



TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Karl R. Amylon, City Manager

DATE: June 10, 2020

RE: **City of Ketchikan Statement Regarding Recent National Events and Ketchikan Police Department Practices**

At the City Council meeting of June 4, 2020, the City Council directed staff to prepare a statement to be publicly released that reflects the City Council's position on recent national events and its expectation on how the Ketchikan Police Department and its officers are to conduct themselves in their interactions with residents of the community.

My office respectfully submits the following draft statement for City Council consideration.

On behalf of the City of Ketchikan, the City Council offers the statement below regarding recent national and local conversations concerning law enforcement and the associated community response.

"It is the mission of the Ketchikan Police Department, together with all the residents of the City, to make our community a safe place within which to live and work" (Ketchikan Police Department mission statement).

The Ketchikan Police Department strives to provide the best police service it can to our community. Many of the Department's officers and dispatchers were born and raised in Ketchikan, and have now dedicated their lives both on and off the job to helping make Ketchikan a better place. The City of Ketchikan's officers have sworn an oath to "perform the duties of police officer upon which I am about to enter faithfully and impartially and will do even and exact justice to all persons therein to the best of my ability." The Ketchikan Police Department works diligently to adhere to these words and maintain the public's trust. The City Council is committed to ensuring this level of service is delivered through the application of the Department's community policing philosophy as well as the continued review and training in best policing practices and the respectful treatment of all persons.

The Ketchikan City Council is saddened by recent national events involving law enforcement and will not tolerate racism or brutality in any form. We support the rights of all citizens to demonstrate lawfully and peacefully to

have their voices heard and we are dedicated to ensuring the rights of all residents are protected and upheld. The City Council thanks the citizens of Ketchikan for being respectful to each other during recent community gatherings and demonstrations.

Ketchikan is made strong because of our diverse cultures and compassion for our neighbors and fellow residents. The City Council thanks the community for their efforts in partnership with the Ketchikan Police Department to make Ketchikan a safer, better place for all to live, work, and enjoy.

A motion has been prepared for City Council consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the City Council adopt the motion accepting staff's June 10, 2020 draft statement regarding recent national events and Ketchikan Police Department practices and directing the City Manager to publish such statement as may be modified by the City Council and in what forums the City Council determines appropriate.

Recommended Motion: I move the City Council accept staff's June 10, 2020 draft statement regarding recent national events and Ketchikan Police Department practices and direct the City Manager to publish such statement as may be modified by the City Council and in what forums the City Council determines appropriate.

"UNAPPROVED"

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Mary Maley said she was here on behalf of the citizens of Alaska for the recall of Governor Dunleavy. She requested the use of either Berth I or III to operate a recall Dunleavy petition drive. She informed the Center for the Recall Dunleavy has developed protocols to collect signatures safely. She indicated she can provide a copy and consult with the EOC regarding those plans. She said they would like to operate this petition signature drive during the weekends in June. She encouraged the Council to approve her request and allow the citizens of Ketchikan to be heard.

Hannah Bayles thanked the Council for all their efforts that have been put in place to the response to the COVID pandemic. She said she would like the City of Ketchikan to make a public statement explaining the policies that actively help combat oppression, including training plans for all city employees. She indicated she would also like to see a statement regarding our law enforcements programs and training regarding the complacency our nation has in regards to serving people of color. She stated our community projects law enforcement as role models, and she believes it is necessary that they use that platform to denounce racist systemic oppression. She encouraged the City to use this time to utilize all resources available to fight for equity for everyone in our community.

Jason Baldwin spoke to the issue regarding people of color. He stated he would also like to request the City to condemn the murder of George Floyd, and for the Police Department to provide some guidelines on how they would handle a similar case if it happened in Ketchikan. He said he was proud of Ketchikan through this pandemic.

Mayor Sivertsen indicated the recent events that were triggered by the tragic death of Mr. Floyd has created an outcry for Cities to review and reform their current procedures. He indicated black lives do matter, and though we are geographically a long ways from Minnesota as people and individuals we are all connected. He said as he watched the reactions that are occurring because of this in other cities, he feels fortunate to live in Ketchikan. He stated as a whole Ketchikan is an outstanding community, and we do not support racism, violence, abuse or brutality. He thanked Police Chief White for his leadership of our Police Department, and the improvements he has made to promote a greater connection with the community he serves.

