

January 27th General Body Meeting Notes

Russell Harper offered the opening prayer at 9:55 a.m.

Jim Peters discussed drugs and meth houses on the reservation, and what the community can do to help eliminate the drug problem.

Vicki Kruger read her concerns to Council:

Why does the Council feel that financial details should not be shared with the community, especially during times of change, do they not trust that we will understand the information?

Not giving the community the facts leads to gossip.

What was the original loan amount?

Did we as of yesterday have enough money on the loan to finish the hotel?

Whose responsibility was it to oversee the fiscal responsibility of the casino?

Did LCOB ask the CEO the right questions?

Even if the CEO lied, why were the LCOB members not able to ask the questions to get the truth?

Why, if the community asks for an enrollment committee, a committee has not been established?

Also asked for support for four fluent language teachers

Concern regarding the failing pump in the sewer system.

Nursing facilities for elders in place of a nursing home.

Concerns of lack of emergency planning for elders when power goes out.

Hosting the 2012 canoe journey, why is there no planning being done to accommodate up to 10,000 people?

Ray Peters announced that Council would honor Dave Whitener Sr., with a Pendleton blanket, in honor of his years of service to the Tribe. Ray read a chronological order of his years served. Council would like to have a dinner in honor of Dave.

Open Mic. Tribal members stood up to say a few words to Dave.

Jim thanked Dave for his dedication.

Jim brought the meeting back to order at 11:00 a.m. Jim reported on the enrollment committee. The enrollment office researched and presented the advantages and disadvantages of an enrollment committee to Council. Council really wants to make the right decision, and is still looking in to it.

Cal Peters is seeking answers to these concerns soon, not necessarily today.

Ray stated the Talking Circles are in place for an avenue for tribal members to share their concerns. People can always put something in writing to submit to Council. Council will discuss the best medium to use to distribute the answers to questions brought up today.

Rick Peters read his concerns:

He claimed he spoke on behalf of others who were in fear if being reprimanded from administration for sharing their concerns.

Healthcare for Indians have dropped, his concerns of lack of tribal health care to all members.

Concerned about all of the construction and pollution to Skookum Inlet, claims that SIT is the largest polluter of the inlet.

A tribal member was recently excluded due to felony charges, yet administration has hired someone with the same charges with a large salary and a no fire contract.

Concerned about the treatment to Mike Peters at the Casino.

Lack of college education on Tribal Council, yet supports the job announcements that require college degrees.

Salish Seafoods concern, non tribal members digging unaccompanied. Nothing has been done. (check Kevins notes)

Asks why if Culture and Heritage are so important, why does that department have to seek their own funds.

Treatment of Elders on digs, they had to load on to the scow and boat to Church Point, when it would have been easier for them to drive there.

Why did the Tribe purchase D & D Seafood?

Feels sorry for people who cannot attend these meetings in fear of losing their job.

Cal Peters Concerns:

Feels it is difficult to follow his son, with the same concerns. He claims that he receives phone calls from tribal members asking him why Council makes the decisions they do.

He wanted to know why, if the General Body is the boss, a quorum is 30%, but where are they? Council needs to take orders from the General Body.

Mike Peters concern; he was appointed by direction of the General Body, as someone who worked with the General Manager of the Casino. So when the General Manager left, he was asked to leave also. Why was his work not appreciated? He went to work for other tribes. The General Body needs to get behind Council and order them to follow.

Elders want respect and honor- they have worked hard for what they have. Told Council to do the job they were elected to do, otherwise they will be replaced.

Vicki Kruger:

She has been trying to start her own business. She attended training for women business owners, and was told to seek assistance from her Tribe on obtaining a business license. She would like to see something like that.

She also hoped Cameron would talk about the Casino finances. She encouraged Council to hire a tribal applicant for the General Manager of the Casino.

Also asked why other tribes are allowed to sell their work in the Casino gift shop, but when Squaxin elders try to sell their work, they are turned down.

Tamika Green:

Asked why law enforcement has no concerns of any activities going on. She once came to the gym in search of an officer, but no one was available. Where are they? They need to be there 24 hours a day.

Rocky Bloomfield:

He commented that the Tribe and Council have good visions of the future, he feels the Tribe just got ahead of themselves. He also stated that the drug issues are not just here, they're nationwide. Everyone needs to get involved.

Sewage treatment plant: asked why the trees that were logged were just chipped up? They were good trees worth money.

Why are tribal loggers and excavators not utilized?

Sewage treatment plant could be a training opportunity for a tribal member.

The events center is a neat facility, but when the box seats don't get sold, why not offer them to tribal members?

