



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
POLICE SERVICE BOARD
PUBLIC MINUTES

Thursday, November 28, 2024
Niagara Regional Police Service - Headquarters
Community Room 1st Floor, 5700 Valley Way, Niagara Falls

PSB MEMBERS:

J. Lawson, Chair
P. Chiocchio, Board Member
K. Gibson, Board Member
L. Ip, Board Member
T. McKendrick, Board Member
B. Steele, Board Member

D. Reid, Executive Director

NRPS MEMBERS:

Chief B. Fordy
Deputy Chief L. Greco, Support Services
Deputy Chief T. Waselovich, Operational Services
C. Gauley, General Counsel
A. Askoul, Director of Information Technology
L. Blood, Director of Human Resources
L. Rullo, Director of Finance and Asset Management
Superintendent D. Forbes, Operational Support
Superintendent M. Lagrotteria, District Operations
Superintendent D. Masotti, Emergency Investigative Services
Superintendent S. Staniforth, Executive Services
A/Inspector D. Savoie, Executive Officer to the Chief
D/Sergeant R. Aceti, Executive Officer to D/C Support Services
S. Sabourin, Corporate Communications Manager
C. Woods, Finance Manager
M. Asher, Executive Assistant to the Chief

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Niagara Police Service Board commenced at 9:32 am.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

The Board began its meeting by acknowledging that the Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Service Board stands with all Indigenous people, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT/PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of conflict or pecuniary interest.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Public Board Meeting held Thursday, October 31, 2024

Moved by: P. Chiocchio
Seconded by: K. Gibson

That the Minutes of the Public Board Meeting held Thursday, October 31, 2024 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

5. REPORTS FROM BOARD CHAIR

CAPG Webinar Sessions - The Canadian Association of Police Governance hosts monthly webinars as part of their educational strategy to keep Police Boards and Police Executives across Canada apprised of issues currently affecting the policing community. Two webinars were held in November, one titled “Recruitment & Retention in Leadership – Churn at the Top?” and the other titled “Equity, Diversity & Inclusion - How Far Have We Come?” Recorded copies of all webinars are sent to Board Members for their viewing.

Building Bridges - Evidence Based Policing Conference - On November 7th and 8th, Barrie Police Service, Durham Regional Police Service, and the Canadian Society of Evidence-Based Policing co-presented the “Building Bridges Evidence-Based Policing Conference” at Blue Mountain Conference Centre. The conference was supported by the Canadian Association of Police Governance, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police and the Ontario Association of Police Service Boards. Discussion included topics related to Evidence Based Policing, Change Management, Recruitment & Retention, Resilience & Wellness, Professionalization of Policing, Innovation & Future of Policing, Police Legitimacy, and more. Chair Lawson and Executive Director Reid attended the conference on behalf of the Board, along with members of the Service.

NRPS Promotion Ceremony - On November 7th, the Niagara Regional Police Service hosted a Promotion Ceremony at Police Headquarters in the Community Room. The ceremony recognized 12 Service members that were recently promoted to the ranks of Sergeant, Staff Sergeant, Manager and Director. Vice Chair Kapisavanhu attended the event on behalf of the Board.

NRPS Annual Awards Ceremony - On November 19th, the Niagara Regional Police Service, Niagara Police Service Board, Niagara Region Police Association and the Senior Officers’ Association hosted the Police Annual Awards Ceremony at Club Italia in Niagara Falls. The ceremony recognized outstanding Service Members and fellow citizens who have demonstrated excellence or made invaluable contributions to the Niagara community, along with Service retirees and long-standing employees for their commitment to the Service. Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Kapisavanhu, Members Chiocchio, Gibson, McKendrick and the Board’s Executive Director Reid attended the event.

