

## **Small Group Session**

## **Séance en petit groupe**

### **Commissioners / Commissaires**

The Honourable / L'honorable J. Michael MacDonald,  
Chair / Président

Leanne J. Fitch (Ret. Police Chief, M.O.M)

Dr. Kim Stanton

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#### **Held at :**

Best Western Truro - Glengarry  
150 Willow Street  
Truro, Nova Scotia  
B2N 4Z6

Thursday, September 22, 2022

#### **Tenue à:**

Best Western Truro - Glengarry  
150 Willow Street  
Truro, Nouvelle-Écosse  
B2N 4Z6

Jeudi, le 22 septembre 2022

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**II**  
**Appearances / Comparutions**

Ms. Bev Beaton

Ms. Alix Digout

Ms. Maureen Wheller

Mr. Leo Artalejo

Mr. Jamie VanWart

Mother-in-law of Kristen Beaton

Counsel

Commission Community Liaison Director

Facilitator

Commission Counsel

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--- Upon commencing on Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

**MS. BEV BEATON:** As we begin, I'd like to say that everyone here at the Mass Casualty has been very good to me from day one, but a few have stood out to me.

First, Jenalee. Right from day one, she's been excellent at her job. She has made myself -- she has made herself readily available for all of us, answering emails, text messages evenings, weekends on her own time. Jenalee has made this so much easier.

Next is Maureen. I can't say enough good things about her. I'm not sure who put her in her position, but they couldn't have picked a better person. Maureen has jumped through hoops to make sure all of our participants' needs were met. No matter what questions we had for her, she set out to find the answers for us. She's amazing.

And one other thing is, before I run out of time, I'd like to say again about Mike O'Malley. I don't know who put this man in this position, but I've sat with him for almost a year. I've asked him questions. He's got me answers to my questions. He's helped my family members out. And I've lost a lot of confidence in the RCMP, but because of Mike O'Malley, I've gained confidence that he will see these recommendations through. So I don't know who put him in there, but I have trust that he will put that through.

Okay.

**MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** Now, is it helpful if I just frame up briefly what the topics are we would like to hear from you about?

**MS. BEV BEATON:** Yeah, I got them.

**MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** Oh, you got them. Okay.

**MS. BEV BEATON:** Yeah.

**MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** I just wanted to make sure.

1                   So just for the record so that we can frame this conversation, we  
2 know that as a family member, you have a unique perspective and experience that can  
3 help this Commission make meaningful recommendations for Canadians in the future.  
4 So the purpose of today is to really hear from you about your experience as a family  
5 member, how you accessed information during the mass casualty, what were the  
6 supports and services that were most helpful to you and your family, and what was  
7 missing that could have been helpful to you and your family so that we can make sure  
8 that Canadians in the future have the support and services they need during events  
9 such as the mass casualty.

10                   So I've shared the questions with you in advance. The  
11 Commissioners have seen them as well. When you're talking, you'll be listened to  
12 respectfully and it's helpful if you share your firsthand experience and avoid sort of  
13 blame or personal attacks in terms of sharing what you have to share today.

14                   I'm here to keep track of the time and support you in any way I can.  
15 If you need a break, just let me know or I'll offer you a break as we go between the  
16 questions.

17                   The first question is, what would you like to tell us about your  
18 experience, seeking information and getting support, during and immediately after the  
19 mass casualty?

20                   **MS. BEV BEATON:** My son and myself and family members tried  
21 since after 10:00 a.m. on Sunday morning in finding where Kristen was because she  
22 stopped answering her phone right around 10:00. Nick had been talking and texting  
23 with her and then had sent Kris a picture of Wortman, and Kristen never seen it. It  
24 shows on the phone if the message was read, and the picture was never seen by  
25 Kristen.

26                   We were all hearing so many stories. Someone told Nick it was  
27 Kris' car in Debert on Plains Road, so Nick started calling the RCMP and Kristen's work.  
28 Neither one could give him answers.

1                   Kristen's brother, Rick, went to the hospital to see if Kris was there.  
2 Our family members and myself and Kristen's family went out to Plains Road on either  
3 end trying to get in to see if that was Kris' car with no luck. Nick continued throughout  
4 the day to call 9-1-1 and the RCMP and the VON multiple times about his wife.

