

**POULSBO CITY COUNCIL RETREAT WITH THE SUQUAMISH TRIBAL COUNCIL OF
JUNE 29, 2022**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mayor Erickson; Councilmembers Livdahl, Lord, McGinty, McVey, Musgrove, Phillips, Stern. Tribal Chairman Forsman, Tribal Vice Chairman Bagley, Tribal Councilmember Mabe, Tribal Council Emissary Judge Hunt.
Staff: Police Chief Harding, Housing Health & Human Services Director Hendrickson, Finance Director Booher, Deputy City Clerk Diehl.

1. Opening of the Meeting

Mayor Erickson opened the retreat at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Erickson noted this meeting was formally noticed per the guidelines of the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act.

2. Introductions

a. Introduction and Opening Comments of City Council and the Suquamish Tribal Council

City Councilmembers, Tribal Councilmembers, and Judge Hunt took turns introducing themselves.

Tribal Chairman Forsman noted this was the first formal public meeting between the two council since the incident on July 3, 2019. Forsman stated he felt there was still a lot of healing to do but looked forward to working with the city council again.

Tribal Councilmember Mabe stated the two groups have many similar interests and are too close of neighbors not to be able to work together but noted there is still improvements that need to be made. Mabe was bothered that Officer Keller was in the running for best police officer in the Best of Kitsap Contest held by the North Kitsap Herald.

Tribal Vice Chairman Bagley stated he also felt there were wounds to heal but felt hopeful since both councils were back at the table together.

City Councilmember Stern noted he felt an advertising campaign done by a self-serving newspaper which lacks rules on voting, was not necessarily the reflection of the people of Poulsbo but understood the impression that campaign could leave on others. Stern noted Poulsbo and Squamish have been the closest of neighbors for many years, not just geographically, and wants to earn back the relationship they once had.

Councilmember McVey stated to the Suquamish Tribal Council, he has heard them and looks forward to making progress together in all the common goals we share such as: protecting the health of Liberty Bay; Economic Development; coming out of the pandemic; and public safety. McVey thanked the Tribal Councilmembers for coming and looks forward to rebuilding a relationship.

Councilmember McGinty thanked the tribal council for coming and noted the importance of the two groups working together to accomplish their common goals.

Councilmember Livdahl stated as where the shooting was a catastrophic event for our communities that created a scar, it was added to hundreds of years of scars and she hopes with these two councils sharing their feeling it will make for a stronger relationship than they had in the past.

Councilmember Musgrove noted he had been looking forward to this evening for a long time in order to have an opportunity to hear from the tribal council. Musgrove noted he might not understand, as where he is not in the tribal members shoes, but this relationship will give him an opportunity to recognize how to make things better going forward.

Councilmember Lord thanked the tribal council for coming and echoed her councilmembers previous statements. Lord noted she felt great sorrow for the family of Mr. Chiefstick and hopes the two council can restore a mutual respect for one another.

Mayor Erickson feels she has a wonderful and caring city council. Erickson feels not only herself but her staff as well, in these past few years have done a great deal of self-inspection and awareness. Erickson feels we all need to be better, work harder and move forward.

b. Introduction and Comments from Police Chief and Housing, Health, & Human Services Director

Mayor Erickson introduced Police Chief Ron Harding and Housing, Health, & Human Services Director Kim Hendrickson.

Chief Harding appreciated the genuine expression of emotion in working on this relationship. Harding noted when he was hired, the Mayor mandated him to change the culture of the police department. Changes included starting from a place of human dignity. New tools were needed including more training especially when dealing with crisis situations.

Harding requested to show a video to emphasize some of the crisis training his officers have learned. Harding noted one of the challenges in law enforcement is they come off as being defensive when they try to explain how something can go wrong,

because the impact of something going wrong is emotional not rational. Harding noted the video was graphic and contain profanity but wanted the public to see a real-life event. (Note: Due to a technical difficulty, audio for the video was not recorded).

Summary of events within the video, given by Police Chief Harding:

The video was of a call for a police response to Waterfront Park for an agitated individual who was scaring and threatening park visitors. The video showed two Poulsbo Police officers speaking with the individual trying to de-escalate the situation in which the individual proceeded to calm down. During the de-escalation tactics a hatchet is seen in the individuals back pocket so another unit from a neighboring agency is called to respond. The responding officer attempts to take control of the situation without the use of the de-escalation tactic and ends up in turn escalating the situation into what could have been a tragic incident. Chief Harding noted he did not believe the responding officer had de-escalation training and could be why he felt the need to take control of the situation. Harding stated he spoke to the responding officer supervisor to let him know he felt the officers' actions were inappropriate. Harding stated during the Poulsbo Police officer's interaction with the individual they were able to calm him down and find out he was struggling with homelessness. The hatchet he had was need for survival and cost him \$14 which was a lot of money to him.

