

**Chief's verbal for
July 25, 2022, OPSB meeting**
(check against delivery)

Good afternoon members of the Board.

As the Board is aware, we are looking to hire more than 80 recruits by the end of 2022.

As such, I want to begin by speaking about our ongoing outreach recruitment.

Hiring is a priority for our service, and we are committed to ensuring that any new classes of our officers are reflective of and share the values of the community we serve.

Last week, I met with our recruitment team for an update on the Ottawa Police outreach recruitment efforts.

We are making good progress and are in the process of signing on another diverse class of recruits.

But we still need the help of community members to encourage anyone who may be interested in becoming police officers.

I would appreciate it if you shared this message with your contacts.

We have several recruitment events coming up, including:

- On August 6 where you can visit us at Jam day @ Vincent Massey Park
- On August 10 where you can join our virtual information on Instagram @ 6 pm

These sessions explain the job, set expectations of what it means to be a police officer and provide information and mentoring opportunities for the hiring process.

You can also learn more by following our social media accounts.

Canada Day

This past Canada Day, families, residents, and visitors could safely enjoy the day in downtown Ottawa and across the city.

This Canada Day was unique due to the return of in-person festivities and a larger footprint.

We had the necessary resources, including public order units, traffic teams, tow trucks, and Quick Response Teams.

Our enhanced police presence was set into motion on June 29th, lasting until the late hours of July 3rd.

During our five-day operation, 12 people were arrested and 50 criminal charges were laid.

We thank all members of the public for their continued support and all police, city and partner agencies that assisted during the City's Canada Day festivities.

Demonstrations

This past weekend, we saw yet another demonstration in our city with people determined to use their vehicles to break the law and occupy the streets.

With our city and policing partners, Ottawa Police teams and heavy equipment were deployed downtown and in surrounding areas to prevent significant disruptions in the Core.

One person was arrested, 103 bylaw infractions were issued, and 13 vehicles were towed.

These events and demonstrations continue to put significant strain on police resources.

While the protest was occurring on Saturday, we saw 1500 requests for assistance (911: 1000 and Other Emergency: 500) and 500 calls requiring a police response.

It is a difficult balance that creates multiple staffing pressures and impacts regular service to residents.

I will send an update later this week regarding the Powershift and any other Freedom-related events planned for next weekend.

We are developing similar deployment plan for future events.

Statistics

We are seeing some concerning statistics related to crime in our city.

- The level of reported crime has risen 25% through the first six months of the year, exceeding pre-pandemic levels
- Violent crimes have risen 14% so far this year, driven by an increase in Threats, Assaults, Sexual Assaults, Robberies
- There have been 31 shootings in our city with 3 fatalities and 15 persons injured
- Hate crimes have risen 6%, with over 160 reports so far in 2022
- Property offences are up across the board -- up 33% / with 3,500 offences, **far surpassing pre-pandemic levels**

- So far this year, we have responded to over 300 overdose Calls for Service
 - o Deaths believed to be caused by overdoses are at: 51
 - o Number of calls for service where OPS administered Narcan are at: 52

These results validate what we are hearing anecdotally from our partners and communities.

There is a general feeling of unrest/disorder that significantly impacts feelings of public safety.

Our members are seeing changing societal trends. This includes an increase in mental health and addictions issues in the market area, rising number of overdose calls and deaths, fatalities on our roadways, and disturbing gun violence.

The Board amended the 2022 Budget and did not anticipate the need for an increase in police resources. It anticipated a decrease.

That Budget released approximately \$2.65 million back to the city.

We will be better positioned to provide the Board with a financial update in September, including what impact that reinvestment has had on reducing police calls for service, if any.

Update on PMO projects

The OPS remains focused on delivering the change agenda and efficiency plan from the 2022 Budget.

We continue to make progress on several initiatives.

Each Strategic Initiative was established to make meaningful progress in equity, diversity, and inclusion, improve and evolve our service delivery models and advance programs for member safety and wellness.

Significant work has been accomplished on several initiatives, including the Safer Workplace Program.

There will be an increased focus on members experiencing—or who have experienced—sexual harassment, violence, discrimination, and intersectional issues such as racism, gender-based discrimination, and homophobia.

As part of the Investigative Change Strategy, the Service is also preparing to roll out a new Adult Pre-Charge Diversion Program & Strategy and a unit to support such efforts.

