

Director Hollowell: Addressing many issues



**CATHERINE HOLLOWELL,
DIRECTOR, UNIT II**

I hope everyone is having a great summer. This season has flown by and it's been so great to have a chance to gather and visit and enjoy our good weather and good company. I was honored to be invited to many of your family gatherings this summer. It's so much fun to touch bases with old friends and new faces. We also managed to get out and gather strawberries, blueberries and sweet grass this season and to sample the garden produce raised by our youth group. We are blessed to have so many good people — volunteers and staff alike — who devote their time and energy to our families, and our communities. Miigwech to all.

Downstate gaming development

The state's attorney general has withdrawn his U.S. Supreme Court appeal of the favorable ruling we received in the 6th Court of Appeals, so its full steam ahead. Our strategic outlook always anticipated roadblocks and challenges and we are not surprised by some of the media coverage that has emerged with our recent legal successes. We expect to see more. We were however, saddened to see commentary from former congressman Dale Kildee in the *Detroit Free Press*, opposing our efforts. He was a proven friend on Capitol Hill during his tenure. It's important to note however, that Mr. Kildee is now on the

payroll of the same Washington law and lobbying firm working to block our application. The story in the *Detroit Free Press* should have disclosed this. Certainly Mr. Kildee has a right to his opinion. But the newspaper had an obligation to disclose this. Another example of being careful of what you see in the media.

Another news article you may have seen regarded the recent favorable ruling in the 6th Circuit Courts regarding 'Ted Gatzaro et al v. Sault Tribe.' The Court found that we do not owe \$74 million to the party.

This is a good time to remind everyone about the difference between Greektown and our current downstate development efforts: Greektown was a commercial casino the tribe happened to own (with partners). It was subject to the State Michigan Gaming Authority and the constraints and demands of local jurisdictions. Our current effort is to establish tribal gaming (Kewadin) under the authority and regulation of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) and the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

Indian Energy (IE) LLC

If you recall, the board made a decision to passively invest seed capital to this IE LLC in order to have an interest in the energy market and the decision was approved by the people in a referendum election. It was always portrayed as a high-risk investment in a highly volatile and political market. Recently, IE achieved a major objective by making the list of prequalified contractors:

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — "The U.S. Army has awarded the final round of solar technology contracts that will support a \$7 billion renewable and alternative energy power production for Department of Defense installations Multiple Award Task Order Contract (MATOC).

The U.S. Army Energy Initiatives Task Force (EITF)

and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, established the \$7 billion MATOC primarily to use for Power Purchase Agreements involving renewable or alternative energy projects greater than 10 megawatts." Indian Energy LLC is one of the pre-qualified contractors. These two projects (Gaming & Energy) represent both traditional and diversified economic efforts to secure long term, high revenue opportunity for our tribal nation. Both have the potential for high revenue and high risk of failure. Next month I will try to update on more local economic development efforts, that I hope will translate into jobs for tribal members.

Northern Kewadin

The issues we are facing at our up north casinos involves personnel, operations and management — and the adverse impact on our workforce and customers — exasperating an

already downturned economic climate. If you work for our casinos and enterprises, or if you frequent our businesses, you already know what I'm talking about. The board of directors and the gaming authority do not make day-to-day management decisions. But we certainly have a fiduciary obligation for oversight. I am disappointed in management performance over the last two years, and we need to intervene and make sweeping change now in order to turn this enterprise around. Our workforce deserves it and so do our loyal customers.

Communication and tribal input

Internal communication at the executive administration level has been a little sketchy as of late. Not sure if it has to do with the transition to a new board, changes and cancellation of board meetings, workshops and committees, but I hope it improves quickly. One thing of particular concern is not being

aware of tribal activity until after the fact. I don't know if it's inadvertent or purposeful, but when elected representatives are disenfranchised, the people are also disenfranchised.

On a good note, I want to once again thank our key government employees who have worked to implement IT infrastructure improvement within our tribal organization. Access to pertinent documentation has improved tremendously. This is the foundational investment required so that we can now evaluate opportunities for cross division information sharing. Ultimately this should translate into better, more responsive service to tribal members who access tribal services.

Looking forward to the Hessel and Newberry powwows and hope to see you there. Enjoy these last days of summer.

Creator bless.

Unit2tribal@gmail.com, www.catherinehollowell.com, (906) 484-6821.