



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
POLICE SERVICE BOARD
PUBLIC MINUTES

Thursday, December 19, 2024
Niagara Regional Police Service - Headquarters
Community Room 1st Floor, 5700 Valley Way, Niagara Falls

PSB MEMBERS:

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

W. McKaig, Board Solicitor
D. Reid, Executive Director
D. Cichocki, Executive Assistant

NRPS MEMBERS:

Chief B. Fordy
Deputy Chief L. Greco, Support Services
A/Deputy Chief D. Masotti, Operational Services
C. Gauley, General Counsel
Dr. T. Hunt, Service Psychologist
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 S. Staniforth, Executive Services
A/Superintendent, S. Magistrale, Emergency Investigative Services
Inspector N. Dave, Executive Officer to Chief of Police
Staff Sergeant A. Knevel, Major Crime
D/Sergeant N. Abbott, Executive Officer to D/C Operational Services
D/Sergeant R. Aceti, Executive Officer to D/C Support Services
Sergeant M. Delano, Member Support Unit
B. Sand, Mental Health Clinician
M. Asher, Executive Assistant to the Chief

OTHERS:

D. Tilley, Policing Services Advisor, Inspectorate of Policing, Ministry of the Solicitor General

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, November 28, 2024**

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

That the Minutes of the Public Board Meeting held Thursday, November 28, 2024 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

5. **REPORTS FROM BOARD CHAIR**

Welcome to the Ministry Policing Services Advisor - Chair Lawson welcomed Dave Tilley to the meeting. Dave is with the Inspectorate of Policing at the Ministry of the Solicitor General and he serves as a Policing Services Advisor to Zone 4 Police Boards in Ontario. He regularly attends meetings as part of the routine visits by Policing Services Advisors to Police Boards across the Province. The Board is pleased to see his continued attendance at our monthly meetings.

Ride Along - On December 6, Chair Lawson joined the Niagara Regional Police Service for a ride-along to observe their Festive RIDE Campaign in Port Colborne. This is an annual initiative to reduce impaired driving through education and enforcement. During the RIDE spot checks that were held throughout that night in Port Colborne and Welland, there were approximately 400 vehicles stopped. A total of four drivers had their license suspended and there were several Provincial Offence Notices issued to drivers for various traffic related offences. She thanked Inspector Chris Lemaich for facilitating the experience, and the NRPS Traffic Enforcement Unit for their dedication to road safety. She also offered special thanks to Constables Frank Chadwick and Brian James, and Sergeant Josh Klop for explaining the equipment and enforcement processes in the field. Chair Lawson encouraged all Board Members to participate in similar initiatives, like ride-alongs, to gain a better understand policing in our community.

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 December one featuring Dr. Stephen Reid who reflected on his first year as the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Police Governance, and the other titled “The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Police Personnel.” Recorded copies of all webinars are sent to Board Members for their viewing.

CAPG Winter Governance Summit - The Canadian Association of Police Governance is hosting a Police Governance Summit on January 6-7, 2025 at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier in Ottawa. The theme of the summit is “Strategic Leadership: From Costing to Culture – Building Your Police Governance Knowledge in a Changing Society.” The summit will feature guest speakers, including the Inspector General of Policing, Ryan Teschner, and discussions will provide a firm foundation on which boards and commissions can build an effective strategy for overseeing their police services. Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Kapisavanhu, Members Chiochio and Gibson, and Executive Director Reid will be attending the summit.

CAPG Executive Director/Chair Quarterly Meeting - On January 14, 2025, the Canadian Association of Police Governance is hosting its quarterly meeting for Police Service Board Executive Directors and Board Chairs. These quarterly meetings are designed to facilitate discussions about common issues related to police service boards, commissions, and advisory boards; and to provide a forum where participants can share ideas about best practices approaches. The meeting will be held virtually and Chair Lawson and Executive Director Reid will be in attendance.

Upcoming Police Service Board Meetings - The Board will be holding a Special Public Board Meeting on January 9, 2025 at 9:30 am to elect its Chair and Vice Chair for the 2025 term. This meeting will be held virtually by Zoom only. The Board's next scheduled regular monthly Board meeting is Thursday, January 23, 2025 at 9:30 am in the Community Room at Police Headquarters.

6. REPORTS FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE

Community Safety:

With the holiday season upon us, the Service continues to increase their RIDE programs as part of the ongoing efforts to deter impaired driving and keep Niagara roadways safer for everyone.

