



## BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS for the HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

**October 25, 2023  
MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Becky Kent, Chair  
Commissioner Harry Critchley, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Lindell Smith  
Commissioner Lisa Blackburn  
Commissioner Yemi Akindoju  
Commissioner Gavin Giles  
Commissioner Anthony Thomas

**STAFF:** Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer  
Andrew Gough, Solicitor  
Andrea Lovasi-Wood, Legislative Assistant  
Catie Campbell, Legislative Assistant

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.*

*The agenda, reports, supporting documents, information items circulated, and video (if available) are online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca).*

*The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m., and adjourned at 6:09 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting took place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and that we are all treaty people.

**2. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS – NONE**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE**

**4. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOVED by Commissioner Giles, seconded by Commissioner Blackburn

**THAT the agenda be approved as presented.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE**

**6. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE**

**7. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

**8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

**8.1 Correspondence**

Correspondence was received and circulated for item 10.1.1.

For a detailed list of correspondence received refer to the specific agenda item.

**8.2 Petitions – None**

**8.3 Presentation – None**

**9. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE**

**10. REPORTS**

**10.1 STAFF**

**10.1.1 Halifax Regional Police 2024/25 Operating Budget Framework**

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- Correspondence from Neil Cook, Veronica Post, Ursula Prosegger, Sade Cooke, Hannah Cameron
- Staff presentation dated October 25, 2023

Acting Chief Don MacLean, Halifax Regional Police gave a presentation. MacLean, Deputy Chief Reid McCoombs, Operational Support, Halifax Regional Police and Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

Commissioner Kent entered the meeting and assumed the Chair.

**Jamie Livingston, District 8** spoke in opposition to the Halifax Regional Police's (HRP) 2024/25 operating budget proposal, including the funding of additional police officers to respond to mental health calls. Livingston stated that HRP's budget proposal did not align with Halifax Regional Municipality's (HRM) Community Safety Strategy and provided a summary of other jurisdictions that use community based and civilian staffed response programs to avoid unnecessary police intervention in mental health calls. Livingston responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

**Ursula Prosegger, Dartmouth** spoke in favour of HRP's 2024/25 operating budget, including the funding of additional police constables for the patrol division. Prosegger spoke to increased theft and vandalism in downtown Dartmouth in recent years. Prosegger stated their support for increased police patrol and enforcement in the area to restore vibrancy to the community. Prosegger responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

**Lou Campbell, District 8** spoke in opposition to HRP's 2024/25 operating budget proposal as increased funding and training for police officers to serve on a mobile mental health team did not equal better practices. Campbell spoke to the lack of public trust in the police which created challenges when police responded to mental health calls and stated that police should not be tasked with that role. Campbell stated that additional funding should be invested in community programs not HRP.

**Sandra McKenzie, Chair, Alderney Landing Board of Directors** spoke in favour of HRP's 2024/25 operating budget and increased community policing. McKenzie spoke to the higher levels of violence and crime in downtown Dartmouth. McKenzie detailed the benefits of a HRM financed circuit breaker intervention, including increased community policing, had in the reduction of violent incidents until the program ended. McKenzie spoke to Alderney Landing hiring off duty police services during the summer and stated their organization did not have the financial resources to continue such efforts to help keep people safe and requested that HRP patrol resources be increased.

**Libby Douglas, Chair, Alderney Landing Proactive Safety Committee** spoke to the work of the proactive safety committee in the development of solutions to increased violence in downtown Dartmouth as well as a response to the high density and high number of homeless in the area who are without supportive services. Douglas spoke to three workshops their committee held with residents, business owners, HRM and provincial staff where increased community policing in downtown Dartmouth was identified as an urgent and immediate need. Douglas responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

**Willa Oaks, District 9** spoke in opposition to HRP's 2024/25 operating budget proposal. Oaks stated that police officers should not be responsible to respond to mental health calls and HRP's request for increased funding of this service should be rejected. Oaks stated a mental health crisis was not a crime and spoke in favour of civilian led mental health responses as outlined in the Subcommittee to Define Defunding Police report to the Board.

**T. Chandler Haliburton, Downtown Dartmouth** spoke in favour of HRP's 2024/25 operating budget as the increased level of crime and violence in downtown Dartmouth showed the need for more police in the area.

**Vishal Srivastava, Vines Fusion Grill Restaurant, Dartmouth** spoke to increased crime in the area near their restaurant that resulted in increased safety concerns for their staff and patrons. Srivastava spoke in favour of HRP's 2024/25 operating budget and increased police patrols in the area.

**Trina James, District 7** spoke in opposition to HRP's 2024/25 operating budget proposal. James repeated concerns with police handling mental health calls and support for the use of citizen led mental health resources as an alternative. James repeated request that additional funds go to mental health resources and low income housing.

**Jesse Hatch, District 7** spoke in opposition to HRP's 2024/25 operating budget proposal. Hatch repeated concerns with police handling mental health calls and support for the use of citizen led mental

health resources as an alternative. Hatch stated HRP provided little evidence that police were needed in hospitals. Hatch stated the need to invest in HRM's public safety strategy.

**Frank Heimpel, District 8** spoke in opposition to HRP's 2024/25 operating budget proposal. Heimpel stated that increased police patrol funding would not improve the lives of the unhoused population and this funding was best spent on other community and mental health services for the unhoused.

**Jeff McLatchy, Dartmouth** spoke to recent changes in downtown Dartmouth and spoke in support of additional resources for the community that included policing, civilian crisis teams, community navigators, the unhoused and people with mental health issues. McLatchy stated that the funding of policing services was equally important as community and mental health supports in their community.

**Kate MacDonald, District 8** spoke in opposition to HRP's 2024/25 operating budget proposal. MacDonald repeated concerns with police handling mental health calls. MacDonald stated that HRP did not provide evidence for their increased funding requests or provide proof that the increased funding would be used successfully. MacDonald responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

**10.2 COMMISSIONER UPDATES – NONE**

**11. ADDED ITEMS – NONE**

**12. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION – NONE**

**13. IN CAMERA (In Private) – NONE**

**14. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE**

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – November 15, 2023**

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Catie Campbell  
Legislative Assistant