

STRATFORD POLICE SERVICES BOARD

A meeting of the Stratford Police Services Board was held on the 13th day of March 2024, Stratford City Hall – Auditorium, 1 Wellington Street, Stratford ON

PRESENT: Tim Doherty (Chair), Martin Ritsma, Harjinder Nijjar, Steve Cousins, Dave Gaffney, Chief Greg Skinner, Deputy Chief Gerry Foster, Inspector Mark Taylor, Members of the Media, Casey Riehl (Executive Assistant)

MINUTES

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:41 p.m.

2. Adoption of the March 13, 2024 Agenda and Addition of Agenda Items

Motion by Steve Cousins | Dave Gaffney

THAT the agenda for the regular meeting of March 13, 2024 be adopted as presented.

Carried

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

4. Adoption of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of February 21, 2024

Motion by Harjinder Nijjar | Martin Ritsma

THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of February 21, 2024 be adopted as printed.

Carried

5. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations

None noted.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1 Update on Stratford Police Station

Chief Skinner reported that they are in the process of moving into 789 Erie Street with the remaining furniture being delivered tomorrow. The street crime and major crime officers that had been reporting to 154 Downie Street are now working out at 789 Erie Street as of today. The hope is that the rest of the administration will be moved over there by the end of March or beginning of April. There are some I.T. issues still being worked out and staff is aiming for the office to accept public inquiries starting May 1, 2024. They will put out communication near the end of April to make the public aware. There will be some double-up of services in the transition period.

Chief Skinner has met with an engineer to discuss plans for the George Street station. There are a number of items the engineer has looked at in his review of the site. There are issues with buried infrastructure in the parking lot in the St. Patrick Street parking lot and the property between the station and Chocolate Barrs. The area between Barrs and the police station does not pose any significant risk or concern from a development perspective. If the decision of the Board or future decision of Council is to add on to the existing building, this area is not an issue.

Further discussion at the April meeting regarding a motion to proceed and plans for next steps.

7. Receipt of Monthly Statistical Reports – February 2024

Board members received the statistical reports for February 2024. Inspector Taylor reviewed the reports with the Board with respect to Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South and was available for questions.

7.1 Stratford

- (1454) calls for service, down approximately (100) calls from last month.
- (284) charges laid
- (76) mental health related calls, up (47) from the same time last year
- (26) fraud related occurrences (mostly grandparent scams and one citizen sending money to someone she thought was a celebrity)
- Theft from motor vehicles is on the rise with the nicer weather starting.
- ALPR's are continuing to pick up on many unvalidated plates, up to 100/day or more.

7.2 St Marys

- (153) calls for service, down from (218) last month
- (29) charges laid
- (6) mental health related calls, down from (10) last month

7.3 Perth South

- (190) calls for service
- (88) charges laid

Motion by Dave Gaffney | Harjinder Nijjar

THAT the Monthly Statistical Reports for February 2024 be received as presented.

Carried

8. Approval of Monthly Accounts (February 2024)

Chief Skinner reviewed the statement of operations as of February 29, 2024. He noted that the 2024 Budget has been approved by the Finance Committee on

March 4, 2024 and will be going to Council for final approval. The 2024 budget for the Police Service is \$13,821,228.00, which equates to just over \$1.1 million per month. Year to date, the Services has spent \$2.6 million, which is \$328,000 higher than they would have expected. This is due to (5) pay periods in the first two months this year (each pay period amounts to approximately \$383,000) as well as additional expenses incurred with 789 Erie Street (furniture, equipment, technology) and will be reconciled with available reserve funds as the year progresses.

MOTION by Martin Ritsma | Harjinder Nijjar

That the monthly accounts for February 2024 be approved as presented.

Carried

9. Police Association Business

None noted.

10. Public Complaints

Chief Skinner reported that they have not received any new complaints this month.

There was one previously investigated complaint that was deemed unsubstantiated after investigation that did go back to the OIPRD for a review at the request of the complainant. The OIPRD conducted their review of the investigation and the decision of the Chief and supported his decision based on the comprehensive investigation conducted. The file is now closed, as there is no further appeal avenue for the complainant.

11. Correspondence

None noted.

12. Consent Items

None noted.

13. New Business

13.1 Oaths and Affirmations

All Board Members must now take an oath and affirmation of office as a member of a Police Service Board, O.P.P. Detachment Boards or First Nation O.P.P. Boards.

Each member of the Stratford Police Services Board read and signed the Oath and Affirmation as sworn before Chief Skinner at the City of Stratford, Province of Ontario on the 13th day of March, 2024.

Stratford Police is currently having all their policies and procedures reviewed to ensure that they are up to date and compliant with the Act.

CEAT members are continuing to participate in the ongoing training with Stratford Police staff and meeting with every class for three hours during the week.

13.2 Crime Stoppers Coordination – Chief Skinner

Chief Skinner reported that they have been in consultation with Huron County O.P.P., Perth County O.P.P. and the Crime Stoppers Board regarding Stratford Police Service taking on the responsibility of providing the Crime Stoppers coordination. Stratford has always been partners, however, has not provided coordination during the rotational period. Stratford will be responsible for the coordination beginning September 1, 2024 for the next four years. The Chief is currently looking into members who are accommodated and if this role would meet their medical restrictions.

13.3 Hate/Discrimination Reporting – Chief Skinner

Chief Skinner reported that over the past several months as the result of issues that have come forward from people being subjected to hate and race motivated incidents, a new reporting tool has been launched. The complainants are not reporting it to the police as they were hesitant and untrusting that the police would help them. They have requested an alternate reporting process to use. The Stratford Police has been working with CEAT and the Community Safety and Wellbeing Administration to find a way to have an alternate reporting process put in place. In researching options, they have found that Chatham-Kent Police have partnered with Victim Services to set up exactly that, an alternate reporting system for discrimination and race-based incidents. Stratford used their model and customized it to meet the needs of Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South. They have rolled it out with Victim Services and it is available on their website as of March 8, 2024. The information will be publicized so people know where to find it and staff will continue to monitor its use and get feedback to see if it is meeting the needs of the community.

14. Adjournment to In-Camera Meeting

Motion by Steve Cousins | Dave Gaffney

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 5:09 p.m.