

# STRATFORD POLICE SERVICES BOARD

A meeting of the Stratford Police Services Board was held on the 14th day of December 2022, at the Stratford Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room.

**PRESENT:** Tim Doherty (Chair), Rosemary Tanner, Martin Ritsma, Harjinder Nijjar, Chief Greg Skinner, Deputy Chief Gerry Foster, Inspector Mark Taylor, Inspector Jason Clarke, Casey Riehl (Executive Assistant), Galen Simmons (Beacon Herald)

## MINUTES

### 1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and welcomed new members Mayor Martin Ritsma and Councillor Harjinder Nijjar.

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

New Business - Update on December Zone 5 OAPSB Meeting - Rosemary Tanner

### 3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

### 4. Adoption of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 6, 2022

**MOTION by** Rosemary Tanner | Martin Ritsma

**That the minutes of the regular meeting of October 6, 2022, be adopted as presented. Carried.**

### 5. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations

None scheduled.

### 6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

#### 6.1 30% by 2030 Report

Chief Skinner reviewed the proposal to consider participation in the 30 by 30 initiative, to increase the percentage of female sworn officers in the Police Service to 30% by the year 2030. The program is primarily focused on increasing the number of female recruits or increasing the recruit classes per police service to 30% female. This does not necessarily apply to Stratford, as they have so few individual members in recruit classes. They could transfer that 30 by 30 over to the Police Service more broadly, rather than just recruits. The initiative was first championed through the New York University School of Law and the National Association of Women in Law Enforcement Executives. There are over 70 Police Services, including Canadian Police Services, who have pledged their commitment to the initiatives. The goal of the 30 by 30 initiative is to ensure that policing agencies, policies and cultures support the success of

diverse officers and improve the representation of women in policing to 30% by 2030.

Stratford Police Service currently has 65 sworn positions:

- 49 Constables
- 6 Sergeants
- 5 Staff Sergeants
- 2 Inspectors
- 1 Chief
- 1 Deputy Chief

Of those 65 positions, 13 are held by females, which equates to 20% overall. All positions held by females are constables, which equates to 26% of constables being female. There are no females in the 15 supervisory positions. Between now and 2030 there are 12 members who meet their earliest eligible retirement date. Of those 12 retirements, 5 relate to supervisory positions.

In order for the Stratford Police Service to reach the 30 by 30 target, two of the projected retirements would have to be females. Seven of the 12 projected retirements would have to be filled by female candidates. Currently there is one female constable with a promotional credit who is eligible for promotion to sergeant. One female constable requested to write the Ontario Police promotional exam.

There will be some financial investment necessary by way of recruitment materials and attendance at police recruitment activities at local college and university campuses. However, the cost would be minimal and easily managed within the existing funding envelope of the Police Service.

The proposed direction will be to develop a targeted recruitment program to attract candidates from diverse backgrounds, amend vacancy advertisements to include language prioritizing adversity and demonstrating a preference towards higher education, review the current promotional process to promote diversity within the supervisory ranks of the service.

Chief Skinner's recommendation is to adopt the goals of the 30 by 30 initiative by actively recruiting females to fill two of the next 12 vacancies within the Service. He also noted that if any current female officers leave the service, these numbers will need to be increased beyond two.

**MOTION by** Rosemary Tanner | Martin Ritsma

**That the Stratford Police Services Board supports the 30 by 30 proposal, as presented by Chief Skinner, that minimally two (2) of the next twelve (12) vacancies hired by the Stratford Police Service will be female. Carried**

## 6.2 Policy Review

Chief Skinner reported that the senior management team for the Stratford Police Service met with Dave Preston, who is a retired Chief of the Saugeen Shores Police Service. After retiring he served as part of an auditing unit to review policies and procedures of police services to make sure they are adequate and effective and in compliance with the expectation of the Ministry. It has been some time since Stratford's policies and procedures have been reviewed. In light of many other police services hiring Mr. Preston to do their reviews, Chief Skinner recommends Stratford engage Mr. Preston to review Stratford's and update accordingly. In addition, he has committed to updating all policies, should there be a change in the Police Service Act.

Mr. Preston provide Stratford with a presentation and committed that the cost would be no more than \$20,000.00. After completing Owen Sound, Hanover, Saugeen Shores, and West Grey, he will for the most part be able to do a direct overlay, with a few exceptions. Chief Skinner recommends engaging the Community Equity Action Team, whose mandate is in part to look at policies and procedures from a diversity lens, that they be engaged on those policies that are relevant to CEAT's mandate. Deputy Chief Foster noted that this cost has been built into the 2023 budget pending the Board's support.

**MOTION by** Rosemary Tanner | Harjinder Nijjar  
**That the Stratford Police Services Board supports hiring Mr. Dave Preston to undertake a review of the current Stratford Police Service policies and procedures, and to spend up to a maximum of \$20,000.00 from the 2023 budget. Carried**

## 7. Receipt of Monthly Statistical Reports – October/November 2022

Board members received the statistical reports for October and November. Inspector Clarke reviewed the reports with the Board with respect to Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South and answered questions.

