

Report to / Rapport au:

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICES BOARD
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICES POLICIERS D'OTTAWA**

28 September 2020 / 28 septembre 2020

Submitted by / Soumis par:

Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa

Contact Person / Personne ressource:

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SUBJECT: LETTERS OF COMMENDATION

OBJET: LETTRES DE MENTION ÉLOGIEUSE

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du présent rapport à titre d'information.

BACKGROUND

Attached for the information of the Board are excerpts from letters of appreciation / thanks received from the public since the last regular meeting for services rendered by members of the Ottawa Police Service (OPS).

Date Received: 13 July 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I just wanted to thank you and your officers for cracking down on speeders. I have been driving these streets for approximately 41 years in Ottawa. For the past year or so I have witnessed unnecessary and excessive speeding on our major highways. Our safety is paramount and I appreciate the officers doing their due diligence in this regard.

Date Received: 14 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Darren Joseph

Excerpt from Letter: I have a problematic neighbour, whose behaviour eventually forced me to file a police report last fall. Constable Darren Joseph contacted me for a follow up on the report and offered his assistance in the event that the situation escalated. This was very reassuring as I had been quite stressed wondering what my neighbour might do next. Cst. Joseph was always available to address any further concerns I had and offered solid advice about how I should deal with the situation. Last week he came to assess the problem in person and I found him to be patient, easy to talk to and a very good listener. I feel very fortunate that he is our community.

Date Received: 14 July 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I am sick and tired of the people who want to defund and criticize the police. I want to offer a token of one citizen's appreciation of the work the police do. I assume police officers drink coffee and eat snacks with it. Can I contribute to a fund that will buy refreshments for police?

Date Received: 14 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Sergeant Richard Dugal

Excerpt from Letter: I was pulled over by an Ottawa Police officer as my license plate was expired. It was an accident and something I was quite embarrassed by. Constable Richard Dugal was incredibly kind during my interaction with him. My 5-year-old son was in the back seat of my car. It was my son's first interaction with a police officer and Cst. Dugal included him in our conversation. He asked my son how he was and where we were coming from. We explained we had gone to feed the ducks and he asked my son questions about the ducks. It was a wonderful interaction that showed my son how helpful and kind police officer's are. I just wanted to say thank you to Cst. Dugal.

Date Received: 15 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Sergeant Margaret Gural and Constable John Webster

Excerpt from Letter: My friend's wife of over 70 years passed away recently and I just wanted to take his opportunity to inform you of the caring and compassionate manner in which Sergeant Margaret Gural and Constable John Webster responded to this unfortunate call for service. I spoke with my friend later and he was extremely thankful for the manner in which the officers conducted themselves during their interaction with him. He couldn't stop commenting on their professionalism and compassion, even their

apologizing for the delay in the coroner attending the scene. Although I attended many calls like this during my time with the Ottawa Police Service, it was easy to say that I was simply doing my job. It's not until the shoe is on the other foot when you realize how much of an impact 'just doing my job' has on a person and family during their time of need. Please extend my thanks and appreciation to Sgt. Gural and Cst. Webster for their caring and sensitive approach to my friend during his moment in crisis.

Date Received: 17 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Gareth English

Excerpt from Letter: This evening you issued me a traffic ticket. Despite the circumstances, I would like to commend your professionalism and courtesy. The Ottawa Police Service is well-represented by you!

Date Received: 18 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Edwin Code

Excerpt from Letter: Notre mère a appelé les SMU en matinée lorsqu'elle n'arrivait pas à réveiller notre père, qui est malheureusement décédé dans son sommeil. Les policiers et le sergent qui ont répondu à l'appel ont été d'une aide incomparable. Ils nous ont expliqué ce qu'ils faisaient et pourquoi ils le faisaient avec beaucoup d'empathie et de compassion. Il nous ont ensuite expliqué les prochaines étapes de manière très simple et ils ont pris le temps d'écouter notre mère tout en s'assurant de son bien-être (p. ex. si elle avait mangé ou pris ses médicaments). Alors que nous étions sous le choc et désespérées, leur approche a été vraiment rassurante. Cela a fait toute la différence en cette journée extrêmement difficile. Au nom de nous toutes, nous vous disons un grand merci!

