



Item No. 10.2.2
Board of Police Commissioners
May 1, 2024

TO: Chair Kent and Members of the Board of Police Commissioners

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 18, 2024

SUBJECT: Board of Police Commissioners 2023-2024 Annual Report

ORIGIN

June 13, 2017 meeting of Halifax Regional Council, Item 14.1.5.

Motion passed by Halifax Regional Council on June 13, 2017:

THAT Halifax Regional Council:

...

f. Require the Board of Police Commissioners to provide an annual report to Council outlining its achievements in the past year and work plan for the coming year.

The Board of Police Commissioners requested that the Legislative Assistant maintain a record of the Board's business annually thereafter.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

By-Law P-100, the Board of Police Commissioners By-law, subsection 6(2) provides:

- 1) The Board [of Police Commissioners] shall, by June 1st of each year, provide Council with an annual report outlining its achievements in the previous fiscal year, and an overview of its workplan for the coming year.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of Police Commissioners:

Forward the report dated April 18, 2024 to Regional Council for information

BACKGROUND

The Board of Police Commissioners is a municipal body required by provincial statute (*Police Act*, S.N.S. 2004, c. 31) for any municipality in Nova Scotia that establishes a municipal police department. The Board gets its authorization from the *Police Act* s. 55(1) and is responsible for providing civilian governance and oversight on behalf of Halifax Regional Council. The Board's roles and responsibilities are further explained in the Board's terms of reference in By-law P-100, the *Board of Police Commissioners' By-law*.

The Board's civilian governance extends to the enforcement of the law, the maintenance of law and order, and the administrative direction, organization and policy development required to maintain an adequate, effective, and efficient police service delivery reflecting the needs and values of the community. Although the Board is responsible for the creation of the budget for the Halifax Regional Police (HRP), it has no power to raise revenue on its own behalf, and the final budget must be approved by Regional Council (*Police Act*, s. 53).

Further to section 68(2) of the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* (S.N.S. 2008, c. 39), Regional Council has elected to share the responsibility for policing within the Municipality between HRP and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Thus, the Board has a dual role. First, it acts as a governing board for HRP (the municipal police department) on behalf of Regional Council. Secondly, it acts as an advisory board to the Halifax District RCMP (*Police Act*, s. 57(1)). As the RCMP is federally regulated, it is not subject to the jurisdiction of HRM and is not subject to civilian governance as provided for through the municipal government.

There are seven members on the Board of Police Commissioners; six are appointed by Regional Council and one is appointed by the Nova Scotia Minister of Justice. Of the six commissioners appointed by Regional Council, three are Councillors and three are community members. Through this composition, the Board seeks to act as the link between the community and police services in the Municipality. The Board designates a representative to sit on the Nova Scotia Association of Police Governance and a commissioner also represents Nova Scotia on the board of directors of the Canadian Association of Police Governance.

DISCUSSION

In January 2024, Commissioner Kent was re-elected Chair, and Commissioner Giles was elected Vice Chair, replacing Commissioner Critchley. The diversity of the board reflects the population of Halifax, with representation from women, newcomers, African Nova Scotians and First Nations communities. In 2023-2024, the members of the Board were as follows:

Commissioner Yemi Akindoju
Commissioner Lisa Blackburn
Commissioner Harry Critchley
Commissioner Gavin Giles - Vice Chair
Commissioner Becky Kent - Chair
Commissioner Lindell Smith
Commissioner Anthony Thomas

Commissioners attended several community events and internal meetings as a part of their duties, including the following:

Long Service Medal Ceremony
Annual Nova Scotia Fallen Peace Officers' Memorial Service
HRP Employee Recognition Ceremony

CopShop

RCMP and HRP Community Town Hall meetings

RCMP stakeholder engagement sessions

Canadian Association of Police Governance conference

Nova Scotia Association of Police Governance conference

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police conference

150 Anniversary of the RCMP celebration

Atlantic Women in Policing conference

HRP ride along

HRP Watch Briefings

Meeting with Minister and Deputy Minister of Justice (Nova Scotia)

