

BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES

October 7, 2013

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

STAFF: Mr. Colin Taylor, Solicitor
Chief Jean-Michel Blais, Halifax Regional Police
Deputy Chief Bill Moore, Halifax Regional Police
Mr. Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. in the Mesiner Room at Halifax Regional Police Headquarters, 1975 Gottingen Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 9, 2013

MOVED by Commissioner Moreash and seconded by Commissioner Read that the minutes of September 9, 2013 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

8.2 In Camera – Legal Matter – Oral

MOVED by Commissioner Outhit and seconded by Commissioner Mosher that the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS - NONE

7. REPORTS

7.1 Staff

7.1.1 HRP Dashboard Reports - September 9-22, 2013

The HRP Dashboard Reports were before the Board.

Chief Blais provided a summary of the report's key findings and requested the Commissioners provide feedback for future reports.

The HRP Dashboard Reports were accepted as submitted by the Board.

7.1.2 HRP Reports

The HRP reports were before the Board of Police Commissioners.

The HRP reports were received by the Board of Police Commissioners.

7.1.3 RCMP Reports

The RCMP reports were before the Board of Police Commissioners.

Superintendent Roland Wells noted that enforcement activity increased in all six districts of HRM policed by the RCMP, because of this increase a heightened sense of awareness of this enforcement among the general public has led to a decrease in impaired driving charges.

Superintendent Wells commented that property offenses have decreased in HRM in areas that are policed by the RCMP. He referenced a former hotspot of property and vehicle break-in activity in the Tantallon area and noted that with the arrest of one individual, all complaints in that particular area with respect to property and vehicle offenses had ceased. Superintendent Wells noted that the arrest of one individual can have a large impact on crime in an area.

Commissioner Mosher inquired as to whether or not the RCMP is currently enforcing and keeping records of vehicles not stopping at unmarked crosswalks. She noted that that residents are concerned with crosswalk safety and that she would like to see more data respecting crosswalk safety and enforcement captured in the RCMP reports.

Superintendent Wells stated that that crosswalk safety is a priority for the RCMP in HRM and that the RCMP will work closely with elected officials and staff to ensure that this data is captured in reports to the Board of Police Commissioners.

The RCMP reports were received by the Board as submitted.

7.1.4 HRM Public Safety Office

The HRM Public Safety Office report was before the Board.

Staff Sargent Scott MacDonald, Public Safety Officer for HRM, noted the 10th Annual Cops n' Kid's camp that took place at the Tim Horton's Children's Camp in Tatamagouche from September 26-27. Staff Sargent MacDonald stated that the event, as in past years, was a success and helps foster a positive relationship between police and youth.

Staff Sargent MacDonald provided an update on Operation Fall-Back, a campaign designed to reduce noise complaints, property damage and public intoxications around universities in HRM. Staff Sargent MacDonald noted that 23 arrests, mostly for public

intoxication, have been made since the commencement of the campaign on August 31, 2013. This was achieved through targeted enforcement and increased patrols in the known complaint areas.

Commissioner Outhit commented that we are currently in the “back to school” season and that police have been stepping up enforcement on people not stopping for school busses in his district, a trend he hopes continues as this is an important public safety issue.

Commissioner Outhit commented about an incident which happened in the Bedford Basin involving a boat that hit a buoy in the early morning hours. He noted that there was some concern regarding how long it took to get a rescue boat in the water, and provide assistance to those who were involved in the accident and if there was a way to determine a response time on this particular matter.

Staff Sergeant MacDonald noted that response to this particular incident should have been a Joint Rescue Coordination Center effort possibly along with the Coast Guard. There is usually a fire-rescue boat available to be dispatched from the Department of Defense Dockyard, but more research would be required for him to provide a comment on response time in this matter.”

On another note, Commissioner Dalrymple mentioned the Halifax Regional Police YouTube channel as an excellent method to relay public safety messages to the public.

The HRM Public Safety Office report was received by the Board.

7.1.5 HRP Budget

Chief Jean Michel Blais, Chief of Halifax Regional Police, provided an outline on the HRP Budget and stated the intention of “getting the ball rolling on the 2014 HRP budget”. The Chief advised that he is expecting to receive information on the cost of pay increases by the end of the month.

