

COMMUNITY LEAD

- Wage parity, escalation model, cannot be decided by the government, the operating model needs to be created by the community; create systems based on nations beliefs and values.
- Legislation to be corrected to allow First Nations to drive the conversation on their needs rather than the government telling the community what their budget should be.
- Canada/British Columbia fails to allow First Nations access to their resources to fund their own community/policing e.g. timber/salmon resources but not allowed access to them. Participant believes if his community could use their own resources, they could fund themselves.
- Autonomy for their own FN government to decide funding and how to allocate it and not having to seek approval from provincial/federal to do that.
- It would be good for the legislation to give the authority for the communities to implement, providing delegated authorities to the communities to implement it.
- Establishing a provincial police force by First Nations for First Nations is the main goal.
- Believes the solution in his community is to put money into his own people to be police officers.
- There is a need for First Nations individuals at the table when creating the documents/legislation, so their voices are heard.
- First Nations always had laws within territory/people/nation. Current first nations laws are the first laws of this land. Colonisers first abided by laws of First Nations communities, until smallpox wiped out communities and colonisers created new laws, but First Nations communities still abide by their own laws in policing/in communities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Often people don't understand the challenges until they experience them, engagement needed with those that are experiencing the challenges.
- Need Community engagement (engagement with RCMP and other police forces).
- Suggests community forums to assist with communication as some people could be uncomfortable sharing in a group setting. People need to have a voice and an avenue to communicate their thoughts and experiences.

CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES

- There is a need for a culturally appropriate de-escalation process.
- The importance of culturally understanding what goes on.
- What they should be changing for example is how their police officers should approach situations etc.
- Legislation needs a holistic approach, to understand what an indigenous person faces in policing.
- There are benefits to having indigenous police force. They have a cultural sensitivity and a layout of the land and the beliefs. Having its own police force to translate original language speakers (reduce discrimination).
- Rely on traditional ways/laws/practices for disputes, the government should follow traditional ways of community they are in disputes with.
- Programs that understand their roots and their culture have a better effect on people who are going down the wrong path.
- Consideration on elders committee/teaching as their youth can lose their identity. Tap into traditional teaching.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Capacity building is vital. Legislation and policing services should include capacity building with First Nations organizations in partnerships with police services in the community.

EQUALITY

- There is inequality in terms of the roles. Need to strengthen the roles of first nations and their own governance and bring in stronger first nations involvement and equal partnership.
- RCMP coming with guns, trucks etc while they don't have the adequate tools/resources to enforce. They want the same resources that the RCMP has.
- Respecting bi-lateral processes is important (First Nation & Federal Government). Bi-lateral process would allow for fair representation for all.

PREVENTIVE AND PROACTIVE MEASURES

- Suggests proactive approach to any situation and try to stop things before they get into a crisis.
- Concept not considered is looking at police force as a preventative line, often it's more about enforcement.
- Need to be sure preventative measures are the right move before implementing them, not always the right move, what is right for the individual (gives the example that 'taking them home' after an incident is not always the right move).
- A data system managed by the community would allow for the implementation of preventative methods rather than complete reactive policing.

METRICS, STUDIES, DATABASES, AND BUSINESS PLANS

- Conversation needed on impacts of previous legislation both federal & provincial. Provincial legislation needs to be part of the conversation.
- Parity of provincial police legislation, including portions governed by Indian Act, should be established to allow for the counting of true cost of policing in the First Nations.
- Creating essential services should look at what each nation needs. Making sure police services meet the needs in that region.
- Recognise the need for a metric for equitable funding that defines policing as an essential service. Capacity building and more police officers - mechanism that provides metrics that the ratio of police officers in communities is equitable to provide community safety.
- Many variables in terms of region, remoteness (access by road, plane), community needs, governance, infrastructure, etc that must be taken into consideration when calculating funding. A "Formula" is being developed to calculate funding.
- Funding scale needed - what funding covers what and where does it go too?
- Funding needs to be on the scale of individual communities/nations, not just a one size fits all approach.
- Let's collaborate and develop a database of cost so that we're all prepared to move forward. It's not just individual nations coming up, let's set up a business plan manual so that each nation has access.
- Crime rate going up and funding going down so metric needs to be real and need to be estimated on real financial need.

FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

- The funding should either go to police services or directly to the community.

FIRST NATION BYLAWS

- The Police Act on reserve is not recognised, therefore there is a struggle to access funding.
- Specialised services e.g. forensics, traffic - difficult to set up, laws are very outdated, fines outdated.
- No funding, hard to lay charges, therefore often won't go to court because it's a provincial issue, but they are federally funded.
- If they lay a charge, the Crown prosecutors won't go with it since it's a federal charge. They would not even prosecute our laws under the Indian Act which is frustrating.
- The laws are there, and we can make our laws, but they are not enforced by the RCMP.
- It is possible to arrest individuals under the Indian Act, but often you cannot follow through with the charges as it bounces back from the court (federal not provincial).
- Gap between Indian Act and Federal/provincial legislation in enforcing charges. A community safety bylaw includes addressing drugs and violence. Includes an appeal within "x" number of days and then you can enforce it here. Run into situations where their bylaws and federal guidelines do not match and RCMP are forced to go with the federal guidelines. Police forces are not recognized by RCMP, and they must listen to RCMP when a situation is involved with both indigenous police and RCMP. Creating more supporting procedures to go along with the bylaws.
- Make sure to have a place to prosecute first nations bylaws to ensure that it is enforceable.
- Mandates need to be looked at to be more aligned to make sure the indigenous police service is successful. Example: Someone had to argue with RCMP to remove someone in their community who was camping on their land. They have land codes and RCMP must serve them equally like they serve Canada.
- Concerns on enforcing on reserve as there are overlaps in the laws as it can fall under different jurisdictions (provincial, community, federal). Some laws are not recognised, therefore not acted upon, making it hard for First Nations police to enforce authority.
- Develop a bylaw that is consistent with the land code.

