

STRATFORD POLICE SERVICE BOARD

A meeting of the Stratford Police Service Board was held on the 22nd day of October 2025, Stratford Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Rm., 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

PRESENT: Steve Cousins - Chair, Martin Ritsma, Harjinder Nijjar, Inspector Jason Clarke, Acting Deputy Chief Mark Taylor, Hank Zehr – Zone 5 Police Service Advisor, Councillor Rob Edney – Town of St. Marys, Phil Psutka, Casey Riehl – Executive Assistant

MINUTES

1. Call to order

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

2. Reading of the Land Acknowledgement

3. Adoption of the October 22, 2025 Agenda and Addition of Agenda Items

Motion by Harjinder Nijjar | Martin Ritsma

THAT the agenda for the regular meeting of October 22, 2025, be adopted as presented.

Carried

4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

5. Adoption of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting September 17, 2025.

Motion by Martin Ritsma | Harjinder Nijjar

THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of September 17, 2025, be adopted as printed.

Carried

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1 Police Station Update

Inspector Clarke reported there are some repairs being done in the front office at 17 George Street preparing for the go-live date for NG911 on November 11, 2025.

The company who completed the roof repairs last year at 17 George Street have returned to fix issues that came up after the work was finished.

The new walk-through metal detector at the St. Patrick Street entrance is causing congestion and issues at certain times of the day. Staff may move the metal detector to the third floor for people who are attending court vs. the entrance doors at ground level.

Parking continues to be an issue at 17 George Street with not enough spaces for staff, and seven parking spaces for fourteen cruisers.

At 789 Erie Street, doors are being installed at either end of the Criminal Investigation Division to help sequester them in their own area.

7. Presentations/Delegations

None noted.

8. Correspondence Received

8.1 Reducing Speeds on Neighbourhood Streets

Members received correspondence forwarded from Chief Skinner regarding a request from a citizen to lower the speed limit on neighbourhood streets from 50 km/hour to 40 km/hour.

Steve Cousins noted that this is interesting communication, given the stance of the Premier right now, he is not sure what the next step could be.

Martin Ritsma stated that Council did previously give direction to staff to source a contract with an organization to do photo radar, however the status of photo radar contracts for municipalities is not known. AMO is continuing to advocate for photo radar, especially in school zones, and hoping to find some common ground with the Premier.

Acting Deputy Chief Taylor agreed that photo radar is beneficial in school zones. In the City of Stratford there are reduced speed zones around schools. Residential areas are not as big of a concern, as the speeds are not as high. A study for 2025 indicated that there have been 39 collisions in the City of Stratford where someone was injured. Of those 39 collisions, none of them have been on a local residential street. They have all been on high traffic streets such as Erie, O'Loane, Huron, Romeo and Ontario Street. The speed limit on these streets cannot be lowered. In his opinion, lowering the current speeds on residential streets may not necessarily have a significant impact.

8.2 Inspector General of Policing Memo – Release of the Inspectorate of Policing's Risk Based Compliance and Enforcement Framework

Hank Zehr stated that I.G. Memo 37 was released and outlines three elements – board meetings and proper procedures to be followed, specifically for closed meetings, risk based and compliance enforcement framework and an updated advisory list.

9. Chairs Report

No new items to report.

10. Governance Report

Steve Cousins noted that the Board recently passed a motion to accept an updated governance policy, which will be posted on the Board website.

11. Receipt of Monthly Statistical Reports (September 2025)

11.1 Statistical Reports for Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South (September 2025)

Board Members have been provided the September 2025 statistical reports for Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South.

Inspector Clarke provided a synopsis of the month of September and was available for questions.

Key Observations & Trends

1. Calls for Service are relatively consistent with a slight drop in Perth South.
2. Mental Health Incidents (MHA) remained consistently high, especially in Stratford, highlighting ongoing mental health challenges.
3. Domestic Incidents decreased in Stratford, St Marys & Perth South this month in relation to August numbers but remain a significant portion of calls for service.
4. Assaults/Offensive weapons increase at high schools, public core areas and some unfounded reports, concerning knife call still under investigation.

Actions/Strategies

1. Our media officer has been tasked with a public messaging about road safety and the importance in the renewal of licence plates and carrying your driver's licence.
2. Increased Police Presence in downtown and High School areas.
3. We continue to ask the uniform patrol to have increased visibility and foot patrols in high-traffic retail areas, specifically targeting mall and LCBO locations.

11.2 Crime Stoppers Report (August 2025)

Acting Deputy Chief Taylor reviewed the August 2025 Crime Stoppers Report:

(53) Total tips received for Huron-Perth County

(13) Tips received for the City of Stratford

SPS followed up on (32) of the tips

Most of the tips received by Crime Stoppers are related to drugs, followed by frauds and mischief calls

MOTION by Martin Ritsma | Harjinder Nijjar

That the monthly statistical reports for September 2025 and the August 2025 Crime Stoppers report be approved as presented.

Carried

12. Chief's Report

12.1 Financial Reports (as of September 30, 2025)

Acting Deputy Chief Taylor reported that the actual year to date expenditures amount to \$10,942,964.00, which equates to approximately 68% of their allocated budget.

The average is slightly higher at approximately \$1.25 million per month. This will still leave the budget with a positive surplus at the end of the year. There are some expenditures left, such as overtime and the cost of (3) recently purchased cars that will come out of the 2025 budget. They are anticipating two officers will be returning to work by the end of November, which will assist with the overtime costs.

Steve Cousins inquired if the SPS will be receiving any more grant funding in 2025. The Acting Deputy Chief stated that there is an NG911 grant to still come in, but that is the only outstanding grant funding left this year.

MOTION by Martin Ritsma | Harjinder Nijjar

That the monthly accounts of September 30, 2025, be approved as presented. Carried

12.2 Public Complaints

Acting Deputy Chief Taylor reported that there were (3) new complaints for the month of September. All (3) were deemed not in the public's interest to proceed to investigation or frivolous in nature.

13. New Business

None noted.

14. Consent Items

14.1 Motion by Harjinder Nijjar | Martin Ritsma

THAT on the recommendation of the Acting Deputy Chief of Police, Gary Wray (Aunt Gail's Taxi) be approved for taxi licence.

Carried

15. Adjournment to In-Camera Meeting

Motion by Martin Ritsma | Harjinder Nijjar

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 4:52 p.m.

Steve Cousins, Chair

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