



OFFICE OF NAVAJO NATION HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

P.O. Box 129
ST. MICHAELS, AZ 86511
PHONE: (928) 871-7436
FAX: (928) 871-7437

IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 22, 2016

Representatives from the City of Winslow speak at Teesto Chapter meeting

ST. MICHAELS, NAVAJO NATION (ARIZ) – The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission (“Commission”) and Winslow City’s Manager Steve Pauken and Chief of Police Stephen Garnett attended Teesto Chapter meeting on June 21, 2016. The Commission and City of Winslow (“City”) are working together to address issues that were brought up by the Diné Winslow Residents and Navajo communities adjacent to the City. Teesto Chapter president Elmer Clark stated, “We have special guest this morning, the city of Winslow.” Clark further stated, “This is history in the making having the City coming out to Teesto.”

During the chapter meeting, City Manager Pauken provided an update to Teesto community members on the pending results from Arizona Department of Public Safety. “At this moment the ADPS has finished their investigation of the incident and we (the City) don’t know the results of the report.” Pauken further stated, “Navajo County Attorney asked Maricopa County Attorney to review the report and once Maricopa County finishes with their review, as a City we have to abide by their recommendations.”

Pauken stated, “We have talked with the City of Mesa to do an independent internal affairs investigation of Officer Shipley, regardless of the results of the investigation.” Pauken further announced the retirement plan of Chief Garnett, which was set in motion when Garnett enrolled in the Public Safety Retirement Pension's DROP program in August of 2011, which means that he effectively retired on that date with a commitment to serve for five more years. Therefore, his distinguished service to the City will end on August 5, 2016.

The City is planning to hire an interim chief of police for 9-12 months. During that time the City will be hiring an outside company from Washington, D.C. to come and assess the Winslow Police Department. The City plans to make modifications according to the assessment. Chief Garnett spoke about the services that the police department provides outside the job duties and the police ride along program, which Clark was interested in.

Family members of the late Loreal Tsingine were present at the meeting and raised questions to the City on the actions that were taken during and after the shooting incident.

Executive Director of Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, Leonard Gorman gave an update on the efforts of the Commission. Gorman stated “there are three issues that are

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ongoing with the [Commission's] office: the first issue is the results from the investigation. There are many requests for US Department of Justice ("USDOJ") to come in and investigate the police department, for USDOJ to investigate we need to show a pattern of practice with in the City of Winslow. Secondly is the survivor benefits, Tsingine family has that responsibility to make sure they meet the 180 day timeline. Lastly is conciliation plans between the City, Diné residents of Winslow and Navajo communities that surround the City."

The conciliation plans was developed by the Commission, Winslow Diné Residents, and Teesto Chapter over multiple meetings. The conciliation plans was divided into different categories: Life and Safety, Public Education, Law Enforcement, Business, Employment, School and other. The Commission, along with the Winslow Diné Residents, and Dilkon and Teesto Chapters, is scheduled to partake in a work session with Winslow's City Council for Tuesday, June 28, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. MST. The work session is an open meeting, but no action will be taken and public comment will not be allowed.

Communication between the City and Commission is a start to develop better community relations between the Navajo citizens residing in Winslow and Navajo citizens who live in the surrounding areas. For more information contact the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission at (928) 871-7436.

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