In response to community concerns regarding the theft of significant monetary amounts, violence, and the presence of weapons in retail establishments, members of the #1 District Community Oriented Response & Engagement Unit (CORE) Unit have led the 3P (Past the Point of Purchase) Shoplifting Initiative and conducted nine focused initiatives to directly address retail theft. CORE members identified and arrested individuals with outstanding warrants, seized weapons and laid charges under the Controlled Drugs and Substance Act. Over 90 arrests were made with 71 criminal charges. This is an exemplary demonstration of the Service directly addressing community concerns with a strategic focus.

A recent investigation involving two bank robberies has reached a successful conclusion. The robberies occurred on November 21st and December 9th and in both incidents a male brandished a firearm. Officers from 1 and 8 District (Uniform and the Criminal Investigative Branch (CIB)), 1 District Street Crime, the Intelligence Unit, Emergency Task Unit (ETU) and the Hamilton Police Break and Enter, Auto Theft and Robbery (BEAR) Branch worked jointly to identify a suspect that was responsible for both robberies. On December 12th, the 29-year-old male was arrested for numerous robbery related offences as a result of the perseverance, investigative collaboration and professionalism between those involved.

Preparations for New Years Eve are underway to ensure the safety of everyone in the Region.

The International Association of Property and Evidence has given the Niagara Regional Police Service re-accreditation for another two years. This is a reflection of the outstanding work done by Sergeant Bruce Mair and his team. The Association was highly impressed by the professionalism and dedication of the team and how they exhibited their knowledge and commitment to best practices throughout the assessment.

December 12, 2024 - The Service hosted a "tabletop" exercise for public safety with colleagues from the United States and Canada. The exercise brought together Canadian transportation operators and security partners including the Transport Security Administration, AMTRAK and Via Rail. This exercise was a reflection of collaborative efforts and great partnerships.

Community Engagement:

December 4, 2024 - The Service participated in the Shopping with Cops event at the Pen Center. There were 88 civilian and sworn police members, including Auxiliary officers and Special Constables, along with members from Niagara OPP and the Niagara Parks Police. All were partnered with children, recommended by their school staff for a variety of reasons, to help them with their holiday shopping. The Service thanks the participating Service members, the Board for approving a Special Fund Request to purchase gift cards and Stephanie Beattie who is a driving force behind this initiative.

November 28, 2024 - The Service attended the Toronto Police Chief's Gala, which provided a great opportunity to network and share insights and information with one of Niagara's partnering police agencies.

November 29, 2024 - The Service attended the Niagara College Welland Campus to assist in judging 3rd year students in the Police Foundations program. Police assessed students on Community Policing presentations based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and had an opportunity to speak with them about policing as a career.

December 2, 2024 - The Service hosted another Chief's Community Inclusion Council meeting and received a presentation from Council member and Niagara Region Accessibility Advisor Tammy Dumas on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the meaningful understanding, responsibilities, and purpose of the Act.

December 6, 2024 - Members of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit attended an online panel discussion hosted by the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment. The conversation focused on navigating gender, sexuality, and ethnocultural identities in public safety occupations.

December 9, 2024 - Members of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit visited the Fort Erie Multicultural Centre to provide an overview of the EDI Unit and how the Service can assist their organization in providing information on policing services to people who attend the Centre.

December 10, 2024 – Members of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit visited the Solidarity of Francophone Immigrant Women of Niagara (SOFIFRAN), an organization in the city of Welland whose mission is to support the social, economic, educational and cultural development of French-speaking immigrant women residing in Niagara.

December 11, 2024 - The Service delivered teddy bears from the Niagara Ice Dogs Teddy Bear Toss to children at the hospital in St. Catharines. Police personnel spent time with the young patients in an effort to help lift their spirits. Thanks are sent to Detective Sergeant Shawn Turcotte for his ongoing efforts with this event.

December 14, 2024 – The Service participated in the Niagara on the Lake Santa Clause parade with Lord Mayor Zalepa. The parade was a great success with attendance reaching over 15,000 people.

December 16, 2024 – As part of the Service's Holiday Hero campaign, students from junior kindergarten to Grade 3 were asked to submit artwork explaining "how you stay safe in your community?" The initiative has now concluded and the illustrations of three students appear on the Service's holiday cards. Chief Fordy, Sergeant Jesse Hicks, Constable Ryan Sexton and Chief of Police Executive Assistant Mandy Asher attended St. Annes School in St. Catharines to meet with two of the winners and their classmates. During the visit these Service members had a chance to chat with and read to the students. They will be meeting with the third winner and students and staff at Harriet Tubman School in the New Year.

