

December 18, 1987

In response to Roger Purcell's December 12, 1987 Grievance letter.

On December 10, 1987 when Mr. Purcell, I will call him Mr since he was off duty, came into my office to purchase a ticket to a training workshop in Chicago, I did ask a few questions about the trip and how he could justify spending so much money on one trip when all we have been hearing for the past few months is how much they are lacking in the Police Dept. I do find his interpretation of the conversation a bit out of perspective. He accuses me of making several threats which I did not, and I would like to address these accusations at this time.

1) Accused Administration of being liars.

I ask him if there was so much money in the budget for travel why do we keep getting all these new requests for funds from the Police Dept. and if they have all this money why did we just put an extra tax on our community to help the Dept. with their financial problems. I did not call the administration a liar but told him, he had lied to me on a previous occasion about the drug Ordinance he wants passed and where our State laws stand on the subject. I felt he had intentionally misled me in an attempt to get what he wanted passed through the council.

2) She was going to put a stop to all travel for City personal.

As required by Alaska Airlines when selling a QE30S (supersaver) Ticket we must tell all purchasers of said fare, that there is a 50% change or cancel fee on this fare once the ticket has been purchased. I did tell Mr. Purcell of this fee with a mention of a discussion with other council members on the possibility of suspension of all City travel due to the emanate excessive revenue shortage forecast. I suggested he might wish to wait awhile on the purchase of his ticket because of the fee's and penalties on the fare. I never once said that I personally was going to stop travel. As a member of a Council, I know and Mr. Purcell should know, that it takes a vote of the whole Council to achieve such a goal and that no one member has that power.

3) Stated we were not getting the equipment we needed to do our jobs.

Yes, Mr. Purcell's ideas of equipment needed and mine are in conflict. I asked a brief question on where Mr. Purcell had gotten his quotes on purchasing new vehicles for the Police Dept. He had told me that we had to purchase 5 vehicles at one time to get a fleet rate. I had been asking around and been told, by friends, that had bought vehicles for business that they had gotten the fleet rate when buying as little as two vehicles at a time. I suggested maybe we needed to shop around a little more. I stated that I still can not see the need for 5 Police vehicles in a town of not quite 1000 people. If this can be construed as a threat, my saying they were not getting the equipment needed to do their jobs, then I guess I did say it in around about way. On many occasions Mr. Purcell has asked my opinion on Departmental problems and matters, but when I give it with out being asked for it, it then becomes "verbally harassment". I find this to be double standards on Mr. Purcell's part-which sets a very dangerous precedence for someone in the law enforcement field. I still stand behind my statement (not threat) that the Hoonah Police Dept. does not need 5 new vehicles.

I did show a short flare of temper when Mr. Purcell insisted that I did not understand anything and voiced the need for security checks on the Garbage

Dump at 2 to 3 in the morning. However I find these to be personal opinions by both myself and Mr. Purcell - which the U.S. Constitution intitles us both too.

- 4) Mills has passed judgement on the Dept. with out finding out any of the facts. And not once since I have been here has Ms. Mills asked about what our Dept. has been doing.

Look who's passing judgement now without facts. I was looking for facts and asking questions but this turns out to be cause for a greivance to be filed against me by what seems to be a Officer that feels highly threated by any questions asked or opinions given that don't meet his appovel. As a registered voter and tax payer of this community and the State of Alaska it is my right to ask any questions considering the operations of either State or City. And as an elected Council member that the community has entrusted with business decisions envolving the City of Hoonah, my rights remain the same. Like it or not Mr. Purcell's Department does fall under the City Councils umbrella of authority. Further more, what member of our community would feel safe in asking Mr. Purcell any questions about the Department ~~if~~ this is the kind of reaction we can expect. Comes very close to Police Harassment and scare tacties in hopes no one will stand up and object to anything going on in the Department.

- 5) Mills told me that I was not going to be reimbursed for travel. Mills did not even ask me if the city was paying for my flight.

I did ask if he planned on reimbursment from the City as keeping with my roll as a rep of Alaska Airlines. I wanted to make sure Mr. Purcell fully understands the restictions of his ticket. I did not have to ask if the City was buying the ticket since he was putting on his Dinners Club Card - It would have been a dumb question even for me!

- 6) Since I was off duty and in a public place.

He may have been off duty, but he was purchasing tickets for a city funded training with a City check. As for where he was "a public place" this has never stopped Mr. Purcell from talking shop before either on duty or off. At one time early this year both Chief Mayeda, Officer Purcell and Mr Tavoliero felt fully justifide in coming to said public place (the airport) and angerly harassing me as to how they felt I should see things and veiw my Council duties till they had me in tears. Should I have filed a grievance? Purcell has on several occasions come to my place of work and discussed department bussness while others were in the building. Again the double standards - its alright for him to do so but not for me. As a Council member I accept the fact that there will be times when I must listen to mad or upset people and times when I will not have everyone liking my stand on issues, we cannot please all the people all the time, but I take this kind of abuse as part of the job I have under taken when I signed up for Office. But dare I point out to Mr. Purcell that he to holds a very controversial position with in our city and that if he can take this simple conversation go personal as to twist it into "threats" then perhaps he is not handling the pressures of the job well and might wish to consider a new and less stresfull line of work. Because if we have an Officer on our Police force who becomes so definsive and angered when questioned as to retaliate against community members, He then becomes a liability to all of us. A Police Officer can not demand respect from the community he serves, but must earn it. If he can not humble himself to this chore then he will never become a good Officer.



In closing may I state (not threaten) that the citizens of our community have the right to know how wise or unwisely their tax money is being spent. And I am sure our State legislatures, as well, will be happy to know how well funded our Police Department is and what their priorities really are. Keeping our citizens and our legislatures well informed on what is going on in Hoonah is just part of my job as an elected official. If Mr. Purcell doesn't wish the expenditures of the department to become a sore point with the voters then perhaps the trust we have placed in the department's own judgement when spending their funds should be used with greater care. Furthermore Chief Mayeda has held his position with the City for the past 2 years and if he needs to go all the way to Chicago now to learn how to run the department (which is what we've been told he's been doing and doing well) then we are in serious trouble specially at this late date and at this price. Why does Officer Purcell need this training? Have we grown so much as to need two Chiefs? With the shortage of officers to cover shifts, that we keep hearing about, how can we allow two Officers to be absent from duty at the same time. Or may be we don't need as many Officers as they would have us believe. This seems to be not so much good logical thinking and planning on our department's part as Joy Riding by the chosen few. Double standards again! We must all cut back in our spending in all departments except the Police department and there its "Dance the torpedoes and full speed ahead", anything they want? If I don't have the rights to ask these questions then who does and better yet who will? How are we ever going to get the community to believe us when we say we're out of funds, up their bills and their taxes and still keep spending lavishly. Public relations is also a part of the job and the Police department should not think the community is not aware of what is going on. City business is all our business and should never be treated as top secret. We should have nothing to hide. A Police department that is so over zealous with its self that it will not practice self control, even in lean years, soon devalues itself.

The conversation between Mr. Purcell and myself at the airport on December 10, 1987 was part of the same conversations we have had on other occasions in the same public place only this time Mr. Purcell didn't like my answers!

I will not apologize for doing a job I was elected to do. Which as a Council member is to help keep a rein on an Administration that doesn't seem to have the sense to rein itself..

Walter J. Mills