

Summit Lake Paiute Tribe
Special Council Meeting
Saturday, November 4, 2017
Primary Administrative Office, Sparks, Nevada

Call to Order: Vice-Chairwoman Randi DeSoto called the Special Council meeting of Saturday, November 4, 2017 to order at 10:01 am.

Roll Call: Secretary Treasurer Eugene Mace called the roll: Chairwoman Page Linton, present (Late); Vice-Chairwoman Randi DeSoto, present; Secretary/Treasurer Eugene Mace; present; and Council Member Jerry Barr, present.

Staff: William Cowan, Natural Resources Department Director, and Rachel Youmans, Natural Resources Department Assistant Director

Mr. Cowan stated he would like to start with the working session and then go to finishing up some old business. The Council agreed.

Overview of Ongoing Natural Resources Services

He handed out a spreadsheet prepared by Alex and the financial department. It is more detailed than the usual financial spreadsheet. It shows the different add-ons to the various contracts/grants.

Fisheries,

103-Road Maintenance and Range Improvement,

104 to 104 N are add-ons to Range Improvement.

108-Endangered Species Program

118-Noxious Weed-It has a typo in the amount which Mr. Cowan struck through.

Transportation Project

More Endangered Species

Invasive Species Project-reed canary grass

107-Desert Terminal Lake program

116-EPA One Mile Stream Project which is closed

117-Tribal Wildlife Grant-sage grouse closing this year

122-NFWF for the PVA

123-Partners for Wildlife for Habitat Restoration Add-on

126-Bureau of Reclamation Water Quality Grant

127-New Tribal Wildlife Grant-sage grouse

The approximate total—Natural Resources spent three million dollars this year with a balance of 2.9 million dollars left as of November 1, 2017.

When Mr. Cowan began work in 2007, the Tribe was at risk of losing all of their federal funds. Currently the base grants with the Bureau of Indian Affairs are Fisheries, Range and Roads. The rest are from the Natural Resources Department securing competitive grant funding. Contracts are long-standing and grants are for specific projects, specific tasks.

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He explained the various BIA Fisheries add-ons and why there are still balances.

Ms. Page Linton entered the meeting during the explanation of add-ons at 10:14 am.

There are a lot of loose ends because the department has not had continuous staff and problems getting the staff training. Things have just been postponed. Mr. Cowan has reservations having untrained staff deal with the highly sensitive equipment and possibly damaging it. This is why some of the equipment has not been purchased yet. The department was extremely short staffed this year.

Road Maintenance shows it was overspent. Mr. Cowan believes they need to work with Finance to understand the funding and sort things out.

Range Improvement Contract –It also shows that it was overspent.

Mr. Cowan feels the overspending is an issue of inappropriate charges to the two funds that should have been charged to an add-on.

Range Inventory shows that it is two-thirds spent. The inventory is complete. The final report is in progress, but it too is affected by the staff turnover.

Fire Suppression-This is an add-on to the water troughs north of Summit Lake off well number one. There is \$22,000 left there.

BIA Endangered Species-Ms. Youmans explained that this was for equipment for Fisheries.

Noxious Weeds-There is a typo on this amount.

BIA Transportation Project-Money to purchase heavy equipment. Still has money for more heavy equipment and a building to house the equipment.

BIA Endangered Species-Sage Grouse-This is to purchase an ATV and just modified to include a storage shed for it.

BIA Invasive Species-Reed Canary Grass-This was awarded this year and has not been be started yet.

Desert Terminal Lakes-This fund shows a balance of \$787,000. Mr. Cowan thinks this is not very accurate. This is with the Great Basin Land and Water assistance with a conservation action plan to have money to purchase land via the buy-back program.

Fund 116 was closed out and all tasked completed. It should not be on the list.

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Tribal Wildlife Grant-Sage Grouse-This is spent. The final report is to be completed after the workshop.

PVA NFWF Grant- \$1.5 million was awarded. The final figures for the UNR contract are not there yet. \$30,000 should be for UNR and the rest for Summit Lake.

