



OFFICE OF NAVAJO NATION HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2016

Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission meets with the City of Winslow

St. Michael's, Navajo Nation (Ariz.) – On April 13, 2016, the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission (“Commission”) had a meeting with Winslow’s Stephen J. Pauken, *City Manager*, Ellen Van Riper, *City Attorney*, Stephen Garnett, *Chief of Police*, and Lt. Kenneth Arend, *Patrol Commander*. At the meeting, the Commission followed up on a Monday, April 4th letter sent to the City of Winslow requesting the following information:

- In police unit camera policy
- Lapel (on the body) camera policy
- Public complaint(s) against police officers within the past 4 years
- Public complaint policy
- Fire arm discharged policy
- Drug testing policy for police officers
- Police training record for the past 4 years
- Dispatch policy

Of the eight requests, six of policies were provided to the Commission and the two remaining requests would take time to compile by the City of Winslow. The Commission staff is now reviewing the provided information with the understanding the additional information will be provided when compiled.

At the meeting, the Commission learned right after the fatal shooting of Loreal Tsinging, Chief Garnett made the decision to contact the Arizona Department of Public Safety Criminal Investigations Division (“DPS”) to investigate the incident. It took 4-hours for DPS to arrive on scene from Phoenix, Arizona.

The Commission learned it would take 60-days for DPS to finish their investigation into the fatal shooting of Tsinging and once the investigation is completed, the investigation’s report and findings will be given to Navajo County Attorney’s Office for them determine if criminal charges will be filed against Police Officer Austin Shipley. All the evidences gathered by DPS from the March 27th incident will not be released to the general public until after Navajo County Attorney’s Office makes the determination on if criminal charge is warranted.

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Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, Leonard Gorman indicated to Chief Garnett the Commission is seeking the assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division (“USDOJ”) to examine the practice of law enforcement with the Winslow Police Department. Gorman further added, “I am confident the City of Winslow realizes the seriousness of this unfortunate incident. It would be in their best interest to accept the wishes of the Navajo stakeholders in the community.”

City Manager, Stephen J. Pauken said, “In the interest of cooperation and transparency, the City of Winslow welcomes a thorough review of this tragic event and our Police Department just as soon as the Arizona Department of Public Safety and the Navajo County Attorney complete their investigation and review.”

Earlier in the day, the Commission also met with Navajo community members. Over 30 people attended the meeting, where 6 recommendations were made and conveyed to the City of Winslow. Three highly important principles conveyed were: 1) an independent investigation is strongly recommended with the USDOJ serving as the investigating party; 2) community and police collaboration must commence immediately to re-establish and restore the trust and confidence between law enforcement officers and the people; and 3) an independent or private investigation be conducted immediately and have the results shared with the Navajo Nation, USDOJ, and City of Winslow.

If you have any questions regarding the meeting you can contact the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission at (928) 871-7436.

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