

STRATFORD POLICE SERVICES BOARD

A meeting of the Stratford Police Services Board was held on the 15th day of December, 2020 at 4:30 pm, held virtually by Zoom.

PRESENT: Dan Mathieson (Chair), Graham Bunting, Steve Cousins, Tim Doherty, Rosemary Tanner, Chief Greg Skinner, Deputy Chief Gerry Foster, Inspector Jason Clarke, Inspector Mark Taylor, Rachelle Willows (Police Association) and Pat Shantz – Executive Assistant.

MINUTES

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof.

3. Adoption of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 25th, 2020

MOTION by Graham Bunting | Rosemary Tanner

That the minutes of the regular meeting of November 25th, 2020, be adopted as presented. Carried.

4. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations

There were no hearings of deputations and presentations.

5. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

6. Receipt of Monthly Statistical Reports – November 2020

Inspector Taylor reviewed the Statistical Reports with the Board for November with respect to Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South and answered questions.

6.1 Stratford

There were 1276 calls for service, 99 e-tickets were issued and 59 warnings were given. Traffic stops are down due to COVID precautions and should return to normal numbers at the end of the pandemic. There was a significant increase in thefts from motor vehicles and an increase in mischief incidences.

6.2 St Marys

There were 218 calls for service, 27 e-tickets were issued and 13 warnings were given. There was also an increase in thefts from motor vehicles, mischief incidents and break and enters.

Tim Doherty noted that mental health incidents in St Marys more than doubled from last month and Inspector Taylor advised that he feels the Service is doing a better job of indentifying mental health calls and an increase will be seen across the board moving forward.

The Chief added there are significant increases year over year regarding mental health statistics with Stratford increasing by 30% and St Marys by 25%. Suicides in St Marys have doubled year or year and overdoses and domestic violence have also increased significantly.

6.3 Perth South

There were 165 calls for service, 31 e-tickets were issued and 10 warnings were given.

MOTION by Tim Doherty | Rosemary Tanner

That the Monthly Statistic Reports for November 2020 be received. Carried.

7. Approval of Monthly Accounts

The Chief reviewed the monthly accounts with the Board as of November 30th and answered questions. He advised that as of the end of November, 14% of the budget is remaining. A projected excess will offset recent expenditures put in place by the Board.

No significant issues have been brought up by the City regarding the Police draft budget which shows an increase of 1.28%.

MOTION by Steve Cousins | Graham Bunting

That the monthly accounts for November 2020, be approved for payment. Carried.

8. Police Association Business

There was no Police Association business to report.

9. Public Complaints

The Chief updated the Board regarding public complaints that had been received.

One new complaint has been received regarding a domestic assault where the complainant was charged with assault with a weapon. The complainant subsequently contacted the OIPRD about the officers and stating that the conditions of her release from custody denied her access to her children. The OIPRD stated that it would be best to have the matter dealt with through the Criminal Court process and no investigation will take place.

Regarding the complaint where the complainant felt officers were being uncivil to the public during a telephone conversation, the investigation was completed and deemed to be unsubstantiated. The OIPRD has received a request for a review and they will conduct a review of the investigation before making a determination on whether or not to proceed.

Regarding the complaint received that involved a two-year time period and various officers, the OIPRD contacted the complainant at the request of the Chief in order to narrow down the time

frame and the scope of the complaint. A voluntary withdrawal of the complaint was received once the complainant knew of the circumstances surrounding the officers' involvement.

Regarding the complaint where officers arrested an individual who suffered minor injuries that the officers were not aware of at the time. There was a subsequent report to the SIU and the OIPRD. Taking precedence over the OIPRD, the SIU has concluded an investigation and determined that officers were acting within their legislative powers and there was no criminality on the part of the officers. The OIPRD has been advised of the SIU decision and may now begin their own investigation.

The Chief is still waiting for further information from SIU regarding the outcome of another investigation. Our officers and officers from other Police services that were involved have been interviewed. A report will be provided to the Board once the investigation has been concluded.

10. Correspondence

There were no comments or questions regarding the correspondence received.

11. Consent Items

11.1 Taxi Driver Licenses

MOTION by Tim Doherty | Rosemary Tanner
That on the recommendation of the Chief, Justin M. Ayenew (Aunt Gail's Taxi) be approved for a taxi license. Carried.

12. New Business

12.1 Rev Charlie Swartwood

The Chief advised the Board that Charlie Swartwood, the Service's Chaplain, has been appointed the President of the Police Chaplains Association of Ontario. He recognized Charlie for his volunteerism within the community and the policing community and congratulated him on his new role.

12.2 Mental Health Call

The Chief provided the Board with information regarding a domestic incident that appeared in the media involving an officer who was punched during a foot pursuit resulting in injuries requiring hospital attention. Although the officer deployed a taser, it was ineffective. A construction worker was nearby and came to help and he will be recognized by the Service. The Chief stressed the need for social workers and mental health crisis workers to be available on calls as incidents can change quickly.

12.3 Shop Incident – No Mask

Graham Bunting provided information to the Board regarding an incident that had taken place in a store involving a patron not wearing a mask who became belligerent and was coughing and yelling before leaving. What can the police do under these circumstances?

The Chief advised that had the police been called, they have the ability to lay a charge depending on the situation. They would first attempt to request voluntary compliance and if their behavior continued, they could be charged. It's a difficult scenario as some people are not able to wear a mask due to health issues and business owners have a responsibility to ensure their places of businesses are safe for patrons and employees.

13. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 27th, 2021.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair wished the administration and the members of the Police Service a Merry Christmas and thanked them for their service during these difficult times. Please be safe over the holidays.

14. Adjournment

Motion by Rosemary Tanner | Graham Bunting

That the meeting adjourn to an In Camera session to discuss personal matters about identifiable individuals, to reconvene in open session if required. Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

"Dan Mathieson"

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Dan Mathieson - Chair