

Metro Vancouver Transit Police
Chief's Community Council Meeting
June 9, 2020

VIDEOCONFERENCE

Attendees:

Karen Reid-Sidhu, Chair
Dave MacDonald
Diane Gillis
Guy Cohen
Helene Love
Justina Loh
Kimberly Wood
Larry Hayes
Maxine Wilson
Sana Aziz
Sherman Chan
Valerie Clements

Chief Officer Dave Jones (*exited at 5:52 p.m.*)
Deputy Chief Officer Barry Kross
Acting Deputy Chief Officer CJ Kyle
Taryn Barton
Stephen Crosby

Guests: Karly Sandboe, ASL Interpreter

Regrets: Donna Dickison, Lianne Ritch

1. Call Meeting to Order - Chair

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. and acknowledged that the Metro Vancouver Transit Police operate throughout the traditional territories of the Lower Mainland Coast Salish peoples and gave thanks for their hospitality on these lands.

2. Review: Approval of Agenda/Minutes – Chair

- **Approval of the February 18, 2020 Minutes: Moved/Seconded, all in favour – Approved**
- **Approval of the Agenda:** There was a request to add 'Co-Chair' to the Agenda for brief discussion.

Motion to approve the Revised Agenda: Moved/Seconded, all in favour – Approved

The new Transit Police Chief's Community Council (TPCCC) members were welcomed and introduced themselves.

- Maxine Wilson, Tri City Seniors Planning Network
- Guy Cohen, Ivanhoe Cambridge, Metropolis at Metrotown
- Sana Aziz, Alzheimer's Society of BC

Additional Agenda Item – Co-Chair: The Co-Chair position was previously held by Rick Parent. The TPCCC was asked if anyone would like to put their name forward for the position. As per the Terms of Reference, this is a two-year term. Larry Hayes volunteered and will be Co-Chair for the remainder of 2020 and 2021.

3. Chief's Update

Chief Jones welcomed the new members and thanked the TPCCC for attending the meeting by videoconference or phone. The Chief provided an update on the following activities at the Transit Police:

- Transit Police's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery
 - Majority of civilian staff continue to work remotely
 - Work with vulnerable groups to make travel safe
 - Calls for service and changes experienced throughout the pandemic
 - No members have been sick from COVID, although one is stuck overseas
- Service Delivery Model review is almost complete
- A Transit Police officer will be placed in North Vancouver to work in partnership with RCMP

The Chief noted the importance of the TPCCC and how discussions from these meetings assist in better meeting and understanding the needs of each of the communities represented. The Chief would like the transit system to be the safest transportation system in North America. The TPCCC asked questions and shared comments on the following:

- Current communication challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing in regards to the wearing of masks and not being able to pass pen and paper back and forth. Many are not comfortable being out on the transit system. Chief Jones offered to bring concerns to the TransLink Executive and the potential option of having designated seating on transit for deaf/blind passengers. It was suggested that officers take basic ASL.
- Recent theft and incidents around Royal Oak. Chief Jones advised that the Neighbourhood Police Officers should be returning to their roles in the near future and should be informed of any new or ongoing concerns.
- Advocacy to the government for more support for mental health and/or addiction.

Chief Jones addressed the calls to defund policing and recent protests. It has opened up a discussion and it is important to hear from groups such as the TPCCC. Transit Police is looking at how to recognize biases and how to respond to them through dialogue, education and corrective measures. Transit Police is focused on community policing and helping people, not just enforcement. TPCCC members shared comments and suggestions. The Chief also shared a comment from the Transit Police Board meeting that

was held at MOSAIC in regards to cultural awareness around policing. The Chief suggested that for the next TPCCC meeting, the discussion on police expectations continue. The next meeting is in September and depending on recommendations from the Provincial Health Authority and the comfort level of TPCCC members, the option to meet in-person or virtually will be reviewed closer to the meeting date.

