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May 29, 2020

Fred Kaustinen
Executive Director
Ontario Association of Police Services Boards

Via email: oapsb@oapsb.ca

Re: Norfolk County Police Services Board Motion – Contract OPP Staffing Shortfall

At their meeting of May 27, 2020 the Norfolk County Police Services Board passed Resolution No. 7 which reads as follows:

Preamble

In recent discussions with our Chief of Police (OPP Detachment Commander) Inspector Varga it has been reaffirmed that Norfolk has a staffing shortage of nine (9) officer positions and this is a recurring situation.

In conversations with the PSB Chair of Haldimand County it was confirmed that they have a serious staffing shortfall and are down to about 60% strength, with Norfolk supplementing with officers to fill shifts.

Brant County PSB Chair confirms that they too are suffering a staffing shortfall.

It has further been stated that the Western Region OPP have about 100 officer vacancies, with many retirements of senior ranks pending. At about \$100,000 per officer that is a salary lapse to the OPP Municipal Policing Bureau of about \$10,000,000. If other Regions are similarly short officers it could be a salary lapse of \$25 - 30 Million.

The true and more important, concern to municipalities is the extent of the staffing shortfall and its implications on frontline service and the subtle, undefined term "adequate and effective policing".

In recognition of the staff shortages, recent initiatives such as False Alarm By-Laws, 911 response and municipal By-Law enforcement reductions have attempted to move valuable officer time to the frontline of crime prevention and law enforcement.

Res No. 7.

WHEREAS it is confirmed and recognized that the OPP is suffering from problems of recruiting and other staffing administrative issues, including pending retirements; and

WHEREAS these problems are causing staffing shortages at the detachment level for OPP municipally contracted services; and

WHEREAS, it can be assumed that the staffing shortfall is predominant across Ontario with a resultant effect of lesser quality of service (fewer officers on the ground) and a significant salary lapse windfall to the OPP Municipal Policing Bureau; and

WHEREAS, the expected, anticipated response is that the undefined and incalculable metric of "adequate & effective policing" is being upheld; and

WHEREAS, unfortunately, there is NO definition of the term "adequate and effective" in either the existing or pending legislation; and

WHEREAS, having a significantly reduced complement of officers seems to still qualify as "adequate & effective policing"; and

WHEREAS, Calls For Service have been reduced significantly due to 911 calls and responses to municipal By-Laws and False Alarms,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards (OAPSB) and more specifically the Section 10 OPP Board members, convene to discuss these matters and be requested to:

Formally request the OPP Municipal Policing Bureau to provide information to determine the true staffing shortage across all municipal contracts and the resultant service level concerns, including any salary lapse;

Request statistics to verify the number of officer time (hours) diverted away from the 911 calls and, responses to municipal By-Laws and False Alarms;

Commence discussions to effectively return staffing to municipally accepted levels and compensate municipalities for the equivalent of the salary lapses, now and going forward; and

Have an open, transparent and frank discussion with the Ministry of the Solicitor General to find a definition of the term “adequate and effective policing” that is acceptable to and involves the municipal Police Service Boards.

We appreciate your attention to this important issue,



Andy Grozelle,
Norfolk County Clerk
On behalf of Chair Dennis Travale
Norfolk County Police Services Board

cc Chair Haley – Brant Police Services Board
via email heather.boyd@brant.ca
Chair Corbett – Haldimand Police Services Board
via email eeichenbaum@haldimandcounty.on.ca