

December 3, 2024

STELLARTON, NOVA SCOTIA

MEETING

A regular scheduled meeting of the Stellarton Police Commission was held on Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 5:30 pm in the large committee room, Town Hall.

PRESENT

Mayor Darren Stroud, Comm P. Kay, Comm D. Taylor, Comm S. Campbell, Comm D. Guthro, Comm P. Lloyd, Comm G. Pentz, Chief Mark Hobeck, Insp Chris Pond and CAO S. Higdon.

Approval of Agenda

CAO S. Higdon stated that she would like to add two items to the agenda, The first being the DOJ meeting with provincial CAOs and the second being the YTD figures for the budget. CAO S. Higdon stated that the first item would come after the election of Vice-Chair. The second item to be Item #6. Comm P. Lloyd made a motion that the agenda be approved. Seconded by Comm D. Taylor. **Motion Carried.**

Approval of the Minutes

Comm D. Taylor made a motion that the minutes be approved. Seconded by Comm D. Guthro. **Motion Carried**

Election of Chair

Chief Hobeck asked if there were any nominations for the position of Chair of the Police Commission. Comm D. Taylor nominated Mayor Darren Stroud. He accepted the nomination. Seconded by Comm D. Guthro. Chief Hobeck asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Mayor Stroud was unanimously selected as the new Chair of the Stellarton Police Commission.

Election of Vice Chair

Chair D. Stroud asked if there were any nominations for Vice Chair of the Police Commission. Comm S. Campbell nominated Comm D. Taylor for the position. He accepted the nomination. Seconded by Comm D. Guthro. Chairman D. Stroud then asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, Comm D. Taylor was unanimously selected as Vice Chair of the Stellarton Police Commission which he accepted.

DOJ Meeting with CAOs.

CAO S. Higdon reported that this meeting was held earlier in the day virtually. This meeting was to provide an update to policing standards, policing audits and policing review. CAO Higdon stated that Hailey Crighton has addressed those present regarding the ministerial directive to meet or exceed the 39 standards within a year, adding there may be a need to amend these standards. Chris MacNeil spoke of the public safety audit function and how it worked. CAO Higdon also reported that there is Police Board training available for Commission members that Chief Hobeck could schedule if they wished. The police review is still proceeding with Deloitte which began after the Mass Casualty Commission. CAO Higdon added that the new Minister of Justice has not been announced due to the election and they are still somewhat in “limbo”. No decision has been made as to whether the report will be made public.

Budget Year to Date

CAO Higdon asked the Commission if they had any questions on the YTD which currently stood at 58%. Comm. D. Guthro asked what they were currently over budget on. Comm S. Higdon stated that they were currently over budget on salaries, supplies, IT/Admin and uniforms, adding the Chief would explain salaries. Insp Pond stated that there were a few issues with dispatch moving where certain things needed to be moved that required some expense. Insp Pond reported that the department was still waiting for a TMR radio that was sent from Motorola on November 3rd that still hasn't arrived. Chair D. Stroud asked why salaries could be up but benefits down. Chief Hobeck responded that this could be a term officer working for a full-time member or that it could be due to overtime where a salary was paid out, but no increase to benefits. Chairman Stroud asked about the number of crossing guards and their locations and the decrease in the amount spent on “Safe Communities”. Chief Hobeck responded that he did not have the breakdown from finance about this and that he would follow up.. Comm D. Guthro made a motion to approve the report. Seconded by Comm S. Cambell. **Motion Carried.**

Municipal Board of Police Commissioners

Commissioner D. Taylor stated that he had requested this item be placed on the agenda, adding this was for the benefit of new members and went on to state some of the procedures and responsibilities of board members and their roles within the Commission.

Business Arising from the Minutes

NSCC- Chief Hobeck reported that he had spoken to the principal (Maxine Mann) as well as the head of security at the school. They reported to the Chief that they had spoken to students about traffic and parking infractions. Both requested a school liaison officer from within the department. Chief Hobeck agreed to this request and will assign an officer to this position.

Monthly Activity Report November 2024

Chief Hobeck explained briefly to the new members of the commission the information breakdown within the report and the listed categories. CAO Higdon expressed her appreciation for Stellarton Officers stepping up and covering 14-2hour shifts selling poppies on behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion. Chief Hobeck then informed the Commission that officers Morrell, Holland and Sampson had recently completed the Mental Health Crisis Intervention Course in Truro and that there was now one trained officer per shift with this training. CAO Higdon asked Chief Hobeck if these officers were asked to participate or had they requested to be enrolled. Chief Hobeck responded, stating that an invitation was sent to all, with interested officers responding that they would like to participate and these three being chosen. D. Taylor stated that hopefully, this training will help keep repeated mental health calls down, as it will streamline help being sought through the Health Authority. Comm G. Pentz added that he felt that the Department of Justice needs to take a hard look at addiction in the province. Chairman Stroud asked how they measure to be able to substantiate the addiction problem. Chief Hobeck and Insp Pond stated that although the issues are known, it remains difficult to measure. At the request of CAO Higdon, Chief Hobeck explained to the Commission the role of the Integrated Street Crime Unit within the Community. A motion was made by Comm D. Taylor to accept the monthly activity report. Seconded by Comm D. Gouthro.

Motion Carried.

Gender Based Violence

Comm D. Taylor stated that he has requested this item be on the agenda as there were three reported murders within the month that were gender biased and wondered if there is anything additional that could be done as these occurrences seem to be escalating.

Insp Pond responded that the department participates in several programs dedicated to reducing gender-based violence.

Speed Control Old Foxbrook Road

Comm D. Taylor stated that this area has been an issue for quite some time, adding he has recently observed the “speed dampening” area on Angel Street in Westville and wondered if this could be done on Old Foxbrook Road. Chief Hobeck stated that on the recent traffic report, the sign at that location recorded an average speed of 31km/hr, adding that there were speeders, but the percentage was low. Comm P. Lloyd asked about reducing the speed limit on this street. Chief Hobeck stated that this could be done with the province’s permission but indicated that some people will speed no matter what the speed limit is. CAO stated that there is currently very little speeding at this location as indicated by the traffic sign report.

School Lockdown Drills

Comm D. Taylor asked if there were lockdown drills completed in the new NSCC residence. Chief Hobeck stated that they are not, being these were considered private residences, however the school is willing to do walkthroughs with police so they would know the layout of the area.

2025 Police Commission Schedule

A schedule was released to Commission members for meetings in 2025.

Next Meeting- January 2, 2025, at 530pm.

Adjournment