

STRATFORD POLICE SERVICES BOARD

A meeting of the Stratford Police Services Board was held on the 6th day of October 2022, at the Stratford Rotary Complex – Tim Taylor Lounge.

PRESENT: Tim Doherty (Chair), Dan Mathieson, Graham Bunting, Rosemary Tanner, Chief Greg Skinner, Deputy Chief Gerry Foster, Inspector Mark Taylor, Inspector Jason Clarke, Kim McElroy (Director of Social Services), John Ritz (Homelessness & Housing Stability Supervisor), Galen Simmons (Beacon Herald), 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

MOTION by Graham Bunting | Rosemary Tanner
That the agenda for October 6, 2022 be approved with the addition of an Update on OAPSB Zone 5 Meeting (Rosemary Tanner) and Item 8.1 (Service Complaints) from the In-Camera Agenda be moved to the Open Session Agenda as per Chief Skinner. Carried.

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

4. Adoption of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 22, 2022

MOTION by Rosemary Tanner | Dan Mathieson
That the minutes of the regular meeting of June 22, 2022, be adopted as presented. Carried.

5. Hearings of Deputations and Presentations

5.1 Homelessness and Encampment Response – Kim McElroy/John Ritz

Kim McElroy and John Ritz presented their coordinated response for those unsheltered in Perth County. They have seen an increase in unsheltered homelessness, also known as visible homelessness, in their service manager area (City of Stratford, Perth County and St. Marys). There are currently 147 individuals identifying as homeless – 90 high acuity (long term homelessness and complex needs), 49 with mid acuity and 8 who are low acuity. Ms. McElroy stressed that most people do not choose to be homeless and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, unsafe, and stressful.

Experiences of homelessness are categorized into four typologies including households who are: Unsheltered, Emergency Sheltered, Provisionally Accommodated and At-Risk of Homelessness.

In Stratford there is an increase in urban encampments, where individuals are residing within the downtown city core. There are also encampments in the bushes in the outskirts of Stratford as well. Addressing encampments cannot be a substitute for addressing homelessness. The only long-term solution to this problem of unsheltered homelessness is permanent affordable housing, including supportive housing. Encampments are a symptom of our community's problem of unsheltered homelessness. It is important to take a human rights lens-based approach in responding to encampments.

The Social Services Department operates a housing-focused emergency accommodations program utilizing local motels for individuals and families (age 25+) in need of emergency shelter.

Shelterlink provides emergency shelter services for youth in need; ages 16-24.

Social Services Outreach staff do proactive street outreach to individuals sleeping rough as well as responding to information provided by citizens and businesses regarding possible encampments or individuals living unsheltered.

The Social Services Department has funded Choices for Change to deliver a housing-focused street outreach program to provide increased supports for those unsheltered.

Encampments and urban camping in the downtown core requires a complex response to ensure the individuals are supported and the voices of concerned business and citizens are heard. The coordinated response involves ensuring coordination amongst service providers, proactive outreach and connection of unsheltered individuals to services, which includes, tending to basic needs, cleaning and maintenance of identified encampments and homelessness prevention casework to ensure residents are supported and transitioned to safe and suitable accommodations when available.

Coordination involves action and support from: Social Services Department, Stratford Police, OPP, Paramedics and Fire, Infrastructure and Development, Community Services, Corporate Services, Community Partners and Social Service Agencies (Choices for Change, Shelterlink, Optimism Place).

The Social Services Department is responsible for coordination of support amongst service providers for individuals sleeping rough. This includes:

Homelessness prevention and housing stability services, emergency accommodations program, proactive outreach to unsheltered individuals and provision of basic needs and financial support.

Once an encampment or individual sleeping rough is identified, people can contact the City of Stratford Social Services Department by calling 519-271-3773 ext. 200 and advise you are reporting an encampment. City staff will take the appropriate information including location/address, a physical description of the site, number of individuals or description of individuals at site and will request photos (if they are available). Staff will follow-up with the caller if additional details are required or permission to access the location of the encampment is needed. Other City departments, Police and partner agencies will provide details regarding active or potential encampments to Social Services to ensure a coordinated and appropriate response.

Outreach staff complete regular walk-about of known encampment locations to connect with individuals currently living unsheltered. Regularity of visits depends on individual case plan and willingness of individual to engage with Social Services staff. When an individual is unsheltered and the Outreach team are made aware, they respond accordingly. When made aware of an encampment through any channel (Public complaint, Police contact, Partner agency), Social Services staff map the location/site and either attend within 72 hours of being notified or contact Choices for Change Outreach staff to attend the location.

When a member of an outreach team attends, they will:
Attempt to contact the individual residing at the encampment, varying time of day and day of the week if they are unsuccessful with initial contact.

