

# Leadership and accountability should be priority



LANA CAUSLEY, DIRECTOR, UNIT II

Old man winter has sure been hanging on, by the time you read this, I hope we have sun and the winter socks are put away! It's been busy during the last month. The tribe has been faced with the total amount that needs to be cut as a result of the sequestration. This budget crisis demanded a great deal of time for our administration and discussion with the chair and board. We are faced with a \$1.7 million total for these cuts and we also have the software upgrade needed to budget this year in the amount of \$1.3 million.

The appropriate departments came forward with recommendations to reduce spending in their budgets that will NOT affect services or cause members to lose employment. We must make operational changes.

At a recent board meeting the board voted to have three gentlemen come in from the Detroit area to conduct an efficiency audit of our casinos. I did not support this as we have an audit committee and HAD objectives with a company though it. But, nevertheless, it was voted to expend an additional \$10,000 to cover costs of the gentlemen. Please look for reports on this in the future because I'm not aware of a plan to begin or expectations of outcome. We certainly need an entire efficiency audit throughout our businesses but planning with objectives, expectations and outcomes are priority to me. I certainly hope this process does not simply create another job for individuals! Stay tuned on this; I've seen it before.

In the meantime, I will be aware and cautious of the reductions we make so that we do not make the same mistakes we made in the 2008 reorganization. I'm reminding administration, the

chair and board of the problems last time and demand justification on cuts per program. I am confident the sequestration dollars identified though the departmental recommendations do not affect our services.

We recently voted to move forward on another loan from the bank. I did not support this as many items could have come forward for reductions but politics do not allow it. But, I'm going to keep trying. We borrowed \$500,000 from the bank and also will spend out our facilities reserve to pay for the \$495,750 software upgrade.

With all this happening, we have scheduled a series of meetings to discuss future efficiency plans for businesses as well as creating better oversight for them. Our managers have to be at the table to discuss the expectations and plan properly for them. Accountability is the key and I have been saying that since my tenure began! The bottom line is this—I'm voting 'no' on additional items to spend one additional penny we must borrow or find! It makes me very upset that, at a whim, we can vote to spend \$10,000 for an audit with no real discussion, plan or outcome. I will say this, the chairman has taken some suggestions I offered and created real time to meet and discuss with leadership and staff the objectives needed to drive revenue and create better business practices; this is also being pushed by Director Sorenson. I'm looking forward to these meetings beginning at the end of April.

We have struggled with our schedule in the past month, it does change quite frequently as did our meeting dates. Please look on our official website at [www.saulttribe.com](http://www.saulttribe.com) for dates and locations for the meetings, unit reports, announcements, voting matrix and board meeting minutes. Please contact our Communications Department (632-6398) with any suggestions you have to better communicate with you. They are approachable to suggestions and comments from members.

The final constitutional review sessions were held this past weekend. I did not attend as I had other obligations. Our unit was well represented by Director Hollowell, Unit II elders Phil Payment, Marilynn MacArthur and tribal member George Tessier. Miigwech for your time. I will support moving

forward with the draft the committee finalized. The board was prohibited from being involved in the original due to political and personal conflicts. I felt very uncomfortable giving input this time due to the fact the original plan excluded the board and all agreed to that, nevertheless sending out the draft will give all the members the opportunity to review and vote.

I do have to report that I'm seeing many of the old ways creep back into the mix at the tribal level. It's very disheartening because we were promised it would be different and that leadership and accountability would be priority. I do get so tired of reporting items that move at a snail's pace or are so bogged down in protecting certain people, but don't worry, I understand the games and will continue to fight for our members. I have no people to protect — my little brother is a front line worker for the tribe making minimum wage. Two of my uncles have the expertise in their respective jobs and hold their own. Yep, I'm frustrated at the old items starting to rear their ugly heads and I won't get into it here — but the personal conversations I have with all of you, you know I will keep fighting the fight for us TO MOVE FORWARD!