Tour of RCMP Depot

Lunch with Deputy Commissioner for RCMP

Swearing in of Acting Chief of Police, HRP

Fallen Member Memorial

RCMP H Division Commissioner Change of Command (Commissioner Dennis Daley)

RCMP COMSTAT

RCMP Hiring Interviews

HRP monthly Chief meetings

Leadership changes occurred within the HRP. In September, Don Maclean began serving as Acting Chief, replacing Dan Kinsella. Acting Chief Maclean began attending board meeting in September, at the onset of budget deliberations. The Board has initiated the search process for the permanent Chief, with the Board Chair and Vice Chair as Chair and Vice Chair of the search committee, respectively. Royer Thompson has been contracted to facilitate the search process. In addition, Jamie D'Angelo joined the Clerk's Office in December as a Legislative Assistant dedicated to the Board of Police Commissioners.

The Board met 18 times in the 2023-2024 fiscal year, in addition to strategic planning sessions that took place over the summer. In September, the Board adopted the use of a logo, to be used on stationary, notices, reports and other documents. With the logo adopted, the Board also began using a common template for all staff reports. The major topics that were considered during the fiscal year are outlined below. Additional information, including minutes and archived video of meetings can be viewed online at <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/a-c/board-police-commissioners>

2024-2025 HRP and RCMP Operating Budget

In accordance with the Board's mandate under Sections 53 and 55 of the Police Act, as well as Section 8 (2)(e) of By-Law P-100, the Board of Police Commissioners By-law, the Board reviewed the HRP's 2024-2025 operating budget and capital budget. Although not within the Board's statutory mandate, the Board also received a high-level overview of the RCMP's operating budget.

In August 2024, the Board adopted a revised budget schedule whereby the process begins in September when the HRP and the Board meet to develop their deliverables for the upcoming budget. Following the presentation of the business plan, members of the public are given their first opportunity to participate in the HRP budget process. Members of the public are given a second opportunity to participate following a detailed budget presentation in November, and the board receiving an overview of capital budget highlights that impact the HRP.

In October and November, the Board held two special meetings, one in person and one virtual, to provide the public an opportunity to speak regarding the proposed operating budget. These meetings helped fulfill the Board's role and responsibility to act as a conduit between the community and the police (Police Act, per s. 55(3)(e) and By-Law P-100, s. 8(2)(k)).

The Board received input and feedback from 54 registered speakers as well as 41 written submissions regarding HRP's 2024-2025 proposed operating budget. The main themes expressed by the members of the public that participated included:

- Observations that HRP's budget proposal does not align with the municipality's Public Safety Strategy and that additional funding should not be used to hire police officers to respond to mental health calls;
- Support for the HRP's proposed operating budget, including the funding of additional patrol officers in downtown Dartmouth;
- Encouragement for the Board to consider de-tasking the police such as by reallocating funds to community social and mental health services;
- Requests that the Board approve the Board's Subcommittee to Define Defunding Police report and recommendations;
- Observations that the increased number of unhoused people require additional police presence;
- Concerns about the police's relationship with marginalized communities; and
- Requests that the Board refuse HRP's proposed budget increases and requests for additional sworn officers.

Many comments from members of the public pertained to items not within the HRP budget or within the mandate of the BOPC, related to topics such as mental health, addictions, community or social services and support, and homelessness.

On November 29th, the Board approved a proposed net operating budget for 2024-2025 in the amount of \$98,132,000 and requested that the operating budget be forwarded to Regional Council for final approval. On January 8th, the Board approved a motion to recommend that Regional Council approve the Halifax District Royal Canadian Mounted Police resource request for an additional 6 regular member positions.

Independent Civilian Review

In May, the Board announced that it had commissioned an independent civilian review of the issues relating to the Board's oversight, governance and policy responsibilities that arise out of the response by Halifax Regional Police (HRP) to protests on August 18, 2021.

The Board retained Cooper, Sandler, Shime & Schwartzentruber LLP to conduct the independent civilian review. The review began on June 1, 2023 and is to culminate in a public report, to include systemic findings and recommendations, which is to be completed on or before May 31, 2024. The subject matter of the review is fully set out in its [Terms of Reference](#).

