



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Board Highlights for May 21, 2024**

**THUNDER BAY, ON, MAY 21, 2024** — The Thunder Bay Police Services Board (TBPSB) convened this morning. Following are notable items from today's meeting:

### **Peer Support Team**

Constable Jeff Elvish gave a presentation on the Thunder Bay Police Service's Peer Support Team. The team is made up of trained volunteers and two peer psychologists. The Peer Support program is about getting service members the help they need after a traumatic or work-related incident. Such incidents can stress members emotional and mental health and can lead to more serious conditions such as PTSD, depression, and other psychological issues. The current Peer Support Program includes reaching out to and listening to service members in need, debriefing after traumatic calls, group therapy, and connecting service members with the right professional mental health supports. Constable Jeff Elvish noted that in 2023, more than 400 members were helped by the Peer Support Team. He further noted that since Chief Flurry took over there has been a drop in the number of service members needing support for work-related events.

Constable Jeff Elvish explained to the Board that the Peer Support Program needs to be restructured because the program does more than just peer support, and because there is high demand for the program. Constable Jeff Elvish outlined what the new program aims to provide: Peer Support; Critical Incident Support (immediately after a traumatic event); and Reintegration (so service members can return to work after experiencing trauma or work-related stress). Constable Jeff Elvish highlighted that this program is helping to normalize needing help and that it's okay not to be okay. The Peer Support Team is also available to EMS service and fire services.

A copy of the presentation is available upon request.

### **Pilot Project – Health Monitoring Bracelets**

Inspector J. Dampier provided an overview about the launch of a pilot project by the Thunder Bay Police Service on the implementation of health monitor bracelets to keep people safe while in custody.

Everyone in custody is given the option to get a bracelet that collects biometric data. The data goes to an app in the Jailers and Watch Commander's office. The bracelet captures the heart rate, oxygen level, and the movement level of the person in custody. If there is a significant deviation in the data an alert will go to the watch commanders who can offer help or get help in the case of a medical emergency. Inspector J. Dampier told the Board the project is getting updated bracelets and an improved app and explained that the bracelets have saved lives in other jurisdictions.

## Communication Strategy

John S. Hannam, Secretary, and Kapow Communications co-founder, Sarbjit Kaur, walked the Board through the proposed communication strategy for the Thunder Bay Police Service Board. This strategic communications plan sets out key communications priorities and opportunities and serve as a guide for the TBPSB. Secretary Hannam stressed that an effective communications strategy is important for rebuilding the public's trust with the Board and will allow the Board to share information about the work they are doing, and the progress being made on implementing report recommendations.

The plan outlines key dates, themes, events and initiatives for the TBPSB to anticipate and plan for to be proactive and communicate effectively. Everything outlined in the strategic plan will help the TBPSB promote transparency and accountability within the Thunder Bay Police Service and build collaboration and trust with the community. The strategic communications plan also incorporates the new *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, requirement that requires the Board to produce an annual report. The communications strategy proposes that the Board elevate its transparency further by producing quarterly reports that will be released to the public and used to compile the annual report.

It was noted that the communications plan is not designed to be a detailed tactical plan - but rather to set priorities and plan at a high level so that implementation can be thoughtfully realized. The plan will be shared with the communications committee.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

### Governance Committee

Denise Baxter – Chair, Governance Committee, reported that over the past month, the Governance Committee has largely been focused on working towards the strategic objective of hiring a new Deputy Chief of Police – Administration.

At the same time, the committee has reviewed and advanced the Artificial Intelligence Use policy to the Board (adopted by the Board at its April meeting), and will be recommending a policy on appointments to Board committees at the June meeting of the Board. The three working groups of the committee have met and continue to work on their assignment recommendations, including focusing on community engagement in support of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework.

The Governance Committee has brought a total of 8 foundational governing policies adopted by the Board in the last 6 months. **(Page 15)**

## Labour Relations Committee

Committee Chair, Mr. W. Bahlieda explained verbally that the committee continues its work and that bargaining of the uniform collective agreement is underway. Various Board members thanked Committee Chair, Mr. W. Bahlieda for his work.

## GENERAL MATTERS

### a) Annual Report – Crime Stoppers

In January 2021, a motion was carried with respect to the Board's financial support of Thunder Bay District Crime Stoppers. Annual assistance in the amount of \$2,500.00 was authorized annually from the Thunder Bay Police Services Board's special account, namely the Board's proceeds of crime funds.

John S. Hannam, Secretary reported that Crime Stoppers Thunder Bay had sent the Board a Statement of Operations to demonstrate transparency in light of the Board's annual contribution. Mayor K. Boshcoff noted the Board is not using tax dollars when it draws from the proceeds of crime fund to make its annual contribution to Crime Stoppers. **(Page 16)**

### b) 2024 CAPG Annual Conference

John S. Hannam, Secretary, highlighted the upcoming Association of Police Governance (CAPG) 2024 Annual Conference in Halifax this August. A request was made for Board members to indicate if they would like to attend. Mayor K. Boshcoff indicated he would like to attend. Though not in attendance, Councillor K. Etreni's name was also put forward with the understanding that Councillor Etreni could withdraw her name should she choose.

A motion to authorize the Mayor's and Councillor Etreni's to attend and that all expenses incurred be paid from the Board's budget was passed. **(Pages 17 - 18)**

### c) 2024 CAPG Annual Conference

A motion was passed to authorize sponsorship in the amount of \$500.00 of the Association of Police Governance (CAPG) 2024 Annual Conference. John S. Hannam, Secretary noted that this year's sponsorship amount was the same as the previous year. **(Pages 19 - 20)**

### d) Special Account

The Board's Special Account Policy, adopted at the Board's meeting of November 21, 2023, requires that "approximately every six months" the Secretary reports on the activities in the Account and decisions of the Special Account Policy Committee. John S. Hannam, Secretary, reported to the Board that as of April 4, 2024 the balance of the account rests at \$46,601.94. **(Page 21)**

## e) Amendments to Procedural By-Law

This item was not discussed. Chair Karen Machado indicated that the Board had agreed to defer the matter to a later Board meeting.

## f) Website Update

John S. Hannam, Secretary, reported that the refreshed TBPSB website continues to receive positive reviews and that every month the website is updated to indicate progress on report recommendations.

## g) CSPA Transition

The *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, came into effect on April 1, 2024. John S. Hannam, Secretary, reported that the Board is making steady progress in addressing the impacts of the new Act, and is keeping on top of the new regulations that continue to roll out. **(Pages 24 - 25)**

## PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

### a) Request to Obtain Training Material

The Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Police Governance (CAPG) made a request for existing board training materials that would be used to create a series of training workshops across Canada for CAPG members funded by CAPG and the federal government. Note that similar requests have been made to Police Service Boards across Canada. John S. Hannam, Secretary, asked the Board to think about any materials they would like to contribute.

## NEW BUSINESS

John S. Hannam, Secretary reported that the City's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee has inquired if the Board had any items it would like the Committee to take forward to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August, and asked the Board for suggestions. Member Baxter noted that Thunder Bay and the Northwest Region still does not have its own forensic pathology lab, which negatively impacts the communities access to essential forensic services. Chief Flurry agreed and noted that having the committee continue to advocate on the Board's behalf would be of benefit. A motion was carried to support such advocacy for a local coroner.

The full agenda can be accessed [here](#)

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