

Tribal Council establishes enterprise funds for fire department, TERO

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals assistant editor/staff writer

Tribal Council established enterprise funds for two Tribal departments during its Wednesday, May 3, meeting.

Enterprise funds allow revenue-generating programs within the Tribe to retain those funds and reinvest them into their departments, Interim General Manager and Finance Officer Chris Leno said.

In 2022, the Tribal Employment Rights Office and the Tribal Fire Station generated \$1.31 million and \$75,521 in various fees, respectively.

During a Legislative Action Committee meeting on Tuesday, April 25, Tribal Council Secretary Michael Langley said that TERO fees were never meant to create revenue for the Tribe and that establishing enterprise funds allows the program to have steady funding levels.

“The funds generated allow the department to keep consistent in its training dollars for our members,” Langley said. “I am really happy about this change.”

TERO Director Harris Reibach thanked council members during the same meeting.

“Establishment of this fund will help ensure we can continue to fund ourselves and ensure sovereignty in TERO,” he said.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved applying for a \$2.5

million development and implementation grant from the Administration for Children & Families for a Tribal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program;

- Approved three credit cards for the Youth Education Department with \$2,500 credit limits on each;
- Approved applying for a five-year, \$1.25 million continuation grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration that will fund the Tribe’s Native Connections program;
- And approved re-appointing Joann Mercier and Michael Mercier and appointing Lori Sterling to the Election Board with terms expiring on March 31, 2025.

Two approved authorizations to proceed also were included in the May 3 Tribal Council packet. One approved the Natural Resources Department building and maintaining a small trail near the tiny shelter village adjacent to the community garden site. The other OK’d applying for a \$31,380.30 Wildfire Season Staffing grant that will pay for personnel costs for additional seasonal firefighters during the high-risk fire season.

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

Tribe rehires former general manager David Fullerton in new position

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Former General Manager David Fullerton, who was relieved of his duties on Jan. 13, did not stay unemployed for long.

Less than four months later, Fullerton has been hired as the new Community Transitions Program manager for the Health & Wellness Department, according to an all-employee e-mail distributed on Tuesday, May 9.

Fullerton’s new duties will be ensuring the community transition properties are developed and ready for occupancy. He also is accountable for establishing program policies and procedures for the transitional housing sites supported by Health & Wellness.

No official reason for Fullerton’s termination as general manager was given since personnel matters are considered confidential.

The general manager, who is a direct report to the nine-member Tribal Council, exercises direct authority over most Tribal departments in carrying out day-to-day operations of the Tribal government.

Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said during the Jan. 25 Tribal Council meeting that the decision to dismiss Fullerton was not unanimous. Following his termination as general manager, Fullerton received support from community members who signed a petition and spoke at Tribal Council meetings.

An online petition calling for Tribal Council to reconsider Fullerton’s “without cause” termination was posted at ipetitions.com and more than 330 people e-signed it. Former Tribal Council member Tonya Gleason-Shepek presented the petition to Tribal Council during its Jan. 25 meeting.

Fullerton became interim general manager in 2015 and offi-



David Fullerton

cially became general manager in January 2016.

During his tenure as general manager, Fullerton guided the

Tribe through the COVID-19 pandemic, which broke in March 2020. An emergency declaration approved by Tribal Council put him in charge of the Tribe’s response to the pandemic. The emergency declaration is still in effect.

Fullerton started working for the Grand Ronde Tribe in June 2001 as an Indian Child Welfare caseworker. He managed the Social Services Department from December 2001 through late August 2015 when he was tapped to serve as interim general manager.

Before joining the Grand Ronde Tribe, Fullerton was the Social Services director for the Quinault Indian Nation in Washington state. He also worked as a probation officer for the Lake County Youth Court in Poulson, Mont., and as a sociology instructor for Stone Child Tribal College on the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation in Montana.

Fullerton earned a bachelor’s degree in sociology from the University of Montana in Missoula, where he minored in both Native American studies and criminology. He also has a master’s in business administration from Western Governors University, an online college located in Millcreek, Utah. He graduated from Jesuit High School in Portland, Ore.

Finance Officer Chris Leno has assumed the general manager duties until a new person is hired. He has previously served in the general manager position and stated he does not want to return to the position permanently. ■

2023

MARCELLUS NORWEST MEMORIAL VETERANS POWWOW



LOGO CONTEST

The Veterans Special Event Board is seeking submissions for the 2023 Veterans Powwow logo contest.

• \$200 Cash Prize • Due by May 31, 2023

Submit to lisa.schmid@grandronde.org or drop off at the front desk of the governance building. For more information please call 503-879-1446.

Print ready files preferred but not required.

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

Community Health Program Services

Medical Transport Services

Medical transportation services are available to Tribal members within the six-county service area when an alternate means of transportation is not available. Advance notice required.

Please call 503-879-2078 to schedule a reservation.

