

June 6, 2024

STELLARTON, NOVA SCOTIA

MEETING

A regular scheduled meeting of the Stellarton Police Commission was held on Thursday, June 6, 2024, at 2:30 pm in the large committee room, Town Hall.

PRESENT

Chairman B. Knight, Comm P. Kay, Comm P. Lloyd, Comm D. Taylor, Comm S. Campbell, Chief M. Hobeck, Insp. C. Pond, and CAO S. Higdon.

REGRETS

Mayor MacGillivray

AGENDA

CAO S Higdon added two items to the agenda: letter from the Department of Justice and the agreement for the sharing of the Chief of Police. Chairman Knight stated that the letter would be on the agenda as 8(a) and the agreement for Chief of Police 4(a). Chairman Knight then asked for a motion to approve the agenda with the additions. Comm S. Campbell made a motion that the agenda be approved. Seconded by Comm D. Taylor.

Motion Carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Chairman Knight asked if there were any discrepancies regarding the Minutes of the May 16th, 2024, Police Commission meeting, hearing none, asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Comm D. Taylor made a motion that the minutes be approved. Seconded by Comm P. Lloyd. **Motion Carried.**

Business Arising from the Minutes

Comm D. Taylor asked for an update on Speed Bumps. CAO S. Higdon stated that Town Council was not in favor of Speed Bumps. Comm D. Taylor asked for an update on the lowering of speed limits within the Town. CAO S. Higdon responded that that as the traffic authority for the town, Chief Hobeck had contacted the province and that a study would need to take place, and this would be presented to Town Council to see if they were in favor of implementing.

Re: Recruiting, Chief Hobeck noted he had met with Brenda MacKay, and they discussed adding one officer per shift which would not add to the 13 now in the budget, only that all

would be considered full time. This cost was estimated to be between \$65,000 and \$75,000. CAO S Higdon stated that from an operational point, if this is what is needed then this is what would take place, adding a recommendation from the Commission would go to Council. A motion was made by D. Taylor that this be the recommendation. Seconded by Comm P. Kay and Comm P. Lloyd. **Motion Carried.** CAO S. Higdon added that this would go before the Council in July. Chairman Knight stated that he thought this to be a positive move regarding recruitment.

Monthly Activity Report

Chairman Knight asked Commission members if they had any questions on the Monthly Activity Report. Comm D. Taylor asked if there was any movement on mental health related calls for assistance. Chairman Knight responded that he was on a committee representing Stellarton and had several meetings with the Health Authority and that things were happening. CAO Higdon added that she, Comm D. MacGillivray and Comm S. Campbell had attended an information session regarding mental health and that Cst Gabe Vandergrift would present his training later in the meeting. Comm P. Lloyd asked about the high number of assaults, assault with a weapon, suspicious persons, etc., asking if these were persons residing within the town, Insp Pond responded that they were, adding the assault and assault with a weapon were an isolated incident. Comm D. Taylor added that there were a high number of vehicle thefts. A discussion was then held about available AED devices available in the town. Comm D Taylor recommended that maybe one could be purchased each year. Comm D. Taylor asked about the new drug on the street called "Trank". Insp Pond responded that this drug was not an opioid, therefore did not respond to Narcan. Chairman Knight asked for a motion to approve the Monthly Activity Report. Comm S. Campbell made a motion that the Monthly Activity Report be accepted. Seconded by Comm P. Lloyd. **Motion Carried.**

Chief of Police Agreement with Westville

CAO S. Higdon reported that she and Chief Hobeck had met with CAO Scott Weir of the Town of Westville about the contract regarding the sharing of the Police Chief. CAO S. Higdon stated that this contract is similar to the previous contract held with Chief Donald Hussher. The contract starts on July 8th 2024. Chairman Knight asked for a motion to approve the contract between Westville and Stellarton. Comm D. Taylor made this

motion. Seconded by Comm P. Kay. **Motion Carried.** CAO S Higdon stated that this would be presented to the Council this coming Monday with a press release on Tuesday.

Police Commission Vacancy

CAO S. Higdon reported that there was one application received thus far and that this would be going to Council on June 10. Comm D. Taylor asked what the prerequisite was for membership. CAO S. Higdon stated there are no requirements other than be a resident and be above the age of 18. Comm D. Taylor then stated that as a board they should look at certain criteria. CAO S Higdon then stated that according to the Police Act they only have to reside in the town and have no criminal record, however applicants can be rejected by the Council.

Police Review- 1:1 meeting with the CAO

CAO S. Higdon read a letter from Minister Barbara Adams to Eldon MacDonald who is the President of the Nova Scotia Association of Police Governance. This letter discussed the current review being conducted by Deloitte. CAO S. Higdon stated that she was interviewed by Deloitte that morning from an administrative point of view, where she had informed them of the lack of cooperation from the Department of Justice.

Discussion was then held on various versions of community policing with Regional Policing being pushed by the Department of Justice. Pros and cons were discussed of the various policing scenarios.

Police Station

Chief Hobeck stated the options were discussed at the Committee of the Whole. It was reported that the RCMP will not be breaking ground in the business park this spring and it could be a couple of years. CAO had requested that other options be investigated for council consideration. Sharing of resources will be explored with Westville Police and the RCMP. Chief Hobeck reported that evidence storage has been an issue, but they were managing.

REMO

Comm D. Taylor brought up his concerns about what plans there are in the event of a fire, especially in Valley Woods, asking if there was a list of special needs individuals in that area. CAO S. Higdon stated that the province was not interested in composing a

vulnerable person's list, nor is REMO. CAO S. Higdon stated that having such a list would be a huge liability for the town, adding wildfires are a provincial responsibility.

Encampments

Comm D. Taylor asked if there was a policy on encampments, hearing that there was not, then asked if a policy was needed. Chairman Knight added that this was brought to Council and that they were not in favor of a bylaw. CAO S. Higdon stated that encampments can be removed from town property, but not from private or public land. Comm P. Lloyd asked if the current encampment was close to the walking trail. CAO S. Higdon stated that it was, however, was not visible from the walking trail.

CIT-Cst Gabe Vandergrift

Cst Vandergrift spoke to the Commission about the CIT training he had received in May that was hosted by the New Glasgow Regional Police. Cst Vandergrift stated that at the Police Academy they all received very basic mental health training, however this training was much more in depth. This training provided many resources that are not typically given to front line officers, adding this training allows health care professionals to release additional health information to CIT trained officers. Cst Vandergrift stated that front line health professionals take concerns of CIT trained officers a bit more seriously than those who had not received this training. Comm D. Taylor asked Cst Vandergrift if training was available so officers could become CIT trainers. Cst Vandergrift responded that this was not available at this time, however he was able to pass along to other officers training information he had received as well as contacts for additional assistance.

Next Meeting July 4, 2024, at 2:30pm

Adjourned Meeting adjourned