

MEDIA RELEASE

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A Message to Community Partners from the Ottawa Police Services Board

(Ottawa)- During a public meeting of the Ottawa Police Services Board on April 27, the Board learned that a racist meme had been circulating within the Ottawa Police Service (OPS). The meme targets racialized members of the OPS and is completely unacceptable.

The Board learned of this meme at the same time as the public and shares the concerns, hurt, and disappointment being felt by the community and members of the OPS.

The Board is fully supportive of the swift actions Chief of Police Peter Sloly has taken to address this unfortunate incident, including the launching of an internal investigation; contacting the affected members; and engaging subject matter experts to help repair the harm that has been caused.

The meme is however a symptom of a far more complex and deep-rooted issue that the Board and the OPS continue to work to address and that is the establishment of a culture at the Service that values and celebrates equity, diversity and inclusion. This meme reminds us that our work is far from over.

The Board will continue to work hand-in-hand with the OPS and the community to ensure the necessary investments are made to engender a positive and respectful work environment at the OPS that is reflective of our diverse communities and removes systemic barriers and inequities people face.

We know that police organizations that value and build a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion demonstrate better community safety results and have greater ability to establish trusting relationships and provide bias-neutral policing. Our Board is committed to doing everything it can to ensure that our progress in these important areas is not lost or derailed by the irresponsible actions of a few.

The Ottawa Police Services Board is the civilian body responsible for governing the Ottawa Police Service. It is responsible for the provision of adequate and effective police services to the City of Ottawa's residents.

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