

Metro Vancouver Transit Police
Chief's Community Council Meeting
September 15, 2020
VIDEOCONFERENCE

Attendees:

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

Chief Officer Dave Jones
Deputy Chief Officer Barry Kross
Deputy Chief Officer Mike Cumberworth
Taryn Barton
Stephen Crosby

Guests: Brenda Erlandson, ASL Interpreter

Regrets: Guy Cohen, Lianne Ritch

1. Call Meeting to Order - Chair

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:02 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

- **Timekeeper** – Larry Hayes
- **Approval of the June 9, 2020 Minutes:** Moved/Seconded, all in favour – **Approved**
- **Approval of the Agenda:** Moved/Seconded, all in favour - **Approved**

3. Chief's Update

Chief Jones thanked TPCCC members for attending tonight's virtual meeting. Chief Jones provided an update on the Transit Police's response to the COVID-19 pandemic including the following:

- Explanation of crime rates compared to ridership
- Types of crime occurring
- New safety initiatives and partnerships
- Staff deployment and return of Neighbourhood Police Officers ('NPO')
 - Cst. Hanif is the new NPO for Burnaby

- Riders returning to transit
- Planning and considerations for return to work-place post COVID

In addition to the COVID update, Chief Jones also provided an update on the following:

- Strategic Planning has resumed
- Dialogue created following the recent global events around policing
- Broadway expansion of the transit system

The TPCCC shared comments. Chief Jones answered a question in regards to hate crimes. Chief Jones noted his appreciation to the TPCCC for the important feedback they provide.

The Chair requested that social media handles, including the Transit Police officers that have social media, be redistributed.

4. Presentation: Tri-Cities Seniors Planning Network – Maxine Wilson

Maxine provided an overview of the Tri-Cities Seniors Planning Network. The Tri-Cities Seniors Planning Network is in transition to become the Tri-Cities Seniors Action Society and is in the process of obtaining charitable status. Maxine outlined events, workshops, sponsorship, and noted that the new Board will plan future events and activities as well as apply for grant funding. During this time of social distancing, meetings have been conducted virtually. Maxine offered to work with the Society's Executive Director to do a survey to canvas how seniors are feeling about taking transit. There is some confusion around the complexity of the transit system, however Transit Police officers and other front-line staff have been very helpful. One issue that has come up is safety on busses and at bus stops. Maxine shared some of her previous work experience and noted the importance of having a government that supports transit. There is a growing number of seniors and they want to be connected. It is important that they understand how to use transit and that they feel safe. Maxine was thanked by the Chair and Chief for the informative presentation.

5. Police Expectations - Chief

This is a continued discussion from the last meeting. Chief Jones highlighted the diverse group of new recruits and shared some of their specialized skills and experience. Transit Police has one of the most diverse police forces in the province and has an approximate 50% ratio of male to female new hires. Chief Jones noted the importance of the TPCCC and their assistance in enhancing and ensuring safety for the communities they represent. Chief Jones answered questions in regards to the specialized skills of one of the new recruits. A TPCCC member commented on the value of being part of the TPCCC and having the opportunity to

hear from and speak directly to the Chief Officer and management. Sherman shared with the group that he has applied to appear before the Police Act Review Committee and noted that the engagement of the local community is important.

6. Communications Update – Stephen Crosby

The TPCCC received an update from Stephen Crosby on recent communications. Last week's media release led to an arrest. Reducing sexual offending is one of the top priorities at Transit Police. A recently launched campaign about how to report sexual offending on the transit system was developed by a group of students from a Vancouver secondary school. At a time when most campaigns were cancelled due to space being dedicated to COVID, this campaign was launched due to the importance of the issue as recognized by Transit Police and TransLink. The students did an exceptional job and the ads focus on how to report an incident right away through the 87-77-77 texting number.

7. Membership Update – Diane Gillis

Diane provided a membership update and noted the importance of having an alternate to ensure continuity. It was agreed by the TPCCC that Diane will approach individuals to speak about alternates. A comment was shared that it may be helpful to have an alternate attend a meeting in an observer role.

As per the Terms of Reference, the TPCCC can have a maximum of 15 representatives. Currently, there is no one geographically representing New Westminster, Delta, North Shore, Langley (City and Township), Pitt Meadows or Maple Ridge. Suggestions are welcome and the NPOs may be aware of potential candidates.

8. Roundtable

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

Maxine – Working with Douglas College in helping students feel that they belong and building restorative behavior. Referenced previous work in regards to anti-racism policy.

Diane – Bait bike program and noted that Guy Cohen mentioned the great work Transit Police did around Metrotown. Activity continues east of Royal Oak Station and CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) considerations. Initiatives outlined to make improvements but there is still work to be done to improve safety. Deputy Chief

Cumberworth will have Sgt. Simpkin contact Diane to put her in touch with the appropriate NPO.

Dave – Have created a hybrid model with the facility open but with limited numbers and staff working virtually. The biggest demand right now is regarding the mental health of youth. Mental health is being challenged during these times and they are trying to figure out how best to support individuals. Seeing more people returning to work and returning to transit.

Chief – System is running well; no COVID cases attributed to transit.

Sana – With in-person services still suspended, services are being provided virtually such as weekly webinars and frequent Telus support groups for caregivers. Dementia Friendly Communities program is providing training for volunteers and seeing a rise in requests from partners in the community. If anyone could benefit from training about dementia please reach out. Seeing increased stress levels with the rising cases and weather changes.

Justina – Office remains closed and services are being offered remotely. The demand is increasing throughout the pandemic and not being able to access in-person services has been difficult. Many of the vulnerable do not have access to technology. Many are not comfortable using transit, especially when the seats assigned in the front are not available. Happy that masks are mandatory, but feel that many people are not wearing them. When stops are skipped to increase efficiency it is extremely problematic for people with disabilities. Some are turning to Handy Dart, which is limited to how many they can take. Justina will be on leave after November and will have an alternate to take over.

Val – Youth centers are closed to the public but are seeing clients on an appointment basis. Both IRAYL outreach teams have been out on the system for the last of couple months but not running as late at night due to problems accessing washrooms. Working closely with Sgt. Simpkin on exploring opportunities for collaborative outreach.

Kim – Events have had to be cancelled and postponed due to COVID. Mask wearing has increased in the community, however seeing masks and other PPE discarded on the ground at many stations.

Larry – [REDACTED]

Minutes revised at the request of Burnaby School Board

[REDACTED]

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Sherman – MOSAIC is currently running in a hybrid mode with limited in person services. There is a provincial initiative to form a network that will provide opportunity to invite different municipalities to explore how to collectively address racism.

Karen – Operating at full capacity with social distancing measures in place. Have had one volunteer test positive and two staff in isolation. The office remains closed to volunteers. Volunteers meet in the community where safe distancing can be maintained. Recent incident at Scott Road with a cross bow resulted in an arrest. Seeing an increase in activity with drugs and alcohol in certain areas. Mentorship program for vulnerable youth is up and running.

The TPCCC briefly discussed the issue of having washrooms available on the transit system.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

10. Closure

There being no further business, the meeting was terminated at 6:30 p.m.

Certified Correct:

Signed Copy on File

Karen Reid-Sidhu, Chair

Signed Copy on File

Taryn Barton, Recording Secretary