



**Ottawa Police Service Board
Finance and Audit Committee
Minutes**

Meeting #: 37
Date: March 27, 2026
Time: 10:00 am
Location: Electronic Participation

Present: C. Curry, D. Donaldson, S. Desroches, M. Carr

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1. Confirmation of Agenda

That the Ottawa Police Service Board's Finance and Audit Committee confirm the agenda of the 27th March 2026 meeting.

Carried

2. Confirmation of Minutes

2.1 Minutes #36 of 6 February 2026

That the Ottawa Police Service Board's Finance and Audit Committee confirm Minutes #36 of the 6th February 2026 meeting.

Carried

3. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were filed.

4. Items of Business

4.1 Financial Status Report-2025 Year End

Chief's report

The Committee asked for more details on the \$11.2 million in non-recoverable overtime cost. The Service explained that non-recoverable overtime refers to extra work hours that cannot be reimbursed as it is not funded by the federal government or covered by paid duty contracts. Recoverable overtime is reimbursed mainly by the federal government. Non-recoverable overtime is 11.2% over budget. At the end of 2025, there was \$6.5 million that was believed to be covered by the federal government, but it was not. Because of this, the corresponding amounts from the recoverable to the non-recoverable field.

The Committee asked for more details on the \$7.5 million collective agreement settlement. The Service advised that in 2024 when the budget was developed, the collective agreement was also being negotiated at the same time and it is hard to predict what the amount will be until the agreement is signed. The Board at the time decided to take a risk by relying on a conservative estimate of what the collective agreement cost could be. The Service noted that they were required to work within the budget direction provided by the Board, which may involve risks of underfunding.

The Committee asked about the \$6.5 million federal funding shortfall. The Service explained that the \$6.5 million shortfall comes from the National Capital Extraordinary Policing Costs Program that normally reimburses certain policing expenses but did not in this case. There was an understanding that costs related to Middle East demonstrations would be covered, but at the end of the fiscal year, Public Safety Canada reversed

this decision and did not reimburse those expenses, arguing the demonstrations were not unique to the National Capital Region. The Service is currently seeking additional federal funding to avoid municipal taxpayers covering these costs in the future. This \$6.5 million is separate from the non-recoverable overtime previously discussed.

The WSIB claims of \$3 million was discussed and it was noted that it was under attributed in the budget, however, the cost has stabilized in the last few years and will be rectified in budgets moving forward.

The Service noted that they base their budget on past estimates and take calculated risks to stay within the budget direction set by the Board all while maintaining adequate and effective policing. This sometimes means choosing between investing in strategic priorities and accepting potential shortfalls in areas like non-recoverable overtime or WSIB.

The Service advised that the staffing stabilization portion of the budget will increase year over year as it is a part of the strategic plan.

The Committee noted that if the Board pushes for new priorities mid-year, they should be clearly told that such changes may lead to a specific projected deficit.

The Committee asked for details on past surpluses and deficits over the last few years. The Service advised that historically, budgets ranged from a small surplus to a \$2–3 million deficit, but in recent years deficits and financial pressures have grown significantly. The 2026 budget increase received fully covers the collective agreement, so there will be no future pressure expected from that. However, other financial pressures remain, such as non-recoverable overtime, demonstrations, and staffing costs, and the Service is working early to identify and manage these and will provide an update to the Board.

It was discussed that the Service has to undertake policing tasks that are related to the federal government and this should be addressed with the federal government to develop a long-term strategy. The Committee suggested exploring structural changes, like increasing use of special constables and auxiliaries, to reduce workload on police and help manage ongoing budget pressures at the Long-Term Financial Planning working group. Another crucial part of the problem is ensuring that the correct budget is requested each year so that OPS is not underfunded.

Previously, vacancies helped offset deficits, but as positions are now being filled to meet service needs, that flexibility is gone.

It was noted that hiring a special constable instead of a sworn officer roughly saves around \$5000 a year but the special constables can take on some roles which would allow sworn officers to attend to calls for service. Auxiliary members are volunteers and cannot be depended on to staff a major event such as the St. Patrick's Day parade but they are being utilized more such as increased presence in the downtown core.

The Committee noted the need for long-term financial planning that clearly links policing needs to specific dollar amounts. This should be in a multi-year plan with clear costs so the Board and City understand what is required to provide adequate service.

It was noted that the Service has a 10% target reduction in overtime. The Service has some control over overtime but in many situations overtime may not be controlled, notably due to unpredictable incidents such as pop-up protests or a homicides. Overtime is one of the few categories where the Service can aim to reduce costs as 85% of the budget is salaries.

ACTION: The Committee requested details about a radio project which initially had an approved budget of \$490,000 but spent \$4.6 million. The Service will provide more detail on this.

The Committee suggested receiving earlier warnings when budget issues arise, rather than relying on quarterly reports and suggested an update at each Finance and Audit Committee meeting. The Service is open to more frequent, real-time updates to better signal emerging deficits and will discuss this with the Executive Director.

That the Ottawa Police Service Board Finance and Audit Committee receive this report for information.

Received

4.2 2026 South Facility Project Update -1st Quarter

Chief's report

The Committee asked for more details about tree preservation and landscaping on the site. The Service confirmed that they considered the site's trees and landscaping from the beginning and relocated some trees

from the developed eight acres to an undeveloped area. There is a plan to reintroduce those trees later as part of the facility's final landscaping once construction is complete.

The Committee asked for more details on the decommissioning of the Leitrim station. The Service advised that no specific decommissioning date has been set. The Board will receive a Facilities Strategic Plan report in the near future that will encompass plans for the next 15 years. It was noted that there some operations will not relocate to the South Facility immediately and that Leitrim station will stay open for a bit longer but the long-term plan is to decommission the Leitrim site.

The Committee asked for details about the inaccurate information circulating in the media that the building is sinking. The Service advised that one of the sources is from one of the subtrade employees. OPS followed up with the executives of the contractor and they have instructed their staff not to make comments that are not factual. It was also noted that a former Ottawa Police Service Board member had also made a social media post that was not factual.

The Committee asked for clarifications on why the new station is under budget by \$5 million even though there was a \$10 million contingency required for the soil remediation. It was noted that there was a \$50 million escalation due to delays in the project because of supply change issues. The decision to pause construction was made by the Board and Executive Command team at the time.

Members of the public were encouraged to reach out to OPS directly if they have questions by emailing info@ottawapolice.ca and not to rely on social media posts for factual information. The Service is also maintaining regular communication with neighbours by sending updates and sharing project progress through local Councillors. **ACTION:** The Service agreed to examine their communication strategy and will report back to the next Finance and Audit Committee meeting.

That the Ottawa Police Service Board Finance and Audit Committee receive this report for information.

Received

5. Other Business

6. Consideration of Motion to Move In Camera

The motion was amended to add a legal matter to the in-camera agenda.

That the Ottawa Police Service Board's Finance and Audit Committee adjourn the public portion of its meeting to move In Camera to discuss the 2025 Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act pursuant to 44(2) (b): personal matters about an identifiable individual, including members of the police service or any other employees of the board and one Legal Matter pursuant to 4.2 pursuant to section 44(f) Advice subject to solicitor client privilege.

Carried as amended

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:22 am.

8. Next Meeting

Tuesday, May 12th, 2026 - 10:00 AM