Using a Housing First approach, the Social Services team and partner agencies will continue to work toward more permanent housing solutions for individuals living unsheltered.

Councillor Bunting inquired what the level of involvement is for the OPP, compared to the Stratford Police? Kim McElroy explained that this data is for Stratford centric, but they are having step by step issues in the Listowel area and she has presented to the Listowel Council as well. The OPP would be involved in this area.

Rosemary Tanner inquired if the numbers of homelessness are rising are falling? Ms. McElroy stated that they are seeing increased complexities in homelessness and the numbers are going up. Mr. Ritz stated that the pandemic has increased homelessness.

Councillor Bunting stated that Stratford has applied for grants in the past to assist with homelessness and have been unsuccessful. Are they aware

of any assistance coming from the government? Ms. McElroy stated that they apply for every initiative that comes through and will continue to do so.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1 30% by 2030 Report – Chief Skinner – *Deferred to next meeting*

6.2 Policy Review – Chief Skinner – *Deferred to next meeting*

7. Receipt of Monthly Statistical Reports – August 2022

Board members received the statistical reports for June/July/August. Inspector Taylor reviewed the most recent reports from August with the Board with respect to Stratford, St. Marys and Perth South and answered questions.

7.1 Stratford

There were 1584 calls for service, with 346 charges laid. There were 37 thefts under in August, which is a concerning increase. There were 9 bicycles stolen and 9 motor vehicles broken into. There were 6 arrests made and 6 trespass notices out of the 37 occurrences. 9 of the calls were for one individual who is sleeping rough. The Service is also seeing a large increase in items being stolen off of people's front porches. There were 5 calls for items stolen off porches.

7.2 St Marys

There were 241 calls for service, with 41 charges laid. There were 5 fraud incidents. There was a loss of \$5,000.00 on a Facebook fraud. There were 2 other Facebook attempts, with no losses. A debit card was stolen and items were purchased.

7.3 Perth South

There were 230 calls for service and 115 charges laid. There were no particularly elevated levels of calls from the previous months.

Tim Doherty stated that the total mental health calls for the year are trending down from 731 in 2021 to 378 so far this year. Inspector Taylor noted that the support they receive from McGregor Austin-Olsen has greatly impacted this number.

Tim Doherty noted under the recruitment section of the reports, an experienced constable has been hired and ongoing recruitment is taking place. Constable Taylor reported that yes, an experienced officer from Woodstock has been hired and there are some special constable and dispatch positions to be filled due to various reasons.

**MOTION by Graham Bunting | Dan Mathieson
That the Monthly Statistical Reports for June, July and August
2022 be received as presented. Carried.**

7.4 Crime Stoppers Report

Chief Skinner reviewed the Crime Stoppers reports from May–August 2022. There were 3 Stratford Police Service tips received in May – one drug related and two intelligence-related. Domestic calls were the highest for Huron-Perth with 12 in May. In June there were 13 new tips received – two were drug related and 11 were intelligence related. Drug and criminal code tips were the highest overall for Huron-Perth each with (6) of each. In July, Stratford had 4 new tips come in – one was drug related and three were intelligence related. Drug and theft were the highest tips they received in July. In August, there were 4 new tips received by Stratford – one drug related and three intelligence-related. The highest tips by type for Huron-Perth were drug related.

Chief Skinner noted that most people do not collect the reward money. People do not necessarily report the crimes to collect the reward money, they do it for the safety of the community.

8. Approval of Monthly Accounts (June-August 2022)

Chief Skinner reported that the Police Services has spent \$8,160,892.00 to the end of August, which is 67.46% of their annual budget allocation. They have spent on average approximately \$1,000,000.00 per month, which is right on target for the year. He did note that the grant money that the Service has or will be receiving throughout the year has not been fully accounted for in the reports and will be reconciled at year end. Until then, this will impact an accurate financial snapshot. One of the grants that the Service was successful in receiving was to support the implementation of the part-time policing program. They have not yet been able to implement the program, however he has been given approval to use the grant money for year one to increase the police visibility in areas of concern using full-time members.

Line 2206-3050 (Materials – Law Enforcement) – This line is at 145% spent due to the inclusion of transcribing investigations for court, replenishing of ammunition for training purposes and noise-reducing paneling in interview rooms.

Line 2208-3030 (Materials – CISO Projects/Investigations) – This line is at 195% spent, which is directly related to the expenditures and participation in a joint forces grant (digital device access of information and extraction). Line 2208-1130 (Ontario Grants) will directly offset this amount.

