

Budget reviews not presented in timely manner



**DENISE CHASE,
DIRECTOR, UNIT IV**

I voted to approve the following resolution at the last board meeting. We have to make sure that services and programs are not left unfunded. This resolution approves continuing funding for 75 cost centers for fiscal year 2016, at their 2015 spending levels.

Again, we were till the last hour and did not have the budgets presented to us in a timely manner in order to review appropriately. Staff said the budgets were prepared and done two months ago for review. So, the board will be scheduled to review budgets for the next couple of weeks, with the executive team and Chairman Payment.

Hopefully, by next year, we can get the budgets reviewed at least a couple of months in

advance, prior to passing.

We passed the continuing funding for a period of 60 days, so this gives us time to review the budgets thoroughly.

RESOLUTION NO: 2015-212
— *Continuing Funding Authority For Fiscal Year 2016 September To August And October To September*

WHEREAS, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians (“Tribe”) is a federally recognized Indian Tribe organized under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, 25 U.S.C. 467 et seq; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors and tribal staff have not completed the process of reviewing budgets for their respective budget year 2016; and

WHEREAS, the attached cost center list, with the fiscal year of September to August and October to September, for budget year 2016 is still under review and will not be completed until after the fiscal year start dates of September and October; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors wants to ensure that services are not left unfunded for a period between the expiration of the fiscal year 2015 budgets and approval of the fiscal year 2016 budgets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves continuing funding for the attached cost centers for fiscal year 2016, at their 2015 spending levels, for a period not to exceed 60 days.

Our dental director, Rural Health manager and health director are still in the process of trying to recruit a full-time dentist for the Manistique clinic.

The board passed a budget modification to add a temporary full-time dentist at the Manistique dental clinic. This person was a former employee and worked in Manistique. Dr. Shilling started on Sept. 8 providing dental services. We had a loss of third party revenue for the three months since our former dentist left, not to mention we had children, elders and families going without needed emergency care and dental services.

It was very important for me to advocate for and support this budget modification and get a dentist back in providing the needed dental care to our communities and members.

I also supported the resolution to amend our current loan agreement with PNC Bank. Approval of this resolution extends our existing debt of \$14,124,999 over a five-year period instead of 2.5 years. This lowers the debt payments from \$6.5 million annually to \$2.94 million. This

is a savings of \$3.56 million annually. This will also allow and free up funding for needed capital improvements.

Fall enrichment gathering and feast — On Wednesday, Nov. 4, 4-7 p.m., a Manistique fall health enrichment gathering will be held at the Manistique tribal Community Room, 5698W US Hwy 2, featuring a local and traditional potluck feast. There will be many share and learn opportunities — seasonal traditional presentation, traditional healer presentation, drum and dance presentation activity and information on “Native plate” and Sault Tribe services. Call Gail for more information, (906) 341-9525.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) — Volunteers will be trained in their local communities to direct people who have an emergency on who to call. They will be there to help with emergencies: suicide prevention, natural disasters, etc. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Jami Traver, (906) 632-5200, ext. 23670.

The shingles vaccine will be available at tribal health facilities for elders aged 60 and over. Non-tribal spouses can also get the vaccine but there will be a charge for this. For more information, call the Pharmacy

Department at the closest health facility.

Heating Assistance — I have been receiving quite a few phone calls inquiring if the tribe will be providing heating assistance this year. On Nov. 1, the program will be open and you can get an application to fill out and submit for fuel assistance. LIHEAP heating assistance will assist low-income tribal households meet their home heating energy burden. The funding will be available until funds are exhausted.

The Elder Heating Assistance Program still has funding available. These funds are to assist elders who have been determined to be ineligible for LIHEAP assistance. Applicants must be 60 years of age on or before the date of application.

Applicants must meet the program eligibility and income guidelines.

For more information, call or stop in and see Viola Neadow, Direct Services worker, at the Manistique Tribal Center, 341-6993 or (800) 347-7137.

Viola also holds weekly satellite office hours at the Willow Creek Professional Building on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

You can reach me by calling (906) 203-2471 or at dchase@saulttribe.net.