Inaugural Citizen Police Academy - Graduation Ceremony - On November 20th, Vice Chair Kapisavanhu joined Chief Fordy and Service members at the Inaugural Citizen Police Academy Graduation Ceremony. The ceremony provided an opportunity to celebrate the first-ever graduating class of the Niagara Regional Police Service’s Citizen Police Academy. Each graduate was recognized for their success after completing an 8-week course that provided valuable insight into the policing profession and was designed to strengthen community relationships.

OAPSB Labour Conference - On November 26th and 27th, the Ontario Association of Police Service Boards hosted their 2024 Annual Labour Conference at the Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel in Mississauga. Attendees were provided with the opportunity to learn more about the police labour relations landscape across Ontario through discussions dealing with WSIB, legal trends and case studies, recruiting and retention cultural impacts, operations of the Inspectorate of Policing, coordinated bargaining and the prevalence of mental health disorder symptoms among police personnel. Chair Lawson, Members Chiocchio and Gibson, Board Solicitor McKaig, Executive Director and Deputy Chiefs Greco and Waselovich attended the conference.

Upcoming Police Service Board Meetings - There are no Committee meetings scheduled in December. The Board's next scheduled regular monthly Board meeting is Thursday, December 19th at 9:30 am in the Community Room at Police Headquarters.

6. REPORTS FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE

Community Safety

The Niagara Regional Police Service is dealing with 14 homicides this year and 20 traffic fatalities, which places significant pressure on resources and we continue our focus in conducting thorough, extensive investigations to bring those responsible to justice before the courts.

Police members continue their unwavering efforts in the community and have seen a number of arrests in the last month for offences relating to the youth in our area. Offences include Internet Child Luring, Sexual Interference and the Homicide Unit and Opioid Enforcement and Education Unit (OEEU) recently laying charges of Criminal Negligence Causing Death involving a 2-year-old child. Members continue their excellent work and resolve as they address criminal actions with tragic outcomes that are affecting some of the most vulnerable in our society.

November 14, 2024 - Police attended the Region of Niagara Council Chambers and presented their 2025 budget. Respecting the processes involved, the Service looks forward to continuing to serve the community and strive for the highest level of police service delivery. The Niagara Regional Police Service hopes to be positioned to begin allocating human and material resources with an outlook to continuously improving - using the cornerstone of public safety, complying with legislative requirements and providing adequate and effective policing.

Community Engagement

At the beginning of November, the NRPS attended a seminar regarding the transition from the Police Services Act to the Community Safety and Policing Act designed to provide useful information regarding the legislation and the requirements and processes involved. Counsel Vita Gauley and Professional Standards Unit Inspector Lynda Hughes attended the seminar.

November 2, 2024 - Members of Niagara Vanguard attended the Toronto Police College for the 2024 Toronto Police Service's Roll-A-Thon in support of the Sick Kids Foundation. Niagara Vanguard is made up of members of the Service, both sworn and civilian, who teach and learn cardio Kickboxing and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. Twelve (12) members attended this event which consisted of an open mat roll lasting over 4 hours. Members pitted their Brazilian Jiu Jitsu skills and techniques against other clubs and Police Services in attendance, squaring off in 20 plus, 5-minute rounds each. Where competition and physicality were the focus, the real winner of the day was charity and community service, with all proceeds of the event heading directly to the Sick Kids foundation. Niagara Vanguard members were able to raise with community support \$4,115.00 which was the largest team donation to the event!

November 2, 2024 – Five (5) members from the Service attended the Serving with Pride Gala in Toronto, as well as having three (3) members attend the Ghanaian Dinner also located in Toronto.

November 4, 2024 - Deputy Chief Waselovich welcomed members (35) from police services across the province to a weeklong OACP Equity Diversity and Inclusion conference that we hosted here in the Community Room for a weeklong event held at police headquarters in the Community Room. The Service was proud to assist with the course delivery and support the police's continue efforts to ensure all people, including those from equity deserving groups, are listened to, understood, and considered. Deputy Chief Waselovich also offered opening remarks at the Sexual Assault Investigators of Ontario Conference that was held at a local Niagara Falls hotel. There were over 100 attendees from many different services including the RCMP and Probation and Parole. The Service was pleased to play a part in helping with these conferences that provide great learning opportunities, best practices and sharing of knowledge and experience.