5                   News travelled and there were around 30 people or more gathered  
6 in Nick's yard waiting for word. This went on all day from 10:00 a.m. till around 5:30  
7 p.m. Sunday night.

8                   After all these hours and no confirmation that Kris was killed, it  
9 started giving us hope that Kris seen something and the RCMP were holding her at the  
10 station questioning her.

11                   Around 5:30 p.m., someone drove in Nick's yard and said the  
12 RCMP are giving a news conference on TV at 6:00 p.m. Nick took out his phone and  
13 called the RCMP and asked the officer if there was any news on his wife yet. They said  
14 no. Then Nick told the officer what his full name was, what the make and model of his  
15 car was and -- the truck was and the colour of his truck and the plate number.

16                   The officer asked Nick why he was giving this information, and Nick  
17 said, "If there's not someone in my yard within 10 minutes to tell me if my wife was  
18 murdered or not, I'm getting in my truck, going out to Plains Road myself to see if  
19 Kristen's car is there or not".

20                   The officer said, "They have barricades up and lots of officers  
21 walking the road". Nick said, "They can't stop a fucking 51-year-old dentist, then they  
22 won't stop a redneck from looking for his murdered wife".

23                   Within about six minutes, a plain car with two plainclothes cops got  
24 out and asked for Nick. Nick asked if Kristen was dead and the cop said yes. Then the  
25 cops told Nick he's lucky because he was one of the first to find out that his wife was  
26 gone. Then Nick asked the cop if the bastard was dead and -- was dead and they said  
27 "Nick, we can't tell you that".

28                   Nick said, "Don't worry. I'm going to put it on social media and ruin

1 your news conference". Nick said, "He murdered my fucking wife. I want to know if he's  
2 dead".

3 One officer said, "Yes, Nick, he's dead". Then the cop left.

4 With this, Nick fell to his knees and bawled. I had to leave my son  
5 on the ground because I had to make sure my grandson didn't see his father in this  
6 condition.

7 I took my grandson in the house to play so he didn't have to see the  
8 scene unfolding in the driveway. It broke my heart that I couldn't hold my son in his  
9 darkest moments, but I had to protect my grandson.

10 There's no way in hell that a victim's family should have to feel like  
11 they have no other option but to threaten the cops that they're going to the crime scene  
12 after almost eight hours to see if their wife was murdered. No family member should  
13 ever have to go through that, especially when the cops already ID'd Kristen to her work.

14 Then we found out later the RCMP had told the VON office before  
15 noon on Sunday that Kristen and Heather were gone, that they couldn't tell the families.  
16 So if the cops knew for a fact by noon that Kristen was murdered by confirming this to  
17 her employee (sic) but refused to tell her husband and her family, my God, in what  
18 world is that okay?

19 By noon, Wortman was dead. Why make these families live in hell  
20 for eight hours?

21 Kristen wasn't found on the side of the road with no ID. Kristen was  
22 murdered in her own car that was registered to her with her address on it. Kristen had  
23 her VON ID around her neck with her name on it. Her registration and insurance cards  
24 were in her dash. Kristen's phone was in her hand because she'd been calling and  
25 texting with her husband.

26 Her husband's name and number was on the phone. Nick and I  
27 and the rest of the family were calling the phone non-stop.

28 Then the officer took Kristen out of the car to see if he could help

1 her, but left Kristen laying on the gravel. Never even had the decency to cover her body  
2 up with something from the car.

3 I was told Kristen was killed in her car and then taken to Halifax.  
4 But to my horror, within a few days after the murders, I got a phone call late at night  
5 telling me there was pictures and videos of Kristen on the internet after she was shot.

6 When I went to the site, it was the first time I realized that someone  
7 had taken Kristen out of the car. We weren't told that. I waited until morning to call my  
8 son to tell him about them. Nick called Skipper Bent. The RCMP had them take down -  
9 - take them down and Bent said he made them delete them off their phones, but God  
10 knows when they surface again because we all know once they're on the net, they're  
11 out there for life.

12 So we'll have a lifetime with fear that these pictures will surface  
13 because the cops didn't have the common decency to take a minute to cover Kristen's  
14 body.

