

# Chief's verbal report for the OPSB, October 23, 2023

I wanted to take a few moments to talk about retired Sergeant Robin Easey.

As many of you know, he passed away last week, surrounded by his family and loved ones.

While I never had the opportunity to meet him, everything I have heard about him is an example of selfless service to others.

Sgt. Easy was shot in 1984 at the Bayshore shopping centre after interrupting an armed robbery. Robin was left blind with severe mobility and health issues. His injuries and the events of that day would have broken many but Robin and his family persevered and stood as a symbol of strength and a driving force for change. He passed away at the age of 70.

By coincidence, a week before he passed, I was briefed on the program that was launched in 1988 by him and other members who had experienced a shooting event in their careers. Robin's Blue Circle is one of the longest-standing police peer support programs that has helped so many of our members and inspired similar programs at police services across the country and around the world.

That's a true legacy and testament to the type of man that he was and kind of captures who he was as a person – that he took a life-changing event and turned it into something positive that would help others.

He remained part of our Service and advocated for improvements in the field of brain injuries and for police members involved in traumatic events. This led to other important initiatives like the Robin Easey Centre for Cognitive Rehabilitation at The Ottawa Hospital.

Robin loved the OPS, and we loved him back. He was supported over the years by so many active and retired members, and I want to thank them all for supporting him.

He will be remembered as someone who faced adversity and turned it into something that would forever change how we support each other as police professionals. His story will forever be remembered as one of courage, and a true hero.

We will honor him at his funeral later this week.

### **Gaza conflict and local impacts**

The conflict in the Middle East is tragic. Despite the events being so far away, the effects of that war resonate to many in our community . The Ottawa Police Service has reached out to numerous community leaders in an effort to coordinate our resources to keep everyone safe. This is our goal.....keeping all people in our community safe.

Thousands of people have demonstrated in Ottawa over the last 2 weeks in response to the conflict in the Middle East. At times, the number of people marching or demonstrating have been a challenge to manage for police. But, I would like to thank those who have peacefully demonstrated in Ottawa. We expect that assemblies will continue and police will attend these events to protect the safety and security of our communities.

In our reach out to impacted communities, we want to make sure they understand they are fully supported and we want to learn about any incidents of hate that may be occurring so that we can address it.

Since the start of the conflict in the Middle East, we have received 17 hate-motivated reports. We are responding to these incidents as they are received.

We continue to encourage anyone who witnesses or experiences such incidents to report them to police. We will prosecute those who commit hate crimes to the full extent of the law.

I was really encouraged by the Mayor's meeting with a number of religious leaders and their commitment in a joint letter to work together to ensure Ottawa remains safe and peaceful and to denounce all forms of hatred and discrimination. This conflict is going to stretch over a number of weeks and months. As a community, let's work together to ensure it's a peaceful time in Ottawa

## **Homicides**

Our Homicide Unit continues to work hard to identify those responsible for shooting deaths in our city.

Last week they made arrests in two major incidents, one in the death of 19-year-old Brendan Mukoma in Orleans, and another in the death of 47-year-old Michael Quattrocchi in Carlington.

To-date in 2023 we have had 12 occurrences of 13 homicides, with 10 of those fully resolved. That's a credit to the professionalism and diligence of our small Homicide team. They are truly motivated in wanting to provide resolution and closure for the families impacted.

We are still fully committed to resolve the two unsolved homicides.

One involved the shooting death of 26-year-old Granit Ahmeti in the 400 block of Farmers Way in mid-August.

The other involves our continuing investigation of the shooting at a wedding in September that saw six injured and two killed.

We are asking the public to come forward and provide any information they have about these two incidents. This can include dashcam or doorbell video, video from a nearby business, or eyewitness testimony.

We know that this has deeply impacted the community and we will continue to work with them to resolve this matter.

## **Traffic Services Unit**

Earlier – we heard a delegation from Councilor Hill that outlined his concerns in his Ward on the topic of stunt driving.

In my meetings with City Councilors across the city, traffic concerns have been raised in most of my discussions with them. We know this is a priority for citizens in Ottawa.

Over the course of October, our officers have been out in key locations all across the city, stopping and impounding those stunt drivers who make our roads unsafe.

On October 10, they were out in Orleans, Kanata and Rideau Street, and stopped someone on Bank Street going 118 km/hr in a 60 km/hr zone.

On October 12 they stopped a driver after he was clocked going 98 km/hr in a 50 km/hr zone near Walkley Road. On the same day, in Ottawa South they charged a street racer with doing 108 km/hr in a residential neighbourhood.

Over the weekend of October 14<sup>th</sup>, our team issued over 100 tickets for speeding and stunt driving, as well as conducted several RIDE checkpoints.

They selected their locations based on reports we receive from the public, so I would encourage you to file a report online any time you see dangerous driving. We take that information to help us identify problem areas in our city and determine where we can best leverage our limited resources.

And I want to thank our Traffic Services team for their city-wide efforts to help reduce the number of dangerous drivers on our roads.

## **Community Safety Data Portal**

I'm pleased to let you know that in the coming month we will be launching a new Community Safety Data Portal. We are conducting our final testing that has included the City Councilors across the City.

The Community Safety Data Portal will provide an "at-a-glance" snapshot about crime and social disorder, right down to a neighbourhood level.

It will include things like thefts, shootings, robberies, hate crimes, and sexual violations and will be updated within about 24 hours of each reported incident. It will also include a new crime map that residents can zoom in to see what's going on in their neighbourhood.

This is part of our commitment to keeping residents informed about what's going on in their community. The goal is to enhance crime prevention for residents and build trust and transparency with our Service.

I want to thank our team at OPS for their incredible work getting this project completed in less than a year.

## **Trial concludes**

In 2019 we were approached by the Vancouver Police Service for an investigation into a police officer from another agency, (not OPS) who had been charged with exposing himself to school children.

Detective Paquette was assigned and was tasked with identifying, locating, and interviewing 10 victims in Ottawa to support the

prosecution of the officer. In many cases, Detective Paquette only had a photo to go on and not much more information beyond that.

She worked hand in hand with our embedded Crown, Suzanne Schriek, who navigated multiple challenges during the trial.

Suzanne's hard work and arguments supported the denial of bail for the officer, and in July he was found guilty and sentenced to 18 months in jail. He will also be listed on the sex offender registry.

Both of these women were tireless champions of those who had been impacted, and I want to thank them for their drive and professionalism.

We received countless emails of thanks towards both of these women for going above and beyond in service to the victims.

### **Child rescue**

I want to end my verbal by telling you about an incident that occurred earlier this month.

We received an email from a grateful mother after she called 911 for help when her 4-year-old daughter went into cardiac arrest. As she started CPR with help from our Communications Centre agent, she managed to regain a pulse, but by the time first responders arrived she had lost it again.

When Constable Josee Provencal arrived on the scene she joined paramedics to restart CPR, regaining the child's pulse in time for them to transport her to CHEO.

I'd like to read the letter we received from the mother:

"I would like to express my gratitude to the police officers who responded to our medical emergency when my daughter went into cardiac arrest at home. The officers were compassionate, helpful, and reassuring. I could not have asked for a better team to have responded to the emergency. An extra special thank you to the officer who drove me

to the hospital and gave me a hug when she saw me in the hallway at CHEO. I would also like them to know that my daughter survived and is recovering very well.”

I would like to thank Constable Provencal for her quick thinking during this critical event. She saved this child’s life.