

# Chief's verbal report for the OPSB

November 27, 2023

Thank you Chair and Good evening.

I would like to begin my verbal report by taking some time to explain the White Ribbon campaign that our service is participating in and how we are focusing on our support for ending violence against women and gender based violence.

*J'aimerais commencer mon rapport verbal en prenant le temps d'expliquer la campagne du Ruban blanc à laquelle notre Service participe, et comment nous concentrons notre soutien pour mettre fin à la violence faite aux femmes et à la violence sexiste.*

Wearing a white ribbon this year symbolizes our commitment to being part of the solution to:

- Listen to and believe victims and survivors.
- Be an ally to those who are working to end all forms of gender-based violence.
- Acknowledge the factors that lead to gender-based violence.
- Building a culture, policies, and processes that promote a workplace free of any kind of violence, harassment, and discrimination at the Ottawa Police Service.”

We acknowledge that intimate partner violence (IPV) is an epidemic in our society. So far, in 2023, 5815 reports of IPV have been made to police.

The Ottawa Police Service will continue to strengthen relationships with organizations within Ottawa working to end violence against women (VAW) and all gender-based violence.

In 2022, the Ottawa Police committed to developing and implementing an IPV risk assessment tool and hiring civilian risk assessors. We have now

hired two Risk Navigators who will start in their roles at the end of November.

We are speaking with agencies that serve men to ensure they are part of the solution to end VAW, gender-based violence and femicide.

We are also working with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition (OAC) on the job description for the full-time Indigenous Women's Safety Advisor position to replace the contracted position.

We continue to collaborate with local violence against women agencies to audit our cases and provide us with feedback on our approaches. These reviews include approximately 400 files per year. Since we began this project in 2018, we've seen continuous improvement in responses to reports involving violence against women.

## **AUTO THEFT**

We continue to see a high level of vehicle thefts in Ottawa with over 1200 reported cases this year alone.

*Nous continuons à voir de très nombreux vols de véhicules à Ottawa, avec plus de 1200 cas signalés rien que cette année.*

We are actively engaged in addressing this issue, collaborating with various levels of government and policing partners to disrupt criminal organizations involved in these activities. We are also advocating for industry changes at the national level to make cars more secure.

Our frontline patrol officers have made commendable efforts, resulting in 80 arrests and the recovery of 315 stolen vehicles. Just last week, proactive patrols located stolen vehicles that resulted in arrests.

Luxury SUVs, trucks and vehicles with proximity keys continue to be prime targets.

Your safety is our top priority. Earlier this month we issued an advisory to the public that thieves have been found with weapons, posing a risk to

vehicle owners. If witnessing a theft, residents are advised to call 911 without engaging the thief, and if possible, track stolen vehicles discreetly.

Last week, we issued a media release that outlined various tips to secure your vehicle which included parking in a garage, blocking vehicles tightly, using aftermarket immobilizers, steering wheel locks, and installing tracking devices. Caution is urged when using tracking devices, as thieves may detect them.

Additional recommendations include ECM port-locks, motion detection lights, surveillance cameras, and maintaining neighbourhood watch efforts.

## **GALA**

At the beginning of November, we hosted an incredibly successful Gala that celebrated the achievements of our dedicated members but also showcased our commitment to community engagement.

The highlight of the evening was the recognition of the hardworking members who received Chief Commendations for their exceptional service and dedication.

The Gala served as a platform for the police service to give back to the community. The event supported two incredible causes: The Door Youth Centre and the Roberts Smart Centre – Treatment for Youth. These organizations are doing vital work to support the youth in our community. We also contribute annually to the Beachwood Cemetery.

## **SOUTH GROUNDBREAKING**

Earlier this month, we marked a pivotal moment for the Ottawa Police Service and the community we serve by officially breaking ground on our new police station in the south end of the city on Prince of Wales Drive.

This significant milestone marks the initiation of a strategic development plan that is critical for supporting the evolving operational needs of the

Ottawa Police Service. This new facility will have a significant impact on our ability to respond to the evolving needs of our community.

I want to express my gratitude to the Board for helping us make this project a reality. We look forward to providing you with regular updates on construction progress which began today.

## **DATA PORTAL**

Earlier this year, we committed to creating a Community Data Portal by Fall 2023, and I am pleased to announce that the Portal has been launched! This platform is designed to provide the community with accessible, real-time data, offering insights into law enforcement activities, crime trends, and community engagement efforts.

We are already seeing a great deal of activity on the site with many citizens of Ottawa accessing the site.

By making this information readily available, we aim to enhance public understanding, build trust, and foster a sense of shared responsibility in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our community. Through this portal, the community can explore and analyze various aspects of policing within Ottawa. It is a powerful tool that not only promotes transparency but also empowers residents to actively engage with the data, contributing to informed discussions and problem-solving.

We invite feedback and insights from our community members. Your perspectives are invaluable in shaping the future of this portal and ensuring its relevance to the needs of our diverse and dynamic city.

## **MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT**

The Service remains deeply concerned about the local impact of the ongoing conflict in Israel and Gaza. In the face of such challenges, our service has played a crucial role in managing and ensuring the safety of

public demonstrations, various places of worship and community gathering locations.

This past Saturday, a Pro-Palestinian march was held that had 10,000 people.

I would like to acknowledge and appreciate the dedication of our members. Since Oct 7<sup>th</sup>, they have been on the front lines, working to prevent the escalation of tensions and to create an environment where all peaceful voices can be heard. Our police service is not only managing crowd dynamics but is also striving to build bridges with our diverse communities.