15 The RCMP were on the scene, never shut down the road, and  
16 continued to let cars drive by, allowed traffic to flow by both murder scenes. The RCMP  
17 allowed some lowlife to pull over to Kristen's murder scene and take pictures and a  
18 videotape of Kristen laying on the ground for over six minutes long, and that was the  
19 only video I seen. There was more videos with officer walking over Kristen's dead body  
20 like it was a dead deer on the side of the road, plus it wasn't just one person that was  
21 allowed to stop. It was many that stopped.

22 I asked Skipper who took Kristen's body out of the car, and  
23 immediately Skipper said, "Oh, it was a fireman". I called Debert Fire Chief at home and  
24 asked him what the hell was wrong with him for not covering up Kristen's body. He  
25 said, "No, Bev. We were stood down and was never allowed at Kristen's site because it  
26 was the RCMP scene".

27 The Fire Chief was angry because he said him or his men --  
28 firemen were never told about any murders. They were called out for a car accident but



1 were never told that there was an active shooter in the area and his firemen were all in  
2 danger.

3 I called Skipper back and told him it wasn't the Fire Chief and I  
4 wanted to know who removed Kristen's body from the car. At no time did Skipper tell us  
5 that he was at Kristen's site until much later.

6 Skipper looked into it and finally called Nick and told him that it was  
7 Officer Hubley that took Kristen out of the car to try and see if he could help her. Asked  
8 Skipper why they didn't take something from the car and cover her up and he said, "My  
9 head was on a swivel that day" because someone was allowed to stop and videotape  
10 the crime scene.

11 Then in about a month, I was at Nick's house -- about a month after  
12 this happened, I was at Nick's house and Skipper stopped in with some quilts or  
13 something and asked Nick -- and Nick asked him for Kristen's phone saying everyone  
14 else got their phones back and I want Kristen's. Nick said, "I don't want to lose the  
15 pictures and videos and the things off her phone". Nick said, "What's taking so long?".

16 Then Bent said, "Well, we have to see if there's a connection  
17 between any of them". And Nick asked, confused, "Skipper, what are you talking  
18 about?".

19 Skipper stammered on his words. Nick said, "Are you fucking trying  
20 to tell me that you think that there's a sexual connection between that bastard and my  
21 wife?". And Officer Bent said, "Yes".

22 Here we have a husband trying to grieve for his murdered wife and  
23 we have an officer of the law standing in front of him saying the RCMP thought his wife  
24 might be having an affair with the murderer and that they had to find out if Kristen was  
25 there to meet Wortman that morning she pulled over. Just for a minute, imagine if this  
26 was your spouse and an officer of the law was standing in front of you saying these  
27 words to you, how you would feel? And they just up and leave, leaving you with all this  
28 on top of the hell you're already going through.

1 Nick didn't have Kristen to talk to. Nick didn't have Kristen's phone  
2 to be able to look at it to see if it was true. All he had was an officer of the law's word.

3 This begins to work on your mind and plant deep-rooted seeds and  
4 mess with your whole world and that one person in the world you would normally trust  
5 and turn to, wasn't there. We had to live with this for over two years while trying to  
6 grieve for Kristen, then two years later, that same officer that stood in front of our face  
7 and made that accusation said under oath here at the MCC and bare face lied on the  
8 stand and nothing happened to him, and people wonder why we don't trust the RCMP.

9 That day Officer Bent lied on the stand we could not hold our  
10 emotions any longer. Two years of hell we had to live through and to watch a cop lie  
11 under oath was the final straw.

12 Basically, we were told to shut up and sit down. Isn't this supposed  
13 to be trauma free MCC? Then please tell me, does anyone here care about the trauma  
14 the victims have been through?

15 We as families shouldn't have to feel that way.

16 Important issues that are important.

17 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** Bev, would you like a break?

18 **MS. BEV BEATON:** No. I'm on a roll.

19 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** You're on a roll. Great.

20 **MS. BEV BEATON:** First and foremost, I and many other people  
21 would like the answers to why Lisa Banfield was given special accommodations when  
22 neither Lisa or her team asked for them. What made three Commissioners decide to  
23 take accommodations even when they were not asked for? If Lisa needed them, her  
24 lawyer would have asked for them.

25 How many other people did get accommodations and never asked  
26 for them? None of us know.

27 To the families and the rest who are watching this does not fit the  
28 mandate of being transparent at all. By saying you think the witness might be more

1 forthcoming with only one person asking the questions is completely bull.

