

Reorganization of tribe's five Kewadin casinos



**LANA CAUSLEY,
DIRECTOR, UNIT II**

I would like to take this opportunity to update our members about the structure and reorganization of our five casinos. As stated in the last paper, I explained that the Gaming Authority (chair

and board of directors) have been meeting on a weekly basis to discuss and prepare plans for the businesses once our chief operating officer departs this month. As stated, Mr. Goetz offered valuable insight and recommendation upon his departure. We honored the recommendations for interim management at the Sault and Christmas sites and will continue to meet weekly as an authority board to discuss future plans.

The board is NOT involved in the interviews or selection of positions this remains the same through Human Resources and management. At this time, we will be seeking a professional firm to assist us in retaining a main interim manager for our northern casinos. (All designated managers are still in place at their respective casinos and this position will be

in the place of the former chief operating officer.) This came with many hours of discussion and debate at the board level; I won't bore you with those dynamics, but this is the path that was supported by a majority of the board. I don't always personally agree with a decision but once it's voted on, I do stand by it.

The plan as it stands is that we have also requested proposals from management firms (I fully support this) to assist in our business operations. We need professionals with extensive knowledge and expertise in gaming to overcome some of the shortfalls we have within our operations. This being said, I'm confident in the area managers we have to hold down areas that they are responsible for. I'm hoping that each and every manager and team

member will assist in holding our own until we can accomplish a solid plan for our businesses. This is where the people can stand out and up for our tribe in their positions. This will separate the naysayers from the leaders when it comes to our business operations.

Although it is difficult times in all aspects of gaming, we are constantly facing shortfalls with our revenue due to the economy. But, we also face shortfalls when it comes to team members feeling appreciated and policies being followed for a satisfied workforce. As I stated earlier, I won't bore you with the debates at the board, but I'm at the table expecting and participating in a solid plan of action to have professionals advise us, that is what is has come down to. We have done surveys, attempted to bring in consultants

and all seem to stall for true increase in revenue or real results of team members' input.

I will say that the management did create the Kewadin improvement team and I'm hearing very good things from this committee of team members and I hope this continues. I will be the first to say the board of directors cannot manage on a day-to-day basis; we must have skilled and experienced professionals to attempt to increase our revenue, reduce operating costs if possible, secure a detailed capital improvement plan and work toward a satisfied workforce. The changes are a work in progress and, please, be patient as we get through this trying time.

I would also like to send a sincere recognition to our former
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chief operating officer, Tony Geotz. Tony has been with us for 25-plus years and has witnessed many struggles, successes and has been instrumental in our operations. We mutually separated and again he has assisted us to the end. I wish him and his wife, Cheri, a blessed road for his next endeavor and know that he will be an asset to any business he chooses. Chi miigwech, Tony, and I appreciate all your years of hard work and attempting to balance out the needs for our business.

Our 2015 governmental budgets are also still a work in progress, we have secured a plan that all department managers and executives communicate together about any recommendations and changes they foresee in the budget for next year. Once the budget is passed everyone needs to be on the same page as to the operations of governmental services and the priorities we have. I secured support from board members to discuss and look toward a improved budget presentation plan (performance-based budgets)

for next year...the only way to identify where are money goes is to see how many members benefit from a program. This is how we were presented the budgets in the past for a short time and it failed to remain that way, getting back to a performance-based budget will cut the fat and secure funding to go toward direct services for the members I will update next month on the final outcome for 2015.

In closing, I think that this season has to be the prettiest I have seen in a long time. My

little ladies have started the big school and lots of changes in the air, it seems so recent that they were only tiny. I love fall because of the changing times and that everything gets ready to rest. During the winter we can tell stories and work on our regalia for next year's season. During this fall we will hold our annual ghost feast and pipe ceremony to get ready for the end of another year. All are welcome to the Hessel tribal center on Nov. 1 to feast together and feed our ancestors. In all our lives, once in awhile,

we all need direction and healing either physically or spiritually, please join us in celebrating and honoring our traditions. I always have vivid and good dreams while I sleep after a ghost feast and I hope anyone that has a chance will come to our gathering. Please contact me anytime if you need to discuss or meet with me.

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