November 6, 2024 - The Service hosted Take our Kids to Work Day where 49 students spent the day learning about what the NRPS and many of their family members do every day to keep Niagara safe. The students visited many of Service's units, including Training, K9, Emergency Task Unit and Communications.

November 11, 2024 – On Remembrance Day, many members, including those from senior leadership, attended various locations in the Niagara Region, including many Royal Canadian Legions, to pay tribute and honour those that made the ultimate sacrifice in military service allowing us to enjoy our many freedoms and way of life.

November 8 & 25, 2024 – Service members attended meetings at the Region as partners in the Community Safety and Well Being Plan as part of the Service's ongoing collaboration to work together with friends and colleagues in related organizations. Complex problems that affect safety and well-being cannot be solved by just one group or organization and working together does make a difference.

November 12, 2024 – Members of the Service met with the Niagara on the Lake Network Breakfast Club, a group comprised of current and former business, academic and public leaders. Information on the Service was presented in an interactive setting to inform, advise and engage.

November 16, 2024 – The Niagara Regional Police Service participated in the Niagara Falls Santa Clause parade, a great community event with a large attendance from Niagara's local community.

November 18, 2024 - Deputy Chief Greco attended the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Training Course to welcome participants on behalf of the Service. This training teaches attendees how to evaluate physical spaces and implements proven strategies and concepts to contribute to safer communities.

November 20, 2024 –The Citizens Academy Graduation took place the evening of November 20th. The inaugural class was a great success. The academy consisted of two-hour sessions for eight weeks. The Academy helps promote understanding and engagement with the policing profession by giving community members insight into what and why the Service does.

November 24, 2024 - Deputy Chief Greco attended the Ice Dogs Teddy Bear Toss. We are making arrangements to deliver the teddy bears to children in the hospital during the month of December.

November 25, 2024 - Chief Fordy and Inspector LaPlante attended the Thorold Town and Gown meeting with Mayor Ugulini and City Senior Staff to discuss issues facing Thorold.

December 4, 2024 - With the holiday season upon us, the Service will once again be attending the Shopping with Cops event at the Pen Center. This event has occurred for over 10 years and involves young students being paired with officers to shop for Christmas gifts at the Pen Center. The children chosen are recommended by their school staff for a variety of reasons, including need, recognition of specific academic or sports achievement or because of volunteer efforts that are making a difference in the community. The Service looks forward to this fantastic opportunity to spend time with Niagara's young community members.

The Niagara Regional Police Service's coloring contest for kindergarten to Grade 3 students to submit artwork explaining “how do you stay safe in your community?” has concluded with three (3) winners. The artwork will be on the NRPS holiday card and the Chief will be visiting the classrooms of the winners to offer congratulations and spend some time in their schools.

Service members have once again begun volunteering in the Out of the Cold program that assists Knox Presbyterian Church with distributing meals to those in need. Every holiday season for many years, members have been volunteering their time to this great community effort. A special thanks is sent to Diana James who liaises with the Service every year in organizing this event.

Inspector Steve Magistrale of Investigative Detective Support taught classes on general policing and crime scene management to Grade 7 and 8 students at Ridley College. This is a great example of a senior leader in a positive role with Niagara's youth in sharing knowledge with these young minds.

Member Wellness

November 7, 2024 – The Service held a promotional ceremony to celebrate the accomplishment of members continuing their leadership journeys and recognizing their hard work in achieving this success.

November 14, 2024 - Ten members of the Service attended the Ontario Women in Law Enforcement Training Day. This was an opportunity for members, both sworn and civilian from police services across Ontario to enhance their skills, knowledge, and network and elevates the standards and impact of law enforcement as a whole.