Response to Mental Health Calls

Also in May, the Board received a presentation from the HRP, RCMP and Nova Scotia Health regarding mental health training for officers, watch times for officers in hospitals, determination of emotionally disturbed persons, and potential plans for collaboration with hospitals. The Board passed a motion requesting a staff report providing data on mental health calls, requesting cooperation with the Community Safety Office, and an update on ongoing conversations regarding the expansion of the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team. This information was received by the Board in October. The Board's engagement in the issue of the police response to mental health calls is ongoing and is reflected in its work plan.

Police Transformation Study

In July, the Board received the Policing Model Transformation Study, produced by Price Waterhouse Coopers, which was referred to the Board by Regional Council. The Board also received a presentation on the Study, delivered by the Executive Director of Community Safety and representatives of Price Waterhouse Coopers. The Board passed a motion for the HRP and RCMP to work with the Community Safety department as part of a committee, with representation from the Board, to prepare a staff report outlining the necessary steps to achieve an integrated operating model. The Board also requested verbal updates during each regularly scheduled meeting. Verbal updates are being provided, and staff continued to work on some policing transformation initiatives although the announcement of a Provincial review of Policing has created some uncertainty and delayed initiation of some work. One notable accomplishment was development of a joint business plan and budget presentation for Halifax Regional Council and working to ensure that goals for 24/25 are aligned.

Mass Casualty Commission and Public Safety Report Alignment

In August, the Board received a report that outlined the major factual findings of the MCC Report relevant to the Board's statutory mandate. The Board passed a motion requesting a staff report outlining areas of alignment between recommendations and actions contained in the Wortley Report, Defund Report, Public Safety Strategy, Police Transformation Study and Mass Casualty Commission Final Report, and for these areas of alignment to be incorporated into the Board's workplan. Staff have also developed a tracking tool to monitor progress on recommendations and actions arising from these reports.

The Procedures of the Board of Police Commissioners Administrative Policy

In December, the Board adopted *Administrative Policy One, The Procedures of The Board of Police Commissioners Administrative Policy*. The intent of this policy is to formalize the Board's current meeting procedures into a procedural policy specific to the Board. The policy includes a formalized public engagement process, in recognition of the public engagement sessions held during the budget process. The policy also allows for the use of a consent agenda, which provides the Board with the opportunity to approve routine or non-controversial items through the approval of a single motion. A standardized report template and process for BOPC has been developed and is being implemented.

Board of Police Commissioners' Policy Manual

The Board approved several amendments and additions to its Policy Manual, including clarifying its process for going in camera, adopting an attendance policy, a revised self-evaluation policy, and several housekeeping amendments. The Board also directed the creation of revised Off Duty/Extra policies, and new policies in the areas of Use of Force and policing and homelessness.

Presentations to the Board of Police Commissioners

The Board of Police Commissioners Policy Manual contains a policy regarding Delegations/Presentations, which provides the Board the opportunity to receive presentations from the public. Presentation topics must relate to police services or policies, affect the community, not an individual, and relate to the Board's oversight role, not to day-to-day police operations. In 2023-2024 the Board received outside presentations, on the following topics:

"The use of polygraphs by Halifax Regional Police" (Matt Stickland, May 3rd)

"Police Enforcement and Issuance of Summary Offence Tickets" (Norm Collins, The Crosswalk Safety Society of Nova Scotia December, December 13th)

More information regarding individual presentations can be viewed online at: <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/agendas-meetings-report>

Board of Police Commissioners Workplan Session

In July, the Board held strategic planning sessions to develop strategic priorities and a workplan for the coming year. The sessions were facilitated by Marion MacKenzie and Laura Hopper of Royer Thompson. Commissioners were guided through a brainstorming exercise to determine work plan priorities before receiving presentations from the Chief Officer of the Halifax Regional Police, the Officer in Charge of the RCMP, the Executive Director of the Community Safety Office and the Chief Administrative Officer. Commissioners then reconvened to confirm strategic priorities, which fall under four pillars: Develop, Engage, Adapt and Evolve. The board adopted a workplan in December, which was subsequently amended to reflect changes between then and year end. This workplan is included as Attachment 1 and ensures that the Board returns to its regular schedule of adopting work plans at the beginning of each fiscal year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications to this report. Any future financial implications arising from implementation of the recommendations will be addressed in staff reports and HRM departmental budgets as required.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Board of Police Commissioners is comprised of four citizen members and three Councillors. Meetings are live webcast on Halifax.ca. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Board are posted on Halifax.ca.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Board of Police Commissioners’ 2024-2025 Workplan (Revised)

