

The Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board

Public Board Meeting
January 23, 2023

Report of the Chief of Police

Annual Report on Auxiliaries and Volunteers

1. Recommendation

That the Board receive this report pursuant to the Police Services Board Auxiliary and Volunteer Program, Board Policy No. 03/02.

2. Summary

In accordance with Section 5.4 of the Auxiliary and Volunteer Program, Board Policy No. 03/02, the purpose of this annual report is to outline the contributions made by members of the Auxiliary Unit, the Volunteer Program, the Chaplain Program, the District Community Liaison Committees and the Police Community Advisory Council, and to report on highlights and program implementation by the Police Service.

3. Background

OVERVIEW OF AUXILIARY AND VOLUNTEER UNIT

The Community Engagement and Wellbeing Bureau within Community Services administers the Auxiliary Unit and the overall Volunteer Program for York Regional Police.

In addition, People, Wellness and Talent manages the Chaplain Program and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Bureau manages the Police Community Advisory Council. All five Districts manage a District Community Liaison Committee and Organized Crime and Intelligence Services manage the Integrated Strategic Community Advisory Committee. There are also two Community Volunteer Groups located in Georgina and East Gwillimbury.

4. Analysis

AUXILIARY, VOLUNTEER UNITS AND COMMITTEES

Auxiliary Unit

York Regional Police established an Auxiliary Unit in 1980. Section 52(1) of the *Police Services Act* provides the authority for a Police Services Board to appoint members as an Auxiliary Constable of a police force. The *Act* states:

An auxiliary member of a police force has the authority of a police officer if he or she is accompanied or supervised by a police officer and is authorized to perform police duties by the chief of police; and

The Chief of Police may authorize an auxiliary member of the police force to perform police duties only in special circumstances, including an emergency, that the police officers of the police force are not sufficiently numerous to deal with.

Auxiliary members are volunteers who are appointed by the Police Services Board and are governed by the *Police Services Act*. The Auxiliary Unit's function is therefore reported independently from other volunteer groups managed by York Regional Police. The Auxiliary Unit's reporting structure is further reflected on the York Regional Police Organizational Chart.

Auxiliary members are expected to dedicate a minimum of 12 hours per month to the Unit for a total of 144 hours per year. This minimum requirement of hours is consistent with a number of other police agencies including Barrie, Halton, Hamilton, Peel, Peterborough and Waterloo. Toronto Police Service requires a greater commitment of 12.5 hours per month, while London and Niagara Regional Police Services require commitments of 15 and 16 hours per month respectively.

At the commencement of 2022, the Auxiliary Unit had 96 members. At the conclusion of the year, the Unit had 111 members. While there are no provisions under the *Police Services Act* that dictate the number of auxiliary members, York Regional Police has adopted a practice of targeting up to ten percent of the authorized sworn strength. Currently, the Unit is within 60 members of the targeted strength.

There were 48 new members who joined the Auxiliary Unit in 2022 and 32 members resigned. 11 of the members that resigned were hired as Cadets-in-Training with York Regional Police. Two members were hired as Cadets-in-Training with South Simcoe Police Service. Two Auxiliary members were hired as Cadets-in-Training with the OPP.

One member was hired by York Regional Police as a Special Constable, and one member was hired by York Region Transit as a Special Constable. The remainder of the members resigned due to personal reasons. The average length of service of an active Auxiliary member is 8.7 years.

The Auxiliary Unit participated in events throughout York Region. These events included Aurora Canada Day celebrations, the Canadian Police Memorial, Markham Jazz Festival, Sutton Fair (see **Appendix A** for an inclusive list of events attended in 2022).

In total, the Auxiliary Unit contributed 19,147 volunteer hours to the organization in 2022.

Volunteer Program

The York Regional Police Volunteer Program is administered separately from the Auxiliary Program. It includes ten groups, including Special Event Volunteers and Mascots, UNITED & UNITY, the two Community Volunteer Groups (Georgina, East Gwillimbury), the Community Ambassador Program, the Community Chorus, Pipes and Drums Band, Venturer / Rover Scouts, the Youth Band, Community Safety Village Classroom Assistants, and the 32 Military Police Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps. The Volunteer Program provides opportunities for citizens to support the community and York Regional Police through volunteer placements. The use and administration of the Volunteer Program is governed by General Procedure AI-006 and specifically states the following:

Volunteers shall not:

- be considered as strength in the general staffing levels
- perform any functions or activities that members of York Regional Police perform
- carry or be equipped with weapons
- operate a marked general patrol vehicle
- wear police uniforms or insignia with the exception of the assigned uniform or insignia approved by the Chief of Police or designate

The objective of the Volunteer Program is to provide an opportunity for citizens to support the activities of York Regional Police in the community. The Community Engagement and Wellbeing Bureau strives to ensure that volunteer assignments personify the Organization's Values and Vision of making a difference in the community.

The Program provides for mobilization of our citizens and allows them to contribute towards a safer and more inclusive York Region.

This year in November 2022, Community Services introduced a new category into the Volunteer Program: The Community Ambassador Program (CAP). This group utilizes experienced and skilled volunteers to engage with the community. Selected and trained volunteers will deliver crime prevention presentations, field questions from the public, and assist District Crime Prevention Officers with various initiatives. As their name indicates, they will act as ambassadors for York Regional Police throughout York Region.

The Youth Band is currently on hold as we search for a new Conductor to lead the Band following the departure of our previous Conductor who moved to Newfoundland.

