

The SHOSHONE-BANNOCK TRIBES

FORT HALL INDIAN RESERVATION
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FORT HALL BUSINESS COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 306
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September 1, 2022

The Honorable Brian Blad - mayor@pocatello.us

Pocatello City Council:

Josh Mansfield - jomansfield@pocatello.us

Linda Leeuwrik - lleeuwrik@pocatello.us

Rick Cheatum - rcheatum@pocatello.us

RE: Shoshone-Bannock Tribes/City of Pocatello Relations and Resolution 2020-11

As Chairman of the Fort Hall Business Council, the governing body for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Tribes), I write to the Pocatello City Council regarding the recent discussions on City Resolution 2022-11 and subsequent actions by several City councilmembers. It is clear that the City of Pocatello (City) is undergoing a significant phenomenon that the Tribes must weigh in on the diversity and welcoming environment in the City. It is ironic that the City has passed Resolution 2020-11 does not acknowledge the misunderstandings and controversial relations between the Tribes and Pocatello. *The Fort Hall Business Council remains open to working with our neighboring governmental entities in open and transparent relationships as long as they respect our Tribal sovereignty and jurisdiction.*

The Tribes have experienced a turbulent and divisive relationship with the City that needs to be recognized and addressed in a meaningful way, including but not limited to, the following issues:

History. The City of Pocatello and Bannock County often fail to recognize that the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes were, and are, an active player in the development of the City and the County because both entities were developed within the original 1867 Fort Hall Reservation boundaries. The Reservation was created for the exclusive use of Indians and federal staff. There is a long history of encroachment and trespass onto the original Reservation boundaries by railroads, businesses, and pioneers that resulted in political pressure to sell and cede the southern portions of the original reservation.

Economics. The Tribes have a major economic impact to the City, southeast Idaho, and to the State of Idaho. The Tribes have over 800 employees, and are one of the largest employers in southeast Idaho. The Tribes and individual tribal members own 110,000 acres of agricultural lands which

produce an estimated \$125 million annually in direct crop revenues, and has created over 900 jobs including the multiplier effects. With our Casino, Hotel, annual Festival, and recreational opportunities, we bring over 40% of visitor traffic to the region.

Pocatello Airport. The US government condemned Reservation lands for national security during World War II, without Tribal consent. Through a series of disreputable federal decisions, via the US Surplus Airport Act, the ownership of the Pocatello Airport is no longer in the hands of the Tribes, even though it is located within the Fort Hall Reservation boundaries. The Airport has been a contentious topic, as the Tribes have been repeatedly excluded from economic development, and was a victim of discriminatory clauses prohibiting tribal communication or interaction, as indicated in a Federal Aviation Administration letter. The Tribes request to be recognized and actively involved in Airport management and economic development.

Environmental conflicts. The City has sided with the industrial giants FMC and Simplot, in addition to the surrounding counties to oppose the Tribes' efforts towards environmental protections of Reservation lands, waters and the health and welfare of the tribal community.

Railroad Rights of Way. The Tribes, City, and others have differing views regarding ownership of the Railroad's Right of Ways (ROWS) now that the ROWs are no longer used for railroad purposes within the original Reservation. We are now in active litigation.

Northgate Expansion closer to the Reservation. As the Pocatello and Chubbuck communities continue to expand within ceded lands of the original Fort Hall Reservation, edging closer and closer to the current Reservation boundaries, it raises concerns about the overuse of natural resources. We already have limited water, solid waste disposal, housing, and crowded schools in the region.

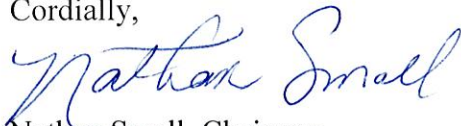
Education. Over 800 American Indian students attend Pocatello School district, however, our educational relationship with the Pocatello School Board has been fractured and inconsistent. When the Pocatello School Board was redrawing the school boundaries in District 25, the Tribes submitted a letter requesting that our children remain free to select their preferred school, but the School Board failed to consider our request or even consult with the Business Council. After decades of controversy with the Tribes, Pocatello High School only recently changed their Pocatello Indians mascot name. However, the school still reinstalled a sign advertising the Pocatello Indians without any consultation with the Tribes. We remind the School District #25 Board of Trustees that they also represent portions of the Reservation, and must reach out to tribal students and parents.

Diversity. The Tribes support a safe and responsible environment that promotes respect for all community members. It is disturbing to see the City Council's uninformed discussion regarding the lack of diversity in the Pocatello area, and the disparaging treatment and comments toward American Indians and Tribal government in the local community. Generational misunderstanding and stereotypes towards our Tribes remain to this day, and we seek to foster new opportunities for Idaho citizens to better understand and value diverse citizenship and cultures. Multi-culturalism is a reality in southeastern Idaho.

Tribal relations with Local Governments. The Tribes believe that having a consensual and harmonious relationship is beneficial, and should include all local governments – tribal, county and cities. Future collaborative efforts can provide accurate information to city, county and local community members, of our tribal history, government and contemporary economic issues. The Tribes suggest that this can be accomplished via a multi-party cooperative agreement, and the Business Council is willing to begin discussions.

We look forward to dispelling any confusing, misleading, or inaccurate interpretations of our tribal history, beliefs, or tribal government that local governmental leadership may have. Please contact our Public Affairs Manager Randy'L Teton at 208-589-8595 or at rteton@sbtribes.com to arrange future meetings.

Cordially,



Nathan Small, Chairman
Fort Hall Business Council
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

CC:

Roger Bray, rrjames113@aol.com
Chris Stevens
Claudia Ortega

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RESOLUTION NO. 2022-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POCATELLO, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF IDAHO, REITERATING THE OCTOBER 2020 RESOLUTION THAT AFFIRMS THE CITY OF POCATELLO AS A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE CITY AND CENSURING CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ROGER BRAY FOR COMMENTS MADE DURING THE JULY 7, 2022 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT MEETING AND AFTER THE JULY 21, 2022 CITY COUNCIL MEETING.

WHEREAS, Pocatello has long been a home to indigenous people, migrants, and immigrants; and has worked diligently to remain true to our heritage of welcoming everyone regardless of age, race, ethnicity or place of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration or refugee status, political ideology, economic status, or religious affiliations; and

WHEREAS, Pocatello's history and tradition are based around ethnic, cultural, racial and religious groups working together to build our community since its founding more than 130 years ago; and

WHEREAS, the Pocatello City Council and the City of Pocatello have a long record of acceptance, inclusion, and non-discriminatory actions and policies; and

WHEREAS, the Pocatello City Council, on behalf of the City employees and citizens of the community, reiterates the words and promise of our October 2020 Welcoming Resolution where the City of Pocatello pledges to welcome all individuals through statements and actions, knowing that discrimination or misunderstanding impedes the social and economic progress of a city by preventing all of our residents from fully contributing to the cultural, spiritual, social, and commercial life of our community; and

WHEREAS, the comments of Council Member Roger Bray made during the July 7, 2022 Budget Development Meeting and after the July 21, 2022 Regular City Council meeting do not demonstrate the values held by the citizens of Pocatello; and