



## Minutes of the Police Services Review Committee

**Place:** Council Chambers

**Date:** Tuesday, October 29, 2019

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Mayor Patricia Stewart, Deputy Mayor Rick Draper, CAO Rachel Jones, Councilor Dave Clark, Byron MacDonnell, David Hoffman, Policing Services Consultant Donna Jewers – Department of Justice, CFO Shelley Rector – Town of Amherst, CAO Greg Herrett – Town of Amherst, Police Chief Dwayne Pike – Amherst Police Department and Linda Cloney (recorder)

**Regrets:** Nil

***A quorum was present throughout the meeting***

**1. Call to order**

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

**2. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda of the Police Services Review Meeting be approved as presented.

***Motion Carried***

**3. Approval of Previous Minutes**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Police Services Review Committee Meeting for August 26, 2019 and September 9, 2019 be approved as circulated.

***Motion Carried***

**4. Department of Justice Funding Error**

Department of Justice had a mathematical error in the calculations of the RCMP bill. -This resulted in an approximate \$30,000.00 refund to the Town of Oxford, and with this year's bill to be reduced by approximately \$15,000 on the final quarter invoice. Thanks were extended to David Hoffman for initiating the review of the costs that found the billing error.

**5. Service Overview: Amherst Police Department**

***Highlights from the presentation***

- The benefits for the Town of Amherst to provide the policing services to the Town of Oxford would be to reduce the Town of Amherst's cost per officer, perhaps reducing the costs of policing for the Town of Oxford and being good neighbours.
- The presentation from the Town of Amherst pertains to policing within the Town of Oxford's boundaries.
- The Town of Amherst will respond to an RFP (Request for Proposal) if the Town of Oxford decides to proceed.
- The presentation tonight is not in any way of criticism towards the RCMP.

- Chief Pike presented a power point presentation outlining in detail the services and programs that are currently offered by the Amherst Police Department. *A copy of this presentation is filed*
- Chief Pike presented a copy of the Chief's Report for the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners, as an example, to the Policing Review Board. *A copy of this report has been filed.*

#### **Q & A for the Town of Amherst and the Amherst Police Department**

**Can the Amherst Police Department provide this level of service, as presented, with 2.8 personnel to their staff?**

*Response: Yes, with adding 2.8 personnel to the Amherst Police Department, it would be enough to provide 112 hours in Oxford. (averages to be 16 hours per day)*

**What is the average salary of the officers?**

*Response: The salaries of the Amherst Police Department are public knowledge. It's based on a collective agreement, a first-class constable with more than two years' experience is estimated to be approximately \$89,000.00 per year (without any overtime).*

**How long is the contract between the Town of Amherst and the Amherst Police Department?**

*Response: The contract is expired; it is anticipated they will begin negotiations in December.*

**How would the staff cover Amherst and Oxford?**

*Response: There are 24 sworn officers and a few part time positions. The staff would be spread out.*

**Could you see officers living here in Oxford?**

*Response: It is possible. There is not a requirement for an officer to live in the town for which they work in.*

**Currently in the RCMP contract, Oxford has 2.8 – 3 dedicated members. In the presentation, the Amherst Police Department is proposing the similar amount of personnel. How does the Amherst Police Department breakdown the types of duties to be performed in Oxford?**

*Response: If Oxford sets its service level at 16 hours a day, then the Amherst Police Department will dedicate 16 hours per day to Oxford.*

**16 hours seems like a lot of hours to dedicate to Oxford, is the Town of Amherst and the Amherst Police Department flexible? Could it be 12 hours?**

*Response: We are very flexible; it could be 12 hours. The Minister of Justice will have to approve the service levels and number of hours.*

**A question for the Minister of Justice Office. Would the Town of Oxford be required to have a greater level of service than other towns?**

*Response: Every town is different. Possibly the Town of Oxford may be required to have a greater level of service. It is dependent on many factors.*

**When we asked the RCMP last time the pattern of crimes in Oxford, none of them said it was unusual. We must push for what is right for the Town of Oxford.**

*Response: The Town of Oxford needs to make a business case to the Minister of Justice for approval.*

**Would there be any other costs associated with using the Amherst Police Department as a service provided?**

*Response: The Town of Amherst worked the capital cost in the amount that would be contracted out to the Town of Oxford.*

**What is the travel time between Amherst and Oxford and have you taken that into consideration?**

*Response: Travel time between Amherst and Oxford is 20 minutes, in an emergency they could be here in 12 minutes.*