This enhanced strategy will seek to divert low-level offenders away from the criminal justice system.

It seeks to direct them to programming designed to address issues, such as substance abuse, anger management, or mental health challenges.

A full update on the OPS' 2022 Strategic Initiatives – including our Call Referral project and Data optimization project -- will be provided to the Board in the Fall.

Gun violence and gun seizures

This July, we witnessed several examples of gun violence in the City, with 8 shootings resulting in 2 homicides.

This brings the total of shooting-related homicides to 3 for 2022.

We are seeing a 27% decrease in shootings to date compared to last year, with 35 shootings so far this year.

Police share the community's concern that 4 of these shootings happened during the daytime -- one during the afternoon funeral of a homicide victim.

Investigators have determined that the shootings were targeted, meaning that the victim and the perpetrator knew each other.

We are seeing too many young men using guns to settle disputes. And we know their families are hurting.

Families and communities can play a role by helping police remove crime guns from our streets.

We must stand together, united against gun violence.

My message today is simple -- if someone you know is at risk of perpetrating or becoming a victim of gun violence, please contact the police or Crime Stoppers.

Your tip can make a difference and save a life. In July, we seized 8 crime guns for a total of 66 this year (compared to 80 in 2021 for the entire year).

VAW community response related to the homicides/Borutski inquest

We have conducted a fulsome review of the recommendations from the Culleton, (Kuzyk) Koozyak, Warmerdam Inquest jury.

We are committed to action.

We will work with our partners and various levels of government and other agencies to support implementing all recommendations.

The OPS is aware and troubled by violence against women and femicide incidents in our city.

Of the 8 homicides this year, 4 have been women. This is unacceptable.

We will continue the critical work on this priority issue in collaboration with our community partners and stakeholders.

We can't and won't move forward without our partners, especially our community partners like those involved in the VAW Advisory Committee.

Together, we will review existing policies and develop procedures to enhance community safety.

We are also developing a new risk assessment tool for all intimate partner violence instances.

ByWard Market Safe Initiative

Earlier this month, our annual ByWard Market Safety Initiative was launched.

The Initiative places officers, in addition to our regular patrol and NRT presence, in the Market area on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The ByWard Market Initiative supports our partners, including By-Law and the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

The goal is to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for those in the Market during weekends by promoting responsible and lawful conduct.

Officers assigned to the Initiative seek to educate and engage members of the public, provide a proactive presence, and promote public safety.

During the Initiative's first weekend, officers arrested a person on outstanding warrants and assisted patrol officers at the scene of a stabbing.

The next day, officers responded to multiple disturbance and fight calls.

Compassion and professionalism

I try to end these verbal reports by showing the humanity and training of our officers that result in important interactions in our community.

These are the kind of moments that will never make a headline and certainly don't reflect the criticism of policing but show the compassion and professionalism of OPS members.

They are important to recognize.

Recently, a member of the public wrote a letter about an interaction between one of their students and two of our members, Constables Timothy Tang and David Ross:

“My student has autism.

Communication, social skills, and behaviour can be challenging for people on the spectrum. In situations of high stress, these challenges can grow exponentially.

I wanted to compliment the two officers who spoke with her today.

Their demeanor, non-intimidating facial expression, kindness, and exceptional communication skills were admirable.

This could have been, for her, a terribly troubling situation had it been handled by people without their skill, expertise, and kindness.

They took the time to explain what their job was, they informed her gently of how the process works and suggested ways for her to get in touch if she needed to at a later date.

We too often hear stories of interactions that go wrong in society for people on the autism spectrum.

Today, it went so right.

The way the officers intervened today, served to re-establish trust in the Ottawa Police Service for my student.

This is invaluable.

Thank you for the work you do and the way you do it.”

This is one example of what our members do daily to contribute to community safety and well-being.

Supt. Granger's Retirement

I want to conclude my remarks by noting the retirement of Superintendent Isobel Granger.

Supt. Granger demonstrated exemplary service to the community, advocating for sexual abuse and intimate partner violence survivors.

She was a tireless advocate for equity, diversity and inclusion, and a respected and valued colleague and mentor.

We are all happy for Isobel, but we are sad to see her go.

On behalf of the OPS, I congratulate her on her successful career with the OPS.