December 16, 2024 - Staff Sergeant Jeff Bootsma and Constables Mike Malachowsky and Mitch Dumont attended the Tree of Hope ceremony in Ottawa, which was organized by Thunder Bay Police. The red lights on the Tree of Hope pay tribute to those lost and is a reminder that their families are not alone, and that their loved ones are remembered. The Tree of Hope was brought to Parliament Hill where members of the Service joined Elders, Drummers, the Minister of Indigenous Services and guests to heighten awareness of the rates of violence against Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited (MMIWG2S) people. The NRPS is currently making plans to have a Tree of Hope in Niagara and it is hoped that police services nationwide will have a Tree of Hope in their jurisdictions.

December 19, 2024 - Members of our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit are attending the Welland Heritage and Multicultural Centre Open House event to show the Service's continued support of this partnership. Members are also volunteering at the Out of the Cold program in St. Catharines at Knox Presbyterian Church to help distribute food to those in need.

Member Wellness:

December 5, 2024 - The Service Women in Policing Internal Support Network held a holiday event with over 50 members in attendance.

December 10, 2024 - The Auxiliary Christmas party was held to recognize and thank the Service's auxiliary members. Auxiliary members assist with many events and functions held by the Niagara Regional Police Service and their efforts to serve our community are greatly appreciated.

7. PRESENTATIONS

7.1 NRPS Member Support Unit

The Service provided a presentation on the Member Support Unit, which offers a variety of support programs to all members of the Niagara Regional Police Service that are designed to assist police personnel in their overall wellness both personally and professionally.

Moved by: L. Ip

Seconded by: N. Kapisavanhu

That the presentation be received.

Carried

8. CONSENT AGENDA

8.1 OAPSB and OACP - Letter to Solicitor General - Funding Announcement for Municipalities Policed by OPP

Joint correspondence dated December 7, 2024 addressed to The Honourable Michael Kernzer, Solicitor General of Ontario, from President Roger Wilkie, Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, and Chair Patrick Weaver, Ontario Association of Police Service Boards, addressing concerns relating to the Ontario Government's recent \$77 Million funding announcement for municipalities policed by the Ontario Provincial Police, and requesting that a governmental strategy be developed that will modernize the grant funding process, secure equitable funding for Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA) implementation and develop sustainable funding solutions to support effective policing services under the Act by small and mid-sized Municipal Police Services.

8.2 Regional Council Approval of Budget Review Committee Recommendation - 2025 NRPS-PSB Proposed Operating Budget

Correspondence dated December 17, 2024 from Ann-Marie Norio, Regional Clerk, Niagara Region, advising of the Budget Review Committee of the Whole (BRCOTW) recommendation that was passed by Regional Council at their meeting held December 12, 2024 regarding the Niagara Regional Police Service and Police Service Board 2025 Proposed Operating Budget, and including a copy of the letter sent by Regional Chair Bradley to the Premier of Ontario and Solicitor General requesting provincial funding to offset increased policing costs as a result of the implementation of the Community Safety and Policing Act.

8.3 RMON - Motion and Recommendation - 2025 NRPS-PSB Proposed Operating Budget

Correspondence dated December 13, 2024 from Ann-Marie Norio, Regional Clerk, Niagara Region, advising of a motion passed by the Region's Budget Review Committee of the Whole (BRCOTW) at its meeting held December 12, 2024 regarding a reduction to the 2025 Proposed Operating Budget for the Niagara Regional Police Service and the Board; and further advising of the recommendation passed by Regional Council at its meeting held that same evening when considering the 2025 Consolidated General Levy Budget, specific to the Region's Agencies, Boards and Commissions.

Moved by: T. McKendrick

Seconded by: B. Steele

That the information be received.

Carried

8.4 Employee and Family Assistance Program - Optional Renewal

Service report dated December 3, 2024 advising that the Service has joined the Region in exercising its option to extend the contract with TELUS Health for the provision of an Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) at a cost of \$30,858.72 for the period January 1 to December 31, 2025.

8.5 Special Funds Specified Auditing Procedures

Service report dated November 26, 2024 providing the Board with the audit results of two Special Fund Accounts, specifically the General Operating Account and the Special Operating Account, that were conducted by Grant Thornton LLP on August 16, 2024 in accordance with By-Law 403-2024 paragraph 11.2, and including a draft report detailing the specified auditing procedures for the year ending December 31, 2023.

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

That Items 8.1, 8.2, 8.4 and 8.5 be received for information.

Carried

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Police Service Board By-Law - Collision Reconstruction User Fees - Fee Update

Service report dated November 21, 2024 advising that in accordance with Section 391 of the Municipal Act and section 69 of the Planning Act, the Service underwent a review of NRPS service fees resulting with a request that the Board approve an increase to the current fee structure set out in Schedule “A” of the Board’s Collision Reconstruction User Fees By-law, and that each year these user fees be indexed to maintain alignment with inflationary labour/supply cost increases.

