



Statement on the Death of Tyre Nichols – A Call to Action for Tukwila

February 28, 2023

Dear Tukwila Community,

We are deeply concerned and saddened by the death of Tyre Nichols at the hands of five officers of the Memphis Police Department.

Tyre Nichols was a beloved father, a beloved son, and a beloved member of the community. He did not deserve to leave the earth in the way that he did.

What happened in Memphis was tragic, should not happen, and could have been prevented. We want our community to know that we do not condone the conduct and behavior of the officers in Memphis, and that this would never be tolerated in Tukwila. We also take this moment as an opportunity to renew our commitment in working towards eliminating systemic racism within our institutions and supporting and exploring alternatives to public safety.

We are supportive of the work our Tukwila Police Department has been doing to hold itself to a higher standard of accountability, building trust through community engagement, and establishing greater oversight of its practices.

The Tukwila Police Department was the first in the state to develop a community review board for any use of force by an officer. Community members in Tukwila serve on the Community Review Board and have a direct influence on how “reasonable use of force” is interpreted. Hiring now involves community members as part of selecting officers who will be serving our community, and they have deployed a new approach to responding to issues involving mental health that pairs officers with mental health professionals. The Tukwila Police Department was also on the forefront of the use of body-worn and in-car cameras.


Despite the meaningful reforms our Tukwila Police Department has implemented, we also recognize that relying solely on law enforcement is not the only way to achieve public safety in our communities. There are broader solutions that involve providing more support and opportunities to those who have been historically and structurally marginalized by our institutions. We want to chart a new path for our city that is more inclusive, more accessible, and more inline with the needs of our community.

The work of Tukwila’s Equity and Social Justice Commission and Equity Policy Implementation Committee have been working to hold our City accountable to making progress on the city’s equity policy. It is our shared goal to eliminate systemic barriers and provide fair access to programs, services and opportunities to achieve social, civic and economic justice within the City of Tukwila.

It is time to explore new solutions to achieve community safety. The Tukwila City Council is committed to this endeavor. We believe that this endeavor needs to involve our Tukwila Police Department, our City Administration, and our community. The path forward should involve all of us working together towards a better future.

The Tukwila City Council invites you to continue this dialogue with us about what you believe makes Tukwila a safer, better place for all. If you are interested in joining us, please contact city council at citycouncil@tukwilawa.gov, and share your thoughts and whether you are willing to commit to continue with us in this discussion. Or come see us at a city council meeting, we meet almost every Monday night at 7pm, at Tukwila City Hall.

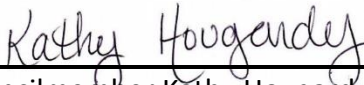
Sincerely,



Council President Cynthia Delostrinos Johnson



Councilmember Thomas McLeod



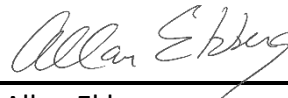
Councilmember Kathy Hougardy



Councilmember Mohamed Abdi



Councilmember De'Sean Quinn



Mayor Allan Ekberg



Councilmember Kate Kruller



Police Chief Eric Drever