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STATE OF NEVADA INDIAN COMMISSION

Stewart Indian School Preservation Project
Update for the May 27, 2015 Nevada Indian Commission Board Meeting
Submitted by: Chris Ann Gibbons, Program Officer I, Nevada Indian Commission

- On December 5, 2014 the Nevada Indian Commission (NIC) submitted a FY15 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Grant proposal in the amount of \$15,000 to hire a professional interviewer/historian to compile oral histories of Stewart Indian School alumni and former employees. On March 18, 2015 received a denial letter from the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office which stated that the denial was due to budget cuts which resulted in limited grant funding available for projects.
- In February 2015 the Nevada Indian Commission sent a letter of inquiry to the National Park Service which explains the reasons why the Stewart Indian School should be designated a National Historic Landmark. Currently, the Commission is waiting to hear back to see if we have been given the go ahead to begin the National Historic Landmark application process.
- In March 2014 the Nevada Indian Commission received a Commission for Cultural Affairs (CCA) Grant in the amount of \$180,000 to fund the structural and seismic retrofit of Building #1 (future Stewart Indian School Cultural Center). On December 16, 2014 NIC met with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to discuss the status of the grant. At the meeting, NIC asked for a grant extension because according to State Public Works Board the entire project is structural and seismic and all work has to be completed at the same time. An alternate use of the grant funding was presented to SHPO at the December 2014 meeting which was to develop a set of detailed construction documents for the building. SHPO conferred with the CCA Board Chairman on the project change request and it was decided that a board meeting would need to be held to discuss the request. On January 5, 2015 the CCA Board met to discuss the project change request. The request was approved, but only up to the \$137,000 level that was included on the preliminary estimate from H&K Architects. On February 3, 2015 the CCA voted unanimously to make available the remaining \$43,000 of unspent CCA grant funds for redistribution to another project. On February 20, 2015 we received a revised award letter and funding agreement in the amount of \$137,000 for the rehabilitation of the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center, Building #1 which was signed immediately and returned. The funding is for design and development of construction documents, architecture and engineering. The fully executed funding agreement (signed agreement from all parties involved) was received by the Commission on March 12, 2015. The Commission is currently working with the State Public Works Division, SHPO, the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and the Budget Office on the finalizing the project schedule and bringing the funding into the Nevada Indian Commission budget account.
- On March 27, 2015 the Nevada Indian Commission received funding in the amount of \$20,000 from the Trustees of the NV 150 Foundation. This funding will be used to interview Stewart Indian School Alumni and the audio recordings of these interviews will be transcribed, catalogued and archived at the Nevada

Indian Commission, State Library and Archives and Special Collections at the University of Nevada, Reno.

These interviews may be used for research or used in a publication or a documentary, museum exhibition, dramatization or other form of public presentation. Recordings, transcripts, catalogs, photographs and related documentary materials may also be posted on the Stewart Indian School website. The Commission will be working with the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs on the RFP process for this project.

- On March 10, 2015 the Nevada Indian Commission artifact collection was moved from the Nevada State Museum to the Commission Office. This collection was previously housed in the Stewart Indian School Museum and consists of artifacts such as grinding stones, basketry, Edward C. Curtis photos and other ethnographic items which are not part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs owned collection. Upon the closing of the Stewart Museum in 2001, former Museum Director Shelia Abbie sent the items to the Carson Valley Historical Society for storage. In 2003, Sherrada James, former Nevada Indian Commission Executive Director, secured the removal of the artifacts from the Carson Valley Historical Society to the ownership of the Commission. In January of 2004, the Curtis prints were sent to the Nevada Historical Society in Reno for storage, and the rest of the items were delivered to the Nevada State Museum for storage. Currently, the items (minus the Edward C. Curtis Collection) are housed in a secure on site storage and will be curated by Commission staff.
- The Nevada Indian Commission is collaborating with the Stewart Facility Buildings and Grounds Division on the implementation of projects related to the Stewart Indian School Landscape Preservation Plan. In keeping in line with the historic aspects of the Stewart Indian School, Buildings and Grounds is currently working on restoring the original front entrance gateway to the facility, adding additional street lights, and replacing concrete throughout the facility. Other Stewart related improvement projects (not included in the preservation plan) include a new roof on building #11 and restoration of the street signs and bus stops.
- The Nevada Indian Commission is working on upgrading the Stewart Indian School website and has revised and re-printed the Stewart Indian School Trail brochure and rack cards. Also, a new Stewart Indian School Trail sign has been purchased and installed along the alternate ADA accessible Trail route.
- The 2015 Stewart Father's Day Powwow will be held June 19-21, 2015. The event has received a Nevada Division of Tourism Marketing Grant in the amount of \$2,500.00 and a Nevada Arts Council Project Grant in the amount of \$3,944.00. The grants will cover radio ads, the sound system, postage, Facebook ads, mailing to Stewart Indian School alumni and honorariums for the head staff and host drum. Also, the Great Basin Artists will again have an exhibit in building #1 which is also the site of the Stewart Indian School Alumni reception.