Chief Blais noted that he will require input from the Board respecting the upcoming budget for the Board of Police Commissioners. He noted that the Board’s Budget will not be administered by Chief’s office but rather by the CAO’s office.

The Chair noted that the upcoming Canadian Association of Police Governance Conference will have an impact on the budget and that the Board will keep this under consideration when discussing the budget.

Chief Blais noted that at the next meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners he will provide information regarding operational priorities and outcomes for Police Services to which he would like input from the Board.

As a final note the Chief commented that his office is currently compiling information for the Mayor's office with respect to a series of scenarios on budgeting and effects of budgets on Police Services.

Commissioner Mosher asked for clarification on the effects of budgeting.

Chief Blais noted that the documentation being prepared for the Mayor's Office will illustrate the effect of budget increases and decreases to the order of 10% in either direction, and that it is being prepared for information only.

Commissioner Mosher suggested that this information should be brought to the Board of Police Commissioners before it goes to the Mayor's office so that the Board can provide input, to which Chief Blais agreed.

7.2 COMMISSIONERS

7.2.1 Commissioner Read – Consideration for the Establishment of Halifax Regional Police Foundation

Commissioner Read gave a presentation regarding the establishment of a Halifax Regional Police Foundation.

In his presentation, Commissioner Read noted several other cities in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario that utilize Police foundations to enable the funding of programs.

Commissioner Read noted that a proposed Foundation would require a Board of Governors, recommended by Halifax Regional Police executive and the Board of Police Commissioners, that would be tasked with involving outside organizations and high profile volunteers from the community to raise funds. The Commissioner remarked that the Board of Governors would have the ability to craft by-laws and would need to have a unilateral refusal right with respect to donations.

In terms of the administration of a proposed Halifax Regional Police Foundation, Commissioner Read stated that he explored two options, that of a stand-alone, independent registered charity or the creation of a foundation fund under the umbrella of the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia. The Commissioner commented that the latter option would enable the timely establishment of the foundation, minimize costs and provide a robust fund management process including handling all financial transactions and receipting and complex gifting.

Commissioner Dalrymple stated that he would like to commend Commissioner Read for his work on this matter and that he would support the establishment of a Police Foundation for the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Commissioner Honsberger stated that he too would support the establishment of a Police Foundation and requested clarification on how the finances would work with respect to managing the a Foundation.

Commissioner Read reiterated that the funds would not be managed or maintained by the Halifax Regional Police or by the Halifax Regional Municipality but rather by the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia. He also stated that the governance Board would control how the distributions of funds would work.

Commissioner Mosher stated that she would support the initiative but would like more information in terms of success rates, regarding the organization that would manage the fund.

MOVED by Commissioner Read and seconded by Commissioner Moreash that the Board of Police Commissioners endorse the establishment of the Halifax Regional Police Foundation.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2.2 Update – 2014 Canadian Association of Police Governance (CAPG) Conference

The Chair provided an update on the CAPG conference and noted that the conference will deal with subject matter related to cyber bullying, labour issues, victim services, drug/mental health issues, social media and its effect on policing. The Chair also noted that she is currently looking for volunteers.

The Chair stated that she has confirmed that the conference will take place at the Westin Hotel, on Hollis Street and the focus was to try and secure a downtown location to facilitate transportation costs.

Commissioner Mosher stated that she is currently working on organizing a charitable golf tournament in relation to the CAPG conference. She has approached retired police officers to participate and is currently looking to find a nation- wide sponsor as a funding partner alongside HRM.

7.2.3 Commissioner Honsberger – Update - Current Status of Sub-Committee on Governance

Commissioner Honsberger provided an update on the current status of the Sub-committee on governance.

Commissioner Honsberger noted that the subcommittee has been reviewing legislation and legislative accountabilities to determine what the Board can and cannot do with respect to its mandate. Commissioner Honsberger also provided information regarding work related to community representation which may result in the structure of Board meetings being changed to facilitate community involvement.