RELATIONSHIPS, COLLABORATIONS, OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES, AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Police are not able to spend time in communities building relationships and doing preventative work.
- There needs to be more collaboration with other agencies that talk about community safety.
- Working groups and coming together helps this as communities and nations face similar issues and challenges and outlines a space for working together.
- Possibly a secretary that will receive projects that knows the goals and initiative of the project and oversee the balance to ensure appropriate funds and put them into appropriate places.
- Having indigenous commissioners to oversee police services and having their own system of reporting within the community (want to be more detached and having a first nations sector to report to); A group/community to steer the "ship".
- Tie in the government agencies that need to be involved like family services.
- There is a need to fund youth diversion programs and support for members that have been incarcerated - reintegration process.
- Police Universe should be considered when defining pay equity.
- The ability to include community safety programs in the funding model is vital and would benefit other communities and nations.

KEYPOINTS/TOPICS – Vancouver Engagement, March 21st, 2024

- It's not just about policing but the resources needed to help the police force after they retire i.e. pensions, dealing with trauma etc.
- Interagency collaboration between First Nations communities and services such as the administration of justice programmes, health services, land-based healing initiatives is needed.
- Other elements of public safety need to be considered e.g. women's safety, internet scams etc. Issues that are prevalent in their community.
- Native liaison officers are often coming and going and therefore it's hard to develop a good relationship, this is not sustainable and often communities are left with a gap waiting for a new person to help them.

ALL THREE ON BOARD

- All 3 need to be at the table and in agreement.
- What I see is necessary to achieve goals is to have the province on board. In the AG's report, it did indicate that a lot of the time Canada is not spending the money because BC or the province isn't prepared to meet it. So, we need to have all three on the table and to be in agreement as we move forward. Otherwise, we are going to be in the same situation. We played this game for decades where the province has money, but Canada can't meet it, or Canada has money, but the province can't meet it. Therefore, no one moves forward.
- Have to get all the stakeholders at the table to develop a comprehensive plan. Not easy to get all stakeholders at the table but if all key people pushing in the same directions, it would be helpful.

WAGE SECURITY

- Wage security is essential. I've been a Mountie for 28 years and 25 of those years were in First Nations policing. I love working on reserves. I had a fight with management to stay on reserve because my funds would go to the office, and they would send me off to work in Sydney or elsewhere else downtown Kelowna or Victoria. I just stayed in the reserves, and I had to fight. The
- Compare salaries at different regions and come to an agreement at the table to come up with a funding arrangement.
- Participants also outlined that police officers in their community have the same training authority as municipal officers in BC, and that their police force is 100% reactive because that's all they can manage and that they are the lowest paid police force in the province.
- Short falls across the country in training police officers, police officers have no quality of life, and they are often approached to go somewhere else i.e. leave the community. Police forces (first nations) train them (first nations) and lose them after they get their credentials because they cannot afford to pay them according to their pay scale and qualifications.
- People here are talking about their pensions not being fair, wages are not fair until recently.

MENTORSHIP

- Get funding for the qualifications they have and right now we just have young people coming into the police force. Who will mentor the young people as the older people (adults) move away once they get their credentials and get paid right?

QUICKER RESPONSE TIMES

- Sisters often go missing, and she wants to put in legislation to have a quicker response time. Have a special unit through the region that has a national crisis response for

EDUCATION

- Legislation needs to have an open door for each individual community to share with the local police what their rules/protocols/laws are. Education is a key component of this.

- Cross-cultural training needed for RCMP officers coming into communities, if not they don't have the cultural knowledge/background to deal with First Nations communities issues.

TRUST ISSUES, ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY

- There are concerns that at some point the provincial or federal government will decide that this is out of their scope and back out of the legislation. The problem is the two levels of government having a say in how the nations run their police service.
- There have never been any true negotiations, take it or leave it attitude at previous negotiations.
- We have developed business plans over the years, and it always indicates what the needs are. We're conservative about it, but it's never met. No matter what each funding agreement comes in, it's never met to meet our needs.
- There have been no true negotiations when it comes to the program. We sit down and talk about negotiations, but it's always been a "take it or leave it" attitude. We have been told that if you don't want it then it closes the doors.
- Accountability about the RCMP's reporting and how much money was used for search and rescue etc.
- Transparency on where the funds are going as the government says they are short on money to help fund the first nations.

5 YEARS WAIT TO REVIEW IS TOO LONG

- The review of legislation every five years is too long, so either shorten reviews or have a document that can be reviewed if needs be at any time.
- Time frame of 5 years to make an adjustment, means the community will be different, so a fluid document would allow for changes as situations arise i.e. something is not working.
- First Nations communities are proactive not reactive, so the 5-year wait doesn't work. They won't wait that long. The government needs to get on their level and work on their time scale.
- There is a need to put pressure on Canada (Federal Government) to respond, historically First Nations have had to wait too long, and it is something that needs to be done as soon as the legislation is passed.

GBA+ REFERENCE POINTS

- Sisters often go missing and she wants to put in legislation to have a quicker response time. Have a special unit through the region that has a national crisis response for missing people (sisters). Taking responsibility and establishing a system for missing women. Lack of response from the RCMP as they didn't take it that seriously. Woman was found 100m near her home in the end.
- Children's safety is also important. Their community doesn't get enough resources to ensure the safety of their children. Other elements of public safety need to be considered e.g. women's safety, internet scams etc. Issues that are prevalent in their community.