

July 13, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement by Leslie Spillett on revocation of appointment to the Winnipeg Police Service

I was not notified by the province of its decision to revoke my 4 year appointment to the WPB.

I found out on Facebook.

That I was not given that courtesy is disappointing.

First, I appreciate completely that this is the prerogative of the Palister government and consistent with how new governments work.

I am very honoured to have had the opportunity to be involved in the establishment of the WPB from its inception. Winnipeg was the last major city in Canada that did not have civilian governance and the community, and in particular the Indigenous community had long advocated for civilian oversight of Winnipeg's Police Service. I believe that my appointment gave many in Winnipeg's Indigenous community members confidence that its voice would be reflected in decision making processes.

I believe that over the past three years, I was able to share a perspective and experience that many of my colleagues did not have and that my involvement helped to shape the first strategic plan (i.e. setting ambitious targets for new Indigenous recruits, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls) and led to the establishment of a representative and community based Indigenous Advisory Circle.

One regret of not having the opportunity to complete my term is not being able to complete the hiring process to select the next Chief; the most significant leadership position in the WPS and one that will impact significantly on the Indigenous community.

I have utmost respect for the members of WPB and its staff. I don't think that many people appreciate the enormous amount of time that being on the WPB requires - sometimes up to 20 - 30 hours a week. The WPB members are very committed to the governance process, want the best policing service for the community and the Service and it was a pleasure to serve with them.

Of course , as a Indigenous person in Winnipeg I am always concerned when the voices and perspectives of Indigenous people are diminished or excluded in these

processes and I think that is unfortunate that is the case with the WPB. In this era of reconciliation, I would think that governments, irrespective of political stripe would be working hard to engage and include Indigenous individuals. Without our voices, the solutions have not worked - this is so evident throughout the entire history of this country.

I wish my colleagues on the WPB well.

I have always been an advocate for fairness, justice, inclusion, equality, and anti oppressive practices and that will continue.

Respectfully,

Leslie Spillet