2 I thought you were coming for me.

3 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** I'm listening.

4 **MS. BEV BEATON:** Lisa was the main person that was there  
5 before, during and after. Lisa could have been the one to answer some of the families'  
6 questions, but this Commission took that right away from us and now we'll never know.

7 Why there – Why? This makes zero sense to anyone that the main  
8 witness can't be cross-examined, that would have been the only way to be able to get  
9 the facts and the truth, but that was taken from us. Unfortunately, your testimony can  
10 be -- unless your testimony can be cross-examined, it's just hearsay.

11 I listened to Lisa's lawyer this morning speaking on the RCMP  
12 charging her and her family and how the RCMP shouldn't have charged her because  
13 she was a victim. Just because someone is a supposed victim, the police shouldn't  
14 investigate them after their spouse has killed 23 innocent people?

15 Look at Carla Homolka. She was abused, and the police -- police  
16 officered her a deal to testify against her spouse and then later found out that she was  
17 involved in the murders. So to say because you're a victim the cops were wrong to  
18 investigate you, what person is ever told by the police that they're under investigation?  
19 Seriously, no one.

20 Sounds to me like a lawsuit may be brewing.

21 There was no proof shown either for or against if Lisa was involved  
22 in any way or there's no proof that I've seen whether she was or whether she wasn't.  
23 We never got to find that out.

24 We never got to hear from so many people that we should have.  
25 Instead of these roundtables about things that had absolutely nothing to do with these  
26 murders should have been used for main witnesses like Leon Joudrey, Peter Griffon,  
27 other key witnesses. Paper documents are only so good.

28 By putting key witnesses there and being able to cross-examine

1 them would have given -- would have been a better use of time. These key witnesses  
2 could have given the families and the MCC a better insight into what really happened in  
3 Portapique.

4                   Finally, final recommendations should point the finger at who did  
5 what wrong and who did what right because if you can't admit your mistakes, you'll  
6 never change your habits. Look at Westray Mine Inquiry. They pointed fingers, no one  
7 was charged, but at the end of the inquiry, we learned what the failures were, who done  
8 them and they won't be made again in another mine because they were pointed out.

9                   So by pointing out who did what wrong and who did what right, I  
10 don't think it's a bad thing. You can learn from your mistakes. Everybody can, no  
11 matter what position you're in.

12                   I lost my thought here.

13                   **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** Take your time.

14                   **MS. BEV BEATON:** I truly feel in my heart -- okay. Can and will  
15 we be able to say this about the mass casualty? I truly feel in my heart and soul the  
16 answer is no, that we won't get the answers we're looking for.

17                   How do you set out to change a whole huge organization with  
18 recommendations if those individuals do not know what they've done wrong and where  
19 they went wrong? Then they will never change with it no matter how many  
20 recommendations you throw at them.

21                   And one thing you could change, if you guys believe that Lisa could  
22 fit through the silent patrolman, then that should be looked at to be changed in all the  
23 police cars.

24                   Everyone spoke about a liaison cop and this is very important part  
25 of the mass casualty because no one -- no one person should have to take on that  
26 many people. You can't serve families properly and one person would burn out pretty  
27 fast; plus, they had Skipper doing so many other tasks, so he was struggling and failing.

28                   At first he was great. In fact, I wrote a very glowing letter about

1 Skipper and the other RCMP officers with boots on the grounds, and hand delivered this  
2 letter, along with flowers, to the Bible Hill Detachment after this happened.

3 Another important thing to look at is containment. I'm sure all three  
4 of you have driven to Portapique, same as the cops did that night, and you realize you  
5 run out of land. You just run out of land. So by arguing about a blueberry field or going  
6 over someone's lawn or whatever, all you had to do -- the first two cops there weren't  
7 doing anything. Had they have sat on one bridge and sat on the other end of bridge, he  
8 would have -- no matter how many back roads, how many lawns he crossed, he would  
9 have never left Portapique.

10 Had any of them looked at a map, they would have seen this, that  
11 the land runs out. That would have been so easy to contain him there with two cops.  
12 That was it.

13 But does the amount of money that the RCMP or the Province  
14 make off these old cop cars come anywhere close to what we, the taxpayers, have paid  
15 for this MCC? I don't think so.

