

BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES

June 10, 2013

PRESENT: Commissioner Micki Ruth, Chair (participated via
teleconference)
Commissioner Phillip Read, Vice Chair
Commissioner Michael Moreash
Commissioner Fred Honsberger
Commissioner Linda Mosher
Commissioner Tim Outhit

REGRETS: Commissioner Barry Dalrymple

STAFF: Chief Jean-Michel Blais
Deputy Chief Bill Moore, Halifax Regional Police
Chief Superintendent Roland Wells, OIC, RCMP
Inspector Dennis Daley, RCMP
Sergeant R. Scott Macdonald
Mr. Matt Godwin, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m. in the Meisner Room, Police Headquarters.

2. Award Presentations

2.1 Chief Superintendent Roland Wells, OIC – Presentation to Ms. Sheila Serfas

Chief Superintendent Wells presented Ms. Sheila Serfas with a certificate of appreciation and recognition.

2.2 John Dunlop Memorial Award presentation to Constable Kathryn Willett

The John Dunlop Memorial Award was presented to Constable Kathryn Willett.

Constable Dunlop offered thanks to her supervisors, her family and to the youth with whom she works.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 13, 2013

The minutes of May 13, 2013 were before the Board.

MOVED by Commissioner Honsberger, seconded by Commissioner Outhit that the minutes of May 13, 2013 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions:

- 8.1.6 Budget update.

MOVED by Commissioner Outhit, seconded by Commissioner Mosher that the agenda be accepted as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5.1 Constituent Letter – May 13, 2013 meeting.

The Legislative Assistant provided background on this item, with Commissioner Ruth indicating that she has reviewed the matter extensively with Legal Services and has communicated to the constituent on behalf of the Board, indicating that the matter is

outside the jurisdiction of the Board of Police Commissioners and no action on the Board's part can be taken in respect of it.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6.1 Commendations – Chief Jean-Michel Blais

Chief Jean-Michel Blais raised the idea of the Board of Police Commissioners conferring civilian commendations on those in the service of law enforcement. He referenced a commendation which had been given to his mother some years ago.

Commissioners Mosher and Outhit both supported this idea.

Commissioner Moreash suggested that the Legislative Assistant conduct a best practices scan and further research in advance of the July 8, 2013 meeting of the Board.

Commissioner Mosher noted there are a number of questions that should be answered, including the frequency of the award and the nomination process.

Commissioner Ruth indicated her support for this practice.

6.2 Canadian Association of Police Board communications

The Legislative Assistant indicated the receipt of numerous communications from the Canadian Association of Police Boards and asked how Board members would like to receive these on an ongoing basis.

Commissioner Moreash indicated he would like to be added to their regular distribution list, with the Legislative Assistant committing to disseminating other emails from time to time to the other Board members.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

8. REPORTS

8.1 Staff

8.1.1 RCMP Reports

The May RCMP reports were before the Board.

Chief Superintendent Wells provided background on the reports as circulated, as well as the dashboard. He highlighted the number of motorcycle injuries and indicated that if they remain at the same level there may need to be a campaign for greater safety on motorcycles.

Commissioner Read asked if road conditions are a factor, with Chief Superintendent Wells noting this will require further investigation. He also noted that there are more motorcycles on the road in inclement weather than one might expect.

Commissioner Moreash asked for clarification of what the RCMP considers aggressive driving, with Chief Superintendent Wells responding that unsafe passing, excessive speed and stunting all constitute aggressive driving.

Chief Superintendent Wells highlighted the drop in crime since 2010 overall, particularly mischief and property damage.

Commissioner Outhit noted that property crime increases with the warmer weather, with Chief Superintendent Wells responding that trend observations are allowing officers to recognize areas where there is an upswing in activity and increase their presence in response.

Commissioner Mosher asked if there are any programs in place to address drag-racing, with Chief Superintendent Wells responding that witnesses to drag-racing should call in during the act itself, not sometime afterward.

Commissioner Mosher noted that the race is often over before the police arrive, with Chief Superintendent Wells responding that the call gives police data and allows them to concentrate resources in certain areas.

Commissioner Mosher asked about vehicle inspection sites, noting that one in her area is effective in stopping people without licences and those whose vehicles have not been inspected.

With respect to car noise, Deputy Chief Moore indicated there is no legislation governing car noise, but officers will ask for inspection information. He committed to providing more information as to where inspections take place.

The Vice Chair noted that it would be worthwhile for the public to make calls about incidents, even if the response won't be immediate. The Chief concurred, noting this allows his staff to establish patterns and target resources.

Superintendent Daley noted the public can report incidents online as well.

Commissioner Outhit asked if 311 is considering expanding its services to include calls about criminal incidents, with the Chief responding that they are looking into 311 accepting calls to report crime.

8.1.2 HRP Reports

The May HRP reports were before the Board, along with the 2012/13 End of Year Budget Report – June 10, 2013.

The Chief invited Mr. Craig Horton, Financial Coordinator, to provide a brief review of the budget document before the Board, which outlines the final break-down of the 2012/13 budget. The actual, net operating number is \$69,488,423.00. There are some savings as a result of the final calculation, with about \$1,000,000.00 being diverted to three reserves.

Commissioner Moreash asked about specialized equipment budget lines, with Deputy Chief Moore indicating that specialized enforcement line items were not aligned properly in the past. There are a collection of line items pertaining to specialized operations and staff are working to realign them.

