

Making progress on budgets but more to come



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DIRECTOR, UNIT III**

The board has been making some progress on the budgets, but the toughest part, schedule C, has yet to be passed. The end

of the year is coming up quickly and I hope we can keep up the momentum and finish up a balanced budget by then.

Some of the major concerns that figure into the budget are our consistent losses in the self-insurance department.

Reoccurring multi-million dollar losses need to be reconciled now and in the future if we don't act now. Our Big Bear Ice center continues to be a major discussion because it also costs in excess of three quarters of a million dollars to keep open. I do not advocate for the center to be closed but some solution to the problem needs to be found.

We have many such areas we have looked over including ACFS, law enforcement,

information technologies, government services and board budgets, just to name a few. Some need more support and some could do with less. It is just that the board needs to set priorities and goals that we have to stick to and make the tough decisions.

The tribal board reviewed and accepted next year's housing and transportation plans. These plans are extremely detailed and complex. They have to be approved by the board and then sent to the federal government and must meet all the federal guidelines. Both departments did an excellent job.

We had reports this month on many other divisions, some of them are health, special diabe-

tes, casinos, elders, education, budgets, legal, accounting, buildings and others.

The board was informed at a meeting that the rates on electricity are going to go up on demand from Wisconsin Energy to increase them just on the Upper Peninsula. This was very alarming to the board, which immediately directed legal to do whatever it had to do to show our objection to this outrageous increase. We have begun the processes of objecting to the federal government that gave the okay to charge the increase and we are hoping to stall the implementation of it until we can be heard. The board was very concerned about how our members would be affected and thought it would be detrimental

to the entire Upper Peninsula population and businesses.

Thank you for all the e-mails and phone calls.

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