

Council floats third loan for Pow-wow

By Paul Baswick
OHSWEKEN

Six Nations Tourism will receive its third \$90,000 interest-free loan from band council to host the annual Champion of Champions Pow-Wow, but council has refused to provide further assistance at the expense of Six Nations Parks and Recreation.

Although approved, the loan request presented at Monday night's general finance meeting raised concerns over a seemingly persistent need to front money for the event and Tourism's ability to meet its repayment schedule.

Councillors were also at odds with an additional request that they direct Parks and Recreation to waive its Chiefswood Park rental fee, projected at \$2,000, for the 2002 Pow-Wow.

"I can not support that because Recreation does not have \$2,000 extra to provide," District 3 Councillor Roger Jonathan said of forcing Parks and Recreation to waive their fee.

"If council wanted to give a donation for

that, fine, but it shouldn't come from Recreation."

The request to have the fee waived was presented in a separate motion and defeated.

The loan request itself, as in previous years, stated that the \$90,000 would be repaid to council within 90 days of the Pow-Wow.

It wasn't until earlier this month, however, that last year's \$90,000 loan was repaid in full, noted finance director Tom Darnay.

He also noted that Tourism owes council additional moneys unrelated to the Pow-Wow, and that while council also owes tourism money, "at the end of the day there's still a balance outstanding from tourism" of about \$54,000.

When asked why last year's loan hadn't been repaid sooner, former Tourism chair Lynda Powless, who just recently stepped down from that position, said Tourism had the money but no one would collect it.

"We asked who we could give a check to but nobody would take it," she said,

Continued on page 2

Loan raises concern

Continued from front

adding that the department had been forced to operate for some time without a book keeper.

The fundamental question of the Pow-Wow's financial sustainability was also raised.

"I thought they weren't supposed to take a loan out every year," offered community member and 2001 council candidate Barb Smith.

"Why do they have to have a loan every single year...Is that how it's going to be?"

Tourism board representative and District 4 Councillor Glenda Porter answered that the loans are viewed as only a short-term solution until Tourism has a chance "to get enough money built up."

District 1 Councillor Syd Henhawk

countered that council needs a clearer picture of when that might be.

"If we loan them \$90,000 I think we have a vested interest in what's going on there."

Chief Roberta Jamieson said an orientation session on the Pow-Wow, including a financial review of the 2001 event, will take place in the coming weeks.