

BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES

February 25, 2013

PRESENT: Commissioner Earl Gosse, Chair  
Commissioner Micki Ruth, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Michael Moreash  
Commissioner Phillip Read  
Commissioner Linda Mosher  
Commissioner Tim Outhit  
Commissioner Barry Dalrymple

STAFF: Chief Jean-Michel Blais  
Deputy Chief Chris McNeil, Halifax Regional Police  
Deputy Chief Bill Moore, Halifax Regional Police  
Inspector Dennis Daley, RCMP  
Sergeant R. Scott Macdonald  
Mr. Richard Butts, CAO  
Mr. Matt Godwin, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m. in the Meisner Room, Police Headquarters.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 11, 2013**

The minutes of February 11, 2013 were before the Board.

**MOVED by Commissioner Read, seconded by Commissioner Moreash that the minutes of February 11, 2013 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

**MOVED by Commissioner Outhit, seconded by Commissioner Dalrymple that the agenda be accepted as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

**6.1 Email Regarding RCMP Severance – Commissioner Mosher**

A copy of email correspondence, dated February 21, 2013, provided by Commissioner Mosher was before the Board.

Commissioner Mosher indicated the short-term impact of severance being built into the fee may have to be factored into the cost per officer.

Inspector Daley noted the corrected document, which had been circulated to the Board, indicating that the total complement of RCMP constables is 206 and HRM funds 178 of these.

A letter sent to Board of Police Commissioners from the HRP, dated February, 2013, was before the Board.

Commissioner Dalrymple referenced question number two in the letter pertaining to the total percentage of money spent on policing. He would like to see these statistics and in comparison with other cities, statistics on police officers per capita, as well as officers to incidents of crime. The Commissioner further indicated he was pleased to see the comparison between management to officers.

The Chief noted his documents provided some of these answers and that staff attempt to make comparisons with cities of similar size, such as London and Winnipeg.

Commissioner Mosher pointed to Question three regarding the replacing of staff sergeants with civilian positions. The Chief indicated in response that HRP is looking at reorganization involving positions such as quartermaster, professional standards as well as the audit section. Deputy Chief McNeil advised that the budget and policy positions are being replaced with one person.

Commissioner Mosher pointed to Question 10 and the civilianization of officers, particularly with respect to graffiti. She argued that officers have access to files, can lay formal charges, track suspects and otherwise provide this service better than civilians could. Commissioner Mosher pointed to a number of studies indicating that graffiti is a gateway crime and lead to other, more serious issues.

The Chief responded that there are three necessary elements of an officer position: specialized training, specialized equipment and specific authorities under the criminal code. He noted that some of these civilian positions may be filled by retired officers who have the requisite experience.

Commissioner Mosher reiterated that intervening in less serious crimes leads to the prevention of more serious ones. Thanks to Community Response Officers (CRO), she has noticed a difference in her community.

Commissioner Outhit echoed Commissioner Mosher's comments that the CROs in his community have been very helpful, especially regarding restorative justice. He asks what will change if these positions become civilianized and the Chief responded that at a practical level, nothing will change.

## **7. HRP Budget**

The Chair provided an overview of the options facing the Board with respect to the Budget and opened the floor to discussion.

Commissioner Read indicated the budget has been presented with precision. Regarding line item 6399 on contract services, he asked if this was a reduction and Deputy Chief McNeil advised it is a line move dealing with the cost of special investigations. He elaborated, regarding the contract, that it was negotiated at an increase and budgeted for a certain amount. However, collective bargaining had not caught up to the budget process and adjustment was required.

Commissioner Read asked about the cost recovery of the Boots on the Streets program. Deputy Chief McNeil advised that it is 39 officers; a \$3.9 million contribution. This budget will have no impact on the program.

Commissioner Read asked if there is a \$275,000 risk related to UN deployments. Deputy Chief McNeil advised that three officers were set to deploy, but this process is being delayed. He expects them to be sent, but that it is a risk.

