

MARCH 2010 Board Matters



OTTAWA POLICE SERVICES BOARD
COMMISSION DE SERVICES POLICIERIS D'OTTAWA

Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe

A Newsletter from the Ottawa Police Services Board

The Ottawa Police Services Board:

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Welcome to the March 2010 issue of the Ottawa Police Services Board's newsletter, "Board Matters", now in its third year of publishing. I'm very pleased that we have this vehicle to share information and enhance understanding about the work of the Police Services Board.

I'm also pleased to be back for a second consecutive year as Chair of the Board. In accordance with requirements under the *Police Services Act*, the Board held an election at its first meeting of the year and I am honoured that my colleagues re-elected me as Chair for 2010. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank all of my Board colleagues for their commitment and hard work over the past year, and I am excited about the work we have ahead of us in 2010.

This issue includes:

- A summary of a report that was recently submitted to the Board and City Council on the Board's activities, training and performance in 2009
- A list of other significant reports received by the Board since the beginning of this year that may be of interest to you
- Information on the Province's new *Distracted Driving* legislation to help clarify what is and isn't allowed under this new law.

I hope you find the newsletter informative; additional information about the Board and its work is always available online at www.ottawapoliceboard.ca.

Eli El-Chantiry, Chair

WHAT'S THE BOARD BEEN UP TO?

In addition to electing a new Chairperson at its first meeting of the year on February 1, 2010, the Board received the following reports related to its performance and future direction: the 2009 Annual Report on Board Activity, Training and Performance; a status report on the Board's Community Engagement Strategy, now entering its third year; and a Board Work Plan for 2010. All reports are available online.

Board Activity

It was another productive and busy year for the seven members of the Board in 2009. Board members collectively attended a total of 49 formal Board and committee meetings, up to 10 community or "coffee shop" meetings, and 102 other events related to their work as members of the Board. The other events include such things as police recruit badge or awards ceremonies, meetings with community partners, community events and fundraisers, meetings with Provincial officials and colleagues from other boards in the Province, police association functions, collective bargaining sessions, and the list goes on. In total, Board members collectively spent 369 hours at meetings and other events as part of their duties, representing a significant commitment of time and effort in service to the community.

2010 - 2012 Plan for a Safer Ottawa

In December the Board approved a new Business Plan for the Police Service, as it is required to do under the *Police Services Act* of Ontario. The **2010 - 2012 Plan for a Safer Ottawa** establishes the future priorities, goals and outcomes needed to successfully achieve legislated responsibilities and address community needs. Under the broad theme of "Service, Excellence and Ethics", the Plan identifies 17 goals and 57 key objectives that are grouped within four strategic priorities; these goals and objectives will shape the direction of the Ottawa Police Service for the next three years. For more info about the Plan, see the December "Board Matters" issue or the report from the December Board meeting at (ottawapoliceboard.ca).

A Newsletter from the Ottawa Police Services Board

2010 Police Budget Approved

Also in December the Board approved the 2010 Operating and Capital Budget for the Police Service. City of Ottawa Council subsequently approved the budget in late January. With a net operating budget of \$227.9M and a capital budget of \$50M, it provides the resources necessary to fulfill the Service's responsibilities to the citizens of Ottawa and deliver the services that residents expect. It will also allow the Service to move forward with its Business Plan objectives over the coming year. Of particular interest to citizens in the rapidly growing south end of the City, the capital budget contains funding to begin the process of realizing a new police facility near the planned Strandherd Bridge in south Ottawa. On a related note, the Service was excited to open the doors at its new West Division Patrol Facility at 211 Huntmar Drive in Kanata last December.

Community Outreach and Engagement

A primary focus for the Board in 2009 continued to be improving relationships with key community partners, communicating better with the public and City Councillors, providing opportunities for community engagement, and educating others about the Board and its work. Two public interest meetings were held, on the topics of **Safeguarding Your Identity and Safety for Seniors**. The latter was presented in collaboration with a community partner - the Council on Aging of Ottawa. The Board also co-hosted an important community dialogue with the Police Service and the Lebanese & Arab Social Services Agency (LASSA) that was successful in providing an opportunity for community members to discuss issues of concern with the Chief and the Board Chair. We were also very pleased to co-host with the Police Service a total of eight 'Let's Chat' coffee shop style meetings to solicit input on the 2010 - 2012 Plan for a Safer Ottawa.

Increasing Awareness of the Board

One of the challenges that all police boards face is being recognized as an autonomous governance body and legal entity. Police boards are largely misunderstood or invisible to the general public, who are much more accustomed to hearing about and interfacing with members of the Police Service on a regular basis. The Ottawa Police Services Board places a high value on representing the public interest and to do that effectively, it must establish its own relationship with the community and regularly hear from the public. To assist in achieving these goals, the Board has tried over the past two years to increase understanding and awareness about its work and to establish links of its own with residents and community partners. In addition to our public interest meetings, collaborations with targeted partners, and quarterly newsletter, efforts to increase awareness about the Board continued in 2009 through the introduction of an independent Board website, a brochure called "the Ottawa Police Services Board and You", and the adoption of our own crest.