Police Chief White indicated the Ketchikan Police Department makes it their highest goal to provide the most professional services to our community. He said since he has been the police chief they have worked hard to gain the community's trust and to keep it. He said they have a hiring procedure in place to hire the best officers they can, and then provide training for them. He indicated over half of our officers are from Ketchikan, noting because of this they have a vested interest in the community. He informed overall the Police Departments priority is to ensure the rights of all of citizens at all times, and we are here to make Ketchikan a safe place to live, work and enjoy life.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Sivertsen suggested moving several items to the Consent Agenda, including; Appointments to Boards and Commissions; Change Order No. 1 (final) to Contract No. 19-41 regarding the Berth III Fender Replacement by Western Dock & Bridge; A budget transfer for supplemental COVID-19 pandemic financial contribution to the Alaska Municipal League; Change Order No. 1 (final) to Contract No. 20-05 regarding the Creek Street Viewing Platform by BAM, LLC; Staff to prepare a draft letter in response to the University of Alaska's proposed elimination and merger of the University of Alaska Southeast; Ordinance No 20-1912 regarding the impoundment of abandoned property in the Ketchikan Municipal Code Chapter 9.60 in first reading; Propose topics for PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center quarterly presentation to the

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Councilmember Gage said Ketchikan is an interesting place and includes multi-cultural groups that live in our community. She felt it is extremely important that we allow people to assemble and safely protest in order to express their views. She indicated we need to be aware of our privilege regardless of whether or not we intentionally oppress a group of people, and we need to understand there are some groups who are marginalized and oppressed in multiple ways. She commended the groups for being respectful with their protest. She also commended the Police Department as they have come a long way, although there is always room for improvement. She encouraged everyone to remember we have the right to speak and that we live in a democratic society. She indicated she did not run for office to carry the baggage of her predecessors, and felt in order to make good decisions we need the communities input.

Councilmember Bergeron echoed comments made by Mayor Sivertsen that he was glad he lived in Ketchikan, noting he has been and worked all over the world. He said in some of those places you want nothing to do with the police as there is corruption, but we don't have that here. He said we are lucky to live where we do, and while this pandemic is going on we are lucky we don't live in New York City or a high density urban environment. He said while living in Ketchikan he has had some semblance of a life, and this is one the best places to be. He said as we talk about opening up our economy he felt the Council has taken a reasonable and responsible step tonight to try and open up Ketchikan for business with these small cruise ships. He stated Alaska has the lowest number of COVID-19 cases because we have mandate 10.1, and now we are augmenting that a little bit, but he felt responsibly. He said he appreciates what Mayor Sivertsen and staff has done during this crisis.

Councilmember Chapel said she wants to give a shout out to wastewater for their COVID-19 testing with Biobot Analytics which allows us to potentially identify a community outbreak. She also gave a shout out to Public Works for their collaborative and can do attitude. She thanked the Water Department for their lower testing levels. She felt it would be appropriate for the City to release a statement on what is happening down South. She said she would like the City to release a public statement which indicates we support people's right to peacefully and lawfully protest, and that our Police Department continues to act in an appropriate manner and abide by policing best practices. She indicated she would like the Council to make a commitment to stand by the pledge; "liberty and justice for all". She clarified when people say black lives matters it doesn't mean they are saying other lives don't, and if that is your interpretation you're missing the message.

Mayor Sivertsen asked for a show of at least four hands to have staff release a public statement as requested during persons to be heard, and at least four hands were shown.

Councilmember Zenge said families come and talk to her while she is at the mall about what they are going through which may include losing their job. She informed some people are actually moving in together to share costs. She felt when we sit down to talk about the distribution of the CARES Act Relief funding that our priority is to get it out to the people and businesses in the community who need it. She encouraged the Council to start thinking about how to distribute this money.

Councilmember Kiffer he said he kind of likes the mask as it creates sort of a barrier to communication which is a good thing for him because when people are talking he is not talking so much himself and is actually listening more. He said he put a post out to the public asking them what they think. He said he received over 400 responses and is working his way through them.

Councilmember Flora said he was looking forward to the meeting in regards to the disbursement of the CARES Act Relief funding. He said we need to get this money out into the community. He