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

That the Niagara Police Service Board approve the draft by-law and amended fee schedule as appended to this report, effective January 1, 2025;

And further, that an inflationary index be applied to maintain alignment with the cost of labour and supplies.

Carried

9.2 Police Service Board By-Law - User Fee Charges for Police Service - Fee Update

Service report dated November 25, 2024 advising that in accordance with Section 391 of the Municipal Act and section 69 of the Planning Act, the Service underwent a review of NRPS service fees resulting with a request that the Board approve an increase to the current fee structure set out in Schedule “A” of the Board’s Imposition of Charges for Police Services By-law, and that each year these user fees be indexed to maintain alignment with inflationary labour/supply cost increases.

Moved by: N. Kapisavanhu
Seconded by: T. McKendrick

That the Niagara Police Service Board approve the draft by-law and amended fee schedule as appended to this report, effective January 1, 2025;

And further, that an inflationary index be applied to maintain alignment with the cost of labour and supplies.

Carried

9.3 Next Generation 911 - Vesta 911 Call Handling System Equipment Expansion and Capital Adjustment

Service report dated December 2, 2024 requesting the Board approve additional NG 911 expenditures and a gross capital budget adjustment for costs associated with the purchase of three (3) Vesta 911 Call Handling System (CHS) workstations for St. Catharines Fire Services, which is a committed partner with the Niagara Region on the NG 911 project.

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

That the Niagara Police Service Board approve:

- 1. The project change order from Motorola Solutions Canada Inc. for NG 911 related workstations for St. Catharines Fire Services in the amount of \$294,354.81 net of HST rebates; and**
- 2. Subject to approval of the Regional Treasurer, a gross capital budget adjustment totaling \$57,500.00 and net \$0.00 to the NG 911 Equipment Replacement project 20000999, fully funded through third-party cost sharing recoveries from St. Catharines Fire Services.**

Carried

9.4 Special Fund Policy Review

Service report dated November 25, 2024 requesting the Board approve the recommended set of guidelines specific to special fund donations that were developed to ensure transparency and accountability of all special fund requests made to the Niagara Regional Police Service and the Board. The recommendations are being brought forward at the direction of a Board motion passed at its May 9, 2024 Finance Committee meeting and the Board's consideration of By-law 403-2024 respecting the Administration, Limitations, and Guidelines of the Special Fund.

Moved by: L. Ip
Seconded by: N. Kapisavanhu

That the Niagara Police Service Board approve the recommendations outlined in the report.

Carried

9.5 Special Fund Request - Holiday Hero Campaign

Service report dated December 6, 2024 requesting the Board approve a donation in support of the Service's Holiday Hero Campaign for the purchasing of gift cards that will be distributed to families that are supported through Niagara's Community Care program.

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

That the Niagara Police Service Board approve a Special Fund donation in the amount of \$5,000.00 in support of the Service's Holiday Hero Campaign.

Carried

10. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

10.1 Domestic Violence Unit - 2025 NRPS-PSB Proposed Operating Budget

Member Ip addressed the rise in domestic violence and its profound impact within Niagara Region, highlighting that Regional Council declared intimate partner violence an epidemic in September 2023. She noted a steady increase in calls for service related to domestic violence and disturbances. In response, Member Ip proposed that funds from the 2025 Operating Budget be reallocated to expedite the hiring of a Staff Sergeant and Detective Sergeants for the Domestic Violence Unit, with appropriate budget adjustments made to accommodate this reallocation.

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

That funds in the 2025 Operating Budget be reallocated to move immediately on the hiring of the Staff Sergeant and Detective Sergeants for the Domestic Violence Unit and other adjustments be made to the budget to offset this move.

Carried

11. IN CAMERA REPORTS

11.1 Special Investigations Unit – Case Number 23-OCI-086 – Incident of February 25, 2024

Service report dated October 31, 2024 advising that the SIU concluded their investigation in this matter and found no grounds for criminal charges against any police officer, and also advising that in compliance with S.32 of Ontario Regulation 268/10 made under the Police Services Act, the Service completed its review and investigation into this matter and concluded that there are no identified policy/service/officer conduct issues.

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

That, in accordance with Board direction, the in camera report be made available to the public.

Carried

12. MOTION FOR CLOSED SESSION

Moved by: N. Kapisavanhu
Seconded by: T. McKendrick

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 10:53 am.

Jen Lawson, Chair

Deb Reid, Executive Director