November 15, 2024 - Members attended the 15th annual South Asian Gala in Toronto, recognizing the contributions of South Asian members of Law Enforcement.

November 16, 2024 - Members attended the 32nd annual Association of Black Law Enforcers (ABLE) Gala in Orillia, acknowledging the role of the community in law enforcement and awarding scholarships to assist young people in their educational endeavours.

On November 19, 2024 – The Service held its annual Awards ceremony (Club Italia) recognizing the great work that its members do. The awards also included retired members and citizens that have contributed to public safety in our community.

Two members from the Service recently complete the Rotman School of Management – Police Leadership Program and four (4) members have enrolled in the DeGroot Leadership Training which will be completed at the end of January 2025.

7. PRESENTATIONS

7.1 NRPS Human Resources Unit

The Service provided a presentation about the Human Resources (HR) Unit, which operates with the goal of developing and implementing efficient and cost-effective tools and services to assist Supervisors, Managers and the Senior Executive Team in understanding and applying a variety of HR personnel policies and procedures.

Moved by: L. Ip
Seconded by: K. Gibson

That the presentation be received.

Carried

8. CONSENT AGENDA

8.1 Inspector General of Policing - Launching our Data Collection Initiatives for Municipal Police Service Boards

Inspectorate of Policing (IoP) joint correspondence dated November 4, 2024 from Ryan Teschner, Inspector General of Policing of Ontario, and Rekha Chetlur, Executive Data Officer, advising of two data collection initiatives being launched to assist the IoP with their mandated requirement to monitor the delivery of adequate and effective policing and support police service boards in meeting their legislative obligations.

8.2 Police Service Board By-law Reporting Requirement - Hiring, Promotions and Other Employment Practices

Service report dated November 8, 2024 submitted in accordance with the one-time reporting requirement set out in section 9.1 of Board By-law 519-2024.

8.3 Quarterly Report - Special Fund Activity - July 1 to September 30, 2024

Service report dated October 25, 2024 submitted in accordance with the quarterly reporting requirements set out in Board By-law 403-2024.

8.4 Annual Report - Brock University Campus Safety Services - 2022-2023

Letter dated November 20, 2024 from Director Moody, Brock University Campus Safety Services, providing the Campus Safety Services' 2022-2023 Annual Report.

8.5 Financial Variance Overview - Period Ending September 30, 2024

Service report dated November 5, 2024 submitted in accordance with the quarterly reporting requirements set out in Board By-law 412-2024.

8.6 NRPS 2025 Amended Operating Budget as Approved by the Budget Review Committee of the Whole

Service report dated November 18, 2024 providing the Board with the amended 2025 Operating Budget for the Board and the Service as approved by the Region's Budget Review Committee of the Whole at its meeting held October 31, 2024, and subject to final approval as part of the general levy by Regional Council on December 12, 2024.

8.7 Regional Municipality of Niagara (RMON) - Resolution - 2025 NRPS-PSB Proposed Operating Budget

Correspondence dated November 22, 2024 from Ann-Marie Norio advising of a resolution passed by Regional Council at its meeting held November 21, 2024 to refer the Niagara Regional Police Service and Police Service Board 2025 Proposed Operating Budget back to the Board with a request for a further reduction than that approved by the Budget Review Committee of the Whole at its November 14, 2024 meeting.

Moved by: T. McKendrick

Seconded by: B. Steele

That the information be received.

Carried

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 NRPS 2025 Amended Operating Budget as Approved by Regional Council

Service report dated November 22, 2024 providing an amended 2025 Operating Budget for the Service and the Board to address the resolution passed by Regional Council on November 21, 2024 for a further reduction of \$1.067 million or 0.57% to the \$213,308,546 operating budget as approved by the Region's Budget Review Committee of the Whole on November 14, 2024.

