

BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES

December 9, 2013

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

REGRETS: Commissioner Tim Outhit

STAFF: Ms. Ashley Dutcher, Solicitor  
Chief Jean Michel Blais, Halifax Regional Police  
Deputy Chief Bill Moore, Halifax Regional Police  
Superintendent Roland Wells,  
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 Meisner Room, Police Headquarters, 1975 Gottingen Street.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE**

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

Additions:

- 10.1 2014 Chief's Directional Statement
- 10.2 RCMP Dashboard Reports to December 9, 2013
- 10.3 HRP Dashboard Reports November 18 to December 1, 2013
- 10.4 Proposed 2014 Meeting Schedule
- 10.5 Crosswalk Safety
- 10.6 Update on the Anti-Bullying By-Law

Deletions:

Item No 12 - Election of Chair and Vice Chair.

**MOVED by Commissioner Read and seconded by Commissioner Moreash that the agenda be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

**4.1 Business Arising – None**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – Date**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS – NONE**

**7. HRP 2014/15 BUDGET:**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The proposed Halifax Regional Police 2014/15 Operating Budget

Chief Blais gave an overview of the budget document and noted savings on legal fees through the hiring of a dedicated lawyer for HRP, vacancy management, and equipment repair and maintenance. He noted that there is a net budget increase of 3.13% for 2014-15.

Chief Blais provided further background information with respect to the Budget and invited Mr. Craig Horton, Budget Coordinator, Halifax Regional Police, to provide a more detailed break-down of the numbers.

Mr. Craig Horton referred to the assumptions found in the budget document on file. He noted increases in salary and benefit expenses in the area of 2.4% and echoed savings found in legal fees, vacancy management and in equipment expenditures.

Mr. Horton noted further increases in expenses in relation to training and travel of approximately \$115,000 and commented on other contractual obligations illustrated in the budget document.

Mr. Horton provided a comparison of the three year budget history and noted that after the 2011/12 fiscal year, fuel and fleet maintenance costs were transferred to Transportation Public Works.

Commissioner Read commented on the size of expenses and noted that no expense item, outside of salaries and benefits is more than .5 percent of the total budget indicating that the operational end of the budget accounts for 7% of the total budget.

Mr. Horton noted that the retirement incentive program is not included in the budget and accounts for another \$ 1 million in expenditures.

Commissioner Dalrymple requested clarification on overtime and court time expenses.

Deputy Chief Moore noted that overtime costs are trending to be lower for 2014-15. He further commented that increases in wages are resulting in a reduction of overtime hours and that dollar amounts associated with this are staying the same.

With respect to court time, Deputy Chief Moore stated that the number of Traffic Court appearances is increasing. He stated that the RCMP and HRP have placed positions within the courts and are cautiously optimistic that efficiencies will be found.

The Chair asked for clarification with respect to expected vacancy savings.

Mr. Horton noted that these saving are found in positions that have been approved that have become vacant, represents salaries and benefits not paid

Deputy Chief Moore noted that there is no desire to run vacancies. He noted that HRP hires twice per year and this is a factor of people coming and going within the organization. He reiterated that it is not a point to save money.

Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer, Halifax Regional Municipality noted that the amount of turnover at HRP is quite low when compared to organizations of a similar size.

Commissioner Honsberger requested further information with respect to sick time occurrences and expressed.

Deputy Chief Moore remarked that from July to December 2012, the average sick occurrence rate was 0.97 for 6 months (1.8 occurrences per year) and for January to June 2013 the average rate was 1.14 for 6 months (2.28 per year).

Commissioner Honsberger stated that he was very impressed with those numbers.

**MOVED by Commissioner Read and Seconded by Commission Honsberger that the budget presentation be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Chief Blais inquired if the Chair would be able to attend the Committee of the Whole budget deliberation sessions regarding the budget. The Chair replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Dalrymple echoed Commissioner Honsberger's statement with respect to the amount of leave taken by Officers in HRP and the RCMP. He noted that the sick occurrences are phenomenally low which can be attributed to sound leadership and good morale.

## **8. 2014/15 Board of Police Commissioners Budget**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The 2014/15 Board of Police Commissioners Budget

Commissioner Read provided a presentation on the 2014/15 Board of Police Commissioners Budget.

He noted that the budget is broken into four components:

- Membership Dues
- Conferences and Workshops
- Travel
- Catering

Commissioner Read noted that he had included a contingency of \$5000 for the CAPB Convention that will be taking place in the summer of 2014. He commented that this should be a break-even event and that he is hoping to see funding contributions from outside agencies for the convention.

Commissioner Read referenced a budgeted \$2700 dollars for upcoming travel costs to conferences and a further \$575 for registration for the Nova Scotia Association of Police Boards Conference that will take place in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

Commissioner Read commented that he has reduced the catering budget and is working with the Legislative Assistant to find efficiencies in this area. He noted that the total budget amount is \$17,500.

Commissioner Dalrymple noted that he would be interested in seeing further efficiencies with respect to catering.

Further discussion ensued.

**MOVED by Commissioner Read and Seconded by Commissioner Moreash to adopt the 2014/15 Board of Police Commissioners Budget. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **9. REPORTS**

### **9.1 Staff**

#### **9.1.1 HRP Dashboard Reports to November 17, 2013**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The HRP Dashboard reports.