Our volunteers are involved in supporting events hosted by Community Services as well as the community. Volunteers can be seen collecting food for a local food bank, collecting toys for the Holiday Heroes Program and assisting with crime prevention initiatives. York Regional Police volunteers attended 111 events (see **Appendix B** for an inclusive list of events attended in 2022). Our volunteers showed great initiative and perseverance by continuing to operate either virtually or in-person as allowed by the changing public health regulations. The return to in-person practices, meetings, performances, and events was greatly welcomed by all in Community Services.

The following table shows each volunteer group, the actual number of members associated to each group, the number of events attended and the total number of hours each group volunteered in 2022.

Table 1
Volunteer Statistics 2022

Group	Number of Members	Number of Events	Number of Hours
32 Military Police Army Cadet Corps	34	7	3,173
Community Ambassador Program	3	2	43
Community Chorus	40	7	4,023
Community Safety Village Classroom Assistants	7	0	104
East Gwillimbury Community Volunteer Group	7	0	0
Georgina Community Volunteer Group	17	11	371
Pipes and Drums Band	36	22	1,745
Special Events including Mascots and Escorts	169	27	692
UNITED and UNITY	11	12	64
Venturer Scouts Company and Rover Scouts Crew	20	23	1,549
Youth Band	19	0	0
TOTAL	363	111	11,764

The total number of volunteers listed in the table above is greater than the actual total number of volunteers (351). The discrepancy arises because many volunteers are involved in multiple groups.

In 2022, two volunteers passed away and 31 volunteers resigned due to their inability to continue to commit to the program. The majority resigned due to family or work-related obligations.

In 2022, 12 York Regional Police members became a registered volunteer, totalling 57 full-time members that are also involved with the Volunteer Program.

In summary, the Volunteer Program contributed 11,764 hours to York Regional Police, plus an additional 19,147 hours from the Auxiliary Unit generating a total contribution of 30,911 hours in support of York Regional Police and the community.

Chaplain Program

The Chaplain Program is administered separately from the Volunteer Program. It is administered by Wellness under the umbrella of People, Wellness and Talent.

York Regional Police currently has nine volunteer Chaplains. All of our Chaplains have status within their chosen denomination and a minimum of five years of practice. Upon appointment, Chaplains take an Oath of Office, allegiance as well as an Oath of Secrecy. Chaplains are assigned to the honorary rank of Inspector and are permitted to wear the uniform of that position while performing their duties.

The role of the Chaplain is to provide spiritual support and guidance to all members of our organization and members are encouraged to take advantage of this service. Chaplains also fulfill a spiritual function at ceremonial events, attend the home of next of kin in the event of serious injury or death of a member and visit sick or injured members at their request. In 2022, the Chaplains contributed 588.5 hours of support to York Regional Police in person and virtually.

District Community Liaison Committees

The District Community Liaison Committees (DCLC) are administered separately from the Volunteer Program. It is administered by the corresponding District; and, in the case of the Integrated Strategic Community Advisory Committee, by Organized Crime and Intelligence Services. The command staff works with members of these volunteer advisory groups with a focus on addressing local issues by developing suggested solutions and initiatives. The committees are comprised of a diverse group of citizens and community leaders.

The following table provides information pertaining to the actual number of members associated to each of the committees and the number of hours they volunteered in 2022.

Table 2
District Community Liaison Committees 2022

Location	Number of Members	Number of Hours
1 District	20	48
2 District	36	51
3 District	21	20
4 District	21	26
5 District	21	30
Integrated Strategic Community Advisory Council	15	262.5
TOTAL	134	437.5

Police Community Advisory Council

The Police Community Advisory Council (PCAC) is administered by the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Bureau under the umbrella of Community Services. The mission of PCAC is to promote and foster harmony, dialogue and understanding between members of York Regional Police and the community. This volunteer advisory group is comprised of 20 residents or other stakeholders of York Region representing ethno-cultural, geographical and age diversity.

The Police Community Advisory Council generally meets bi-monthly, with the Chief to provide informed advice on a variety of matters including awareness of race relations, perceptions of social inequality, specific initiatives and the delivery of specialized programs.

This initiative is reciprocal in that the Council provides feedback to the community on policing perspectives, facilitating both community awareness programs and community responses to public safety and policing issues. The Council takes every opportunity to remain current with community and policing concerns and is prepared to guide community members on appropriate procedures to follow.

The Police Community Advisory Council, while remaining an independent resource to both the community and the police, facilitates opportunities to promote ongoing positive public relations on behalf of York Regional Police. In 2022, PCAC contributed 90 hours to York Regional Police and the community through meetings, special events and initiative planning.

5. Financial

Funding in the amount of \$2,542,160 was included in the 2022 Operating Budget for the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Bureau inclusive of salary and benefit costs of \$523,052 for one Sergeant, two Volunteer Coordinators and an Administrative Assistant directly related to Auxiliary and Volunteer initiatives. Additional funds existed in the 2022 Operating Budget for Officers to supervise Auxiliary activities as well as costs to equip and train the Auxiliaries and Volunteers.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Auxiliary Unit and the various York Regional Police volunteer groups provided a total of 32,027 hours in 2022. Collectively, the Auxiliary Unit and the volunteer programs make a difference in our community by enhancing the presence of York Regional Police in the community and building trusting relationships with our citizens.

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Cecile Hammond
Acting Chief of Police

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Attachments(2) - Appendix A – Auxiliary Event
- Appendix B – Volunteer Events