Moved by: L. Ip
Seconded by: T. McKendrick

That the Niagara Police Service Board approve the following:

- 1. A further reduction of \$852,194.00 or 0.45% to the amended 2025 Operating Budget for the Police Service and Board resulting in a Total Net Expenditure Budget before Indirect Allocation;**
- 2. The 2025 Operating Budget for the Police Service and Board resulting in a Total Net Expenditure Budget before Indirect Allocations of \$212,456,352.00; and**
- 3. Submission of the amended 2025 operating budget of the Service and Board to Regional Council for approval.**

Lost

Voted In Favour: Members P. Chiocchio and B. Steele

Moved by: T. McKendrick
Seconded by: K. Gibson

That the Niagara Police Service Board decline Regional Council's request for a further budget reduction of \$1.067 million to the Niagara Regional Police Service and Police Service Board 2025 Proposed Operating Budget.

Carried

9.2 Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act, 2024 - Proposed Amendments Related to the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019

Correspondence dated November 18, 2024 from Deb Reid, Executive Director, Niagara Police Service Board, advising of the Ontario Government's Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act, 2024, and the new measures that will be put into place if/when passed; and of the Ministry of the Solicitor General's proposed amendments to the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA), to address specific issues related to policing in Ontario in keeping with the proposed Act.

Moved by: K. Gibson
Seconded by: L. Ip

That the Board provide feedback as outlined in the report, which was developed in consultation with the Niagara Regional Police Service, to the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

Carried

Before considering special fund request Items 9.3 to 9.4 Chair Lawson reminded members of the public that the "Special Fund" does not form part of the police operating budget and is separate from the Regional tax base. The "Special Fund" is a discretionary pool of funds, which is used for grants and charitable donations. Disbursements from the fund are made in accordance with guidelines provided in the Community Safety and Policing Act, and with Board By-Law 403-2024, Special Fund Administration, Limitations and Guidelines.

9.3 Special Fund Request - Shopping with Cops

Service report dated November 6, 2024 requesting the Board approve a donation for the purchase of gift cards in support of the Service's annual Shop with Cops event being held on December 4, 2024 at Pen Centre. (*This is a first-time Special Fund request.*)

Moved by: B. Steele
Seconded by: T. McKendrick

That the Niagara Police Service Board approve a donation in the amount of \$4,000.00 from the Special Fund in support of the Niagara Regional Police Service's Shopping with Cops event.

Carried

9.4 Special Fund Request - NRPS Men's Elite Team - International Hockey Tournament

Service report dated November 4, 2024 requesting the Board approve a donation to help offset expenses incurred by the NRPS Men's Elite Hockey Team while participating in the 2025 International Police Hockey Tournament being held in Durham Region, Ontario, from February 27-28, 2025. (*Previous donations: 2006-2019 - \$500; 2020 - \$700; 2022 - \$500; 2023-2024 - \$1,500*)

Moved by: B. Steele
Seconded by: P. Chiochio

That the Board approve a Special Fund donation in the amount of \$1,500.00 in support of the NRPS Men's Elite Hockey Team at the 2025 International Police Hockey Tournament.

Carried

10. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

10.1 Status of Timelines to Complete Police Record Checks

Member Steele requested an update on the delays to complete police record checks. Deputy Chief Greco advised that the NRPS has recently changed service providers. They are currently transitioning between the two systems, which will result in greater efficiencies and reduced wait times. It is anticipated that once the backlog is cleared, the new technology will allow the NRPS to process records checks in real time with minimal to no delays.

11. IN CAMERA REPORTS

There were no in camera reports.

12. MOTION FOR CLOSED SESSION

Moved by: L. Ip
Seconded by: K. Gibson

That the Board move into Closed Session for consideration of confidential matters pursuant to Section 44 of the Community Safety and Policing Act, namely for subject-matter related to potential litigation, human resources matters, information supplied in confidence by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and from vendors for contract awards, as well as legal matters that are subject to solicitor-client privilege.

Carried

13. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Meeting adjourned at 10:54 am.

Jen Lawson, Chair

Deb Reid, Executive Director