### 7.1 Stratford (October)

There were 1557 calls for service, with 227 charges laid. There was one hate/bias incident. There was an increase from 47 to 66 mental health related calls from September to October and no suicides in October. There were two overdoses. There were 45 domestic related calls, which was very similar to last month and the same month last year. There were 6 assaults, down from 9 last month. There was an increase from 10 to 19 break and enters from September to October. There were 5 impaired by alcohol charges in October. There were 45 MVC personal injuries and 41 E-tickets issued.

### Stratford (November)

There were 1482 calls for service, with 288 charges laid. There were 3 hate/bias incidents and mental health related calls were down to 52 from 68 the previous month. There were 2 overdoses reported. There were 34

domestic violence related occurrences. Assaults in Stratford rose to 12, from 6 the previous month. Sex offences also rose to 5 from 1 the previous month. Break and enters dropped to 4 from 19 in October. There were 2 impaired by drug charges laid and 5 impaired by alcohol charges laid. There were a total of 79 MVC's for the month, 60 of those were property damage only. The top E-ticket charge laid in November was for no current validated permit, as people have not been registering their plates since Covid.

#### 7.2 St Marys (October)

There were 226 calls for service, with 46 charges laid. There were hate/bias incidents remained at 0. There were 4 mental related calls and 7 domestic related calls. There were 4 assault occurrences, up from 0 the previous month. There were 9 MVC's in during the month of October. Speeding remains the highest of the E-tickets issued, with 22.

#### St. Marys (November)

There were 242 calls for service, with 34 charges laid. There was 1 mental health related report and 6 domestic related occurrences. Assaults dropped to 1, from 4 the previous month. There was 1 impaired by alcohol charge. MVC's rose to 14, up from 9 the previous month. Speeding was the top infraction in St. Marys with 14 E-tickets issued.

#### 7.3 Perth South (October)

There were 128 calls for service and 60 charges laid. There were no hate/bias incidents reported during October. There were 2 mental health related reports and 2 domestic related occurrences. There were no reports of violent crime and drug/alcohol crime. There were 2 reports of property crime (auto thefts). There were 9 MVC's reported and there were 44 speeding infractions.

#### Perth South (November)

There were 173 calls for service with 65 total charges laid. There was 1 mental health report and 5 domestic related occurrences. There was 1 auto theft reported. All numbers remain at zero for violent crimes. There was 1 impaired by alcohol charge laid. There were 26 MVC's for the month of November, 21 were property damage only. Speeding was the top E-ticket issued with 28.

Chief Skinner brought to the Board's attention the increase in weapons being seized. Producing weapons with 3D printers, known as "ghost guns," has become an increasing problem across Canada. There have been 3 3D printers seized by SPS members, along with weapons that have been made. Increasing numbers of 3D printers and weapons are also be seized at the borders. 3D printers have become relatively inexpensive, making them accessible to anybody to import to Canada and used for this type of criminal behavior.

Chief Skinner also stated of the 5 sexual assaults reported in November, the vast majority are historic in nature. Victims are coming forward years after the incident has taken place. Those incidents are very difficult to investigate and very difficult for the Crown to prosecute. The victims

generally know their assailants and there are many familial relationships involved in those sexual assaults.

7.4 Crime Stoppers Report  
No reports submitted.

**MOTION by** Rosemary Tanner | Harjinder Nijjar  
**That the Monthly Statistical Reports for October and November 2022 be received as presented. Carried.**

8. Approval of Monthly Accounts (October/November 2022)

Chief Skinner reviewed the Monthly Statement of Operations up until November 30, 2022. To date the Service has spent 87.92% of their budget, which leave a surplus of approximately \$440,000.00. For the first 11 months of the year, they have spent on average \$962,000.00. They are currently showing a positive variance of \$1,500,000.00. The month of December will also include the annual payout of banked overtime for the Service, which will be approximately \$97,000.00. Provincial grants are portioned on a provincial fiscal year basis, which is April to March, while the City of Stratford's fiscal year is the calendar year. This means that some money expended in 2022, in relation to those grants, will show up in the books in the first quarter of 2023 from the province. The projected surplus of \$440,000.00 is right now a conservative estimate. They are currently working with the City's Finance Department on a plan to allow a portion of the annual surplus to remain in a reserve account with the Police Service for future capital expenditures, including building-related issues.

G231-2200-3180 (Vehicle – Fuel) – Will be spending approximately \$10,000.00 less on fuel compared to a year ago, attributed to some of the fleet converted over to hybrid vehicles. 10 of the 12 marked vehicles will be hybrid by the end of 2022.

