

Policing Task Force Public Forum #2

Wednesday August 25, 2021 6:30PM – Ashland Band Shell

PRESENT: Mayor Deb Lewis, Stacy Craig, Esie Leoso-Corbine, Kate Siegler, Cheyenne Otto, Brandon Marten, Rick Olivio, Laura Negro, Elise Kiele, Allison (*last name not stated*), Jason (*last name not stated*), Elizabeth (*last name not stated*), Katherine Morrisseau, Jay Livingston, and other concerned citizens

Mayor Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:32pm she gave a thank you to committee members and everyone in attendance.

Esie Leoso-Corbine led the public forum in a traditional Native American blessing.

Cheyenne Otto explained the agenda, mission statement and community agreements to those in attendance.

Stacy Craig introduced the task force members and an overview of the Ashland Policing Task Force and the previous public forum asking if anyone had comments or questions about what was discussed.

Leoso-Corbine gave a short talk about her input to the previous meeting and her previous and current relationship and feelings about the police.

PUBLIC COMMENT

(Comments have been edited for clarity and length.)

Elise Kiele stated how welcomed she felt as a transwomen when she moved to Ashland two years ago and just wants everyone to feel safe and welcomed. She stated that she wants for herself and for everyone to be able to call the police without questioning if they will be creating a dangerous situation.

Allison (*last name not stated*) lives in Red Cliff and often experiences people give her darker relatives dirty looks when they are doing nothing wrong and often if her relatives try and ask for help it often escalates to them being made into the villain and being unable to get the help they need.

Jason (*last name not stated*) asks the police department to establish some kind of paperwork or have officers going to the schools to teach about when you should call the police, helping to grow knowledge and help spread information about the police

Star Ames told personal stories about policing and her interactions with law enforcement. What she wants to say most about race and policing is, don't shoot our kids, don't shoot our relatives, there's tasers, there's gas, there's handcuffs, and when your frightened of a 14 year old boy you might want to learn de-escalation and negation skills because you are supposed to be a police officer and help keep the peace, there are always alternatives to violence.

Elizabeth (*last name not stated*) told a personal story about her interaction with police in Milwaukee. She just wants people to treat others the way they want to be treated.

Sophie (*last name not stated*) stated that she has had many interactions with police officers, some interactions good, and some interactions that were bad. She asked that the police just let people be people, they have a right to just look around and be.

Katherine Morrisseau is looking for people to build community, to look to the community to rebuild their voice, and for young people to make their future. She doesn't want to have to beg the police to listen when she calls and she doesn't want to hate cops but, she has had many experiences that have created that distrust. She respects the diversity in the Ashland community and wishes everyone else would as well. When it comes down to it we are community and we often act like it especially in crisis.

Otto talked about officers in Ashland being people you see everywhere, they're your neighbors and you can hate them but we live in too small of a town to live like that but we have to recognize the complexity of where we live. People must understand that hate will not drive them out, so maybe don't hate so much because currently police officers are the system we have.

Craig asked 2 questions that were posed at the last meeting and opened them up to anyone who would like to share. What does community policing mean to you? What does restorative/transformational justice mean to you?

Kiele spoke about her vision of community policing and a future where everyone can get help.

Jason (*last name not stated*) stated that to him community policing is the cop you know and that lives to you. His idea of restorative justice would be to get the offender the help they need in the community not just foster out the help they need to other places.

Jay Livingston talked about the way her family members are treated by the police based on their skin color and disabilities, especially as her younger brothers grow older. She also wanted to highlight the lack of biased training for local officers in recent years.

Otto talked about how community policing isn't just about the police learning the community but the community learning about the police. She stated that there are no reason the police should fear their citizens and the citizens should fear the police in a city of 8,000 people.

Leoso-Corbine wanted to add to the discussion about how community policing would look different in her community with a clan structure and that each clan has an order to what they are responsible for. She added that community policing boils down to all of us working together.

Craig closed the meeting at 8:05 pm thanking all the comments and stories told during the public forum. She stated that there are two more public forums and a task force email to allow for additional comments or stories to be shared from the public.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chelsea List

Deputy Clerk