Fund 123 Partners for Wildlife Grant—Restoration of stream banks but has been changed three times. Most of this money is still available and not due to close until 2019.

Water Quality Monitoring-paying for the water quality monitoring of the restoration program.

New Sage Grouse Tribal Wildlife Grant-not yet started.

Mr. Barr noticed that it was mentioned several times that there were funds for storage sheds. He wondered if it was possible to pool the money and just build one big shed for all the equipment. Mr. Cowan replied they could try, but they would have to ask the funders because the grants are specific.

There is \$2.9 million to operate through the end of these programs some of which do not close until 2020.

Most of this money came into the program under a more prosperous government administration which looked favorably on the environment, natural resources and other types of programs. Things are more uncertain from this point forward.

Transportation looks a little better than in previous years for infrastructure improvements, but there is still uncertainty on what services will be available with the new federal budget.

Many of the funds are not closed because the department did not have the staff to buy the equipment or train the staff to use the equipment properly.

The Natural Resources Department ultimately is tasked to monitor, protect, enhance and manage soil, air, water, wildlife, fisheries and cultural resources. They have been funded to do fisheries, range, and wildlife assessment as it relates to sage grouse, wild horse management, fisheries management and added facilities to monitor climate. The EPA grants are closed. These previously provided the water quality program and non-point source projects including the wells, the fencing to protect the Lake and reservation surface water.

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Transportation: The department was able to obtain funds for equipment for old money from the Federal Highway Administration based on SAFETLV. It was important to get the tools and facilities for the Tribe to maintain the roads.

Aside from the Fisheries management, Range management and roads, the NFWF grant and Tribal Wildlife Grants, the add-ons are for purchasing equipment and not to pay for staff time to gather data on the equipment but only time to acquire the equipment. They are for specific projects or to purchase equipment.

Today the Department is asking for input to help define the future for the Natural Resources Department. The Council needs to keep in mind there may be more limited resources than they have had in the past when working with the Natural Resources Department.

Ms. Linton asked if there was anything on the reservation that needed attention. She questioned if there was anything of dire need to be accomplish on the reservation like fixing up the trailers for the employees. Maybe the Council can help in the spring. It is important for the employees to a safe environment to work in. Part of this falls on the Council and the Tribe as a whole that the employees are safe in their surroundings and working environment.

Mr. Cowan said yes there is a list of things. The facilities they have been using have aged and not properly maintained. He mentioned a few things that need to be done. Some of the issues with purchasing equipment is there is nowhere to put it. Ms. Linton asked if it was expensive to create large cement slab some place. Mr. Cowan explained the expensive part was delivering the concrete to the reservation. But it is not cost prohibitive. There is a problem with rodents.

There is still a lot of support for what the Natural Resources Department is doing, but the funding is what is uncertain.

The IPA contract which allows Mr. Cowan to work with Summit Lake: This expires February 22, 2018 or in about three and a half months. There were some causal discussions with the Fish and Wildlife Service. He met with his immediate supervisor recently. He was asked by the Fish and Wildlife Service if he was happy and did he want to continue working there. Also they felt that if they were to amend or extend the IPA, they would need to be more specific. The existing IPA is for Mr. Cowan to serve as Natural Resources Department Director and build a program. He gave them his suggested duties if the Council were to renew the IPA as discussed with the Fish and Wildlife Service. These are just suggestions. His expertise is that he is a biologist, a Fisheries Aquatic Ecologist. He would like to continue to apply this benefit at Summit Lake. Basically to manage, research and restore the fisheries and aquatic resources.

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This would entail:

- Providing oversight on the population viability analysis project funded by NFWF which closes September 30, 2019
- Continuing involvement with the planning of the restoration activities funded by the NFWF program to restore Mahogany Creek
- Offering to develop and implement climate monitoring program training and protocols
- Continuing involvement in developing hydrologic monitoring (water flow blended with climate).
- Closure and acquisition of the heavy equipment
- Continuing to be engaged in the land acquisition and other initiatives to protect Summit Lake as it relates to the Desert Terminal Lakes program.
- Work with Tribal Council or Tribal advisory committee to develop and implement the reorganization of the Natural Resources Department
- Develop and implement a phased approach and strategy to transition a new Natural Resources Director.