Commissioner Honsberger asked if there is an annual issue for officer uniforms and equipment, with Deputy Chief Moore responding that officers are generally issued two sets of pants, two shirts and boots as required. This line also includes dress uniforms.

Commissioner Read asked if recorded savings can return to the consolidated budget, with Deputy Chief Moore responding that the savings are returned to the reserves and cannot be carried over. Any additional savings return to HRM.

Commissioner Read asked why HRP cannot contribute more to the reserves, with Deputy Chief Moore responding that, in the case of the facility lease reserve, there is a cap preventing further contribution.

8.1.3 Public Safety Update - Sergeant R. Scott MacDonald

The June Public Safety Update was before the Board.

Sergeant MacDonald paid special note to the Youth Adcoate Program, which was discussed at the last Board meeting. He also met with Brad Anguish, Director of Community & Recreation Services, and advised that the program manager is willing to attend a Board meeting to speak to the program. He also highlighted the success of the prescription drug drop-off program.

Councillor Outhit asked about the status of a gun amnesty program, with Sergeant MacDonald responding that it is something his team are considering. He noted that the recent Pixels for Pistols campaign in Winnipeg was very successful.

MOVED by Commissioner Moreash, seconded by Commissioner Outhit that the June Public Safety Update be received by the Board. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Sergeant MacDonald noted that the Halifax District School Board review of shared protocols, information sharing and agreements regarding bullying, cyber-bullying and sexual violence and the extent of police coordination with the HRSB is expected on June 14, 2013. He also noted that he endorsed a proposal for funding to a national crime prevention centre focused on anti-bullying amongst girls.

Sergeant MacDonald indicated that a report on the “Distractions Kill” campaign will be provided at a later date.

8.1.4 Court Time

A letter from Ms. Marion Tyson, Acting Director, Legal Services, dated May 24, 2013 was before the Board.

Commissioner Outhit indicated he would like to have Legal Services staff attend a meeting of the Board to speak to the court time issue.

The Vice Chair noted that this issue is one the Board can have an impact on resolving.

8.1.5 Citizen Satisfaction Survey

The Urban Report: Final Results, was before the Board.

Chief Superintendent Wells asked if a 14% response rate is normal, with Ms. Teresa Rath, Public Relations Manager, indicating she would follow-up on this, noting that 402 surveys were returned. She further noted that the authors’ target was 400 respondents to form a representative sample.

Commissioner Read pointed to the visibility graph and noted that the HRP/RCMP are down compared to 2012, with Deputy Chief Moore responding that the decrease is within the margin of error.

Chief Superintendent Wells noted that a decrease can be expected, given that officers are being targeted to areas where they are required, rather than where there is no criminal activity.

Commissioner Moreash asked what the cost of the survey was, with Ms. Rath responding that she would have to provide that information at a later date.

Commissioner Moreash noted that there may be a better way to gauge public opinion on these matters, with Chief Superintendent Wells responding that the use of third party data allows the force to get baseline data. Ms. Rath further responded that the questions are largely the same year over year, which allows the HRP/RCMP to identify trends.

Commissioner Honsberger asked if other Canadian cities ask similar questions, with the Chief responding he doesn’t have this information. Ms. Rath further indicated that the wording is designed by the company, but they could request a comparison.

Commissioner Ruth noted that the Calgary Police Service survey is disseminated from their Board of Police Commissioners and she would be happy to share this information. She also indicated that she would speak to their representatives at the August

Canadian Association of Police Boards conference with a view to creating a more robust survey process.

8.2 Commissioners

8.2.1 Updates

Commissioner Mosher noted that Professor Clairmont is presently interviewing all members of Council regarding the Mayor's Roundtable on Violence Update.

Commissioner Honsberger asked what the vision for video surveillance in HRM is, with Deputy Chief Moore responding that the tool has not been expanded since 2007. Mobile-based cameras were purchased in 2012, but there is work to be done in this area. Overall, surveillance has been used for some investigations, but not many, and it's not particularly cost-effective.

Commissioner Honsberger asked if ultraviolet cameras are being used, with Deputy Chief Moore responding that they use both analog and digital cameras, but are not using nighttime vision or face recognition technology. He further noted that recent research has suggested better results may be achieved with better lighting rather than with cameras.

Commissioner Ruth provided a brief update on the Canadian Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement conference in PEI, which she attended recently, and committed to providing more detail on when she returns to Halifax.

With respect to the Canadian Association of Police Boards (CAPB) conference, Commissioner Ruth noted that Destination Halifax and the Mayor's Office are supporting the breakfast HRM is hosting to promote the 2014 CAPB conference. CAPB will send a number of logo options to the Board and the Board will also have input into the theme of the conference.

Commissioner Read asked about interest in attending the CAPB conference in August, 2013, with the Board consenting that Commissioners Read and Ruth should represent the Board.

8.2.2 2013 Board of Police Commissioners Objectives Review

This item was deferred until the next Board of Police Commissioners meeting.

8.2.3 CACOLE Conference - Commissioner Micki Ruth

This item was dealt with under item 8.2.1 on page 8.

9. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

10. IN CAMERA – NONE

11. NEXT MEETING DATE – July 8, 2013

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Matt Godwin
Legislative Assistant