

November 4, 2022



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TO: HUU-AY-AHT CITIZENS

Very serious allegations have been brought forward against Tayii H̱aw̱iḥ ̱iḥḥin/Derek Peters. These allegations have not yet been fully investigated or proven.

The H̱aw̱iḥ Council and Executive Council wish to ensure that citizens have accurate information and understand the steps we have taken and plan to take moving forward.

When we first became aware of allegations, both Councils took action in response. The H̱aw̱iḥ immediately took steps to address ̱iḥḥin's role as H̱aw̱iḥ Councillor and as a part of the H̱aw̱iḥ Council on an interim basis and Executive Council directed the creation of an Inquiry Panel to investigate allegations of abuse of power, intimidation, harassment, assault, sexual harassment or sexual assault committed by members of government.

Below we set out the details of the actions we have taken so far, followed by our views on the way forward from here.

̱iḥḥin's Role on the H̱aw̱iḥ Council and on Executive Council

On May 5, 2022, the H̱aw̱iḥ Council learned of very serious allegations that were made against ̱iḥḥin by one of our citizens.

Because of the important role of the H̱aw̱iḥ Council and of the Tayii H̱aw̱iḥ for the Huu-ay-aht people and the seriousness of the allegations, the H̱aw̱iḥ Council determined that the best thing for the Huu-ay-aht was for ̱iḥḥin to step back from his role as Tayii H̱aw̱iḥ until the matter had been resolved. The H̱aw̱iḥ Council informed ̱iḥḥin immediately that he was not to participate in the meetings or decision-making of the H̱aw̱iḥ Council, or speak publicly on behalf of the Huu-ay-aht or the H̱aw̱iḥ Council pending a resolution to the allegations.

At that time, ̱iḥḥin also held the role of H̱aw̱iḥ Councillor on Executive Council. The H̱aw̱iḥ Councillor is appointed by the H̱aw̱iḥ Council every four years, at the same time as the general election for the other members of Executive Council. It is outside of the H̱aw̱iḥ's power to remove the H̱aw̱iḥ Councillor from Executive Council, but the H̱aw̱iḥ respectfully requested that ̱iḥḥin step down for the good of the Nation. ̱iḥḥin then resigned on

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understanding that the person appointed to replace him would resign if it turns out that the allegations are unfounded. The H̄aw̄iih Council then appointed Yał luu a / Jeff Cook as the H̄aw̄iih Councillor. Yał luu a will remain in the position until he resigns or until the next general election.

Inquiry Panel

The allegations against ̄liišin have not been proven. Both Councils believe strongly that all citizens are entitled to due process. The H̄aw̄iih Council's decisions with respect to the allegations were directed at addressing the situation on an interim basis until the allegations can be finally determined.

While the criminal justice system is one means by which these types of allegations may be addressed, it is external to our community and culture and the process is often lengthy. Recognizing this, Executive Council directed the development of a made in Huu-ay-aht approach: an inquiry to be conducted into allegations of abuse of power, intimidation, harassment, assault, sexual harassment or sexual assault committed by members of government in a manner that:

- a) takes a trauma-informed approach,
- b) is consistent with the principles of *ii-saak*, *uu-a-thluck* and *hish-uk-tsawak*,
- c) is culturally appropriate,
- d) is attentive to the particular needs and dynamic of the Huu-ay-aht community, and
- e) adheres to best practices;

The Panel's role is two-fold: first it will conduct an inquiry and prepare a report into these issues; second, it may determine that an investigation into allegations against one or more individuals is warranted.

The lead investigator on the Panel is a lawyer with extensive experience in dealing with allegations of this type, both as a Crown prosecutor and as a workplace investigator. If allegations are brought forward against any individual members of government, including ̄liišin, the lead investigator may conduct an investigation and make findings of fact with respect to those allegations. If any findings of fact are made in respect of allegations against ̄liišin, the H̄aw̄iih Council will take them into account in making a final determination about ̄liišin's role.

Marjorie White was one of three members of the Inquiry Panel. Both Councils express their gratitude Marge's willingness to take part in the panel and are saddened by her departure.

In light of Marge's resignation, the Inquiry Panel will be seeking participants in a working group to help shape a plan for Huu-ay-aht input and involvement in



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the Inquiry process. A posting about this will appear soon on the Huu-ay-aht website.

We fully support the Panel and urge citizens to take part in the important work that the Panel is doing and to bring forward your views and experience.

Yours truly,



Robert Dennis



John Jack



Edward Johnson



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Brad Johnson



Duane Nookemis



Evan Cook



Jeff Cook (on behalf of Ha'wiih Council)

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