

The Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board

Public Board Meeting
June 22, 2022

Report of the Executive Director

OAPSB Conference Highlights

1. Recommendation

That the Board receive this report for information purposes.

2. Summary

The Ontario Association of Police Services Boards (OAPSB) held its Spring Conference and AGM in May. The OAPSB is the leading voice of police governance in Ontario and helps police services boards fulfill their legislated responsibilities by providing training and networking opportunities and facilitating the transfer of knowledge; advocating for improvements in public safety laws and regulations, practices and funding mechanisms.

This report will provide highlights from the Spring Conference.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

a) Modernizing Police Governance

The Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) presented on the modernization of police governance. The interpretation of the role of the police services board by Judge Morden in the G20 review plays an important role in modernizing police governance and oversight in Ontario.

This interpretation of the role of the Board has impacted the TPSB in various areas, including strengthening the two-way communication between the Board and the Chief's Office, enhancing work with stakeholders to inform the Board's decision-making, and developing policies that reflect an enhanced view of the role of the Board in directing the way policing work is carried out.

TPSB's model is guided by its Trust Proposition:

1. Is your Board talking about trust as a valued and desired outcome? Why is trust important in policing?
2. Has your Board established what trust means and is the definition shared with the Service and key partners like the community?
3. What is your Board's trust proposition? Why should key partners, stakeholders and the broader public trust the board and the service it governs?

Securing the respect and cooperation of the public is about trust; the ability for police to perform their functions is dependent on public trust and approval.

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

According to Judge Morden's policing review of the G20 summit and recent reports by Judge Epstein on Missing and Missed, Boards should ask for and consider information related to police operations. The Board should receive all information relative to its governance function and sometimes that means operational information.

TPSB panel provided the Freedom Convoy in Toronto as an example. This event was identified as a critical point by the Board; that is, an event that will affect the operations of the whole Service and not solely one area of the Service.

The Board determined that the information exchange between the Service and the Board was to happen immediately. The Service met with the Board and showed the Board its operational plans, which included hate and terrorism-related threats, priorities and objectives of the operation and facilitating charter rights to expression and assembly. The questions asked were related to requiring any legal agreements and also related to the adequacy of resources. Public communication was necessary to ensure transparency to communities about what is happening and why it was happening. The Board ultimately had to ensure that there were adequate resources to do the job and to service the rest of the city.

The new Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, when it comes into force, will impact the fundamentals of police governance and oversight based on Judge Morden's report on the G20 policing review. The new Act will clarify the board's ability to direct the chief of police, outline mandatory training for board members, and will also have a greater emphasis on analytics.

ADVISORY PANELS

TPSB also outlined its advisory panels to support the role of the Board. Its Anti-Racism Advisory panel, which included a subject-matter expert from the community, is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations from the Andrew Loku Inquest. The panel also helped with the race-based data collection.

The Mental Health and Addiction Advisory Panel is made up of diverse community members. It developed a mental health strategy for the Service and informs the Service's work as it relates to mental health.

TPSB also has an advisory group consisting of Somali mothers who lost children to gun violence. The mothers want to have better relationships with local police and need support. The Board created an MOU to ensure Service works with the mothers in the division in northwest of

the city. They work with neighbourhood officers and have meetings to build back the trust. TPSB signed an agreement which ensures that all parties work together.

b) Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism

A panel consisting of the Presidents of Association of Black Law Enforcers (ABLE) and Ontario Women in Law Enforcement (OWLE), and the Chair of AWIP-ON provided an in-depth conversation about how legislation and regulatory frameworks require Police Service Boards to take a more active role in ensuring that EDI and anti-racism strategies for all of Ontario's police services are implemented and measured. Some points include:

- Panelists supported external consultations with the community when Boards recruit and select the Chief of Police.
- Community consultation for Chief hiring process should be made public; why that individual was selected should be made public
- Every board should have an anti-racism advisory committee and remuneration for its members
- Boards and Services should reach out to organizations like ABLE and OWLE to fill in the EDI gaps on boards and in hiring processes
- There are examples of good practices and there are opportunities to learn from other Boards and Services
- Police service members have to understand what EDI strategy is and how it impacts them
- COVID has had a huge impact on women in law enforcement; how can Boards make organizations better and more supportive
- Boards and Services have to be champions for women in law enforcement
- ABLE supports young Black and racialized people to pursue a career in law enforcement.

c) Policing 2023 and Beyond

A panel consisting of the Vice-President of OACP, Chair of the OAPSB and President of the PAO discussed critical issues facing policing today and into the future. Some points include:

Special Constables

- Expanded use of special constables under the new Act.
- Make sure organizations do not put special constables in harms way. They are not trained or equipped as police officers. Special constables are also not subject to an oversight body like police officers.
- Need to find ways to maximize police resources.
- Special constables, for example, can be at a hospital with a person who is waiting to get admitted.

- Boards need to leverage special constables for non-emergency situations and they need to be equipped and trained appropriately.
- Boards, police services and associations need to share information more readily on how they use or can use special constables.

Alternate Response

- Police need to let go of certain tasks where they are not the best response and instead support human services that do provide the right response for example during a person-in-crisis call.
- System-level coordination is required to mitigate the demand on policing, for example, working with public health, school boards etc. What is the strategic and holistic plan for addiction, for example. That issue cannot be resolved through enforcement and policing.
- Boards have to consider building capacity when there are members who are away from work for extended periods of time. This will relieve some of the pressures and burdens on police personnel and civilian front-line staff.

Board Member appointed to OAPSB Board of Directors

At the Annual General Meeting, Board Member Jennifer Fang was re-appointed to the OAPSB Board of Directors as a Big 12 representative.

3. Conclusion

This report provides some highlights from May's OAPSB Conference. The recommendation is to receive the report for its information.

Approved for submission: Mafalda Avellino
Executive Director