



Minutes of the Police Services Review Committee

Place: Council Chambers

Date: Monday, September 9, 2019

Committee Members in Attendance: Deputy Mayor Rick Draper, CAO Rachel Jones, Councillor Dave Clark, Byron MacDonnell, David Hoffman, Donna Jewers – Department of Justice, S/Sgt Craig Learning - RCMP, Sgt. David Lilly - RCMP, Bobbi Jones – RCMP, Allison Matthews – RCMP and Linda Cloney (recorder)

Regrets: Mayor Patricia Stewart

A quorum was present throughout the meeting

1. Call to order

Chairman Rick Draper called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Q & A for Department of Justice and RCMP

- Why does Stewiacke pay significantly less for RCMP services than Oxford?

Response: Oxford had a higher amount and different types of calls than Stewiacke. Stewiacke pays for one member (resource), that one resource is part of a district policing model. The cost savings is based on what the community has decided they were willing to sacrifice.

- Are there some significant differences in the demographics between the two communities?

Response: A social economic demographic study would need to be done in order to answer this question. Stewiacke has accepted a standard of lower presence and visibility.

- What are the hours per shift for coverage in Oxford?

Response: 17 – 19 hours per day, and then its supplemented.

- How many members do Oxford pay for?

Response: Currently Oxford pays for 3 members

- Is the Town of Oxford paying for everything in the Oxford detachment boundary rather than the Town of Oxford boundaries?

Response: That question is in conflict of the way RCMP are operating here. Oxford is not only paying for the things that happen here in Oxford, Oxford is paying for the service of RCMP to be here in case something happens.

- Are we getting our proper allocation, even with our 2.75 members (resources)? Or is that still too many?

Response: The percentage of calls that occur in the municipality are 91% and the calls that occur in Oxford are 8.5%.

- From the presentation that was given to Council at the Municipality of the County of Cumberland Office, there was one scenario where Oxford would be looking at over \$100,000.00 savings.

Response: That was presented as one option. The Municipality of the County of Cumberland may be considering only part of the option. The third part of the option was if they close the Pugwash RCMP Office there would be a reduction of two resources. This would cause an increase in the boundary of Oxford that would result in a less cost percentage for Oxford.

2nd Response: The Municipality of the County of Cumberland is waiting for the Oxford Police Review to finish before they decide on their options.

- Does the Department of Justice fund 30% of the policing costs?

Response: Yes

- The Town of Oxford has 6.2% of the population, why does Oxford have 8.5% of the costs?

Response: The reason is because Oxford causes 8.4% of the workload and 8.5% of the crime.

- What is the main crime happening here in Oxford?

Response: Impaired dangerous driving and traffic are the main crimes in Oxford.

- If the Town of Oxford would like to see an adjustment of the type of work the RCMP are doing in the town, is that an option?

Response: Yes, with the Police Advisory Board they set up priorities at the beginning of the year.

- If council said they are really concerned about ATV traffic on our streets, would we bring that to the Police Advisory Board to reach out to the RCMP?

Response: Yes, the Police Advisory Board would communicate any issues or concerns that Council may have and the RCMP will investigate that.

- If Oxford would like to see an officer downtown on foot for 3 hours a week, could that fit into the structure that is set now?

Response: Yes, the annual performance plan is always living. During down times it's a great idea to have enhanced presence. Operational calls always come first.

- How do you feel things may be done differently? The RCMP have 5 detachments around the county, is there a way for more cohesion with the municipalities, is there a more efficient way to approach the policing needs?

Response: The district policing concept has always existed here and is working well; it has made some great improvements in the policing services. The RCMP are always trying to find efficiencies.

- How is the Trans-Canada Highway 104 policed?

Response: The Northern Corridor Traffic Services are dedicated to policing the Trans-Canada Highway 104.

- Is there any set RCMP contract for the Town of Oxford?

There is the Provincial Police Service Agreement that is a 20-year contract that is in place now till 2032.

- Where Oxford's two most calls for service are traffic related, one is impaired driving and the other is traffic, are we over policed?