16 So this moratorium on cop cars should be put there permanently  
17 because another inquiry like this is going to cost us \$50 million and up, and they're not  
18 going to make \$50 million off selling their cop cars.

19 I'm almost done.

20 One could say the RCMP are top heavy. If police agencies can  
21 come into Colchester County and do a better job than the RCMP have been doing for  
22 way less money, plus better trained and all carbine trained with the proper tools. In  
23 Colchester County right now, and for many years, the RCMP give us zero coverage  
24 from 2:00 a.m. to 6:30. We have zero coverage.

25 We have an officer on call in -- at home in bed that only comes if  
26 there's a murder or something serious. If you have a break-in or something else, you  
27 don't get to see the cop until 7:00 the next day. Most people know this for many years.  
28 Now people at parties and bars just wait till 2:00 a.m. and drive home drunk knowing

1 they'll never meet a cop on the road.

2                   There are many examples like this in Tatamagouche.

3                   How can we depend on the RCMP for protection when there isn't  
4 any on the clock?

5                   Truro Town Police have given Colchester County a document  
6 outlining what they could do and how much it would be for Colchester, the training their  
7 officers will have, we'll have 24-hour coverage for way less than what we are paying the  
8 RCMP, plus if we had -- plus if this had happened in Truro, the Truro Police would have  
9 not been investigating themselves like the RCMP are. This would have been a local  
10 department with more transparency to the people they protect.

11                   This is why I say the RCMP is top heavy because if they can't have  
12 as many officers on the ground 24/7 to protect us on the busiest night of the week,  
13 Saturday night, and Colchester gets maybe four officers at tops to protect thousands of  
14 miles and thousands of people.

15                   Do I feel right now today this could happen again in our  
16 community? 100 percent.

17                   Do I think the RCMP would be ready for it if it happened today?  
18 No.

19                   If you really wanted to find out why and how someone could pull  
20 this off, one thing you as Commissioners should have looked at was into his criminal  
21 background in which the MCC didn't. Here you might have found the real reasons on  
22 why and how Wortman was allowed to pull this off, but this MCC seemed more focused  
23 on hearsay and cross -- without cross-examination and abuse and follow some  
24 guidelines of trauma for some.

25                   When Chief MacNeil was here for the entire day, not once did the  
26 Commissioners ask him if he needed a break or water or anything.

27                   Sorry. Lost my part.

28                   There were very few that sat for the entire day, but when RCMP

1 officers and others sat there, the Commissioners asked the witnesses if they needed a  
2 break or if someone suggested lunchtime, the Commissioners returned and asked the  
3 witness if they needed a break or if they could go on.

4 I went back over some of the videos and was disheartened to find  
5 the total difference in the way the witnesses were treated.

6 So if this was done but didn't realize it, it was being done, I'm  
7 bringing it to your attention now so it won't happen again. I'm not pointing any fingers.  
8 I'm just saying.

9 And my last point is, you always thank the witnesses and anyone  
10 else who attends and express, you know, it's been hard on them to be here, but the  
11 other day one of the victim's family, Tara Long, was representing herself, which must  
12 have been so hard for her to do in the first place. She got interrupted. I've seen some  
13 nervous lawyers get nervous a bit when they go to speak and get interrupted, so I can't  
14 imagine how hard that was on Tara. But yet not one of you Commissioners expressed  
15 at the end of her speech how hard that must have been standing up there and  
16 representing herself. Not one of you, and that was very hard on us sitting there  
17 watching.

18 So I'd just like to say I've gotten to know you guys quite a bit over  
19 the last year or so, and I can't continue without saying I don't know what I would have  
20 done without Alix and Tara. They have been a godsend. They have stood by me and  
21 talked so many hours to me.

22 My hours are wore down, and she's still here. That's commitment  
23 and that's what I felt from both of them the whole year.

24 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** Thank you, Bev.

25 **MS. BEV BEATON:** So that's ---

26 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** I want to thank you for honesty and for your  
27 courage to share everything that you shared, and I also just wanted to say it's very  
28 beautiful that you've acknowledged so many people who have made a positive

1 contribution. I know because I ate some of the candy that you've brought, so I want just  
2 thank that, you know, you do see the interconnectedness of all of us here trying to do ---

3 **MS. BEV BEATON:** No matter what your jobs are, I brought  
4 candies and gifts for every different -- the sound, the security ---

5 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** Yes.