The Chair noted that this is the first step in terms of what the committee is charged with doing and the next step will be to transfer this to action. What will it look like and what will it involve.

Commissioner Mosher commented that she believes that the sub-committee is on the right track with regard to strategic planning and that the Board needs to refocus on this matter.

Commissioner Moreash stated that he would like to see some quantifiable information with respect to Governance. He noted that it is a difficult subject matter and that illustrating "where we are" as line items would be helpful.

Commissioner Honsberger noted that the subcommittee is currently working on a community representation piece to ensure that a structure is in place that shows that the Board of Police Commissioners is approachable and that this information will be captured in a report.

MOVED by Commissioner Dalrymple and seconded by Commissioner Moreash to have the sub-committee continue its work on Governance.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2.4 Commissioner Mosher- Anti Bullying By-Law, Alberta and Saskatchewan

Commissioner Mosher stated that this item originated from an email to her from Councillor Craig which was forwarded to him by one of his constituents. She noted that there are many policy statements made about bullying yet there is nothing concrete in terms of a by-laws and enforcement to deal with the issue.

Commissioner Mosher noted By-Law No.964-2012 of the town of Hanna Alberta which allows Police Officers to issue fines for bullying. She noted that financial implication for those engaging in bullying is a good method of deterrence.

Commissioner Mosher also referenced educational programs for first offenders with respect to bullying as another method of deterrence and prevention. Commissioner Mosher noted that programs and by-laws such as those in Hanna, Alberta should be considered for HRM and that the Board of Police should assist in this process.

Deputy Chief Moore noted initiatives at the provincial level which are currently taking place with regard to anti-bullying legislation. He noted work that is currently underway

with respect to cyber bullying by a Provincial Taskforce, in particular, a tort which allows the parents of the offending individuals to be sued.

Chief Blais noted that the Hanna Alberta, By-Law referred to bullying in a public place while the Grand Prairie, Saskatchewan makes provisions for any place as well as for hazing. Chief Blais suggested that Legal Services review this and other similar legislation.

Commissioner Moreash noted that the Hanna, Alberta By-Law is quite new and has likely not been enforced at a high level. He remarked that there are likely constitutional ramifications that must be explored. Commissioner Moreash further commented that he would like Legal Services to provide insight on this matter.

Commissioner Dalrymple stated that he would like to know how many By-Law infractions resulted in non-guilty pleas and trial dates. Commissioner Dalrymple also inquired as to whether the Provincial Task Force manager may be able to give a presentation to the Board of Police Commissioners. Commissioner Dalrymple commented that he would like to continue down this path with respect to drafting an Anti-bullying By-Law.

Councillor Outhit noted that consultations with School Liaison Officers would be helpful when considering a By-Law for HRM.

Inspector Roland Wells noted that there is a danger in that many municipalities rush in with cross over by-laws and that a matter such as this needs to be fleshed out.

The Chair commented that she agrees that a presentation from the Provincial Task Force would be useful. She commented that a common sense approach is needed with regard to an anti-bullying By-Law. The Chair also remarked that she would arrange to have presentation to the Board.

MOVED by Commissioner Mosher and seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that the Board of Police Commissioners pursue this matter through HRP and HRM Legal to see if an anti-bullying by law is feasible for the Halifax Regional Municipality.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Chair requested a motion to convene to In Camera to deal with the following items:

8.2 – In Camera – Legal Matter

9.1 – Contractual Matter – Youth Programming

MOVED by Commissioner Outhit and seconded by Commissioner Read that the Board convene to In Camera. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Board of Police Commissioners convened to In Camera at 2:01 p.m.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.2 In Camera – Legal Matter

This matter was discussed by the Board of Police Commissioners during the In Camera Session.

The Board of Police Commissioners reconvened to public session at 2:50 p.m.

9. IN CAMERA

9.1 Contractual Matter – Youth Programming

This matter was considered during the In Camera session held earlier and was before the Board for ratification.

MOVED by Commissioner Dalyrmple and seconded by Commissioner Read to approve the recommendation as contained in the Private and Confidential report dated September 30, 2013. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10. Next Meeting - November 18, 2013

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Liam MacSween
Legislative Assistant