



CHUKCHANSI REVIEW

FEBRUARY • MARCH 2005

Foxwoods and Chukchansi Gold

The CEDA Board has signed a consulting agreement with Foxwoods Development Company of Connecticut. Foxwoods is owned by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation.

CEDA hired Foxwoods to advise and consult to the CEDA Board. We are asking that they assess our Casino and give us recommendations that ensure maximum success as we go forward. The CEDA Board is especially interested in recommendations in the areas of marketing, expansion and human resources. Foxwoods will not manage Chukchansi Gold, they will only advise and consult.

We choose Foxwood's because of their size and experience, Foxwood's is one of the largest Indian Gaming facilities in the world with 7400 slots, 390 Table Games, three hotels with 1400 rooms, 30 restaurants, two championship golf courses, major entertainment venues, retail shops and a health spa and salon. Foxwood's has a proven track record of success. We liked what we saw, read and heard from their management team.

We now have individuals and teams from Foxwoods on-site at the property with specific skills and knowledge of various aspects of gaming. We have been told that we may expect to hear their initial recommendations within forty-five days. We will keep our membership apprised as we go along.

17 year old Tribal Member goes to Washington

Alyse Charley was selected, along with several other young women, to present at the Forest Service's 100th anniversary in Washington D.C. Ms Charley spoke about her heritage as a Tribal person and her views on preserving and conserving natural resources for future generations. Next year Ms Charley plans to attend college to become a wildlife biologist. We congratulate Ms. Charley on this important assignment and wish her well.

Chukchansi Indian Housing Authority will resume meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6pm.

The first quarterly meeting of the general membership is tentatively set for Saturday March 26, 2005 at 10:00 AM.

The Tribe very much needs to work together on a strategic planning process. Any Tribal member with skills and experience in Tribal planning, please submit a resume to Tribal Council, attention Tricia At-tara.

There is still opportunity to submit applications for the Housing Commission, the Natural and Cultural Resource Commission, and the Budget and Finance Commission. Interviews will be set for perspective applicants

Utility Assistance Program for Members Over 65

The Tribe is creating a new program to provide utility assistance to Tribal Members over the age of 65. Tribal Members over the age of 65 who earn equal to or less than the U.S. median family income per year (\$57,500 this year) are eligible for monthly assistance. We are very excited to be able to provide this new program. For more information or an application, please contact Timothy Soledad at the Tribal office.

Group Term Life Insurance

We are extremely pleased to announce that Tribal Council has just approved a new benefit for all Tribal Members. Effective March 1, 2005 all enrolled Tribal Members will be covered for group term life insurance. This benefit is provided to you at no change as part of your Tribal Membership regardless of age or condition of health. We are especially pleased with our Agent, Ron Beringer (Tribal Member), who has worked tirelessly to bring this program to our Membership. You will be receiving a letter in the mail outlining the specific benefit and directions in naming a beneficiary.

Tribal Council Report



Recall Hurts the Tribe

This recall is about misinformation and about doing business "the same old way": In 2003, the Tribal membership voted for change, in that four new Council Members joined three incumbents to do Tribal business. Our commitment is to run Tribal Government in a fair and open way and to work together for the common good of all Tribal Membership.

What this meant was that certain practices of family favoritism based on whom you knew on Tribal Council were no longer tolerated by the majority of Council. Instead, Council chose to provide services to Tribal Members based on policies and procedures. Council is very committed to spending within our program budgets.

During this past year, several Tribal Members did not receive services because they were either not eligible, or they had already exhausted their fair share. These decisions were made by a majority vote of all Council members. Several other Tribal members did receive services by the *former* Tribal Administrator even though there was no budget or policy for the service. The Tribal Administrator chose to ignore the direction explicitly stated by Council. She was subsequently not promoted to permanent status for this and other misconduct.

Those pursuing recall desperately want to be in power. They are led by the former Tribal Administrator, individuals who lost their seat on Council or did not get elected and a few angry Tribal members who did not get special consideration. These people want to do business "the same old way" (special favors for friends and family) and since they are not on Council through a legitimate vote, they will do it anyway they can.

This recall group does not respect the elected Council, or the enrolled voting membership of the Tribe. Telling lies about Council members to garner your signature on a recall petition comes easy. Is this who you want running your Tribal Government?


This group is starting with two Council members but it won't end until they are firmly in the majority and then we will see how quickly we lose the gains made in fairness and financial and program accountability.

This recall is also about Enrollment: Since the beginning of our Tribe's federal recognition in 1988 every Council has made mistakes in enrollment. We enrolled members over time because it "served our interest", the greater our membership numbers, the more dollars we received from BIA. Chukchansi people and people who were not Chukchansi were allowed membership under Enrollment Ordinances inconsistent with our Tribal Constitution (including the "600" list). Membership files have been lost, stolen or destroyed during several upheavals in Tribal Government resulting in more than one request for membership document submission. This Council is working to straighten out over fifteen years of poor enrollment practices.

During the last year, since our gaming facility opened, enrollment has become a huge issue. We recognize that there are members who do not fit the "letter of the Constitution", that is, they are not part of the original distribution list for Picayune, they are not descendents of an allotment, and they cannot prove that they petitioned within the first year.



Tribal Council Report



Some members believe anyone who cannot document the above (See Constitution Article 3, Section 1 and 2) should be summarily removed from the Tribe. They feel that these Chukchansis only became Tribal members because of the greed for gaming dollars.

Other members believe that the movement for membership removal is also driven by greed (members hoping to receive larger per capita checks). Some feel that rather than culling the membership and limiting the size of the Tribe, we should be expanding our Tribe to include all people of Chukchansi blood.

This recall is about replacing Council with members who believe in disenrolling the petitioners. This issue is already tearing our Tribe apart. Should we take the path of summarily disenrolling members from our Tribe, our Tribe could become the example of the greed that gaming has engendered from coast to coast. This kind of press directly affects our Casino business, and contributes to the already significant backlash against Indian gaming in California and across the U.S.

The Indian Civil Rights Act specifies two important criteria for Federal Court intervention on behalf of tribal members; due process, and equal rights. No longer do we exist independently, no matter how much we wrap ourselves in the blanket of sovereignty. Don't be fooled into believing disenrollment is a simple matter. Certain issues can and will involve our Tribe in lengthy and costly litigation, removing members without due process is one.

As a Tribe we need to talk this through and take care in our actions. Let's not be pushed by "hot heads" and greed on either side. Instead let's practice the traditions of our people: respect, restraint and generosity in unraveling years of poor enrollment practices so that all people of Chukchansi blood are dealt with fairly. All Tribal members will have a say in the steps this Council will take with regard

The Cost of Recall

The cost of recall is not cheap, It cost time and energy that could be better spent working together to build a stronger Tribal Government. Even though the recall movement has brought certain factions within our Tribe together, these coalitions, based on mis-information and negativity are fragile.

Ultimately recall has already split our Tribe and added to the hard feelings that already exist within and between our families. Finally, recall is expensive; in addition to the \$4000 plus cost to certify a fair election, Government instability affects our ability to refinance our Casino property. Investors are skeptical of Tribal Governments who appear unstable. Recall equals Tribal instability. Our future must be

