



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board approves appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Karen Machado to lead Board as new Chair

THUNDER BAY, ON (June 20, 2023) — The Thunder Bay Police Services Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Karen Machado as Board Chair and Denise Baxter as Board Vice Chair, effective July 1, 2023.

Machado was first appointed to the Board by the province in January 2023, while Baxter was chosen by the Thunder Bay city council in February as its civilian appointment. Notably, Machado and Baxter were part of the Governance Committee that selected Darcy Fleury as the new Chief of the Thunder Bay Police Service in April 2023.

In keeping with the terms of his appointment as Administrator of the Board by the Ontario Civilian Police Commission, as of July 1, 2023, Mercer will continue to have one vote on Board matters and will work alongside the four members of the Board until such time as the province fills the existing vacancy on the Board.

Both Machado and Baxter are Indigenous; Machado a member of the Red Rock Band outside of Nipigon and Baxter, a member of Marten Falls. Their full biographies are below.

Quotes:

Malcom Mercer, Administrator, Thunder Bay Police Services Board

“On behalf of the Board, I would like to congratulate both Karen and Denise on their new appointments. Their experience as Board members and their work within the community will help to lead us in the right direction.”

Karen Machado, Chair, Thunder Bay Police Services Board

“I am honoured and proud to have been appointed to this important role on the Board. I am eager to lead the Board and continue the work that is already underway.”

Denise Baxter, Vice Chair, Thunder Bay Police Services Board

“The last several months as a Board member has taught me a lot about what needs to get done and where we need to go both as a community and as a Board. Being able to continue that work with the other members and Karen at the helm, is a true honour.”

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Appointee Biographies



Karen Machado

Karen has worked in the Ontario Public Service for 34 years in various ministries, including the Ministry of Labour where she was an Industrial Health and Safety Officer and then Regional Program Coordinator where she oversaw Industrial Officers in the Northern Region. Karen’s career then took her to the Ministry of Solicitor General where she held the positions of Deputy Superintendent of Administration at the Thunder Bay Jail and Correctional Centre, and Superintendent of the Thunder Bay Jail and Correctional Centre. She was eventually tasked with

separating and creating new structures for both the Thunder Bay Jail and the Correctional Centre. She retired as the Superintendent of the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre in 2020.

Throughout her career, Karen has advocated for and been involved in diversity and inclusion. She co-chaired the Systemic and Antiracism Organizational Change Committee and was appointed the Provincial Co-Chair for the Ministry of Community and Safety and Correctional Services Indigenous Subcommittee of the Human Rights Project Charter.

She is a member of the Red Rock Band outside of Nipigon where she spent her early years and has lived in Thunder Bay for 50 years.



Denise Baxter

Denise Baxter has served as Vice Provost Indigenous Initiatives at Lakehead University since 2017. She has also taught in both the Department of Indigenous Learning and Department of Continuing Education. She is completing her PhD in Equity and Indigenous Education at York University. As an established education leader, Denise has worked in multiple contexts including public school boards, the Ministry of Education, Lakehead University, and First Nations private schools for the past 29 years. Within each of these contexts, she has built capacity and partnerships with multiple community stakeholders. Her work with the community has involved education conferences, workshop presentations, and capacity building.

She currently serves on two service boards in Thunder Bay and an EDI advisory committee provincially.

A Marten Falls First Nation member, she maintains that preserving and practicing cultural traditions and ceremony keeps her connected to the community, Indigenous cultures, traditions, and protocols. She works to establish networks, strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities and governments, and build capacity between Indigenous, public, and private partners which have supported multiple initiatives that advance educational outcomes for Indigenous students.