6 **MS. BEV BEATON:** --- and the lawyers, the flowers. Like I even  
7 give it to the DOJ lawyers, like all of them. And -- because they're lawyers, they're  
8 people, and that's how I see them. And when I was leaving yesterday, I come out that  
9 side door and I seen the interpreters and I went, "How could I forget them?".

10 So today when I come, I brought them their dish of candy and  
11 thanked them and explained to them some days when it was really hard up there to  
12 watch, I would turn and watch them and it would calm me down.

13 So I just wanted to thank everybody involved in the mass casualty,  
14 Maureen, from them that's made it so much easier on all of us.

15 So that's just my way.

16 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** I just want to admire that you're able to  
17 appreciate that even though you're dealing with so much pain.

18 **MS. BEV BEATON:** Well, like I said, right -- a month or so, I don't  
19 know how long it was -- it wasn't long after the murders -- I sat down and I thought  
20 about the pain we were going through and I thought about the poor officers and how  
21 they must be feeling, so I sat down and I wrote a 16-page letter to let them all know that  
22 they were with us. They were part of us, and we felt their pain and they were going  
23 through the same thing. They would never be the same, the same as us.

24 And I took it in and I asked for boots on the ground and I give them  
25 the flowers and he opened and I said, "My God, don't open that letter", I said, "because I  
26 spent all night writing it and bawling". And I said, "Just make me one promise". And he  
27 said, "What's that?". And I said, "That every officer that was in Portapique and around  
28 that weekend will get to see this letter. It won't get tucked away".



1                   And then Skipper called Nick and he said, "Your mother made me  
2 cry -- tried to make me cry. No, I'm not going to lie. She made me cry today at work".

3                   And Nick said, "Oh, my God, what did mom do?". And he said,  
4 "She said things in the letter that were so nice about me that my parents have never  
5 said". And he said, "We promised her all the officers would get one", but he said, "we  
6 mass emailed all the officers in Canada the letter to let them know so we wouldn't miss  
7 anybody".

8                   But I just had to let them know that we felt -- even though we were  
9 going through hell, we felt bad for them. So I'd just like to ---

10                   **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** So you brought a lot of humanity to this.

11                   And I want to -- we're short on time, so I want to ask the  
12 Commissioners for their questions and comments.

13                   **MS. BEV BEATON:** Yeah.

14                   **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** We don't have time to respond to all the  
15 issues you raised, but we have the public record. It's very, very helpful that you've been  
16 willing to share that, so I'll just turn to the Commissioners and see if they'd like to  
17 comment.

18                   **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you very much for being  
19 here. Thank you for your honesty. I appreciate it very much.

20                   You have been disappointed with some of our decisions, many of  
21 our decisions, but every day you still came and you showed up and you were as -- and  
22 thank you for acknowledging those who are working for the Commission and for your  
23 kindness in acknowledging them. I appreciate it.

24                   The afternoon that Skipper, if I can refer to him as that, testified, I  
25 could have handled that better. I apologized to your son, and I'm sorry that you felt --  
26 your expression, I think, was -- not that you're saying I said this, but you felt like to sit  
27 down and shut up and you shouldn't have been made to feel like that, so I apologize to  
28 you for that.

1                   **MS. BEV BEATON:** Thank you.

2                   **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** So you know, I admire the fact  
3 that it's obviously very difficult for you, but it must be more difficult when, you know, you  
4 don't see eye to eye with some of the Commission's decisions and -- but you still  
5 showed up and I think that's admirable, indeed.

6                   And you know, I just want you to know -- you're injecting humanity.  
7 We're doing the very best we can as well, and -- but I respect your honesty, I respect  
8 your courage in coming here and I appreciate the fact that you've been with Mr.  
9 MacLeod and the Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chief and others. We see that every  
10 day, and we appreciate it.

11                   And so I guess I see it as you're sticking with us regardless,  
12 obviously, in Kristen's memory and we appreciate that. And we've got the same goal.  
13 We want to increase public safety. And I'm not going to try to convince you today, but I  
14 am hopeful that we will come up with meaningful recommendations that you will agree  
15 with, and that's our goal. And I guess we've got a shared goal.