Here is one letter we received from a person at the demo that sums up the excellent work of our members.

*I want to congratulate you on your professionalism and superb performance during the Gaza demo yesterday in downtown Ottawa. I'm a journalist and I have covered large demos (some, sadly, turned into riots and bloody confrontations) for more than 40 years across Canada, the US, Europe, Asia and Africa. Your work yesterday, preserving public safety and the rights of people to demonstrate peacefully, was as good as anything I have ever seen. It made me proud that I live in Ottawa. Well done.*

## **HATE CRIME**

It is important to address the recent increase in hate-motivated incidents within our community that is associated to the conflict in the Middle east. As a city that prides itself on diversity and inclusion, it is disheartening to witness acts that stand in direct opposition to these values. Anit-sematic hate crimes have risen significantly since Oct 7<sup>th</sup>. We need to support our Jewish communities that are being targeted. We also see incidents of Islamophobia continuing to occur in Ottawa and the OPS will work with our Muslim and Christian leaders to ensure their safety.

We continue to encourage anyone who witnesses or experiences such incidents to report them to the police. The Service condemns such acts,

urging reporting to ensure prosecution and emphasizing our commitment to community safety.

Hate has no place in our city.

La haine n'a aucune place dans notre communauté. Nous prenons au sérieux toutes les plaintes, et nous mènerons une enquête approfondie sur chaque cas.

## **GUN VIOLENCE & HOMOCIDES**

This past Thursday, we were called to an address in the Centrepointe area for a shooting that resulted in the death of one man and serious injuries to a second man.

A stray bullet injured a dog in a neighbouring home. This kind of gun violence is incredibly concerning.

Again, we have seen a shooting in a heavily populated area with no regard to the safety of residents.

Our investigators are working very hard on the case to arrest those responsible. Many people have come forward with information and we thank them. We continue to ask those with information about this homicide to come forward.

We also continue to investigate the double homicide and mass shooting that occurred in September.

We have met with community members to update them on the investigation and to appeal for people to come forward.

Gun violence continues to be a major issue in our City.

To date we have seen 69 shootings this year. 75 crime guns have been seized.

These are just numbers but the work that goes behind this data should be recognized.

I would like to cite the example of Constables Samon Vo and Kyle Lamothe. They were driving on Bank St. earlier this month when they heard gunshots near the corner of Gilmour. Both Constables sprang into action, coming to the aid of a shooting victim and chasing down and arresting a suspect.

Two guns were seized and two people were arrested.

The rise in incidents involving firearms is a challenge that demands our collective attention and a steadfast commitment to community safety. Our Service acknowledges the gravity of this situation and is actively engaged in comprehensive efforts to address and mitigate the impact of gun violence.

## **IMPAIRED DRIVING**

As we enter the Holiday Season, we have again partnered with MADD Canada to conduct RIDE stops throughout the City.

Impaired driving continues to be an issue in our community. We have stopped and charged 778 impaired drivers and we have seen 203 collisions, 7 of which resulted in fatalities, where alcohol or drugs were a factor.

With that in mind I would like to finish off with a letter from a person who had an interaction with one of our officers...

*I would like to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to Constable Aiman Almoflehi for the exceptional professionalism and compassion he demonstrated when he pulled me over. This particular time in my life was marked by severe emotional trauma, and it also happened to be my first encounter with a DUI charge. Despite being the accused, Cst. Almoflehi displayed an extraordinary level of compassion and concern for my well-being throughout the entire ordeal of my trial. Cst. Almoflehi was a beacon of compassion and understanding, a stark contrast to the treatment I received from others, including my own defence attorney. His refusal to*

*treat me as a mere criminal and his profound understanding of my emotional turmoil during the accident and trial's initial stages were a source of comfort. Individuals like him, who exhibit compassion and empathy in positions of authority, are desperately needed. Cst. Almoflehi, you are a shining light in an otherwise dark and challenging situation. Do not allow anyone or any system to diminish the compassion and kindness that you bring to your role. Your actions and empathy are the embodiment of what our society needs.*

Thank you.

## **IF YOU WANT SOME BUDGET LINES.....**

### **BUDGET**

Now, I would like to highlight some key elements from the draft 2024 Budget. In the upcoming year, the Ottawa Police Service will embark on a transformative 3-year staff stabilization strategy, incorporating 25 growth hires and 40 replacements for positions affected by WSIB or long-term disability annually. By the end of this period, this strategy will result in a total of 555 sworn and civilian positions, addressing attrition, retirements, growth needs and vacancies due to health-related issues.

Additionally, we are excited to introduce a new district policing model aimed at enhancing services across urban, suburban, and rural areas of our city. The initiative underlines our dedication to providing effective and responsive policing tailored to the unique needs of each community. Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and human rights is further emphasized through strategic investment aligned with the DRIVE2 Strategy. These initiatives seek to create a more equitable and inclusive environment for all residents of Ottawa.



We are also proud to announce a more coordinated approach to community relations, reinforcing our connection with the diverse neighbourhoods we serve. Furthermore, continued investments in the OPS data program will provide valuable safety insights to our community, enabling informed decision-making and proactive measures to enhance safety.

As part of our ongoing commitment to the well-being of our members, we are undertaking a comprehensive review of wellness programming to promote the health and resilience of our dedicated team. Our dedication to ensuring public safety extends to advancing strategic, operational and partnered responses to public events and demonstrations. We are determined to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and responsiveness in these situations.

Lastly, the South Facility Project remains a top priority, and we are committed to delivering on this promise, providing a cutting-edge facility critical for supporting the evolving operational needs of the Ottawa Police Service.