facebook Live event held on Wednesday, March 22. The first Creekside units will be complete in May and they all should be available for occupancy by September.

\$6.85 million contract with Scholten Construction of Willamina on Feb. 22.

Later during the event, Webb said he still needs to discuss with Tribal Council whether the 15 Tribally built homes will be rented or sold.

Leno said that anyone interested in building a house as part of the home ownership project should contact the Housing Department, which will then forward the Tribal member's contact information to the Salem mortgage company that the Tribe is working with.

Webb added that the second phase of the home ownership project will see the remaining 32 single-family homes built.

For non-Elder Tribal members who don't need a house, the Wind River Apartments off Tyee Road will continue to be built. Webb said that future four-unit apartment buildings will feature more one-bedroom units to house single Tribal members.

Police Department and the Food Bank on the west side of Grand Ronde Road.

Rowe said the units filled up quickly and there is currently a waiting list. A second tiny shelter site will be located near the old community garden in Grand Ronde.

To qualify for the tiny shelters, a person must be a Grand Ronde Tribal member, spouse or parent of a Tribal member.

"We've had a lot of feedback from the guests who are very thankful for being able to find this shelter and not be living in their vehicles or in tents," Rowe said.

The three representatives fielded about seven questions from the Facebook Live audience.

"There's a big effort and a lot of support from Tribal Council to really push getting those wait lists down and building more housing for the community," Webb said.

Mercier concluded the event by saying that he still backs a Tribally subsidized grocery store in Grand Ronde. Even though it did not pencil out financially when a feasibility study was conducted about eight years ago, he said he would not be averse to re-examining the issue.

"I still like the idea of a grocery store," Mercier said. "I know too many people get their food from convenience stores, and there's a reason they are called convenience stores. It is convenience and it's certainly not the price that you get a bargain on there. There's nothing to stop us from evaluating again whether the community can support a grocery store. I think one deserves the right to have access to healthy food that won't break your wallet."

To watch the entire Facebook Live event, visit the Tribal government's Facebook page or search for "Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde" on the website. ■

Healing Circle
Spring A Time of Restart
 A time of cleansing our minds, body, and spirits. Coming together for new beginnings and fresh ideas for Spring!
 When: April 10th, 2023
 Time: 11am
 Where: 4445 SW Barbur Blvd #101, Portland, OR 97239

Tribal Veterans Service Office
2023 Claim Appointment Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Thursday
By scheduled appointment only	By scheduled appointment only	Walk-in claim appointments

To schedule a claim appointment:
 call (503) 879-1484 or email
CTGRtribalVSO@GrandRonde.Org

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