

The Regional Municipality of York

Police Services Board

Public Board Meeting
April 26, 2023

Report of the Executive Director

Public Relations Reserve Fund Policy Review

1. Recommendation

That the Board receive the report and provide feedback on the draft proposals for the new public relations fund policy as outlined in this report.

2. Background

The York Regional Police Services Board (the “Board”) has funds within its budget to be used in accordance with its Public Relations Reserve Policy. Sections 132 (2) and 133 (3) of the *Police Services Act* gives the Board sole authority to use the proceeds from the sale of unclaimed personal property and money found and seized by the police service for any purpose that it considers in the public interest. The Board’s public relations fund is maintained through the auction sale of unclaimed property, the proceeds of which are deposited into the fund.

Under the current policy, the Board uses its public relations fund to support charitable organizations that are also policing partners, policing initiatives that support the wellness of YRP members, and events that support board governance conferences and training to name a few.

The Board currently receives requests for financial support from community and charitable organizations that it has historically supported. Typically, the requests are sent to the Executive Director by correspondence and are included as a board report on the meeting agenda for board approval. Many of the requests are related to fundraising events like galas and golf tournaments.

Similarly, York Regional Police submits its request for funding support in a board report. Requests from the Service are related to the Police Appreciation Dinner, Community Safety Village, member support initiatives and fundraising efforts for charitable organizations.

3. Modernization of Public Relations Fund Process

The public relations fund policy review will be conducted using a consultative approach with feedback from key stakeholders and key YRP staff including the Executive Director of YRP Financial Services. The goal of the review is to modernize application and assessment process for the fund.

The draft recommendations in this report address a number of areas.

Fixed-Term Commitment

One proposal is to consider providing fixed-term commitments with long-standing partner charitable organizations where the Board donates an annual fixed amount for a three-year term, for example. The renewal may be contingent on successful outcomes. A fixed-term commitment will provide stability and continuity to organizations that benefit from the donations. The funds would be used to service the client directly.

Following the term, the Board may choose to rotate its support to other community programs particularly where there is a clear need and with programs that are aligned with the Board's priorities and objectives.

Support Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Initiatives and Community Engagement

The Board believes that community engagement is the foundation for safe, healthy, strong and inclusive communities.

The Board and the Service are taking important steps to address anti-racism, to build community trust and to strengthen police-community relations. Funds can be used to support recommendations in the Board's Anti-Black Racism and Building Community Trust report particularly those that relate to community/stakeholder engagement and consultations.

Wellness Program Supports

The review will also consider funding requests from the Service to determine how best to provide funding support for initiatives related to member wellness.

New Requests for Funding

All new funding requests will be accompanied with a recommendation to the Board from the Executive Director based on compliance with board policy and based on the assessment of the request by the Executive Director. Consideration may also be given to setting a dollar figure limit to new requests. All new requests should require a report on the effectiveness and achievements of funding objectives.

4. Conclusion

This report outlines areas for consideration and draft proposals for the new policy on public relations reserve fund. I am seeking feedback from the Board on the draft proposals and on the direction set out in this report for the review and development of the new policy.

If approved, the draft proposals in this report will streamline the application, administration and assessment process for public relation fund expenditures, will provide more consistent support to community safety partners and to other important initiatives like community engagement and will more clearly articulate the requirement for any funded initiatives to report out on their effectiveness and achievement of objectives.

Approved for Submission: Mafalda Avellino
Executive Director