G-231-2200-4090 (Legal) – Legal expenses are 213% overspent due to a number of issues that have caused the Service to seek legal advice and as a result of legal engagement in those investigations and processes, legal fees have spiked over the last year. They do not anticipate this will be an ongoing cost and that this year was an anomaly not a trend.

**MOTION by** Martin Ritsma | Rosemary Tanner  
**That the monthly accounts for September-November 2022 be approved. Carried.**

9. Body Worn Cameras Update

Deputy Chief Foster reported that all officers are wearing body cameras in the field. They are in the final processes to identify new members to assume special constable duties to address the issues of redaction and processing the visual evidence, hopefully by January 2023. Chief Skinner spoke to the Assistant Crown regarding body worn camera video evidence and she stated she was amazed at the degree of understanding now within the judiciary and crown council with respect to the types of escalated volatile incidents that the officers are engaged in on a daily basis. The body-worn camera footage is valuable evidence.

10. Police Association Business

There was no Police Association business to discuss.

11. Public Complaints – Chief Skinner

There have been three new public complaints made. Two of those complaints were deemed to not be in the public interest to refer for investigation and have been closed by the OIPRD. One complaint has been assigned to investigation by the OIPRD and they have opted to send that file to the OPP for independent investigation and the investigation is underway. The last complaint was assigned for investigation and retained by the SPS, the investigation has been completed and the file report is with the Chief for sign off. The result of the investigation indicates that there is no misconduct on the part of the officers involved. The allegations involved uncivil behavior and unnecessary use of force. The investigation involved information provided from independent third-party witnesses and body-worn camera footage of the incident. Once the investigation is signed off on, the complainant will have the opportunity to appeal the decision through the OIPRD. In 2021 there were a total of 19 complaints received from the public and managed by the OIPRD. At the January meeting, the Chief will provide the year-end total for 2022 for comparison.

12. Correspondence

Chief Skinner noted that the annual report for the risk driven tracking database is regarding situation tables. There is a situation table currently running in Huron and Perth Counties. John Ritz from Social Services and MacGregor Austin-Olson from the Police Services are Co-Chairing the Huron-Perth situation table.

Deputy Chief Foster reported that the Ministry has announced the opportunity for Police Services and Municipalities to apply for funding for Next Gen 9-1-1. The funding application is due in by January 10, 2023 and the SPS will strive to have an application submitted. Costs have not yet been determined and they hope to have the figures prior to the submittal date. The funding will cover some costs from 2022, which were minimal. In order to access funds for 2023 and 2023 you must make an application.

Tim Doherty noted that the CEAT meeting notes were included in member's agenda package and will continue to be included moving forward.

13. Consent Items

**MOTION by** Martin Ritsma | Rosemary Tanner

**That on the recommendation of the Chief, Miteshkumar Patel (Stratford Taxi), Ruth McKay (Stratford Taxi), Robert E. Matheson (Stratford Taxi), Richard Rymer (City Cab Inc.) and Andrew Neil Johnston (Radio Cab) be approved for a taxi license. Carried.**

Chief Skinner noted that there are approximately 100 licensed taxi drivers in the City of Stratford.

## 14. New Business

### 14.1 Zone 5 Meeting Update

Rosemary Tanner updated the Board on the December 13, 2022 meeting hosted by Waterloo Regional. Beth Houston from Waterloo Regional shared a crisis call diversion presentation. She also outlined the criteria for suitable diversion and will provide information. There is a currently a grant pilot program running that was established in 2022.

The next Zone 5 meeting is scheduled for March 2023.

### 14.2 School Bus Arm Cameras (East Ferris Municipality)

Martin Ritsma inquired if the issue of vehicles passing school buses while stopped with their flashing red lights on and possibly installing cameras has been discussed. Chief Skinner informed the Board that there are some initiatives started within Ontario support this, stemming from the tragic death of a 5-year-old child who was hit by a car that didn't stop for his bus with the arm down. He stated that the number of vehicles passing buses with their arms out is astronomical. It is getting worse, rather than better. The next initiative is to look at putting cameras on the arms of buses. They are looking for the support of PSB's across the province and to get the Provincial Government involved in making this a mandatory requirement for all buses. Chief Skinner stated that locally, they have also been experiencing a higher number of incidences of complaints of people passing buses while stopped and off-loading children, which is very concerning. Public education will play a huge part. Legislation does not allow to charge the owner of a motor vehicle for the offence, the driver must be identified. Part-time policing may allow the Service to assign officers to particular areas to proactively do this enhanced visibility and enforcement.

## 15. Next Meeting Dates:

January 18, 2023 - 4:30 p.m.

February 15, 2023 – 4:30 p.m.

March 15, 2023 – 4:30 p.m.

April 19, 2023 – 4:30 p.m.

May 17, 2023 – 4:30 p.m.

June 21, 2023 – 4:30 p.m.

## 16. Adjournment

**Motion by** Rosemary Tanner | Martin Ritsma

**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 5:38 p.m.

“Tim Doherty”