

By Dean Rhodes*Smoke Signals editor*

Tribal Council approved renewing a memorandum of understanding with the Banks School District regarding its use of the Braves mascot for school athletic teams during its Wednesday, May 4, meeting.

The Banks School District became the first school district in Oregon with a Native-themed mascot to sign an agreement with one of the state's nine federally recognized Tribes in August 2016.

The agreement, which expired in October 2021, phased out the school district's previous Native American warrior profile mascot from school buildings and athletic uniforms and prompted the district to start offering a Tribally created history curriculum and sponsor a Native Club for its students.

Education Department Manager Angela Fasana reviewed the previous agreement and made minor changes.

The memorandum of agreement says the Tribe's goals are to build respect and understanding of the Tribe's history and culture, give youth an opportunity to learn the Tribal curriculum and foster a culturally respectful representation of Native American symbolism and pride while the district's goals are to foster respect and informed understanding of Native Americans and to adopt a culturally appropriate mascot.

In early 2016, the Oregon Department of Education adopted rules that allowed school districts to retain Native American mascots only if they entered into agreements with an Oregon Tribe regarding

their use.

In addition to Banks, the Grand Ronde Tribe also entered into agreements with the Molalla River and Scappoose school districts.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved the enrollment of one infant into the Tribe because he or she meets the requirements outlined in the Enrollment Ordinance and Tribal Constitution;
- Approved extending the appointment of David Shaw as Tribal Court's interim chief judge until a new chief judge is appointed, but not longer than March 2023. Shaw returned to the chief judge role with the Tribe Court after Cynthia Kaufman Noble resigned in February;
- Approved applying for a maximum \$150,000 grant from the Oregon Department of Education's Office of Indian Education to fund an additional academic coach for Native youth for two years;
- And approved a ninth amendment to a contract with Industrial Economics, the Tribe's technical consultant for Portland Harbor and related cleanup and natural resources damages.

Also included in the May 4 Tribal Council packet was an approved authorization to proceed that directed Finance Officer Chris Leno to begin the supplemental budget process for the \$573,129 expansion of the Tribe's Great Circle Recovery medication-assisted opioid treatment clinic in Salem.

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