

Vice chairwoman reports on Greektown lawsuits



**LANA CAUSLEY, DIRECTOR,
UNIT II**

I would like to start out my report letting all in Newberry know how thankful I was to attend such a welcoming powwow this past September. This powwow started out very small just a few years back and it has grown to be one of the very best in our area. Miigwech to Shirley Kawalk, Lois Bryant and the committee for all they do to get this ready for us. The elders are very active in that community as well and events like this show the pride in our people.

This past week we had a budget resolution presented to us to increase the Elders Health Fund by \$99,400 due to spending out the current 2011 budget for direct services to elders. I supported this increase. The increase was needed due to the number of tribal elders reaching the age of 60 and those who use the program.

The Elder Services Division had also recommended a modification to the Elder Health Fund policy to implement some cost saving strategies and to accommodate the increase in the number of elders served. I didn't support the new changes in the policy but understand we must do something. The new policy will serve the neediest elders and utilize other programs that offer the same service. We have been told there is no loss of service to our elders but some changes will occur — let me say we are not cutting any funding, just trying to spread it out farther. But, we need to make sure our departments make sound

plans to sustain the increase. I did not support the change because I firmly believe if we seriously sit down and prioritize our needs we could come up with other action. If you have any problems with any change, please contact our Elder Division so that accurate information is given.

Since the last report, we have settled two imperative cases that would have negatively affected our tribe. First is a case we settled out of court that pertains to Greektown. WE prepared a lawsuit against Greektown for computer misuse. After much preparation, we did make a case that was in favor of us. For this one lawsuit, Greektown will be obligated to settle with us in the amount of \$125,000. That's a first and I'm glad this one ended as it did; it's small but nevertheless IN favor of us. As for the much larger lawsuit from Greektown, the only update at this time is that there will be

another hearing at the end of October and we continue to stand our arguments.

We were also in a major dispute at the federal level with the Carrciera case, which brought in question lands that the government held into trust as Indian lands. We acted quickly and diligently retaining our most senior outside council Bruce Greene, with his advice and our own legal department, we prepared reports, arguments and statements and prevailed. Our Indian lands will not be affected by this lawsuit any longer, other Tribes continue to have to fight this case and I hope they all prevail as we have. Reporting both these outcomes does my heart good as our continued effort to protect our Tribe is the most important priority personally for me.

Also at this past weekly business meeting with the board we were presented the 2012 Indian housing plan. I'm impressed with

the plan and want to say miigwech to our administration and our grant specialist for all the work — also our construction and work crews! The homes look awesome and people are happy. With our 2012 plan we will build addition housing for elders, rehabilitate homes on trust land, assist with down payments, repair our existing facilities, upgrade water heater and furnaces and assist those that rent off reservation. I know many tribal members need housing and many ask why we just don't use all money to build new, it's very important for us to maintain the large amounts of unit we have now and good job too our department for all that's planned, all housing sites will be affected with our 2012 plan.

As we move forward with our planning, we do have economical development endeavors on the horizon that the tribe is pursuing. I will continue to act cautiously

and be a voice for “lessons in past mistakes” but also understanding we must diversify.

Director Hollowell and I will be holding a unit meeting at the Newberry Tribal Center on Oct. 17 at 5:30 p.m. We plan to hold the next in DeTour; please watch for notices on our new website and in local papers as well.

In closing, I would like to invite all to our first *Gathering of Pipes* fall feast. The ceremony will take place and pipes will be lit at noon on Nov. 5 at the lodge, located on the Hessel powwow grounds. We will have a feast and please bring a dish to pass if you can. Our community does this on its own and its another old custom that helps all of us on our path.

Please contact me personally at (906) 4842954 or lcausley@sault-tribe.org if you would like to talk or meet with me. Baamaapii.

Lana Causley,
Vice Chairwoman