



BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS for the HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

MINUTES January 8, 2025

PRESENT: Commissioner Gavin Giles, Chair
Commissioner Greg O'Malley, Vice Chair
Commissioner Becky Kent
Commissioner Tony Mancini
Commissioner Virginia Hinch
Commissioner Yemi Akindoju

STAFF: Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer
Martin Ward, K.C., General Counsel
Andrea Lovasi-Wood, Legislative Assistant
Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant

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

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 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 – December 18, 2024

MOVED by Commissioner O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Hinch

THAT the minutes of December 18, 2024 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOVED by Commissioner Mancini, seconded by Commissioner Akindoju

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 Presentations – None

9. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

10. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

10.1 STAFF

10.1.1 Halifax Regional Police 2025/2026 Proposed Operating Budget and Royal Canadian Mounted Police Halifax Regional Detachment 2025/2026 Resource Request

- **Public Consultation for HRP 2025/2026 Proposed Operating Budget and RCMP HRD 2025/2026 Resource Request – 4:00 p.m.**

The following was before the Committee:

- Correspondence from Collins Ellison, Jane Fleming, Nicole Corrado, Campbell McClintock, Carmel Farahbakhsh

Curtis Watson, Halifax raised concerns regarding the current allocation of the Halifax Regional Police (HRP) proposed 2025/2026 operating budget, particularly with the amount of funds allocated to road safety. Watson responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

Kate Macdonald, District 7 spoke in opposition to HRP's 2025/2026 proposed operating budget and cited concerns that HRP was not required to provide evidence that budget increases resulted in improved community safety. Macdonald advocated decreased funding for HRP in favour of increased funding for community supports that addressed issues including housing and homelessness and intimate partner violence. They also opposed HRP's request of an armoured rescue vehicle (ARV) and questioned its use and purpose.

Paxton Romana, District 8 spoke in opposition to HRP's 2025/2026 the proposed operating budget. Romana noted concerns with increased police presence in Halifax Public Library locations and noted the unmet needs of residents experiencing homelessness. They contended HRP did not prevent crime, were ineffective at dealing with and often escalate situations, and explained Halifax Regional Municipality's (HRM) money could be better spent on public transit and housing.

Lou Campbell, District 8 spoke in opposition to HRP's 2025/2026 the proposed operating budget. They contended the recommendations included in the Defunding the Police: Defining the Way Forward for HRM report commissioned by the Board were not seriously considered. Campbell noted the report called for financial reform and the proposed budget increase did not align with the pillars outlined in the report. They encouraged the Board to implement the recommendations outlined in the Defunding the Police report and the Halifax Independent Civilian Review Into August 18, 2021 Encampment Evictions report.

Jordan Roberts, Halifax spoke in opposition to HRP's 2025/2026 proposed operating budget increase. Roberts echoed the sentiments expressed by previous speakers regarding the need to allocate funds to various community services. Roberts noted further concern that input provided in the public consultation process was dismissed and urged the Board to be more responsive to the concerns of community members.

Carrie Low, Halifax spoke in opposition to the proposed HRP budget and contended HRP lacked accountability which eroded public trust. They stated the Board routinely ignored the public's concerns and did not provide adequate civilian governance and oversight. Low asserted the police disregarded the lived experiences of sexual assault survivors and noted concerns with HRP's request for body-worn cameras (BWC) and ARV's and proposed cuts to the Sexual Assault Investigation Team.

Charles Naugle, Lawrencetown spoke in support of HRP's proposed budget. Naugle noted their decades long career with HRP and expressed concerns that ARVs were being mischaracterized. They explained the acquisition of ARVs provided additional safety to officers and resulted in decreased deployment of lethal weapons and firearms. They noted the dangerous nature of policing.

Tanner Van Every, Halifax spoke in opposition to the proposed increase to HRP's operating budget and echoed concerns noted by previous speakers. They called for HRP to provide evidence that past budget increases benefitted communities and called for further oversight of the allocation of HRP's budget.

Madison Geldart, District 9 encouraged the Board to reject HRP's proposed budget. Geldart expressed disappointment that HRP's proposed budget increases were routinely approved despite public opposition and encouraged HRM to re-allocate funds to community services that prevented and stop crime. They explained marginalized communities would be disproportionately affected by and harmed by an approved budget increase.

Collins Ellison, District 7 spoke in opposition to HRP's 2025/2026 proposed operating budget. They noted concerns with the policing of residents experiencing homelessness and asserted international laws

were violated by criminalizing homelessness. Ellison suggested funds should instead be invested into outreach supports and community services for those experiencing homelessness and cited the high cost of detaining residents experiencing homelessness.

Natasha Hines, Clayton Park spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed 2025/2026 budget and urged the Board to listen to the concerns raised by members of the public. Hines cited concern with the increased militarization of the police and lack of accountability. They encouraged the Board to implement the recommendations outlined in the Defund the Police and the Mass Casualty Commission reports.