What this means is that he would step down as Natural Resources Director at the end of the IPA or at some time into the future. He would have a role to help to transition that incumbent. He would have a role in a technical advisement assistant capacity as a Fish Biologist.

Fish and Wildlife Service is still foggy about the IPA whether it will be extended, amended or renegotiated. They are interested in continuing Mr. Cowan's services where it concerns Fisheries management and aquatic resource management. When it comes to the renewal of the IPA; (this is just the talking phase and he makes no promises for Fish and Wildlife Services;) they think that if it was an extension or amendment perhaps the terms for payment can remain the same. Currently Mr. Cowan's cost to the Tribe is approximately \$25,000 a year. Fish and Wildlife pays for the rest. If it is a MOU or MOA it is a whole different process. Mr. Cowan informed Fish and Wildlife of the work session with the Council and it is up to the Council to decide which way to go. The options are to end the IPA, extend or amend the current IPA or a renewal, and a MOA. The Council needs to organize a date and time to meet with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mr. Mace asked Ms. Youmans how she felt. If she were given the opportunity to be made Director, if Mr. Cowan stepped down, she said Mr. Cowan has been an amazing teacher and she has been very involved with the programs in many capacities. She is ready for whatever challenges are ahead, she is prepared if given the opportunity.

Ms. Linton believes she would be up for the challenge and cited the good things Ms. Youmans has accomplished.

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Ms. DeSoto believes that Ms. Youmans and Mr. Cowan have been very positive in working together. Mr. Cowan's asking for an assistant director has worked. She also praised the work Mr. Cowan has done. Now the Council needs to decide what to do with the IPA coming due.

Ms. Linton said that the Council wanted to meet to see how everything was going and see if there was anything the Council could do.

Mr. Barr asked Mr. Cowan if the bullet list of tasks Mr. Cowan would like to do means that he would turn over the other things to Ms. Youmans. Mr. Cowan replied yes. Mr. Barr believes it is a good thing for Mr. Cowan and thanked Mr. Cowan for his work.

Transitional Phases:

Mr. Cowan presented the transitional phases which include challenges, changes and improvements.

Biggest Change is that Mr. Cowan would step away from the Natural Resources Department Director responsibilities.

If he were to continue he would provide the following services: to bring to closure the NFWF and Desert Terminal Lake Grant, which is the protection of the Lake, protection of fisheries and trying to get more land.

A major challenge is continuity of the staff. They are having a difficult time filling positions with skilled employees. Mr. Cowan cited examples of difficulties the department had finding different people with the desired skill sets. They did try to work with contractors. There are things that need to get done.

There were also some problems with conflicts. The new director will need assistance in learning to deal with a multicultural team and people with a lack of desired skill sets. There is a need for training of the employees.

Mr. Cowan said he did not know the solution. He wondered if it is time for a Human Resources Department to handle these issues. He posed several questions regarding employee satisfaction, morale and environment at the Lake, but has no answers. He discussed some of the challenges that exist.

- Lack of down-time options
- Scheduling
- Care of equipment
- Lack of accountability

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Ms. Linton asked about his approach when people do take accountability. He explained his approach. Mr. Barr expressed his opinions on the matter. There was a discussion on different types of approaches that could be used with personnel. Mr. Barr raised the question of multigenerational attitudes.

Ms. Youmans voiced her opinions of the problems.

- People do not stay long
- Low morale causing a lack of caring and sense of investment: raising morale would help people care and become invested in the work

The Council would like to do create living accommodations were the employees have space to spend their down time away from the work. Mr. Cowan had ideas for the possibility of some rent and a deposit on the living space. When it comes to the vehicles, a suggestion was to have Alex do a check on the vehicles when they come back from the field similar to a rental car agency.