**The service level for the Town of Amherst, would it be the same for Oxford?**

*Response: Amherst would police Oxford the same as they would Amherst.*

**Would the Amherst Police Department service levels be significantly different than the RCMP?**

*Response: There is a fair bit of difference because Amherst has 24-hour policing.*

**If there was something happening of urgency and there was a call to tend to a matter in Oxford at the same time, would you be able to reach out to the RCMP to assist?**

*Response: The Amherst Police Department has a very good relationship with the RCMP, if they needed assistance, they would ask the RCMP and the RCMP would ask the Amherst Police Department if they needed their assistance as well. Its all about community safety and partnership.*

**How do service levels get determined?**

*Response: The police commission or the police board, council, and community feeds into a process and the service levels get developed jointly.*

**Last week there was an attempt of child luring in the Amherst area. This is not factual, all word of mouth, but it was said that the Amherst Police Department was unable to attend to that call because they were busy with something else.**

*Response: What happened in that case was when that call came in officers that were on duty were busy. The person that was on the phone said she wanted to call about an incident that happened on the previous Thursday. In a couple of hours, the Amherst Police Department called her back and had the matter taken care of. If it was an immediate emergency, they would have freed someone up to attend to that matter.*

**Is the Amherst Police Department part of the Town of Amherst for benefits?**

*Response: The pension is part of the police force pension and it is well funded at this point. Amherst has not seen a big increase in benefits for the past few years.*

**Liability for the Town of Oxford – how is that handled?**

*Response: The Town of Amherst would want to have a conversation with the insurers and the Town of Oxford would want to have a conversation with theirs as well.*

**What is the initial training that the constables go through? Also, what are the on-going training programs and how much time is devoted to training?**

*Response: Most of the individuals that the Amherst Police Department have hired have gone through DEPOT or the Atlantic Policing Academy. The Amherst Police Department does training constantly. The standards to be a police officer in the Province of Nova Scotia are set by the Minister of Justice.*

**Is there a minimum requirement for annual training for the officers?**

*Response: There is mandatory training set by the Department of Justice.*

**Do you ever utilize the RCMP Training Centre in Burnside?**

*Response: The Amherst Police Department has never used it.*

**How much staff turnover have the Amherst Police Department have voluntary and involuntary?**

*Response: The only staff turnover they have experienced in the last few years has been retirements. Most of their members have ten years of service in.*

**How does the Amherst Police Department handle performance reviews?**

*Response: There has always been an annual performance appraisal. They also issue noteworthy events throughout the year. The noteworthy events are both positive and negative.*

**Do you have an Annual Performance Plan? Would this plan be different than Amherst's?**

*Response: This would be something that should be discussed a bit further.*

**What kind of gender equity do you have on force?**

*Response: There are six females working with the Amherst Police Department right now.*

**What do you know about the profile of the Oxford community?**

*Response: There is nothing in Oxford that the Amherst Police Department would have of real concern. There is a lot of opportunity in Oxford to do proactive policing.*

Greg Herrett, Shelley Rector and Dwayne Pike exited the meeting.

## **6. Next Steps**

### **6.1 Develop Draft Service Level Requirements**

- Donna Jewers will send to the committee the service level requirements that the Department of Justice's office has on file, she did comment though that it is out of date.
- The committee would like to compile various service level requirements from other communities and draft one to best fit Oxford.
- Donna Jewers and Rachel Jones will work together to draft a report on service levels. The other members of the committee will forward their suggestions to Rachel.

### **6.2 Public Meeting Planning**

- Present to the public what the current service level is now.
- Ask the public what they want as a community, are they satisfied with this service level and are there changes they would like to see in this service level.
- A microphone should be set up, have time limits set and have proper protocols defined.
- Stress to the public that this process is not about the RCMP, the process is about efficiencies for the Town of Oxford.
- Compile a few key questions to ask the community for their feedback.
- November 27, 2019 at 6:30 pm at the Capital Theatre is the date set for the Public Meeting.
- Rick Draper will be the facilitator for the Public Meeting.

### **6.3 Timeframe for Remaining Process**

- Anticipating an RFP (Request for Proposal) ready for January 2020.

General Discussion Notes during the meeting

- Currently the Department of Justice is reviewing all the costs that are being charged when Municipal Police are using the RCMP for additional services.


7. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting date is November 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

8. **Adjournment**

At 8:30 pm, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion Carried**



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Chairperson, Rick Draper



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Recorder, Linda Cloney