***5:52 p.m. Chief Jones exited the meeting**

4. Building Confidence in Using Public Transit – Stephen Crosby

Mr. Crosby provided an update on phase one and two of the pandemic and advised that safety is top of mind. In regards to reassuring the public that it is safe to return to transit, TPCCC members were asked if their communities have returned to transit and if not, what would be required for them to return. Hand sanitizing stations are now available at some stations and a supply of Personal Protection Equipment ('PPE') has been obtained. TPCCC members shared the following comments/suggestions:

- Hand out PPE on the system
- Messaging for how people should deal with those that are not wearing masks
- If wearing a mask on transit is required, some people with disabilities may not be able to put on their own mask
- Continue to limit the number of passengers on buses so they are not too crowded
- Seniors may still be nervous to leave their homes and some seniors from Asian communities feel they are being judged for wearing masks
- For the mental health community, anxiety levels are elevated as the usual access to support has not been available over phase one
- Mixed messages over masks and distancing

Mr. Crosby advised on what Transit Police has implemented to create a safe work environment. Deputy Chief Kross also shared some information and noted that the BC Centre for Disease Control website is a good source for the most current information on COVID-19.

5. Communications Updates – Stephen Crosby

Mr. Crosby provided a Communications Update noting that social media is being used to convey to the public that Transit Police is still on and around the system to help.

6. Membership Update – Diane Gillis

Ms. Gillis referred to an email message sent out after the last meeting, asking for feedback/suggestions in regards to membership. As there were not any responses received, the message will be resent. Bios for TPCCC members are posted on the Transit Police webpage. If updates are required, or if a bio is missing, please send to Taryn. TPCCC members were asked to have a designated alternate to ensure continuity at meetings. A reminder that if three consecutive meetings are missed without reasonable cause, the member will be considered to have given up their position on the TPCCC.

7. Roundtable

Members went around the table to provide an update on current initiatives in their communities:

Justina – working remotely and trying to offer services by phone or internet. It has been limiting and the vulnerable have been affected. Trying to figure out the best way to safely reopen.

Diane – working to address crime in the area. Overgrowth has returned under the skytrain so may attend a TransLink Board meeting. Diane was advised to send an email to Deputy Chief Kross or Stephen Crosby.

Maxine – outlined involvement with mental health advocacy.

Larry – school trustee in Burnaby for 18 years and just retired in December. Background in federal and provincial corrections. Currently looking to put together a working committee with input from the community regarding policies for acceptance and racism.

Sherman – concurs with comments made tonight in regards to racism and more work that needs to be done, civil engagement and dialogue. Access to government information has been an issue due to technology and language barriers.

Sana – programming has moved online due to Covid and providing support is ongoing. Dementia helpline - can share the numbers with Taryn to circulate with an update on available programs.

Dave – there have been challenges with the vulnerable that live in poverty and don't have access to technology. Have received some generous support and been able to provide iPads to some. Looking at soft opening of the Pathways facility.

Kimberly – past president of the Greater Vancouver Association of the Deaf and currently an elected director on the Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility Board and serve on Measuring Up. Covid has had a huge impact on the deaf blind community, especially seniors. Information wasn't available and there was a huge push from the community to ensure updates are interpreted.

Acting Deputy Chief Kyle – alternate for Deputy Chief Cumberworth; looks after West division. Shared comments on the recent negative attention to the policing profession and is looking forward to the opportunity for change.

Val – Surrey Outreach Centre; oversee IRAYL program. Facility has been closed and have been reaching out to young people by social media. Have returned back to service and doing outreach but not at full capacity. PPE available for youth and having conversations with youth to educate them.

Guy – reopening of business, taking time to work in the new environment and make adjustments, better communications with tenants and clients.

Helene – was an alternate for Rick Parent who has now retired. Instructor in charge of field practice students; always looking for placements for students. How COVID is affecting internships – would be interested to have a discussion offline.

Karen – down for a month and have just started back with traffic safety programs. Now have PPE and other safety measures are being taken as a number of volunteers are coming back.

6:36 p.m. *Dave McDonald exited the meeting

Measures to reopen office. The need for PPE has impacted the budget. Moving forward with a mentorship program for vulnerable youth.

Deputy Chief Kross – Deputy Chief of the Administration Division which covers training and recruiting; currently reevaluating how service is provided and received. On behalf of the Chief and the organization, the two way dialogue with the TPCCC is so important and very much appreciated.

Stephen Crosby – Manager of Strategic Services which includes communications. Outlined current initiatives and efforts.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

9. Closure

There being no further business, the meeting was terminated at 6:43 p.m.

Certified Correct:

Signed Minutes on File

Karen Reid-Sidhu, Chair

Signed Minutes on File

Taryn Barton, Recording Secretary