

Facebook Live event introduces Economic Development Director

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

A Facebook Live event on Wednesday, Dec. 18, served to introduce the Tribe's new Economic Development Director Mike Cully, and to allow Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe to provide an update for members. Rowe will deliver a more comprehensive report at the next General Council meeting on Sunday, Jan. 5.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier attended the event.

Some members had questions about the new constitutional amendment on enrollment, but Communications Director Sara

Thompson explained that the Tribe is still waiting for the election results to be certified before it begins addressing how the amendment will be implemented.

Several others, however, had questions for either Cully or Rowe.

Cully, who started in August, said he is excited to be working for the Tribe, and sees both large and small opportunities. For example, he said, one of his goals is to get a coffee shop built on the campus, so that khofi haws operator Ariel Hunt would not have to rely on the small trailer she operates out of now.

"Any support that I can offer to

the entrepreneurs in this community, I'm all for it," Cully said. "(My position) is a fantastic opportunity to build some generational wealth for the Tribe and do some things that are long overdue."

Rowe said that Health and Wellness plans a soft opening for the new residential drug recovery center in Sheridan this month, followed by opening fully in February. Earlier in the week, the department had held a kickoff ceremony for construction of the planned renovation of a second center in Salem, she said.

The centers will improve Great Circle Recovery Clinic's ability to effectively treat Tribal members who need to detox from some types of drugs, while taking methadone for an overall addiction, Rowe said.

She assured people watching that her department is closely tracking news of the incoming Trump administration's plans and making budget plans of its own, something she said it does with every new administration.

"For us, we're always looking at the 'what ifs' to make sure that if something does happen, we have

the resources stashed away," Rowe said. "That's not something we take lightly."

Cully said that his first goal is to develop an over-arching plan for the Tribe's economic development, along with guidelines for the Tribal Council for evaluating new economic opportunities.

In addition, he said, he is meeting with consultants and working with the casino and the Tribe on ideas for reducing reliance on the electrical grid and adding agricultural opportunities.

"Being self-sufficient with agriculture is another of my goals," Cully said.

He said the casino uses 19 million kilowatt hours of power a year. "That's a huge power bill," he said. "If we can put a microgrid in, and solar power to back it up, that's just as good as creating revenue."

Rowe took three questions from audience members and Cully took six.

The Tribe began hosting Facebook Live events during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and these have continued intermittently and cover a variety of topics. ■

'Our hatcheries have reached a tipping point'

SALMON continued from page 6

ies) off altogether because they are what's going to be needed to re-establish the populations," he said.

ODFW Communications Coordinator Michelle Denahey said the state is facing some hard questions about its hatchery program.

"Our hatcheries have reached a tipping point," she said. "Many were built in the 1950s and have a backlog of deferred maintenance."

A nearby example is the Salmon River Hatchery in Otis, which needs a fish weir replaced for an estimated \$12,000 to \$15,000, but

which is also increasingly vulnerable to flooding.

"We're seeing increased water temperatures, which are a problem for rearing cold-water fish like steelhead, salmon and trout," Denahey said. "We're also facing, like everyone, inflationary pressures. For example, fish food costs are rising 5% each biennium and utility costs are also going up...Hatcheries are the single biggest expense of the fish division budget, about 40% of that budget."

The agency plans to spend this winter compiling a report on hatcheries' future viability for the state Legislature. ■

Tribal nonemergency text

The Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department has a nonemergency text line at 541-921-2927.

"If you have a nonemergency situation or question, feel free to contact my officer via text through this line," said Grand Ronde Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight.

McKnight said that emergency situations still require calling 911. For more information, contact McKnight at 503-879-1474. ■

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & PREVENTION

JANUARY - MARCH 2025 EVENTS

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
<p><u>Chinuk Winter Gathering</u> Dates: TBD</p> <p><u>Round Dance Gift Making</u> Dates: 1/8 - 3:30-6:30 1/15 - 11:30-1:30 1/22 - 3:30-6:30 1/29 - 11:30-1:30 Location: Community Center</p> <p><u>Stick Game</u> Dates: 1/16 - 3:30-5:15 1/30 - 3:30-5:15 Location: Youth Ed. Building J</p>	<p><u>Love Rocks</u> Date: 2/14 - 11am-2pm Location: Community Center</p> <p><u>Unity Conference</u> Date: 2/6-2/9 Location: Arizona</p> <p><u>Youth Native Wellness Day</u> Date: 2/28 9am - 4pm Location: Tribal Gym</p> <p><u>Agency Creek Round Dance</u> Date: 2/28 starting at 5pm Location: Tribal Gym</p> <p><u>Stick Game</u> Dates: 2/11 - 3:30-5:15 2/27 - 3:30-5:15 Location: Youth Ed. Building J</p>	<p><u>Agency Creek Round Dance</u> Date: 3/1 starting at 6pm Location: Tribal Gym</p> <p><u>9 Tribes Youth Prevention Camp</u> Date: 3/24-3/28 Location: TBD</p> <p><u>Canoe Journey Prep</u> Dates: TBD</p> <p><u>Stick Game</u> Dates: 3/13 - 3:30-5:15 Location: Youth Ed. Building J</p>

***All events are subject to change, please look out for our official fliers on the Youth Empowerment & Prevention Facebook page.**