

I'm announcing my candidacy for chairman in the upcoming special election. Submitted by Eugene Purser, September 25, 2023

Please read my entire letter carefully.

I have both the knowledge and the experience to be an affective Tribal Chairman having served on council as Vice-Chair and Councilman many times in the past. I will work every day to improve the lives of my fellow Tribal Members. The last time I ran for chairman the vote was very close, and to the great credit of Chairman Jeremy Sullivan, my nephew, he listened to the voters and through his leadership Tribal Members received more benefits and payments in the last couple years than ever before. If you elect me chairman I will carry on and expand on what Jeremy started.

There are a couple candidates in this election that hold a completely opposite position when it comes to extending benefits and payments to Tribal Members, if either candidate is elected chairman all the progress made up to this point under Jeremy's leadership will be lost. Let's keep the momentum going!

I want fair and equal treatment for every Tribal Member, and I will make certain this happens.

In both the 2016 and 2018 election I advocated for eliminating the fish tax for all treaty fisherman. And through the continued efforts of fisherman like Jason Purser and my son Darren, Tribal Council eventually voted to eliminate the tax. I believe of all the candidates, I will be the best advocate for treaty fisherman in the future.

I will insist that Tribal Council and administration fulfill their fiduciary responsibility to the tribal membership. This means any and all funds expended will be for the direct benefit of Tribal Members. A fiduciary responsibility is both a ethical and legal responsibility.

I was in attendance at the Tribal Council Meeting when discussion on the purchase of the Kountry Korner store and property was being considered, I asked Tribal Council at this meeting if there was a business model/plan in place that showed this would be a profitable business acquisition for the tribe, I was told there was. Obviously the plan was not good a one, it was announced recently that Noo-Kayet was closing the store down. My daughter in-law made a great observation, asking why wasn't this property put in trust and why wasn't the store closed down before constructing a new building for the sale of marijuana, her thought was that this would have been a much more lucrative location for the pot shop. Tribal Council needs to hold those responsible for bad advice accountable.

What is Noo-Kayet's function, as I've stated in the past, we haven't seen a new business started by this entity since it's inception. I don't consider opening the marijuana shop a new business created by Noo-Kayet. The tribe needs to diversify our economic base through new profitable businesses. I think Heronswood should be put under the authority of Noo-Kayet. I would have Noo-Kayet evaluate several year-end profit and loss statements to determine if it's worth investing hundreds of thousands of dollars for improvements as is currently being planned. Perhaps with Noo-Kayet's expertise Heronswood can be made profitable or at least a break even business.

I'd like to see the tribe move away from getting grants that requires the tribe to open our facilities to the public. I'm really interested in getting the tribe to finance housing for Tribal Members instead of seeking grants or loans from outside organizations or the state. We shouldn't put ourselves in the position of having the state or outside organization tell us who we can rent to or how much we have to charge for rent. We must protect tribal sovereignty.

A couple years ago on a zoom presentation the Planning Department showed plans for a new tribal center. I believe the cost back then was estimated at 40 to 50 million dollars. At today's construction cost the tab would be more like 70 to 80 million dollars. This project would be rated very low on my priority list. I can think of many better uses for this amount of money.

In any future logging projects I would require Natural Resources to be in charge and also require that we request BIA oversight. This applies to major logging operations not logging on individual assigned lots.

I have always advocated for full transparency. Money and power can corrupt without full transparency. The amount of money coming into the tribe and going out is huge, it behooves all of us to be ever vigilante so that no one can ever take advantage of us. We are a trusting people, almost to a fault, and that's okay, but we need to always require transparency by our government and enterprises. Trust but verify.

We have some very smart and capable people on Tribal Council and in administration, it's going to be very important for who ever is elected to the Chair position to listen and cooperate with everyone involved, and at the same time bring to the Chairman position their vision for the tribe.

Thank you for your consideration and hopefully your vote. Eugene Purser