

Jenna Kay

From: Monica Zazueta <zazuetamonica0813@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 10:39 AM
To: Jenna Kay; Amy Koski; Ben Duncan; Sylvia@mosaicresolutions.com; Dana Hellman; Harrison Husting; Nicole Metildi; tlunsford@parametrix.com
Subject: Inconsistent with law, state guidance, or County authority

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Rewritten:

"Engage with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, regional tribal governments, and culturally specific groups, including local immigrant communities and heritage organizations, to assess their interest in employment opportunities and/or collaborate on climate resiliency efforts that meet community needs while supporting their hiring into county staff positions."

Subject: Hiring a Tribal Member for Heritage and Climate Initiatives

Dear County Team,

I hope this message finds you well. I understand there are concerns regarding the hiring of a tribal member to assist in our initiatives related to Native heritage and climate change. However, I believe there are compelling reasons to reconsider this stance, given the profound injustices faced by Indigenous communities and the value they bring to our understanding of sustainable practices.

1. **Historical Injustices:** Native communities have endured significant injustices, including land dispossession, cultural erasure, and systemic discrimination. Engaging a tribal member not only acknowledges these historical wrongs but also actively works toward reconciliation. This step is essential for fostering trust and collaboration between the county and Indigenous communities.
2. **Cultural Expertise:** Tribal members possess invaluable knowledge and perspectives rooted in centuries of tradition and stewardship of the land. Their insights can guide our climate initiatives, providing culturally relevant strategies that respect and incorporate Indigenous practices. This collaboration can enhance our environmental efforts, making them more effective and holistic.
3. **Alignment with State and Federal Goals:** Many state and federal initiatives emphasize the importance of Indigenous involvement in climate resilience and environmental justice. By hiring a tribal member, we align our efforts with broader state and national objectives, showcasing our commitment to inclusivity and social justice.

4. Community Restoration: Addressing climate change and restoring our communities requires diverse voices and approaches. A tribal member can provide unique solutions to these pressing issues, helping us restore not just the environment but also community ties and cultural heritage that have been disrupted.

5. Legal and Ethical Considerations: While there may be concerns regarding compliance with certain laws or guidance, it is essential to explore how hiring a tribal member can be structured to meet these requirements. This initiative can be framed as a partnership that respects Indigenous sovereignty and contributes to the county's goals, rather than contradicting them.

6. Positive Public Perception: Demonstrating a commitment to diversity and inclusivity can enhance the county's reputation and strengthen community relations. It shows that we are responsive to the needs and voices of all constituents, fostering goodwill and support.

Hiring a tribal member to engage with our efforts in heritage education and climate action is not only a morally sound decision but also a strategic one. It can enhance our initiatives, promote healing, and pave the way for a more sustainable and equitable future for all community members.

I have spoken to one of my good friends who is native and she says it's an insult to just be consulted when time and wisdom are absolutely valuable. And since being born in a capitalistic society where money is the way to survive being paid for their time makes sense. That or being given back the land that was stolen. She said either one would work.

Thank you for considering this perspective. I am hopeful we can move forward in a way that honors and uplifts Indigenous voices in our collective efforts.

Sincerely,

Monica Zazueta-Hernandez Tabor EJC member