



# COQUILLE INDIAN TRIBE

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Dai s'la!

As you already may have heard, the Coquille Indian Tribe is making some changes to its Police Department. I want to explain what is changing and why.

### **Are we reducing the number of police officers?**

The short answer is yes, but the Police Department is not going away. We are initially reducing the Police Department by two officers, but we are adding a new security program to work in coordination with our Tribal officers. The vast majority of calls for service at Kilkich are better suited for a security response. We believe the new service will provide better response to the true needs of the Kilkich community. This new structure will also save the Tribe more than \$350,000 annually.

### **How is this possible?**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) provides only \$75,000 annually for policing, a small fraction of the overall cost. Tribal funds cover the rest. The new plan includes:

- A full-time chief of police, primarily funded with BIA money
- A full-time police officer, rehired and funded with a Justice Department grant for five years
- A security supervisor and a security officer, both paid for with additional federal funding
- An increased Coos County Sheriff's Office presence at Kilkich

### **Why now?**

The Tribal budget shortfall continues to climb, and we are looking for ways to be more efficient. Police Chief Scott LaFevre plans to retire in September, and Officer Rob Scoville is leaving to take a position with the city of Coos Bay. Meanwhile, the Justice Department has announced a new five-year funding opportunity. So now is the time to consider changes. I have been working with Chief LaFevre to develop a plan to help create a better structure for the police, while still meeting the Tribe's needs. We believe the new model will be more efficient and cost-effective.

### **Moving forward**

Layoffs are painful. The many years of service provided by our officers has helped create a safe and drug-free community. Their service is truly appreciated. We hope that the two affected officers will consider opportunities in the Tribe's new structure.

We expect this plan to maintain a strong security presence at Kilkich. We'll have continued patrols by armed Tribal police and an enhanced sheriff's deputy presence. With two police officers, two security officers and the increased sheriff's patrols, Kilkich residents can be confident that their homes and streets will be safe. Chief LaFevre and I will attend the April Kilkich Residents Association and Coquille Indian Housing Authority meetings, to hear from the community and address any concerns as we develop the new security program.

Masi,

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