

Grants team addresses planning and federal grants

By Nicole Montesano
& Katherine Warren

Smoke Signals staff members

The Tribe’s Grants Management team provided an update on the status of the Tribe’s various federal grants in a community forum held Tuesday, July 8.

Since the Trump administration came into office in late January, it has rescinded congressionally approved grants and slashed funding for projects nationwide. Engineering & Community Development Department Manager Ryan Webb, Community Development Manager Kristen Svicarovich and Grants Program Manager Wendy Sparks explained that the Tribe is pursuing multiple avenues to try to keep its programs and plans intact, including in one case, potentially suing the federal government.

Tribal Council members in attendance included Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier, Secretary Jon A. George and council members Matthew Haller, Kathleen George and Lisa Leno.

“As a lot of people know, there has been a lot of upheaval at the federal level and it has been affecting us at different levels,” Mercier told the audience. “We’ve had a number of Tribal members and community members reach out to us, wanting to know the impacts of these various federal cuts and executive orders and while it hasn’t affected us as drastically as it has some other entities, as you’ll see from some of the presentation tonight, it has affected us. There’s one in particular that I think will probably bother some people, but you know, this is why the Tribe needs to contest some of this stuff.”

Although the Tribe is taking the cuts seriously, “We still control a lot of our own destiny, regardless of what happens at the federal level, but we also believe in being

One of the cancelled grants was \$20 million for the Tribe’s new resident and recreation center. The estimated cost for the 47,000-square-foot building and indoor amenities ranges between \$22 million and \$25.5 million, depending on the options offered.

prepared and to inform our membership about what some of those possible changes might be,” Mercier said.

One of the cancelled grants was \$20 million for the Tribe’s new resident and recreation center. As of late 2024, the Tribe had secured a total of \$27.5 million in grants and other funding.

The estimated cost for the 47,000-square-foot building and indoor amenities ranges between \$22 million and \$25.5 million, depending on the options offered.

Webb said the Tribe isn’t just accepting the loss. He noted that the grants team is “able to pivot quickly to look at other opportunities that may arise out of the administration or even at state level or private foundations or nonprofits, and how we can continue to provide for the membership and the community.”

In the case of the cancelled \$20 million recreation center construction grant, the Tribe is considering contesting the cancellation.

“We have been working with our legal department,” Webb said. “Other grantees are responding in the courts, and they are being successful with that. So, they are taking this to court and through litigation they are able to get those funds reinstated, and so we’re working with our legal team; in fact, I had conversations today about what those next steps are to make sure that we can be successful as well, if that’s what we pursue to

get that grant reinstated.”

In 2024, the Tribe received “historical levels” of funding, Sparks said — \$62 million total, or 43% of the total \$142 million it applied for.

“That’s really unusual, but it’s also indicative of how much funding was available and the incredible support we received from Tribal Council,” she said.

The Tribe’s strong history of successful grant applications contributed to its ability to secure new ones, Sparks added, and it searches intensively for new grant opportunities.

The Health & Wellness Department is the largest grant recipients, Sparks said, and in addition, “There are lots of opportunities for funding” the Tribe’s preschool and other educational programs this year.

Last year, the Tribe received funding for building new housing and the new Early Care and Education Center, as well as funding to operate the Warriors of Hope program, language immersion and education and academic coaching.

“Recently, we also received funding to begin the restoration of the historic train depot as well,” Sparks said.

The Tribe has worked over the past few years to create long-term plans to help guide its grant applications, Svicarovich said. This includes utility master plans, a climate action plan, transportation plans and a natural resource management plan, all either completed or underway. The plans help to clarify what funds are needed for which projects.

Despite the many cuts, the Tribe is also seeing funding made available for community policing and energy sovereignty.

“Local foundations have been coming forward with more opportunities to provide support and the state of Oregon has been generous in helping us plan for future funding as well,” Svicarovich said.

Applying for federal grants has become more challenging, however, as the government has cut the application time from six to eight weeks, to just four weeks, she said.

Sparks said it’s unclear whether or how the loss of USDA school funds will be offset.

“Once we determined that USDA funds were going to be cut it became a priority” to seek alternative funds, she said.

The Tribe is also looking for funding to replace the monthly Healthy Food Boxes, Webb said.

Executive Director of Health Services Kelly Rowe said that “The Tribe is still waiting to hear from the FDA or from a number of local grants they applied for to support the Healthy Food Box distributions.” ■

Produce Market date changes

August 14
&
August 21

Elder Activity Center
Noon to 2 p.m.



HEALTH & WELLNESS
CENTER

NEW SIGN AT THE HWC

THE DESIGNATED AREA IN
FRONT OF THE CLINIC IS FOR
LOADING AND UNLOADING
ONLY.



PICK-UP
AND
DROP-OFF
ONLY

NO PARKING



FIGHT DRUG OVERDOSE
#OPIOIDAWARENESS



Join Us for an

Overdose Awareness BBQ

On August 28th @ 12 ~ 2 PM

At the Cheryl Kennedy Public Health Building

Come together to honor, heal, and raise awareness.

Enjoy free BBQ, connection, resources, and a shared commitment
to recovery and remembrance.

All are welcome