Response: The actual calls for service for the Town of Oxford are accurate, but the workload that is presented in the data collection is estimated based on the types of calls.

- Why is Oxford travel time allotment close to the same as everyone else?

Response: The data collection averaged out all the travel time for the whole Oxford Detachment area. The town was not looked at on its own.

- **What are the response areas that the Oxford Detachment are responsible for?**

Response: East Linden, West New Annan, Wentworth Valley, Westchester Station, Collingwood Corner, Londonderry. It is a large area to cover.

- **To make the data collection more accurate, as in to allocate the costs between the municipalities, what would you pick to do differently?**

Response: The estimated of the workloads could be more accurate, because Oxford was not done separately.

- **Is there a general rule that areas of greater concentration of population have more crime?**

Response: No, its all about the demographics, the people and the calls for service.

- **Explain why the proposal going forward is that Oxford's share of the shared costs comes down by more than half?**

Response: Its because the numbers have reduced, then that automatically reduces the shared services.

- **The shared services came down a lot faster than the number of officers and it looks like we have been overcharged in the past.**

Response: It's a spread sheet that the Department of Justice has. Department of Justice will review this closer back at the office.

General Discussion Notes during the Q & A with the Department of Justice and the RCMP

- The RCMP have 5 members that work out of the Oxford Detachment and they have the support of 27 other officers when a big event happens in Oxford.
- The RCMP have traffic services that roams through the town on the highways and they are generating a pile of traffic enforcement
- The Town of Oxford has two RCMP houses in the community. If Oxford decides to go with another police service, where are those officers going to live? How far away will they be when you want them to be on call?
- Oxford is part of the PPSA (Provincial Policing Services) where it's a 70 / 30 split of costs with the province.
- If there was a major crime, the RCMP have 8 – 10 officers that come in and the local resources step back to police the area while the major crime manages the major crime.
- Mental Health calls can take an officer between 5 – 6 hours to handle
- The communication between the Oxford Town Council and the Police Advisory Board needs to improve.
- In a RCMP district model, you are also looking at what impacts your neighboring municipalities.
- People who have concerns in the community are strongly urged to call the police directly because that's the only way a file gets started and that's the only way the RCMP knows what needs to be addressed. If that is not happening from the Town perspective, and we know there are calls going into the RCMP, that is when council can confront the RCMP why it is not being done.
- Overtime costs are absorbed; it does not get billed to the municipalities.

- If you want to adjust any RCMP services, the municipality needs the Ministers of Justice's approval.
- The reason we are not billed as a population to police ratio, because the crime is not always reflective of the people that live here.
- This committee has been tasked to determine what type of service level we are looking for as a community for policing.
- The RCMP would like to arrange a headquarters tour for all of Oxford Town Council and the Police Advisory Board. It's important for people to see what happens behind the scenes.

Closing remarks from the Q & A with Department of Justice and the RCMP.

This discussion has been very helpful and thank you to the Department of Justice and the RCMP for their time. This policing review is not about the RCMP, its about getting the best value for the Town of Oxford. Oxford does have a lot of respect for the RCMP and the work that they do. Its excellent to have this representation and to be able to have all the levels of questions, data, answers and discussion on a very open level.

3. Discussion on next steps and options going forward

- We may be in a negotiation position with the Municipality of the County of Cumberland.
- The Committee may choose to continue this process or to accept the recommendation that was given to Oxford at the meeting March 18, 2019.
- The Committee may also choose an RFP (Request for Proposal) process.
- Another option for the committee is to have a meeting with the Municipality of the County of Cumberland to work this out.
- The process is to report back to Council with the Committee's recommendations.
- Organize a public session to have the conversation with the public and hear what is important to the community.
- The RCMP are unionizing, this could impact tremendously
- The committee would like to meet with the Town of Amherst Police Force

4. Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting date is to be determined at a later date, in consultation with the Town of Amherst's availability.

5. Adjournment

At 8:00 pm, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Carried



Chairperson, Rick Draper



Recorder, Linda Cloney