Nancy Hunter, District 11 urged the Board to reject the proposed 2025/2026 HRP budget and echoed concerns that community input was not seriously considered. Hunter expressed concern regarding the allocation of Municipal funds, HRP being overtasked and the request for an ARV and BWCs. They encouraged the Board to adopt the recommendations outlined in the Halifax Independent Civilian Review Into August 18, 2021 Encampment Evictions report.

Alan Joyce, Windsor Junction spoke in opposition to HRP's request for an ARV and noted these vehicles were expensive to buy, maintain and for officers to train on. Joyce suggested funds could be better used to help those sleeping rough in HRM and further investment in community services.

Nicole Corrado, Resident opposed the 2025/2026 HRP budget. They emphasized the need to de-task police and create non-police, community service focused alternatives to respond to mental health calls and cited the Toronto Community Crisis Service as an example. Corrada noted concerns that HRM did not have a missing persons unit and cited the success of search and rescue services in Toronto and Montreal. They responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

Christina Tellez, Halifax spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed budget. Tellez cited the findings of the Wortley Report that found people of colour were disproportionately targeted by police and explained police could not be reformed due to its historical and ongoing oppression of marginalized communities. Tellez called for a decrease in HRP's budget and noted concerns with the purchase of an ARV without public consultation.

Hannah Cameron, Kjiptuk spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed budget increase and repeated concerns expressed by previous speakers including HRP's approach to sexual assault charges and mental health crisis calls. They explained many residents did not feel safe in the presence of police.

Willa Oaks, Halifax spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed 2025/2026 budget. They repeated previous sentiments that feedback from the public was not taken into consideration by the Board and noted concerns that the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) was able to approve the purchase of an ARV without an approval process.

Ames Mather, District 8 spoke in opposition to the proposed 2025/2026 HRP budget and objected to the CAO's use of HRM capital fleet budget for the purchase of an ARV and suggested that future purchases of similar vehicles should be moved to HRP's annual budget to allow for due process and public consultation. Mather reiterated concerns that the Board was not operating in the best interest of HRM residents.

Kiera Blackadar, Halifax spoke in opposition to the proposed 2025/2026 HRP budget. They cited concerns including lack of transparency in spending, the CAO's ability to approve an ARV and lack of civilian trust in HRP. They explained that studies show that increased police funding did not decrease crime and suggested that HRP funds be allocated elsewhere.

Emily Thompson, Halifax urged the Board to reject HRP's proposed budget and noted concerns with HRP protecting property instead of people, not properly serving marginalized communities and increased militarization of HRP. Thompson encouraged the Board to implement the recommendations outlined in the Defunding the Police report.

Isabel Tees, Halifax spoke in opposition to the HRP's proposed 2025/2026 operating budget. They highlighted the need for further efforts to decrease the rate of incarceration of residents of indigenous and African descent. Tees noted concerns with HRP's request for an ARV and stated policing did not adequately serve communities. They encouraged the Board to implement the recommendations included in the Defund the Police and the Halifax Independent Civilian Review Into August 18, 2021 Encampment Evictions reports.

Wiebke Kungl, Halifax spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed 2025/2026 operating budget and asserted HRP should be defunded further fund community led programs and services. They explained the police were overtasked, they did not address the root causes of the issues they deal with, and policing was a reactionary service and often serviced the interests of the wealthy as opposed to the general public. Kungl responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

Frank Heimpel, District 8 spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed 2025/2026 operating budget increase. They reiterated previous concerns that community consultation was not being taken seriously by the Board and explained the consultation process did not allow for meaningful discourse. Heimpel explained public funds would be better utilized in other areas and noted concerns surround the purchase of an ARV for the HRP. Heimpel responded to questions of clarification from the Board.

Max Gregory, Halifax spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed 2025/2026 operating budget and questioned the purpose and utility of the Board. They stated the Board did not accurately represent the public and noted concerns with tax dollars being used to purchase an ARV.

Toby Green, District 8 urged the Board to reject HRP's proposed 2025/2026 operating budget and repeated previous speakers' assertions that concerns expressed in public consultations were dismissed by the Board. Green agreed with previous speakers that policing was a reactionary service and stated funds could be better invested in services like public transit and snow removal.

Rebecca Hartery, District 8 spoke in opposition to the HRP's proposed 2025/2026 operating budget and noted concerns regarding HRM's plans to purchase an ARV for HRP.

Öykü Su Gürler, District 5 spoke in opposition to HRP's proposed budget increase and noted concerns that the Board did not provide civilian oversight. They urged HRP to consider re-allocating their budget in favour of funding programs that were proactive in preventing community issues. Gürler noted further concerns regarding HRP's plans to hire civilian officers and noted the Board's lack of action in de-tasking police services.

11. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

12. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE) – NONE

13. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – January 15, 2025

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Elizabeth Macdonald
Legislative Assistant