SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WOOD VILLAGE CITY COUNCIL
November 2, 2015
MINUTES

PRESENT: Mayor Patricia Smith, Council President Tim Clark, Councilors Scott Harden, Bruce Nissen, and Jimmy Frank, Grand Ronde Tribal Members Chair Reyn Leno, Tonya Gleason-Shepek, Brenda Tuomi, Ed Pearsall, and Jon George

MAYOR SMITH CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:00 PM.
Mayor Smith and the Council welcomed Chari Leno and the Councilors from the Grand Ronde. Leno stated that the welcome goes both ways as this area is native lands to the Grand Ronde. Leno stated that as things move forward it is important for people to know what the Grand Ronde is all about. Leno invited the Council to tour their governance center, health clinic, and housing units. Leno explained that they are not just a casino. Leno stated that the casino helps take care of the tribal members which number over 5,000.

Leno stated that they do not know what will be built at the dog track site, and gaming has not been taken off the table. Leno explained that their first step will be to level the site, and then work with the City on what could be developed. Leno stated that they are looking for a long term investment to fund their endowments. Leno explained that the tribe is excited about this opportunity, and have not taken on a project like this before.

Leno stated that the Grand Ronde has a large investment in their casino, and they are about to take on a refurbishment project. The casino supplies over 1,400 jobs, and the tribe is looking to protect that investment as well. Leno explained that something could be done at the site to market Spirit Mountain, but nothing specific has been looked at yet. Leno stated that the tribe will develop a mission statement for the project, and hopefully the City will be interested in taking part in that process. Leno stated that in addition to having a developer who is vested in the area, this project will also supply jobs.

Smith asked if local jobs would be available for this project. Leno stated that there would be local jobs available, and the Grand Ronde is focusing on further job creation for members.

Pearsall stated that their goal is to be a good working partner, and they have a good track record of working with people. Leno explained that the tribe has learned a lot since building and operating the casino. The tribe took it upon themselves to learn how to run and operate a casino instead of hiring a management company. Leno stated that the community took care of the tribe when they were first restored, and now they are taking care of the community. Leno explained

that working with the community is first, and you cannot be successful unless you work with the community.

George stated that he is interested in what the Council has been asked about the sale of the property. Smith stated that most questions have been about a casino. George explained that part of this meeting is to help clarify questions from the Council and community. George asked if there was anything the tribe could do to help answer questions that have come up. Smith stated that the main questions have been about a casino, and if the building was going to be removed.

Clark stated that there is the short term project of removing the building, and asked about the creation of a development plan and what would be included. Leno stated that if the question is if the tribe has made plans for a casino, the answer is no. Leno explained that the tribe has a huge investment in Spirit Mountain, and Multnomah County is not part of the land trust classification. Leno stated that there would be major hurdles to go through to place a casino on this site. Clark stated that while clearing the site will be an improvement, he does not want the site to remain empty for the next 20 years either. Leno stated that while there will be a process to form a mission statement and to find a developer, it does not take the tribe long to build projects. Once all the pieces are put together, the project will be huge.

Clark asked about the status of the Town Center study. Peterson stated that the project is underway, and some of the first papers have been completed. Peterson explained that members of the tribe have been appointed to the citizen's advisory committee, and the technical advisory committee for the project. Clark stated that he just wants all the parties to be on the same page. Leno stated that the hope is to start the demolition in January.

Harden stated that there are a lot of tribal members who live in the Portland area, and asked if they have identified any needs that this property may serve. Leno stated that the tribe was in the position to purchase the property. There is a community meeting once a year, and ideas for this property may come from that meeting. Leno explained that the tribe has built about 200 homes in Grand Ronde, and they have also built their governance structure, health clinic, and education complex.

Gleason-Shepek stated that their members are the number one priority, and she has not heard from any of the members from this area. This property may be better served as an economical investment for the tribes. Harden asked about the other investment lands or developments that the tribe owns. Leno stated that the tribe owns an office complex in Portland, the Cherry City Mall in Salem, and timber land in Tillamook County. Leno explained that they were a timber tribe before they were a casino tribe. Leno stated that the tribal members are excited about this opportunity, but no one has really had a chance to think about the development options yet.

Harden asked how their other investments have been working, and if any of them could be expanded here. Leno explained that some of their other investments led to cost savings for tribal members. Leno stated that their membership had asked for a diversification in investments, but they have to be the right kind of investments. Harden asked if the tribe is looking at other property as well. Leno stated that has not come up, but they will not limit themselves to just one site. Leno explained that they are looking at the security of their endowments, and plan for a future with less gaming.

Harden asked about the healthcare and educational benefits for tribal members. Leno explained that casino revenues are distributed on a per capita basis. Other income sources come from their logging operation which last year brought in over seven million board feet. Leno stated that they operate a responsible and sustainable logging operation, and have their own natural resources department. Leno stated that he feels that some of the tribe's ceremonial hunting rights were restored because of their natural resources department.

Gleason-Shepek stated that gaming and timber revenues are their main sources of income. That is followed by the Cherry City Mall, and the other income properties. Gleason-Shepek explained that those funds are used for the general fund, and tribal members get a per capital share of gaming revenues and a timber distribution.

Nissen stated that he appreciates the invitation, and is looking forward to a tour of the Grand Ronde community. Leno stated that they will work to get the tour scheduled. Leno explained that the tribe is very community oriented, and contributed over $4 million to the Dundee bypass.

Frank stated that he likes the fact that the tribe does not yet have a clear idea for the site as that will allow a collaborative effort to take place. A lot of good can come from that process. Frank stated that removing the building will be a big improvement, and is excited about the development potential. Frank asked about the gaming revenues and trends. Leno stated that they study gaming daily, and new trends emerge all the time. Leno explained that even in 2008 people would come to the casino to have a good time. There are not as many big players, but there are more players coming to the casino. Leno stated that they see a lot of blue collar workers coming to the casino.

Pearsall stated that the main goal is to diversify their investments, and be a good partner. Harden stated that there was a recent article about tribal casinos, and how they might have moved away from their original intent. Harden asked about their original goals for the casino, and the filing against the Cowlitz Tribe for a casino. Leno stated that some of that is still being litigated, but he is not in favor of shopping for a casino site. Leno explained that their casino is on their reservation, and they would support a Cowlitz casino if it were moved back to the reservation

land. Leno stated that they do not feel like their casino has moved away from the original intent, and they can fund a lot of their endowments with the revenues.

Smith asked if the tribe was looking at housing options for the site. Leno stated that he has heard some discussion about housing, but nothing has been set for this site. Leno explained that the tribe operates low-income and elder housing, and operate their own housing department. Smith stated that the City has some incentives for vertical housing. Smith explained that her dream for the site would be a family friendly entertainment center with a water park or movie theater, and sit-down restaurants. Smith stated she would like to see a place where the whole family can have a good time.

Smith thanked the tribal members for coming, and stated that she is looking forward to a tour of their community. Leno thanked the Council for the opportunity to meet.

ADJOURN

With no further business coming before the Council, the Council adjourned at 6:51pm.

Patricia Smith
Mayor

12-8-15
Date

ATTEST:

Greg Dirks