

# Let's stay focused and prioritize our attention



**CATHERINE HOLLOWELL,  
DIRECTOR, UNIT II**

As I'm sure you have read in other director reports and from the chair, we are moving forward in a rather swift manner to chart a course that is beneficial to our tribal organization, including our employees and the tribal citizens we serve. This pace is a direct result of the leadership of our new chairman. It is also a transitional period and there is a palpable fluidness within our

institution at the present time. But I'm happy to report there have been frank conversations and commitments made to work together—including progress on the subject of “executive authorities to the chair” and acknowledgement and respect for the “minority voice,” which includes the “minority voice” of the tribal legislative body.

We don't have to mimic the divisive factionalism that dominates national and state politics. Unlike those governments, we are still “nation building” and we've got work to do! Our challenges are different and demand respectful, responsible and vigorous discussion on these topics. Our tribal nation will be more resilient if we respect opposing views as legitimate and valid. The outcome promises to be a more responsive, transparent government that serves its citizens better.

We have to stay focused and prioritize our attention on a number of projects and initiatives

under way. A crisis that requires immediate response is drug usage within our tribal populations and in our tribal community. Thank you to both Director Causley and Chairman Payment for getting this emergency in front of us for some immediate action.

Our Lansing casino project is moving forward as planned, although you may have read in the media about the developer reorganizing internally. It's a move that increases my financial confidence in the overall project. Therefore I cast my first vote of approval on the project.

Finally, besides conducting our tribal elections on June 28, the other important event that occurred that day was the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling upholding the Affordable Care Act, informally known as Obamacare. The implications for our tribe's ability to provide better, more comprehensive medical care to our tribal members is tremendous! I urge our executive and elected leader-

ship to focus an aggressive effort on implementing tribal provisions available in this statutory law. The outcome will be the tangible benefit of increased coverage and increased quality of medical care for all tribal members who reside in the state of Michigan.

The Warrior's Camp and Junior Police Camp have concluded their annual summer gathering. The Rexton Youth Empowerment Powwow was held last Saturday.

The 20th annual Gathering of the Eagles Powwow in Hessel will be on Aug. 17-19: Friday night, spiritual gathering and open drum; community health fair at the Tribal Community Center as well! Saturday, grand entry at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m., potluck feast at 5 p.m.; Sunday, grand entry at 1 p.m.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at powwow and I sure hope you can attend. Miigwech to Lisa Burnside, the Powwow Committee, our drum, our elders

and all the volunteers who make this powwow possible.

The 2012 St. Ignace Heritage Week will be under way Aug. 19-26 concluding with the Rendezvous at the Straits St. Ignace Powwow on Aug. 25 and 26. There will be many special opportunities during the weeklong event. Fort de Baude will be hosting daily genealogy sessions and the Museum of Ojibwa Culture will be hosting historians, storytellers and cultural programs and events. The all family reunion will be Thursday, Aug. 23, with live music, food and a parade. I'm really looking forward to this event and finally meeting some of the “Derusha Descendants” I've come to know on Facebook.

Enjoy the remainder of this blessed summer, everyone. And, as usual, please call or email me with your questions, comments and concerns.

Catherine Hollowell  
(906) 484-6821  
unit2tribal@gmail.com