Moving Forward

The Board intends to continue its focus on community engagement, outreach and improved communication throughout 2010. Plans include more public interest meetings, building relationships with targeted community partners, and collaborations with partners such as the ones undertaken in 2009 with the Council on Aging and LASSA.

The Board values and needs community input as a means to ensure the Police Service is meeting the expectations and requirements of residents. We encourage you to attend the various meetings and consultations held throughout the year and to share your thoughts with us. If there is a particular subject you would like to read about in our newsletter or have us address at one of our community meetings, please let us know.

RECENT REPORTS RECEIVED BY THE BOARD

The Board recently received the following reports that may be of interest to you; all reports can be accessed through the Board's website (ottawapoliceboard.ca):

- **Use of Force 2009 Annual Report:** This report presents statistics on the number of incidents of use of force in 2009, categorized by the levels of force outlined in the Ontario Use of Force Model established by the Province.
- **Compliance with Ministry Standards 2009 Annual Report:** Police services and police services boards in Ontario must comply with approximately 80 standard guidelines established by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. This report contains information on compliance with those standards in 2009.
- **Workforce Management Report - Fourth Quarter 2009:** This report identifies all new members hired in Q4 2009; hiring goals and actual hiring for the year; and activities related to retirements, resignations and promotions in Q4.
- **Employer of Choice Status Report Fourth Quarter 2009:** This report itemizes initiatives taken to further the Police Service's goal of becoming an "employer of choice for all" and reports on progress made in completing 17 recommendations contained in the 2004 Outreach Recruitment Study.
- **Positive Workplace 2009 Annual Report:** This report provides a general overview of the Police Service's Respectful Workplace Program and statistical information on the utilization and outcomes of that Program.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE POLICE SERVICES BOARD?

There will be a vacancy for a provincially appointed community representative on the Ottawa Police Services Board this July when the term of appointment for Board member Des Doran expires. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Police Services Board, visit the Province of Ontario's Public Appointments Secretariat to fill out an application form at www.pas.gov.on.ca/scripts/en/appl_how.asp.

A Board member job description is available on our website at: http://ottawapoliceboard.ca/Opsb-cspo/images/stories/pdf/Board_Member_Job_description_final_2006_EN.pdf.

DISTRACTED DRIVING LEGISLATION - WHAT'S ALLOWED?

The Provincial Government's distracted driving legislation took effect 26 October 2009. The Act makes it illegal for drivers to talk, text, type, dial or email using hand-held cell phones and other hand-held communications and entertainment devices. In Ottawa between 2006 and 2008, approximately 5,500 collisions were caused by driver inattention resulting in eight deaths, almost 1,940 injuries and a social cost estimated at \$300 million.

What's Not Allowed:

- Using hand-held communication devices (such as cell phones & Blackberries) and hand-held entertainment equipment (such as iPods and Play Station portables).
- Texting and emailing.
- Programming directions and/or information into a GPS device.
- Having display screens visible to the driver if they are unrelated to driving tasks, such as DVD players or laptops.

Drivers can use communication devices to call 9-1-1 while in motor vehicles. The prohibitions noted above are permissible if the driver is pulled off the roadway and is not impeding traffic and not illegally parked.

What Is Allowed:

- Hands-free communication devices with an earpiece, headphone, speakerphone or Bluetooth device.

- Pressing one button to activate and deactivate a hands-free application, or to place a call.
- Display screens of GPS units that are in hands-free mode.
- Display screens used in commercial vehicles to track location and provide information on cargo delivery, passenger pick-up or operational information from a dispatcher or control centre.
- Display screens for collision avoidance systems and display screens for providing the immediate environment of the vehicle and screens that provide information on weather and road conditions.

Tips to Reduce Driver Distraction

1. Put reading material in the trunk if tempted to read.
2. Attend to personal grooming and plan your route before leaving.
3. Identify and preset your vehicle's climate control, radio and music player.
4. Make it a habit to use your cell phone only when parked. Have a passenger take the call or let the caller go to voicemail.
5. Do not engage in emotional or complex conversations.
6. Take a break from driving when hungry or thirsty.

The Ottawa Police Services Board is a civilian body established by provincial legislation that provides governance and oversight for the Ottawa Police Service. It is accountable to the community, the Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services, and the Ontario Civilian Police Commission. If you are interested in viewing past issues of the "Board Matters" newsletter or other information about the Ottawa Police Services Board, please visit www.ottawapoliceboard.ca

The Police Services Board usually holds regular business meetings on the fourth Monday of each month except August (there is no meeting in August) and December (the meeting is on the 3rd Monday). *There are some irregularities in 2010 please check the online schedule for details.* All meetings are open to the public and take place at 5:00 p.m. in the Champlain Room, Ottawa City Hall. Members of the public are welcome to speak to any item on the agenda or can speak to an issue not on the agenda but of concern to them, provided they give at least one week's notice to Board staff. A complete schedule of meetings is available online.