**The HRP Dashboard reports were received by the Board as submitted.**

#### **9.1.2 HRP Reports**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The HRP reports.

**The HRP reports were received by the Board as submitted.**

#### **9.1.3 RCMP Reports**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The RCMP Reports

Superintendent Wells provided an overview of the RCMP reports and noted that there has been an extensive increase in the number of checkpoints resulting in a decrease of impaired driving charges.

**The RCMP Reports were received by the Board of Police Commissioners as submitted.**

#### **9.1.4 HRM Public Safety Office**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The Public Safety Office Report, dated December 2013.

Staff Sergeant Macdonald gave an overview of the Public Safety Office report and noted several initiatives:

- Participation in the Mayor's Roundtable on Violence
- Working groups on affordable housing initiatives
- The Cops and Kids program
- The Cop Shop program where 50 deserving children go on a shopping spree with police officers
- Partnerships with MADD Canada and Operation Christmas

**The Public Safety Office Report was received by the Board as submitted.**

#### **9.2 Committee Members**

##### **9.2.1 Updates**

Commissioner Mosher extended her thanks to Halifax Regional Police for their attendance at the African Nova Scotia event at the Bayers Westwood Community Christmas Party. She noted that HRP has a very positive presence in the community and their support is appreciated.

Commissioner Honsberger presented a progress report with respect to the Governance Subcommittee and noted that the subcommittee is working diligently to define the Board's role in relation to policy development and public outreach.

Chief Blais commented that he would like to see an overview of how the subcommittee views policy development and noted that it would be a good way to influence the internal workings of the organization.

Commissioner Honsberger noted that the subcommittee views policy development in two parts, historical and new and that they are currently conducting producing documentation on this matter. He stated that is the Board's interest to ensure that the community interest is maintained and noted that the Board could act as a conduit between the Police Services and the Community.

The Chair expressed her support for a more active role of the Board in policy development and for the work that the subcommittee has undertaken.

Several Commissioners spoke to issues relating to community engagement and the use of social media for community representation.

Commissioner Read noted that he would like to see an information piece put on the website illustrating the role of Board in relation to Police Services.

Superintendent Wells inquired if the advisory role between the Board and the RCMP could be included within a one page document to clarify the relationship to the public. He offered assistance in illustrating these priorities.

## **10. ADDED ITEMS**

### **10.1 2014 Chief's Directional Statement**

Chief Blais thanked the Board on behalf of HRP for their involvement at the recent strategic planning retreat which was an integral part of the HRP re-envision project.

Chief Blais provided a brief overview of the operational priorities that will be communicated to HRP employees. He noted that he will be sending out a directional statement on December 31 outlining the achievements of the previous year and addressing operational and organizational goals for 2014.

### **10.2 RCMP Dashboard Reports to December 9, 2013**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The RCMP Dashboard Reports to December 9, 2013.

**The RCMP Dashboard Reports were received by the Board as submitted.**

### **10.3 HRP Dashboard Reports November 18 to December 1, 2013**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The HRP Dashboard Reports

**The HRP Dashboard reports were received by the Board as submitted.**

### **10.4 Proposed 2014 Meeting Schedule**

The following documentation was before the Board:

- The proposed 2014 Meeting Schedule.

The proposed schedule was approved with the following changes:

- March meeting date changed from March 10 to March 17, 2014
- Meeting location moved to Halifax Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street.

**The 2014 Meeting Schedule was approved as amended.**



## **10.5 Pedestrian Accidents**

Commissioner Moreash stated that there has been a great deal of media attention with regard to pedestrian accidents and noted that it may be a good opportunity to discuss education endeavors with respect to vehicle/pedestrian safety. He requested further information from staff on this matter.

Deputy Chief Moore stated that HRP is currently reviewing the manner in which accidents are being reported and are collecting data with regard to the date, time of day, and orientation of the reported accidents. He noted that there does not appear to be geographical correlation with regard to problem crosswalks or intersections at the present time. He further noted that in the simplest state, it comes down to pedestrian awareness and awareness of vehicle operators. He commented that HRP has provided public education pieces with respect to pedestrian and vehicular safety. He noted that information regarding pedestrian accidents will be included in dashboard reports.

Mr. Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer noted that it is important to not draw snap conclusions as this is a very complex issue.

Commissioner Dalrymple stated that he sits on the Crosswalk Safety Committee which is currently working on a Traffic Safety Plan. He noted that the committee is working on an all-encompassing plan and he would be happy to share that information with Board when the final report comes forward.

Commissioner Mosher referenced problems with pedestrian accidents near the Halifax Shopping Centre area. She noted that crosswalks in that area were painted bright blue by private owners which led to a significant reduction in incidents.

Further discussion ensued regarding crosswalk safety.

## **10.6 Update on Anti-Bullying By-Law**

Staff Sergeant MacDonald noted that School Officers have met with officials in the provincial Cyber Scan Unit. He noted that there is no opposition to implementing a By-Law but there are concerns with respect to developing the legislation. He noted that HRP is working with Legal Services in this regard.

Deputy Moore stated that he would be interested in specific cases where the present law that is in place with respect to bullying have not mitigated the issue. He noted a gap must be identified in the current laws with respect to bullying before further legislation is put in place.

Superintendent Wells echoed Deputy Chief Moore's comments and noted that more work needs to be done before new legislation is introduced.

## **11. IN CAMERA - NONE**

**12. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

This item was removed from the agenda.

**13. NEXT MEETING DATE – January 13<sup>th</sup> – Halifax Hall, City Hall.**

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:09.

Liam MacSween  
Legislative Assistant