

Re: Item No. 15.3.1

September 10, 2024

**HALIFAX**

## **Item: 15.3.1**

**Halifax Independent Civilian Review Into  
August 18 2021 Encampment Evictions**

# August 18, 2021

- HRM Parks and Recreation staff, HRM Compliance Officers, and Halifax Regional Police took steps to clear four encampments;
  - Horseshow Island
  - Peace and Friendship Park
  - Halifax Common
  - Memorial Library

# Review Timeline

Date	Activity
August 18, 2021	Closing of encampments
October 2021	Decision to complete an independent review by Halifax Board of Police Commissioners
May 2023	Hiring of Cooper, Sandler, Shime, & Schwartzenruber LLP to complete review
August 2024	Report delivered to Halifax Board of Police Commissioners
Sept. 2024	Halifax Board of Police Commissioners receives the report and forwards it to Regional Council

# Terms of Reference

- The adequacy of the Board's existing policies
- The adequacy of HRP's priorities, objectives and goals as they relate to the eviction of unhoused people
- The adequacy of oversight and governance mechanisms employed by the BoPC

# General Recommendations: BoPC

- Adopt a more assertive role in overseeing the HRP, including by
  - Ensuring the Chief keeps the board apprised of important HRP operations before and after events unfold
  - Identifying a process to review BoPC and HRP policies
- Identify BoPC policy gaps, including in the areas of
  - Policing encampments and the unhoused
  - Human rights
  - Use of Force and pepper spray
  - Defining what constitutes a “critical point”
- Acknowledge the distinct needs of traditionally underserved communities

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# General Recommendations: BoPC

- Issue apology for flaws in decision-making process that led to evictions (in conjunction with HRM)
- Establish committee with representation from HRP, BoPC, unhoused people and social service agencies
- Revise training modules, Operational Plans, detention procedures and role of Commanding Officer
- Review policies related to officer identification, Use of Force and Sensory Irritants

# General Recommendations: Council

- Continue to designate appropriate public spaces for encampments and only consider eviction in non-designated sites as last resort
- Improve communication with encampment residents:
  - If an encampment is cleared, ensure a Notice is issued with information about their options and what to expect
  - Ensure a variety of communication methods are used
  - Ensure social service agencies are also provided information
- Review the resources provided to support the unhoused community

# Questions: