

STRATFORD POLICE SERVICES BOARD

A meeting of the Stratford Police Services Board was held on the 20th day of April 2022, held virtually by Zoom.

PRESENT: Dan Mathieson (Chair), Tim Doherty, Graham Bunting, Steve Cousins, Rosemary Tanner, Chief Greg Skinner, Deputy Chief Gerry Foster, Inspector Mark Taylor, Constable Rob McMillan (Stratford Police Association), Gail Cossey (Aunt Gails' Taxi), Ranjit Singh (City Cabs), Brad Rickert (Radio Cab), Don Robinson (Stratford Taxi), Phil Psutka, Galen Simmons, Casey Riehl (Executive Assistant)

MINUTES

1. Call to order

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

2. Addition of Agenda Items – Business Arising and New Business

There were no new items added to the Agenda.

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

4. Adoption of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 23, 2022

MOTION by Tim Doherty | Rosemary Tanner

That the minutes of the regular meeting of March 23, 2022, be adopted as presented. Carried.

5. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations

5.1 Brad Rickert – Proposed Increase in Taxi Fares

Brad Rickert reported that the four taxi companies met on March 9, 2022 to discuss increasing the current taxi fares in the City of Stratford. The four companies represent all the licence holders within Stratford and have agreed to amounts which they believe the taxi fares should be set at. They have submitted a letter outlining the proposed increases.

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
1-2 pax fare	\$11.50	\$14.00
3 or more	\$12.50	\$15.00
Senior 65+	\$11.00	\$12.50
Stop along the way	\$ 3.50	\$ 5.00
Waiting time	\$40/hr+HST	\$60/hr (includes HST)

Costs relating to the taxi industry have risen exponentially. Mr. Rickert is asking on behalf of all the licence holders that this increase be approved by the Board as soon as possible. The taxi companies will have cards printed and notices out to the public to update them on the fare increases.

Rosemary Tanner inquired when the last taxi fare increase was. Mr. Rickert reported that it was approximately three years ago.

Ms. Tanner also inquired how they determined the increase amounts currently proposed. Mr. Rickert explained that all the taxi companies in Stratford discussed operating expenses incurred and settled on the proposed amounts. Stratford does have a flat-rate system and always seems to have slightly lower rates than surrounding areas.

Ms. Tanner inquired if there were any statistics to support the nearly 20% increase? Mr. Rickert stated that they are looking at this as an industry agreement within the City and that is what they the owners have decided is appropriate at this time. They have taken into consideration rising costs for fuel and insurance and an upcoming increase to the minimum wage, in order for the companies to continue to operate and remain profitable.

Tim Doherty suggested the Board will contact Mr. Rickert after the May meeting to allow for Board members to review the proposal. Dan Mathieson requested the item be listed on the May 18, 2022 agenda for the Board to consider the request. He also requested to advertise the rate increase to notify the public and give them the opportunity to provide input.

Brad Rickert stated that he sees the precedent in the procedure to advertise and seek public feedback, however he feels that as a business owner, it is not a public matter. As individual company owners, they are all private enterprises and the Board cannot regulate their business expenses. They have come to the Board as an industry to make a recommendation they have agreed to, in order to continue to operate in the City.

Dan Mathison noted however, that taxi companies require licences approved by the Stratford Police Services Board in order to operate their business in the City of Stratford. The taxi companies submit a recommendation for fare increases, the Board considers the recommendation and it is up to the Board to approve the fares. The Board is aware of the increased expenses, however as a public body, they have an obligation to allow public consultation. It does not mean the request will not go forward, it means the public gets an opportunity to know that the rate is being considered to change from \$11.50 to \$14.00.

Dan Mathison thanked Mr. Rickert for his presentation to the Board. The City will advertise the proposed increase to allow for written submissions from the public. The Board will contact Mr. Rickert with a final decision after the May meeting.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

None.

7. Receipt of Monthly Statistical Reports – March 2022

Inspector Taylor reviewed the Statistical Reports with the Board for March with respect to Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South and answered questions.

7.1 Stratford

There were 1466 calls for service, 89 e-tickets were issued, 75 warnings, 47 mental health related calls and 29 domestic related occurrences.

Sexual offenses rose from 2 in February to 7 in March, 3 of them were historical in nature and 2 charges were laid and 4 still under investigation. There were 18 mischief calls in March, 4 vehicles were damaged after thefts.

7.2 St Marys

There were 231 calls for service, 37 e-tickets issued. Calls for service remained similar to February, with 75 charges laid in March.

There were 5 mischief calls, 3 were for cut locks at the landfill site and some of the e-waste was taken.

7.3 Perth South

There were 165 calls for service, 69 e-tickets were issued. Charges laid were up significantly to 80.

There were 3 break and enter calls in March. All 3 were sheds entered with locks cut.

7.4 Crime Stoppers Report

No report for March 2022.

MOTION by Graham Bunting | Steve Cousins
That the Monthly Statistic Reports for March 2022 be received as presented. Carried.

8. Approval of Monthly Accounts

Chief Skinner reported that they are 25% though the calendar year and Police Services has spent 26% of their budget. Monthly wage expenses for February were higher than the same period last year in part due to illness and injury related absenteeism, resulting in some increase in overtime expenses to meet minimum staffing compliment. Some internal alterations have been made in the interim to cover shift shortages.

MOTION by Tim Doherty | Rosemary Tanner
That the monthly accounts for March 2022 be approved. Carried.

9. Body Worn Cameras Update

The Deputy Chief advised that the body worn cameras may be deployed as early as next week and all training is now complete.

10. Police Association Business

There was no Police Association business to discuss.

11. Public Complaints

Chief Skinner reported there was one new public complaint received and Deputy Chief Foster was able to facilitate a mediated discussion with the complainant and the officers involved, resulting in an informal resolution to that complaint.

12. Correspondence

There were no questions or discussion regarding the correspondence received.

13. Consent Items

MOTION by Graham Bunting | Rosemary Tanner
That on the recommendation of the Chief, Charlene Rose Edwards (City Cab) and Bradley James Seary (Stratford Taxi) be approved for a taxi license. Carried.

14. New Business

There was no new business to report.

15. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.

16. Adjournment

Motion by Tim Doherty | Steve Cousins

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 at 4:57 p.m.

"Dan Mathieson"

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Dan Mathieson - Chair