

Charter Review Commission (CRC)

Justice & Equity Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 10, 2021

Start time: 4:05pm

End time: 6:27pm

1. **Recording/Roll Call**

Roll call: Kyle, Jane, Sharon, Kevin (joined late)

Guest speaker: Samuel Barr

Members of the Public: Linnea Anderson

2. **Approval of Minutes from May 3, 2021 – Minutes Approved.**

3. **Conversation with Sam Barr (Samish Nation) on connections between San Juan County and Coast Salish Peoples (30 mins.)**

Sam Barr is the Deputy Historic Preservation Officer for the Stillaguamish Tribe and leads a Youth Environmental Conservation Corp. He is a Samish Tribal citizen who grew up on Lopez Island. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Resource Management from UW. He's also a canoe skipper. He gave a brief history of tribal presence in the SJIs - a deep collaborative intertribal history.

General recommendations based on our questions:

- There's been a lot of historical tactics to divide tribes. What the Justice & Equity Committee is trying to do is a point of healing. Be as inclusive as possible to tribes that have ties to these lands.
- Samish, Lummi, Swinomish, Jamestown S'Klallam and Tulalip, and sometimes Stillaguamish, have been involved in National Parks visitors centers. They are their own individual sovereign nations. If a group wants a representative on a board to represent all these tribes, they don't realize each tribe needs its own representative.
- He advises not to list individual tribes in land acknowledgments - it's really political, and the intention is not to be political but to be healing.
- "All Indigenous Peoples that have ancestral ties" is good all-inclusive language.
- He encourages every group to include a statement of commitment in their land acknowledgment - that's what makes it go beyond a trendy land acknowledgement - they can run the risk

of lip service/empty words. Consider including some kind of commitment - up to us to think about what we can do to more authentically raise awareness of Coast Salish people and give them a voice in contemporary issues.

- Alexis and Joe Dolan - the Native American liaison
- The important thing is the government-to-government relationship - with the National Parks - all appointed by the respective tribal councils to interface with the U.S. government. Every tribe has its own structure, departments (like cultural and natural resources), work load. You can't make everyone happy.
- Justice, Equity & Inclusion Commission that would be citizen-led and have tribal representation. Sam guarantees that the tribal councils would be interested in having a voice at such a table made up of residents of the SJC community, especially a citizen grassroots kind of organization - a lot of tribal citizens would be interested - thinks that would be very valuable, sort of a counterpart to the higher level government.
- Lopez Family Resource Center has been interfacing with Samish and Swinomish tribal citizens. Need more of this - a very healing step for local island organizations to take it upon themselves to find ways for this to happen - finding housing, help with ferry costs - that's really awesome on a citizen level, and authentic relationships can be built. A grassroots line of communication is very valuable.
- Make sure it's not just a couple of tribes on there. All you can do is put out the invitation and hope that people respond. But do whatever outreach you can - work with people in SJC who have some relationship with the tribes already.
- Important distinction between federal-tribal and county-tribal relationships.

Kyle will talk with Alexis and hear her version of how that came together - that avenue.

4. Review of structure and preparation for committee report to CRC Commission on May 20.

Judy Scott: The fundamental basis in terms of our findings - the justification/rationale is Res. 312020 - we need to link back to that resolution and make the case that the Charter needs to support that in structural terms - that is much of the rationale for the work we're doing.

Kevin: There's a lot of good stuff in that resolution so let's do something with it. He finds having it listed out works better than the 3 column format - here's the resolution we're using to guide our work, and here are the amendments we're putting forward.

Jane: Need to run our proposed amendments passed Randy before full CRC presentation.

Kevin: Would need to give him at least 72 hours ahead of time. We can send him some things if we have them ready. His email to the chairs - contracting Kyle Loring through the PA's office and he can come on board quickly. That way they'll have some more help.

Jane: Nondiscrimination section - almost there - we could send that tomorrow, and probably a couple of other things we can send as well.

Kyle/Jane: She just sent a very important reference document to Amy Vira. **Jane will forward it to Kyle as well.** Office of Attorney General opinion provided - Use of Race or Sex Consciousness to Remedy Discrimination in State Contracting - for Dept. of Enterprise Services in Olympia. Looking at that, they should not be pushing back on us in any way. It's a well-legally-researched piece.

Kyle referenced I-200 to her.

Kevin doesn't anticipate pushback from the PA's office. Amy was really pleased to hear from Kyle. The AG opinion will be very helpful to her.

Jane to send the antidiscrimination piece to Randy.

At this point Amy is a contributor, not a filter.

Work on Presentation – Discussion:

Jane: After talking with Judy Scott, we need to include a line about treatment of residents and visitors - how the county treats the people who live here and who come here.

Jane: We want to establish a relationship that upholds collaboration and support rather than scrutiny. Example of Pierce County Charter.

Former superior court judge was the chair of the committee in Pierce County. It was a time-limited body that identified major gaps and then made recommendations on those gaps in the county government. Then it disbanded.

Kyle: If it's a standing commission, within a year or two it will have a profound impact. How it reviews and does its job is that much more critical.