The police relationship with this individual lasted for months and the police departments social worker was introduced to help him find resources. The Police Department recently came in contact with this individual at a public event and he was in a much better place.

Housing, Health, & Human Services Director Kim Hendrickson gave a brief description of her background, noting she had previously worked for the City of Bainbridge Island and served in a position which was preliferably responsible for the hiring and discipline of police officers. Hendrickson relayed a story regarding an officer involved shooting which killed a man with mental illness Douglas Ostling. She felt that situation was not handled properly by police and made her opinions known publicly resulting in her firing and heavy criticism by powerful local people. Hendrickson noted she feels people with mental illness, or a substance abuse disorder are generally not violent and no more dangerous than the general population, but when having a crisis and they become violent, police officers are asked to get involved when no one else will and are not equipped to do so. She feels the Mayor, City Officials, the Police Chief & former chief have been very focused on behavioral health and policing, noting things have been changing. There has been an expansion on training and addition of a co-responder in the form of a social worker. She has learned the focus is exclusively on the police but needs to extend beyond police, she feels it cannot just be law enforcement but creation of new programs. The fire department has created a program known as FireCARES. It pairs a firefighter with crisis training, up with a social worker, to be first responders to any behavioral health

calls for help. FireCARES also works with the Suquamish Tribe, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Fishline, and the local schools to help people that have behavioral health problems but have not reached a crisis level. A large majority of the behavioral health calls are for the senior population that need a different response than the typical 911 response. Hendrickson stated dealing with behavioral health issues goes beyond a Police or Fire response and the need is much greater for housing, detox & treatment facilities, and peer support. She feels the lack of these services is why people are relying on 911 and that is not acceptable.

3. Wrap Up of Discussion

Tribal Councilmember Mabe questioned if the FireCARES team would have been called to the scene shown in the video. Chief Harding explained how they would have come after the scene was secured in order to figure out what services would have helped the individual. Mabe also questions if police officers would still be the front line now as they were then. Mabe asked for a comparison of de-escalation training and hours now and before July 3, 2019. Chief Harding noted all but three new officers have completed forty hours of crisis intervention training and is required to complete a two-hour refresher every year. There is also forty hours of Interviewing Techniques Training given to the officers to help with the line of questioning used to deter and prevent any further agitation by the subject.

Hendrickson spoke in regard to the navigator program, noting the valuable relationship the social worker is able to build after an interaction as opposed to during an interaction. The state is launching a phone line (988) to respond to behavioral health calls. This phone line will be staffed by trained behavioral health professionals to either talk to the person through the phone call or dispatch trained professions to the caller. Hendrickson noted most behavioral health responders request the police to be on scene.

Councilmember Livdahl questioned the hours of the police department's behavioral health specialist and the possibility of getting additional funding to provide the service. Harding noted it is a forty hour a week position that takes place during business hours.

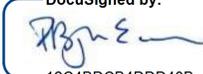
Tribal Councilmember Mabe noted their wellness team is government funded and is also a business hour set-up. Their wellness team has started making site visits. Mabe questioned in the de-escalation training there was also room for implicit bias training.

Chief Harding noted the officer go thru a yearly implicit bias training and would be open to having conversations with groups to talk about how they feel and interact law enforcement. Harding noted if he ever heard of one of his officers showing an explicit bias, it will not be tolerated.

Judge Hunt noted the art in the roundabout was at first, not inclusive of the tribe but the City of Poulsbo has taken great steps to make it inclusive to all. Changes included hiring a tribal artist and adding a welcome message in several different languages. Hunt also noted she was impressed with the rebuilding of city/tribe relationship and how everyone started with good hearts, intentions, integrity, and cooperation.

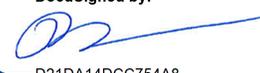
4. Closing of Workshop

At Mayor Erickson's requested the workshop be adjourned and the recording stopped to continue on with the dinner portion of the meeting at 5:06 p.m.

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Rebecca Erickson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Rhiannon Fernandez, CMC, City Clerk

Respectfully prepared and submitted by Kati Diehl