We are scheduled to get draft recommendations for better health services and health access in outlying areas — I'm looking forward to discussing this. I will not accept any excuses or delays. I will give a detailed report next month.

Our Tribal Action Plan is moving along and our committee members have been conducting many input sessions with schools and community members. Our neighbor tribes are in the stages of making decisive decisions in their respective communities for this growing problem, please see the following press release.

**LAC DU FLAMBEAU, Wis.**  
— *The Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians Tribal Council declared a state of emergency on March 29, 2013, as it relates to the threat of synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones and other illegal drugs affecting the reservation and tribal members. Due to the rising popularity and proliferation of synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones and other illegal drugs within the tribal nation and surrounding community, the*

*tribal council is taking decisive action against the new wave of drugs commonly referred to as K2, spice, potpourri, bath salts and plant food.*

*The tribal council recognizes that Indian Country cannot remain idle when national reports and scientific information repeatedly publish that many first-time and repeat users are under the misconception that synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones are legal and safe when, in fact, they are not. Common side effects from a single use of synthetic cannabinoids include: hallucinations, panic attacks, anxiety, paranoia, agitation, extreme anger, seizure, tremors, kidney failure, liver failure, increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, stroke, coma and death.*

*Due to the great irreparable harm and permanent effects that can result from using synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones and other illegal drugs, the tribal council is committing the necessary tribal resources to rid the reservation and the surrounding community of this catastrophic menace that will not only entail swift prosecution but will also include a tribal campaign focused on prevention and a committed tribal effort to provide extensive rehabilitation services. The tribal council remains firm that every tribal department will partake in the war against synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones and other illegal drugs. As detailed in the tribal council resolution, the Lac du Flambeau tribe is dedicated to following extensive and comprehensive changes to return the tribal nation to the teachings of our ancestors:*

— *Restructuring the Tribal Code to criminalize synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones;*

— *Working with federal, local and state governments to ensure offenders are prosecuted;*

— *Treatment and rehabilitation for those who have become addicted to synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones;*

— *Revising the tribal housing regulations and policies to implement drug tests for tenants;*

— *Banishment, disenrollment and forfeiture of per capita payments for those caught using, selling and/or manufacturing synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones;*

— *Review of current and future grant funding specific to substance abuse prevention and*

*intervention to specifically target this developing problem;*

— *Mobilize existing "community-based" task forces to participate in door to door distribution of prevention materials and begin community education; and,*

— *Introduction of an educational campaign in community schools and youth programs.*

This is a powerful measure that Lac du Flambeau's council feels it needs to take. Our tribe has begun the steps toward action but we have so much more to do. I'm printing this to educate our members on the extreme problems that our tribal nations are facing. Thank you to our dedicated staff and members who are working together for our tribe's plan.

We will be holding an assembly meeting of the fisherman in our tribe to assist in the problems they face as well as the items we, as a tribe, must face with our resources. When scheduled, board recording secretary Joann Carr will notify all involved by U.S. mail. And, please look to our website or call me for the date, it is imperative that all attend to voice their needs, suggestions and concerns. This meeting will also give the history of our rights and where we are now.

In closing, I was happy to attend our elders' meetings this past month and it was so good to see all of you, many have been sick and some have even walked on this long winter. Happy birthday to, probably our eldest in Unit II, Fanny Aslin from Newberry. Hope you enjoyed BB King!

I ask that we take a minute to pray for our old ones and our families who lost loved ones. In our community, we lost a very special lady, my great aunt, Loreen Andrews Causley. She was an instrumental part of our tribe's recognition process and success. She was an active leader and board member for many years (when there was no pay). We will miss her and the others. It's sad to lose our old ones — they understood our struggles as Anishinaabe and it felt safe just knowing we could stop over for coffee to either get counsel from them. And, yes, sometimes a good ole fashion verbal never hurt me either. I'm going to miss her being up on the hill.

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