Following is a summary of the challenges faced by the Natural Resources Department:

- Uncertainty of funding
- Filling vacancies with people who will stay and investing in those employees
- Keeping morale high while in an isolated workplace
- Improving the living accommodations at the Lake
- Mr. Cowan stepping down and working through the transition

Mr. Barr asked what long term goals Mr. Cowan would like to see. He replied:

- To preserve the wilderness/wild character of the landscape
- To see the fish and wildlife continue to live there so the future's generations can enjoy and respect it
- To manage the resources so that catastrophic, unplanned events like wildfire can be dealt with
- To have a source of revenue to build a community
- To expand the land base
- To gain recognition of the Tribe's federal partners and other entities of the Tribe's existence

There was a discussion of solutions to get manpower:

- To recruit sub-contracting services, non-governmental agencies to do some of the work, for example Great Basin Institute and Noxious Weeds
- To consider recruiting interns as well as employing seasonal personnel

The question of long term goals was also asked of Ms. Youmans: She said many of her goals were similar to Mr. Cowan's goals.

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- To preserve and enhance the Tribe's greatest resource-the natural resources at the reservation such as fish or sage grouse, for now and for the future generations.
- Preserving the wild place for the Tribe to go to hunt, fish or camp
- To gain recognition from the Department's federal partners to spotlight the incredible resources
- To continue doing the good science with a plan which the department started doing the last couple of years
- To help find funding to keep the programs going into the future

Mr. Cowan said that there is still a need to determine how the transition will be accomplished. If the IPA is extended he would continue in the aforementioned services but feels he is at a point where the Natural Resources directorship needs to be passed on. The department has evolved through time to gain all these other responsibilities. Now the Council will need to determine action items and timelines for a reasonable approach.

Mr. Barr stated that the first thing is for the Council to discuss and determine what to do with the IPA. Ms. Linton said the first thing would be to set a date to talk to the Fish and Wildlife Service and then meet to determine what they want to do before meeting with Fish and Wildlife.

Mr. Cowan was asked when they will start to winterize at the Lake. He said that would be in the next couple of weeks.

Ms. Youmans was asked if there was anything that the Council could do to help the Natural Resources Department. What did she feel were the most important things to do when the Lake opens in the Spring.

She replied that foremost there needs to be a good plan ready to start out the field season. She feels fixing the roof on the trailer is very important and also fixing the porch on the Fisheries trailer. The most helpful assistance from the Council would be to know how this transition is going forward. It is hard to move forward if she does not know what her role is, her responsibilities. She needs to know the process and where she fits into the process.

Mr. Barr assured her that as soon as the Council makes their decision of what to do, they will let Mr. Cowan, Ms. Youmans and the department know. Ms. Youmans believes the Natural Resources Director and the Council need to meet to set a plan for the long and short range goals for the Natural Resources Department. Mr. Cowan reminded everyone that the Conservation Action Plan is a long term ecological plan that the department has been moving forward with.

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Ms. Youmans was excused from the meeting at 12:28 pm.

Unfinished Business:

Facilitation Services: Mr. Cowan said that he contacted people and talked to Saman Hussain from the Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution in the Department of the Interior in Washington D.C. She asked that if the Council would like to pursue their services, would the Council be willing to pay for it. She explained the process as interviewing each individual, meeting with the team once or twice, then develop a plan. Based on this it would cost approximately \$8000. He said he would pass this on. Thinking about \$8000, it is not in the Natural Resources budget. He thinks it might have been a good service six to ten months ago. Now it is up to the Council to decide. The Council will let him know as soon as possible.

Firebreaks: There are various home sites up there. He would like to know if this is a service that the Fire Resilient Landscape Grant can provide. There is still \$27,000 left to cover operating expenses. They did mow along the roadway and fencing. They would like another analysis to where else to mow. Plants have grown back and there are fuels in the firebreak. He asked if they should consider mowing around home sites. Since the grant does not have a deadline, Mr. Barr said to save the money to pay to re-mow the established firebreaks after plants grow back. This would fund the mowing for a few years. The funding is from the Fire Resilient Landscape add-on, part of the Range contract. Ms. Youmans has become more involved with the Fire Resilient Landscape Collaborative.