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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Board of Police Commissioners' 2024-2025 Workplan (Revised)

Develop

This pillar focuses on developing the Board's capacity and accountability. Making progress on this pillar will ensure the Board has the supporting staff, expertise and resources, along with the relationships necessary to achieve its mandate and implement its strategy within a changing context.

Strategic Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
Enhance board capacity Ensuring the board has the expertise and experience resources needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify resources (budgetary, staff, etc.) needed within existing board structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased budget dedicated to the BoPC 	Q1	CAO's Office
Increase accountability Ensuring the necessary structures are in place to determine the priorities, objectives and goals of police.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor progress on Wortley Report recommendations 	Staff report received outlining updates on the Wortley Report	Q1 and as needed	HRP/RCMP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine a path forward on the use of body worn cameras by the HRP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated staff report on the use of body worn cameras including a budget ask 	Q1	HRP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the HRP's Off Duty/Extra Duty policies reflect best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshed BoPC policy on Off Duty/Extra Duty Refreshed HRP policy on Off Duty/Extra Duty 	Q2 Q4	Policing Policy Strategist/HRP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete board self evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self evaluation completed by all board members and analysis of results conducted and distributed internally 	Q4	Board of Police Commissioners/ Policing Policy Strategist
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the necessary steps to achieve an integrated operating model between the HRP and RCMP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff report received BoPC representation on a committee preparing response to Study 	Q1 Ongoing	Public Safety Office

Strategic Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies are in place regarding police making public statement about matters that are the subjects of police investigations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff report received 	Q2	HRP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare annual report and workplan for fiscal 24/25 for submission to Regional Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to council 	Q1	Policing Policy Strategist

Engage

This pillar focuses on engaging and consulting with community members and stakeholders. The Board is accountable to the public and must reflect the public safety needs and perspectives of the communities it serves.

Strategic Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
Engage and Consult Developing a communication and engagement plan with community members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build systems that will allow the Board to consult with community members and stakeholders (e.g., surveys, a website, virtual and in-person consultations, invitations for submissions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities for community feedback as new policies are developed • Explore revamped Board website capable of receiving public feedback • Community Survey for police developed and adopted 	Ongoing Q2 Q4	HRP/Clerk's Office/ Corporate Communications
Identifying and developing relationships with stakeholders to encourage collaboration, information sharing, and moving the strategy forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance efforts to publicize opportunities for the public to communicate with board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore dedicated communications resources • Increased communication of opportunities to engage with board members 	Ongoing	Policing Policy Strategist/ Corporate Communications

Strategic Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
	• Develop a public communications plan including progress against priorities.	• Communications plan posted on website	Q3	Policing Policy Strategist
	• Ensure the Board is directly engaged during Regional Council's budget deliberations	• Non-Councillor Board presence at Regional Council budget deliberations	Annually	Commissioners
	• Engage the Public Safety Office in the implementation of the Public Safety Strategy	• Annual updates from the Public Safety Office received	Q3	Public Safety Office
	• Engage the province in their comprehensive review of the policing structure in Nova Scotia	• Participation in the comprehensive review	Ongoing	Commissioners
	• Build relationships with DoJ	• Regular meetings schedule established with senior DoJ staff	Quarterly meetings going forward	Policing Policy Strategist

Adapt

The Municipality is growing quickly and is facing increased pressures from emergency events; we must adapt to be prepared for large-scale and emergency events. This pillar focuses on ensuring police services have the necessary policies, tools, and resources in place to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of the public now and into the future.