16                   And thank you to you, Ms. Digout, for being there every day well, or  
17 virtually every day, and for being here today. This is a difficult -- retainer is the word  
18 lawyers use, but this is a difficult experience for everybody involved, and so thank you  
19 so much. And thank you, Ms. Beaton.

20                   **MS. BEV BEATON:** Thank you.

21                   **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** I would say much the same as  
22 Commissioner MacDonald. It's heartbreaking on so many levels and the strength that  
23 you continue to bring forward is remarkable. You're a mother bear, I think, and the  
24 image of you taking care of Dax when your son was in his worst place in his life is an  
25 image, Bev, that will live in my heart and my mind for the rest of my life. And I really  
26 thank you for sharing that.

27                   It's -- you know, we've sat across the room from one another for  
28 many, many months now and, you know, as hard as we try, we can never imagine

1 what's going on inside of somebody else's mind and heart and so for you to come and  
2 share so kindly and articulately with us today means a lot. Like Commissioner  
3 MacDonald said, you know, I'm hoping -- I'm really hoping if we get it right at all that --  
4 which I'm hoping we do, that some of the questions that you have that through our final  
5 report that some of that understanding will be stitched together to help answer some of  
6 the questions that you feel are still unanswered and we're going to work our hardest to  
7 do that in our final report and bring together all the information that's been given to us.

8 The submissions that we're getting this week, you know, we're  
9 taking in every ounce of that and, you know, your counsels are representing your views  
10 for us very well, so I remain very, very hopeful that when the final report is done that  
11 we're going to answer your questions to the best of our ability and help paint a picture  
12 for you that will help, as my mother would say, soften the lump in your throat.

13 **MS. BEV BEATON:** I hope so because it don't feel like that now.

14 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** We also think Jenalee and Maureen  
15 are wonderful. We didn't hire and don't have any employment relationship with Mike  
16 O'Malley, but it's good to know that the representative in the room for the RCMP is  
17 helping you.

18 **MS. BEV BEATON:** With all the family members and I'm trying to  
19 introduce him to all the family members that have come because I want them to sit and  
20 talk with him and get a feel for him. And they would probably feel the same as I do.

21 Nick has talked to him on several different, and I really feel deep in  
22 my heart -- 'cause I don't say nothing I don't feel -- that he's the one that will implement.  
23 And as I've said, I've got your email, I've got your cell phone number. I don't got to  
24 crawl over a bunch of monkeys to get to you. I'll be holding your feet to the fire. And  
25 Mike said, "There's not a doubt in my mind you will do that".

26 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** I'm not doubting that either.

27 **MS. BEV BEATON:** I mean, he personally brought up Kristen's --  
28 we were never told. We were told Kristen had two phones, her work phone and her

1 VON phone. So we've asked and couldn't get it back, couldn't get it. We were  
2 supposed to ask the day Skipper was there.

3 So I asked Mike. Mike said, "Oh, there's two phones". And I said,  
4 "Well, it's not on the list". He said, "Well, they're both Kristen's".

5 Mike brought them up to my house personally and dropped them  
6 off and went out to Kristen's site with me to visit.

7 You can tell. You can just tell a person. He's a good person. He's  
8 a good person inside. And I think -- I think he's got a lot of -- he's going to listen and put  
9 what happened out west there, like they've taken a lot of what's happening here and  
10 Mike's been pushing it through. I truly believe him myself.

11 So he's starting before he's even starting. He's an excellent man.

12 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** Bev, I want to close the session by saying  
13 that you're a good person, too.

14 **MS. BEV BEATON:** Thank you.

15 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** And I want to acknowledge you because  
16 everyone has been acknowledged, but we really do appreciate you being here. And  
17 your role as a grandmother and a mother and a protector, you've really touched me. I  
18 wanted to thank you for your courage.

19 **MS. BEV BEATON:** Thank you.

20 **MR. LEO ARTALEJO:** I appreciate you making the time, so we'll  
21 go ahead and close the session.

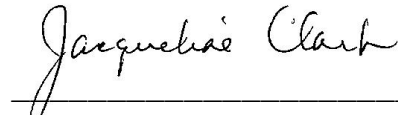
22 Thank you very much.

23 --- Session concludes  
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**CERTIFICATION**

I, JACQUELINE CLARK, hereby certify the foregoing pages to be an accurate transcription of the audio recording provided to the best of my skill and ability, and I so swear.

  
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