Last Supper Cave Documentary: Geoff Smith, anthropologist at UNR is filming a documentary. It is moving forward. They are asking if anyone from the Tribe would be willing to be interviewed in the documentary. They ultimately want to show that archeology has changed and is more respectful of Native communities and Native perspectives. He feels that there has been greater respect for the Tribe by informing the Tribe of the work that is being done. There has been better collaboration. Please let him know by the end of the week so he can get back to Ms. Smith.

ATV Storage Shed: There are three bids from Tuff Shed, Out West Buildings, and Durabuilt. He feels that they have run out of time this year. The grant modification has not been received yet. Mr. Cowan would like to postpone this until next season.

Cadastral Survey: The surveyors will be finished on Tuesday. Mr. Cowan is meeting with them Monday at 2:00 pm to show them the monuments that separate the Tribal lands from the private lands west of Summit Lake. Soldiers Meadow will be present. So if anyone wants to attend they are welcome. The other monuments are already installed. The Cadastral surveys will be showing the plaques placed on the monument stating the standard "do not tamper with this survey marker owned by the government".

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GSA Truck: The truck is wrecked. The department had planned to return the vehicle after this field service, because they had money to purchase another truck. Also with being short a truck it has created problems in transporting the ATVs to a storage unit here, in conveying materials to the Lake, and towing the trailer to dispose of the Suburban and Tahoe. Ms. Linton said to pay someone to do it. Mr. Cowan asked for permission to reimburse himself or Mr. Hicks to use their personal trucks when used for these things at the standard mileage rate of 52 cent a mile. It would be about \$100 one way. The Council all individually said yes, it needs to be done.

ATV Storage: Mr. Cowan was thinking of renting a storage unit in town for the ATVs. This will make it easier to assess the access to the Lake when they go to open up in the Spring. He wants to also use it as space to build net boxes and do other things during the winter season to be ready for Spring. Alex has researched and found a unit to rent for around \$100 a month and he would be renting for about five months. This is the plan.

Suburban and Tahoe: Mr. Hicks has submitted an offer to purchase the Suburban as-is for \$500. His nephew is interested in the Tahoe. The Council felt that if they can come and get the Tahoe, they can have it and will accept the \$500 for both vehicles. He will inform Mr. Hicks.

LCT-There was a Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Management Oversight Group (MOG) meeting at the end of September. Mr. Cowan was reminded that the Council needs to designate a representative to attend the meetings. Mr. Barr has attended in the past. This management oversight group has stalled in language for quite some time. They hired a facilitator to get it going revamping the MOG level. They would like a Tribal representative with decision making authority and designate a representative for an interview for input. Ms. Linton received word on this. Please get back to him on this.

Mr. Cowan requested an executive session for 20 minutes to discuss personnel.

MOTION: Council Member Jerry Barr moved for an Executive Session for 20 minutes to discuss personnel. Secretary/Treasurer Eugene Mace seconded the motion. Vice-Chairwoman Randi DeSoto called the roll: 3 FOR 0 AGAINST 0 ABSTAINED. Motion carried at 12:52 pm.

The Council returned from Executive Session at 1:19 pm.

MOTION: Council Member Jerry Barr move to adjourn the meeting. Secretary/Treasurer Eugene Mace seconded the motion. Vice-Chairwoman Randi DeSoto called the vote: 3 FOR, 0 AGAINST, 0 ABSTAINED. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 pm.

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CERTIFICATION

I, **Eugene Mace, Sr.**, Secretary/Treasurer of the Summit Lake Paiute Tribal Council, hereby certify that the Minutes of the November 4, 2017, Special Council Meeting were approved by the Council during a duly held meeting November 18, 2017 at which there was a quorum present, and the Council voted:

2 - FOR _0_ - AGAINST _1_-ABSTAINING, Chairwoman Page Linton did not vote because there was not a tie vote.

11/28/2017
Date

Eugene Mace
Eugene Mace, Sr.
Secretary/Treasurer
Summit Lake Tribal Council