Thanked Council for this opportunity, and hopes their vision of the future slows a bit.

Chuck Bloomfield:

He shared that he put own money in to purchasing an excavator and equipment for his business, but the Tribe is not giving him work. He wished for better oversight on projects.

Marcella Castro:

She has been trying to get tutoring for her kids, but have not been able to.

Why is there no clam buyer for the elders digs?

Not enough digs during the Christmas time, there are a lot of power outages, and shortages of money. What is Council doing to take care of their elders?

Why is nothing being done to clean up Oakland Bay?

Sis Brownfield:

She recently hurt her wrist at the Casino, but cannot get any assistance.

A tribal member recently went through running start and is attending the UW, but cannot get any assistance for school.

More needs to be done for kids going to school; she recently drove some kids to WSU for a high school completion course. Those kids feel the Tribe wont help.

Why is there not Tribal elders parking up front at the Casino, like other Casinos?

She worked at the Casino for six weeks, and it is run on fear, she cannot believe that employees are treated like they are.

Margaret Henry:

She had a question about the opportunity for tribal members to build their own house on a piece of property. She asked if that is still in the works. Will the tribe buy their house, so they can build?

Barb Whitener:

Shared how well her daughter is doing through the Sylvan tutoring program that TLC provides.

Cal Peters:

Council really needs to support the young tribal members with their education, because they are the leaders of tomorrow.

Rickie Ramage:

She works at the hotel front desk, and customer service is number one. KTP needs to improve their customer service.

Jim Peters stated that the questions and answers will be published and distributed. Jim stated that he would like the rumors to stop; if someone hears a rumor he invited them to find the truth by speaking to the appropriate person. Rumors can really hurt the community by spreading false information. Some issues brought up today are the first that Council has heard them.

Regarding the Casino, he stated that Doug Boon was not the only problem, and Council is taking care of what they can. Abuse issues at the Casino need to be dealt with through personnel, utilize the employee handbook. LCOB and Council will make sure that policies are followed and mistakes don't get made again. They are watching everything closely.

Jim provided a report on the progress of cleaning up Oakland Bay. Squaxin DNR is working closely with Mason County Health Department, and pushing them to clean up and enforce. Squaxin DNR was the one who pinpointed the pollution problem and are pursuing the cleanup.

Council recently met with the elders, and is planning a regular scheduled meeting with them to discuss their concerns.

Jim and Ray will both work on clearing up the rumors.

Andy discussed the wastewater treatment plant. Once the water goes through and is treated, it will be class A water, to be used for irrigation. Andy also reported on the Oakland Bay cleanup, if anyone has any questions, his door is always open.

Ray stated that all employees have the opportunity for a grievance hearing. Administration needs to know if any injustice is happening, and it will be dealt with. He stated his door is always open, encouraged people not to wait for general body meetings or the talking circle, if any concerns rise, see him or Council.

Cameron Goodwin reported on the Casino finances. He stated the Casino is doing much better today than it was two months ago. The investment is high, and he takes direction from Council on what information he can share because of information getting to competitors. The Tribe is no 28 million over budget. The Casino has money and support from the bank. The hotel is about one month out. The gaming floor is busy. At the General Body Meeting in May he will have an audit report.

Jim stated that Council does not hold information back, it doesn't get published because of the wide audience. Information is public for tribal members, but not the general public. Council and LCOB is keeping a closer eye on the Casino.

Andy shared that being on LCOB, his door is always open. LCOB is not a board of directors, but more of a form of discussing ideas. Because of past mistakes, the CFO reports directly to the LCOB.

Cameron continued and reported that the hotel is a 30 Million investment to draw people to the property, and spend money on the gaming floor. The hotel is right on budget. Golf Course: due to the weather there is not a lot of activity going on, and the golf course is at 22 Million. The bank has allowed to loan the amount of money needed to complete all projects. The hotel will be open, and performance on the property will continue to rise.

Cal Peters stated he was disappointed that the advertising for the Casino does not state the affiliation with the Squaxin Island Tribe. Why?

Ray stated that historically this issue has come up. Council has made a decision in the past to not affiliate Squaxin Island Tribe with Little Creek Casino.

Russell Harper stated that being the newest Council member, he is impressed with the creative and critical thinking of staff involved to solve problems. His comment on tribal health care, he has looked in to it, and the cost to cover all tribal members is far more money than the tribe has. It would take a huge commitment from the community as well. Regarding the four fluent language teachers, he asked how one could justify four teachers when no one attends the classes offered by the one teacher they already have. He encouraged the community to get involved with the committees and commissions.

Russell Harper offered the lunch prayer at 12:43.