

STRATFORD POLICE SERVICES BOARD

A meeting of the Stratford Police Services Board was held on the 17th day of January 2024, Stratford City Hall – Auditorium, 1 Wellington Street, Stratford ON

PRESENT: Tim Doherty (Chair), Martin Ritsma, Dave Gaffney, Steve Cousins, Chief Greg Skinner, Deputy Chief Gerry Foster, Inspector Jason Clarke, Inspector Mark Taylor, Constable Rob McMillan (Stratford Police Association), Councillor Rob Edney (St. Marys), Connor Luczka (Media), Casey Riehl (Executive Assistant), Members of the Public

MINUTES

1. Call to order

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

2. Adoption of the January 17, 2024 Agenda and Addition of Agenda Items – Business Arising or New Business

Motion by Dave Gaffney | Steve Cousins

THAT the agenda for the regular meeting of January 17, 2024 be adopted as presented.

Carried.

3. Election of 2024 Chair and Vice-Chair

The Executive Assistant assumed the role of the Chair for the purposes of an election. Pursuant to the *Police Services Act*, the Board is required to elect a Chair at its first meeting each year.

Motion by Dave Gaffney | Martin Ritsma

That Tim Doherty be nominated as Chair of the Stratford Police Services Board for the year 2024.

Carried

No further nominations were received.

Tim Doherty agreed to let his name stand.

Motion by Martin Ritsma | Dave Gaffney

That Tim Doherty be elected as Chair of the Stratford Police Services Board for the year 2024.

Carried

Pursuant to the *Police Services Act*, the Board may elect a Vice-chair at its first meeting each year.

Motion by Dave Gaffney | Martin Ritsma

That Steve Cousins be nominated as Vice-chair of the Stratford Police Services Board for the year 2024.

Carried.

No further nominations were received.

Steve Cousins agreed to let his name stand.

Motion by Dave Gaffney | Martin Ritsma

That Steve Cousins be elected as Vice-chair of the Stratford Police Services Board for the year 2024.

Carried

The meeting was turned over to recently re-elected Chair, Tim Doherty.

4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

5. Adoption of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of December 13, 2023

Motion by Steve Cousins | Martin Ritsma

THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of December 13, 2023 be adopted as printed.

Carried.

6. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations

None noted.

7. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

7.1 Update on Stratford Police Station

Chief Skinner updated Board members that after meeting with the City's CAO, Joan Thomson, she has connected him with a consultant that the City is currently working with on the Cooper site. The Chief has had some preliminary discussions with the consultant regarding the 17 George/100 St. Patrick Street site. He has done a paper review of the documents that are on file with the City detailing any issues that may be associated with the site. He will do some further investigation and they will continue down the path to determine whether the site will support either a new building on that site or an addition to the existing building on the site. Once that site

examination and review has been completed, further steps can be determined regarding the current police station location being a viable location for any new build or renovation/addition to the existing building. The Chief will update the Board as he receives information.

Chief Skinner reported that through the budget process, the City is reviewing a number of options for the front entrance accessibility of the Police Service building and the feasibility of the project.

8. Receipt of Monthly Statistical Reports – December 2023

Board members received the statistical reports for December 2023. Inspector Taylor reviewed 2023 year-end statistics with the Board with respect to Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South and was available for questions.

8.1 Stratford

- Received over 2,000 more calls for service in 2023 (20,302) compared to 2022 (18,144).
- (1,648) of the calls for service were from 20 individuals. One individual called for service (248) times.
- Domestic related occurrences were also up in 2023 with (617) as compared to (468) in 2022.
- MVC's – (680) in 2023, (675) in 2022
- Top 5 E-tickets remained relatively the same as last year, speeding was down slightly, no currently validated permits were up.

8.2 St Marys

- Calls for service were down in 2023 with (2,631), compared to (2,764) in 2022.
- Charges laid remained similar – (519) in 2023, (582) in 2022.
- MVC's – (103) in 2023, (98) in 2022
- E-tickets for speeding dropped from (178) in 2022 to (58) in 2023.

8.3 Perth South

- Calls for services down slightly with (1,997) in 2023, compared to (2,010) in 2022.
- Charges laid were up in 2023 (1,004) compared to (946) in 2022
- E-Tickets remained very similar – (690) in 2023, (688) in 2022

Chief Skinner noted that calls for services, just for the City of Stratford alone, were up 12% from last year.

With mental health calls up 30%, suicides/attempted suicides up 75%, domestic related occurrences up 32% and domestics with charges are up 39% from last year. These are significant increases and trends that they are seeing in Stratford, as well as St. Marys. Moving forward they will continue

to work on strategies to support the community as they continue to see these upticks, even post-Covid.

8.4 Crime Stoppers Report (November 2023)

Chief Skinner reviewed the Crime Stoppers report submitted for November 2023. There were (19) total calls to the Huron Perth Crime Stoppers.

(10) of the calls were relating to the Stratford Police Service. (4 were drug related, 6 intelligence-related).

