

Council confirms Michael Anderson as DPS Director

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 25th Navajo Nation Council confirmed the appointment of Michael Anderson to serve as the Division Director for the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety on April 16.

Anderson, who has dedicated his career to public safety, was confirmed following a rigorous review of his background in law enforcement, judicial roles, and community leadership. Before the vote, Council delegates questioned Anderson about his vision and goals related to making communities safer, increasing accountability, allocating resources, and overall efficacy within the Division of Public Safety.

Council Delegate Brenda Jesus (Oaksprings, St. Michaels) highlighted the need for improved data reporting.

“It is essential that we have accurate data to secure the necessary resources for our communities. I trust that Director Anderson will prioritize this,” she said.

Council Delegate George H. Tolth (Littlewater, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake, Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Ojo Encino, Counselor), a former police officer, asked Director Anderson why the NNDPS has not proposed or increased the number of substations across his region.

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He emphasized that an increased law enforcement presence is needed to impact the increase in crime, drugs, and abuse on the Nation. He said that often community calls for a police officer go unanswered.

Delegate Germaine Simonson (Hard Rock, Forest Lake, Pinon, Black Mesa, Whippoorwill) stressed the importance of providing proper equipment to law enforcement.

“Understanding the needs and issues of law enforcement is critical—we need to take better care of our officers by providing adequate protection and equipment,” she said.

Upon his confirmation, Anderson shared his vision for a unified and robust Division of Public Safety stating, “My goal is to bring all departments under one umbrella to foster a strong, communicative, and cooperative environment. We also aim to elevate our police officers to federal officer status to effectively tackle serious crimes across our Nation.”

Additionally, he addressed the pressing issue of sexual assault, a critical concern within many communities.

“Addressing sexual assault cases is paramount, he said. “We must refocus our efforts and ensure that our women and communities are safe. This will be a priority for my team.”

The Council approved Legislation No. 0059-24, which was Anderson’s appointment, with a vote of 10 in favor and four opposed.

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