Jane got some input from Patrick in King County - mandate must be in the Charter - by ordinance gets put into the code - the finer details. But

an ordinance is not the Charter. Make sure the most critical elements of this body are written into the Charter. She spoke with Steve De Julio today and that reinforced why we want to create this body. She's not yet convinced that it's the Charter where we should be talking about Onboarding - that might be for a recommendation to the SJCC.

Sharon to talk with James on Tuesday about the onboarding process: Should there be something about this in the Charter - in context of re-establishment of the CRC and what happens in that process? Would there appropriately be a proposed amendment for language on hiring of staff?

Kyle: Do the shop stewards have a seat at this table? Should they be in the upfront conversation or should that be handled by HR?

Linnea: This was spoken about informally with some of her colleagues - inspired by conversation about CRC wanting to tighten the onboarding process. She saw an opportunity here.

Jane: Line in Pierce County Charter about equal opportunity employment applying to all elected and appointed offices. James Wolf feels the way our Charter is currently worded, it's well understood that the personnel policy manual doesn't apply to elected officials, so we don't need further clarification on that. The nondiscrimination section covers it all but he likes reinforcing it. Need to make sure we're dovetailing with the Operations Committee on anti-bullying language.

Jane will send Maureen an email about it. We can talk about it Wednesday in the CRC meeting when they make their presentation.

Personnel Board - Jane had a conversation with James Wolf - no need for a personnel board in this county. Needs to talk with Clerk of the County Council about appointments to boards and commissions. Need to have a conversation about oversight, with Ingrid or Maureen. James doesn't know if there's any language encouraging minorities to apply for positions, but he doesn't think there is.

Kyle: The County Personnel Manager should be including something about this.

Sharon to ask Ingrid what is the process for this.

Jane will cc Sharon on her follow up email to Ingrid, so Sharon will have Ingrid's contact info.

Jane/Kyle: Does anyone ever get refused from a voluntary board seat? Generally there aren't enough people.

Kyle: Amy said a lot of what the state says about contracts is the fiduciary component - it's tax money so that's usually the #1 reference. She wasn't sure and said she would look into the purchasing side - might be more capacity for the J&E Committee to draw some lines on that aspect of the county's activities. But a lot of the actual contracts, she felt there were some specific limitations out of state law.

Jane: Examples of other counties with very progressive initiatives on contracting - **she'll forward that to Amy, etc.** She forwarded it to James Wolf and Mike Thomas.

Good to run anything by Judy Scott - knows about the federal level for these kinds of efforts - "Responsible Contracting" - **we should run any language we come up with by Judy Scott.**

Kyle: **Will get stuff to Amy this week**, and offline let us know what he hears back before our meeting next Monday.

Jane: **Nondiscrimination clause specific to contracting - have Amy look at that.**

Kevin: Coast Salish Acknowledgment:

At SJCC meetings in 2020, Rick Hughes read a statement of land acknowledgment - the county never adopted that - it was him acting on his own, which he could do as chair. It disappeared in 2021 because it was never formally adopted by the county.

Jane heard from a constituent that the Salish Sea language is falling out of favor in discussions among the tribes. Statement of Commitment - very valuable info from Sam Barr.

Kyle: A statement of commitment is great as long as it's carried out.

Jane: We could include a section in the Charter that tasks the SJCC with passing an ordinance. It would be their responsibility to work it out with representatives of the tribes of this area. There's work that has to go into doing that - that's about relationship building and restorative justice - not quick term work.

Kyle: Res. 312020 - place name commitment has already been expressed though not yet incorporated. 312020 didn't include some of the language for 2021.

Jane: 2020 language in first paragraph: "We strive to acknowledge, dismantle ... of marginalized identities ... black, indigenous and people of color."

Kyle: Agrees that is the commitment - it's just the manner in which it's done - there's no mechanism for accomplishing it right now. Where does it live in the Charter? Could be line two of the Preamble?

Jane: Mike Thomas said they don't even have a road map. It starts to become a road map in the Charter. It could be in the general provisions - should live where our other work is living in the Charter - should be a thread that holds them together. **Need to get advice from Randy on how to build this into the Charter.**

Kyle: **Will have this a little more thought through, some more findings and concrete choices for our next meeting.** Probably won't fly as a stand-alone ordinance. He talked with Rick Hughes today.

Jane: **Where is the Climate & Environment amendment being built into the Charter? Is it a new Article?** If so, we should do that, too.

5. **Discussion on supportive FINDINGS for proposals.** Not discussed.
6. **Discussion on composition of SJC Law and Justice Commission membership.**

Jane discussed it with Linnea today - citizen representation but perhaps just in one person. The person who chairs the JE&I committee would be on that council. That would have to be changed in the Code. Recommendation to SJCC - that Law & Justice Council needs to become more formal in how it conducts its business - info being publicly available (it's not on county website), proper minutes. There's no transparency and accountability right now - that needs to be conveyed to the SJCC. Linnea's point - How unwieldy it could get having that many representatives on this body in such a small county. JE&I Review Commission would be the body through which citizens would want to have a voice on that council.

7. **Discussion on County Onboarding Process for new staff.**
(see above)

8. **New Business**

1) Kyle will need to chair the meeting next week - Jane will be in transit. Jane & Kyle will work on the agenda together.

2) Think about whether we need a work session on Friday for about an hour.

9. **Public Comment** 5:20

10. **Adjourn** - Adjourned at 6:27pm