There have been (340) year to date tips received in Huron Perth.

The top tips by type in Huron-Perth were drugs with (4) and Highway Traffic Act with (3).

Motion by Dave Gaffney | Martin Ritsma

THAT the Monthly Statistical Reports for December 2023 and the Crime Stoppers Report for November 2023 be received as presented.

Carried.

9. Approval of Monthly Accounts (December 2023)

Chief Skinner reviewed the month to date and noted that they overspent by a significant amount due to the renovation costs at 789 Erie Street and paying for the completed renovation expenses. However, the year to date still reflects a positive variance of \$233,214.00. The 2023 budget figure is \$12,621,026.00 and the Service spent \$12,387,812.00. There will be some reconciliation of grants and funding that are on the Provincial fiscal year, which ends at the end of March 2024. Some of the surplus will be apportioned back to St. Marys through the contractual agreement, however most will be put into a surplus account for capital expenditures for the Service.

The Chief noted that the Services always strives to be as fiscally efficient as they possibly can and not asking for anything in the budget that is not needed. Even when the municipality budgets them a certain amount of money, they always try to find the best options to stay within their fiscal realities.

Tim Doherty thanked City Councillors for all their ongoing support during budget negotiations for the Police Service. He also thanked Chief Skinner and Deputy Chief Foster for all their hard work preparing a budget that provides enough financing to complete the necessary work and still remain fiscally responsible.

Martin Ritsma stated it was nice to hear in the Finance and Labour Relations Subcommittee meeting the idea of continuing the process to build the capital reserves. He also brought forward the message that, as this is going to be a challenging budget year, if there was anything that the Police Services Board could do to help lessen the tax levy, it would be appreciated.

MOTION by Martin Ritsma | Steve Cousins

**That the monthly accounts for December 2023 be approved as presented.
Carried.**

10. Police Association Business

Constable McMillan commended officers for all the great work they continue to do on the road and throughout the communities of Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South. They continue to do it with integrity and courage and respect for all the people they encounter on a daily basis keeping our communities safe.

*Constable McMillan no longer present at the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

11. Public Complaints – Chief Skinner

Chief Skinner reported that the Service received two new public complaints into the OIPRD in the month of December. Both complaints were deemed to not require investigations and not in the public interest to move to investigation. There was one investigation completed and a closing letter was sent to the complainant and the OIPRD with the complaints against the officer being unsubstantiated.

In 2023, the OIPRD managed (21) complaints on behalf of the Stratford Police Service. (17) occurred during the current year and (4) were carried over from the previous year. Of the (18) new complaints, (5) were screened in for investigation and (13) were screened out. Of the (5) complaints that were investigated this year, all (5) of them were unsubstantiated and did not require further review. Of the (5) complaints, (1) was withdrawn and (1) met the early resolution criteria, which resulted in it being agreed upon not to be investigated or any type of complaint process. Both the officer and the complainant were satisfied with this decision. Of the (5) complaints there were allegations of neglect of duty, discreditable conduct and unlawful/unnecessary exercise of authority.

12. Correspondence

None noted.

13. Consent Items

13.1 Motion by Dave Gaffney | Steve Cousins

THAT on the recommendation of the Chief of Police, Orlando Pena Hernandez (City Cab) be approved for a taxi license.

Carried.

14. New Business

14.1 CSPA Implementation – Tim Doherty

Tim Doherty discussed the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA) and a recent e-mail received regarding a training session taking place February

27-28, 2024. He has secured one spot at the session and is available to attend if no other members are available.

The CSPA will impact the relationship between municipal governments and the Police Service Boards and further information will be provided at the session. Some items that will now be required are that Boards will be required to create diversity plans, criteria around the use, hiring and training of special constables, new position of Inspector General of Policing, formation of a law enforcement complaint agency, develop a community safety and wellbeing plan. Tim Doherty stated that Stratford is in a good position as they have already begun or created some of these.

Training for this is now mandatory and will be held online.

Chief Skinner noted that the overhaul of the Act has been long overdue, with the new CSPA replacing the current Police Service Act first enacted in 1990. The CSPA will be enacted on April 1, 2024 with an approximate 1-year deadline for implementation. Stratford is well on their way to being compliant with the new regulations.

It will change the way business is done. There are a number of issues around the size and expectations of units, particularly around containment teams and emergency response with have some staff and training implications. It is mainly the regulations that will impact the Service.

Chief Skinner suggested inviting Duane Sprague to a future SPSB meeting to discuss how he sees the new regulations impacting Stratford with the contractual agreements they have with Perth South and St. Marys.

Martin Ritsma inquired if there will be an impact on staffing or financial implications. Chief Skinner stated it may have a minor impact on their staffing complement, it may cause some of the units to have to increase which may affect training and equipment costs, but it will be minimal.

14. Adjournment to In-Camera Meeting

Motion by Dave Gaffney | Martin Ritsma

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 to In-Camera at 5:12 p.m.