Commissioner Read asked about transfers to and from capital pertaining to line 8008 and Deputy Chief McNeil advised that the transfer is to and from reserve. He further advised that there is an extraordinary investigation reserve intended for a catastrophic event.

Commissioner Mosher asked about red-light cameras and the provision of a business case. Deputy Chief McNeil advised this is something staff can investigate this year, but the business case would not affect this budget.

After a comment from the CAO, Commissioner Mosher indicated she would like to see a business case on both red light cameras and speed cameras.

Commissioner Dalrymple asked about line items 6315 and 6711 which ask for significant moneys. Deputy Chief Moore advised these reflect investigations, such as cold case files. Some files are for the witness protection program.

Commissioner Outhit directed a question toward the CAO, asking if the HRP was given instructions to present options: One budget with an overall increase of 2.4% and the second with a zero per cent increase. He asked if the CAO has what he needs.

The CAO advised that Council provided staff with the challenge and noted a zero per cent option will be brought forward. HRP and Fire will provide challenges given the budget increase.

Commissioner Read pointed to the document he circulated regarding Halifax Regional Policing Costs. Deputy Chief McNeil noted staff had to make adjustments as it also includes 911 and crossing guard expenses.

The Chair asked the Chief about the causes keeping the budget down as compared to last year. The Chief responded that the cause is largely due to wage increases which were negotiated in good faith years ago. There were wage increases last year and there will be this year. There is a request for new money for witnesses and new investigative capacities. Expenditures are related to criminal activity and last year crime levels were stable.

The Chair provided the Board with a draft copy of his covering letter for the budget recommendations.

Commissioner Outhit advised that the letter include a statement about the additional funding for increased investigative capacity, in addition to the wage increase as a reason for the budget increase.

The Chief asked if inflation is a significant component to the increase and Deputy Chief McNeil advised that it has a negligible impact.

Commissioner Dalrymple suggested that the motions in the recommendation, one regarding the budget and the other regarding the contract negotiations, be separated and the latter be taken out of the motion.

**MOVED by Commissioner Dalrymple, seconded by Commissioner Read that the Board of Police Commissioners recommend that Halifax Regional Council accept the 2013/14 Halifax Regional Police budget, totalling \$73,718,700.00.**

Commissioner Dalrymple indicated that wage increases present unique challenges, but taxpayers have gotten a good deal given the services provided. He noted that he does not see how any further cuts to the budget can be made. Additionally, he identified public safety as an important issue for residents and was in the top two when the results of a major survey on residents' concerns came out.

Commissioner Dalrymple further asked about the provision of field dressing kits, as it was raised in the HRP letter. Deputy Chief Moore advised this is being done and they are augmenting the existing provisions. There also needs to be appropriate training done.

#### **MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

### **8. REPORTS**

#### **8.1 Staff**

#### **8.2 Commissioners**

Commissioner Ruth indicated that she is doing a provincial and national scan for information on the witness protection program.

The Chair indicated there will be a presentation from Commissioner Ruth at the next Board meeting on her attendance at the economies of policing conference in Ottawa.

Commissioner Outhit indicated he was pleased to see work being done on educating residents on pedestrian safety. He asked the Chief what was being done regarding the Mayor's Roundtable on Violence and the Chief suggested speaking to the Mayor and that it may have to be revisited at Council.

Commissioner Mosher noted there may be a need for additional resources to address Roundtable concerns. The Chief responded that 87% of recommendations from the Roundtable have been actioned, but there are some items which are dependent on changes in legislation.

**9. ADDED ITEMS – NONE**

**10. IN CAMERA**

**10.1 Approval of the Minutes.**

This item was discussed In Camera.

**10.2 Evaluation of the Chief**

This item was discussed In Camera.

**11. NEXT MEETING DATE – March 18, 2013**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Matt Godwin  
Legislative Assistant