**MOTION by Graham Bunting | Dan Mathieson
That the monthly accounts for June-August 2022 be approved. Carried.**

9. Body Worn Cameras Update

Deputy Chief Foster reported that all members on front-line operations are now wearing body cameras while on duty. Overall the program has been going very well. There have been issues recruiting people to do the redacting and processing the video footage evidence. They are continuing to look at alternatives to provide staffing for this process, as opposed to officers being taken away from their front-line duties to do it.

Deputy Chief Foster stated that there is an opportunity to expand to in-car video with a cruiser mounting video system.

10. Police Association Business

There was no Police Association business to discuss.

11. Public Complaints

Chief Skinner reported that there were two service complaints received.

The first one was a traffic stop which revealed the driver was prohibited from driving and the vehicle was impounded for 45 days. The driver was not the owner of the vehicle. The owner alleged the vehicle was borrowed by a friend and the vehicle must have then been stolen by the prohibited driver. The owner was given the opportunity to provide a statement regarding the theft of the vehicle but refused to participate in any further investigation. The complaint itself revolved around the hardship the vehicle owner endured as a result of the impoundment of the vehicle. The investigation of the service complaint revealed that the appropriate action was taken by the officers involved and that the law and procedures were followed properly. The service complaint was therefore unsubstantiated.

The second complaint was an assault call involving a parent and child. The officers completed a thorough investigation and as a result of the conflicting versions of the events and consumption of intoxicants, the officers were unable to develop reasonable or probable grounds that an offence had taken place. Approximately 6 months after the call, one of the involved parties complained that numerous calls to the investigating officer had gone un-responded to, resulting in a service complaint. During the course of the complaint investigation, the investigator made numerous attempts to contact the complainant without success. There was no evidence that the complainant had called and left a message for the investigating officer or that they had called to speak with the officer's supervisor. It was therefore determined that the complaint was unsubstantiated. The complaint investigation did reveal that the domestic violence investigator did not have an opportunity to follow up on this occurrence, which is standard operating procedure. This is being rectified for future investigations.

There were five public complaints that came in over the course of the summer. Four of the complaints were screened out by the OIPRD because there were criminal charges before the court at the time. At any point in time after the conclusion of the court process, the complaints can be re-activated and potentially be assigned for investigation by the OIPRD. The last complaint was a public complaint by someone accused of sexual assault. The accused complained that the investigating officer did not complete a thorough investigation, made an illegal arrest and did not afford the accused to make a personal phone call while in custody. The criminal charges were withdrawn by the crown at the time of the trial. However, the investigation into the complaint revealed the officers completed a thorough investigation, developed reasonable and probable grounds to lay the criminal charge and provided the accused the opportunity to call a lawyer as required. Subsequently, the allegations against the officers were unsubstantiated.

12. Correspondence

There were no questions or discussion regarding the correspondence received.

13. Consent Items

MOTION by Rosemary Tanner | Graham Bunting
That on the recommendation of the Chief, Murray R. Patterson (Aunt Gail's Taxi), Wesley Allan Merner (City Cab), Wayne Alexander Wreford (Radio Cab) and Francesco (Frank) Mattucci (City Cab) be approved for a taxi license. Carried.

14. New Business

14.1 Automated License Plate Reader Grant & Implementation

Deputy Chief Foster reported that in an effort to reduce the impact of vehicles not requiring license plate stickers, provincial grants have been provided to various police services across the Province to acquire ALPR technology for vehicles. Stratford has been able to apply for \$169,000.00 from the Province to outfit as many as 9 of their 12 front line vehicles. The grant however has not fully been approved yet by the Ministry, but they anticipate it will be. The solution that Stratford has chosen to go with will be a marriage between the ALPR technology with in-car radio. The system will scan license plates to identify to the officer in the car if the vehicle is registered and the system will also operate as an in-car video system.

14.2 Update from Sept. 13, 2022 OAPSB Zone 5 Meeting – Rosemary Tanner

Rosemary Tanner updated the Board on the latest Zone 5 OAPSB meeting. At the meeting they announced the new Executive Director for the OAPSB, Lisa Darling. Ms. Tanner reviewed Ms. Darling's biography and will provide a hard copy to members with the next agenda package. At the Zone 5 meeting, Duane Sprague provided an update on the Community Safety and Policing Act and June 2023 is the optimistic target date for release. Some of

the new items the OAPSB is working on is an orientation template for new Board members, a new media platform and website and refresh the layout of the roles of Boards in Section 10.

15. Next Meeting Date – October 19, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. – Tim Taylor Lounge (Rotary)

16. Adjournment

Motion by Graham Bunting | Rosemary Tanner

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 5:22 p.m.

“Tim Doherty”

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Tim Doherty - Chair