Strategic Priority	Potential actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
Enhance policies to adapt to growth and emergency situations	• Review the police response to the Tantallon wildfire, and the recent flood to identify strengths in response and potential gap or risk areas.	• Staff report received on response to 2023 wildfires and floods	Q1	HRP/RCMP

Ensuring our policing services have the necessary policies, tools, and resources in place to adequately respond to emergencies, large gatherings, and a growing population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify policy needs (e.g., fast moving water rescue policy) and enabling policing services to develop the necessary policies with support from the Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff report received on policy needs related to emergency situations and growth 	Q2	HRP/RCMP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the development of public safety policies related to growth (e.g., large gatherings and protests). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HRP policies adopted on emergency situations and growth 	Q3	Policing Policy Strategist/HRP/RCMP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for and support acquisition of a new HRP headquarters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshed staff report received on the building plan for a new Halifax Regional Police headquarters 	Q3	Finance & Asset Management/HRP

Evolve

Expectations of police are changing, and the Board must evolve how it works with community, partners and stakeholders within policing. This pillar focuses on 1) evolving police response in critical areas (identified by community, stakeholders, and public safety reports), and 2) strengthening the focus of police service leaders place on attracting, retaining, and developing the people in their services.

Strategic Priority	Potential actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
Review, align, and action findings and recommendations from key reports Reviewing reports and developing targeted action plans through collaboration with partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address root causes in attrition in sexual assault reports to police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violence Against Women Advocate Case Review Model adopted 	Q1	HRP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host public consultation meeting on policing and gender-based violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff report received outlining policies, procedures, statistics and other relevant information relating to the issue of policing and gender-based violence 	Q1	HRP

Strategic Priority	Potential actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation session hosted Identification of possible gaps in policing services regarding gender-based violence and an action plan to address these gaps Staff report received examining need for and potential models of third party reporting 	<p>Q2</p> <p>Q3</p> <p>Q4</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure clarity in the role of police toward homeless individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BoPC policy regarding police response to homelessness adopted HRP policy regarding police response to homelessness adopted 	<p>Q2</p> <p>Q4</p>	Policing Policy Strategist/HRP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support alternative responses to mental health related calls to police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation between HRP, RCMP and the Public Safety Office in establishing costing and partnership models for a Community Mental Health Crisis Service. 	Ongoing	HRP/RCMP/Public Safety Office
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the HRP to develop a Use of Force policy for inclusion in the Policy Manual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved Use of Force policy developed in collaboration with the HRP included in the Policy Manual 	Q4	Policing Policy Strategist/HRP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify further areas of alignment between recommendations and actions contained in the Wortley Report, Defund Report, Public Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff report received identifying further areas of alignment 	Q1	Policing Policy Strategist

Strategic Priority	Potential actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
	Strategy and Mass Casualty Commission Final Report			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly review and refresh policies contained in the BoPC Policy Manual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On average two policies a year are reviewed, refreshed and adopted 	Ongoing	Policing Policy Strategist
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and address recommendations out of Independent Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive Independent Review Begin addressing recommendations 	Q1 Ongoing	Commissioners Policing Policy Strategist
<p>Oversee the development of a people-focused policing strategy</p> <p>Ensuring our police develop clear plans (including policies, practices, and systems) that will enable them to attract, retain, and develop the people in their services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the development of targeted recruitment strategies for underrepresented groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual update received from HRP and RCMP HRP recruitment strategy adopted that aligns with the principles of Employment Equity 	Q2 Q2	HRP/RCMP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recognition programs/ Implement an annual BOPC Award for Excellence in Policing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria and nomination process adopted in support of annual award ceremony Recognition program communicated to HRP and RCMP members 	Q2 Q3	BoPC Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance psychological safety and trauma supports including consideration of budgetary implications and providing policy direction as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual update received on HRP actions to enhance psychological safety 	Q2	HRP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze existing culture within HRP and develop actions to strengthen and improve that culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report received on assessments of culture and actions taken by HRP to improve work culture 	Q4 Q4	HRP/Social Policy Strategist

Strategic Priority	Potential actions	Outcomes	Estimated Timeframe	Lead
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research received from HRM staff on cultural transformation in policing 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action taken on the report Understaffing, Long-term Absences and Mental Health Claims at Halifax Regional Police • Determine if there is a correlation between overtime and extra duty and sick leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff report received 	Q1	Human Resources