Date Received: 21 July 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: 529 Garage is a great program! It was very easy to register and shield pickup from Huntmar was convenient with friendly staff members at reception!

Date Received: 22 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Adam Collins

Excerpt from Letter: I just wanted to let you know that Constable Adam Collins did a great job with one of our clients. He provided a very vulnerable family with information, helping a mother with her son (who is in conflict with the law). My team has already connected with the family and interacted with the youth. I just wanted to highlight Cst.

Collins' work, and the fact that he is making these connections, as we always wanted to happen.

Date Received: 22 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Andrew Worth and Alan Porteous

Excerpt from Letter: I just wanted to say a big thank you to the two officers on bicycles that took the time to stop and chat with my 9-year-old son and my 7-year-old daughter at an Ottawa city park. My kids came home with huge smiles, they were so happy. My son said he had a jumping contest with one of the officers, he was so giddy. As a parent I always make sure to take the time when we see a police officer, a fireman, a soldier or a paramedic to go over to them and the kids and I thank them, shake their hands, or give them a high five. I want my children to grow up appreciating your hard work and dedication to keep us feeling safe. Those two officers today proved my point even more. No matter what some negative media may focus on, please don't give up. Our little family sends you our love and appreciation.

Date Received: 24 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Yannick Charron

Excerpt from Letter: I want to thank the Ottawa Police Service on behalf of the family after my mom went missing. I did not get the names of all the officers involved because of the number involved, so I'm speaking in terms of the team effort (I believe the search coordinator in charge was Constable Yannick Charron). All responding officers, from the first on the scene to the K9 officer, the search coordinator and all others involved, displayed professionalism, courtesy, speed and dedication to the task at hand. We were also appreciative of the amount of resources deployed in the search, which resulted in a happy ending three hours later when my mother was located alive and well way back in the woods. I have to give special recognition to the K9 officer and his dog, who did remarkable work in picking up a scent and locating her.

Date Received: 24 July 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I just wanted to send a compliment for the Chief's on the discussion they had early this afternoon with Members of Parliament. I watched it online. I was very impressed with his knowledge, compassion, and ideas for making policing better; not only for the community but for your members as well. It seems to me we are in good hands, but as you all mentioned, will we succeed this time? Or will we just see another report and no action? Now the hard part begins but I think you are all up to the task, on your end anyway. I wish you my best and keep up the good work.

Date Received: 24 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Jordan Lapierre and William Fairchild

Excerpt from Letter: I just reported an incident to the OPS through 911 and wanted to provide some feedback about the results. The call was to report a possible intoxicated male at the community garden who was ripping plants out of planters and acting oddly. The officers who responded were friendly and professional and the situation didn't escalate, they made sure he was ok and all was resolved. Thanks for their outstanding work!

Date Received: 28 July 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: Great to hear police are cracking down on very loud car muffler noise. I know you can't get them all but please keep up the good work.

Date Received: 31 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Gary Robb and Stephen Brown

Excerpt from Letter: Constables Gary Robb and Stephen Brown; I immediately noticed your friendly, calm and jovial demeanours, even amongst the obvious stress and tension of the situation. Particularly, during a post-pandemic environment where social anxiety is high, the display of professionalism the two of you embodied is deserving of the highest honour and recognition. Please pass on our personal greetings to your chief as well as the other frontline works and first responders of the Ottawa Police Service and Paramedic Services.

Date Received: 31 July 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I just wanted to say that my spouse and I love you guys. We are avid fans. If there's any way to pass that onto someone, please do. Thank you very much and happy summer!

Date Received: 31 July 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Alanna Meehan

Excerpt from Letter: We experienced a very unfortunate incident where personal property was stolen. Alanna Meehan was extremely helpful and professional and creative in responding to our situation. We were very pleased with the service that the OPS provided to us.

Date Received: 3 August 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable James Wilson

Excerpt from Letter: We were visiting Ottawa from Mississauga for a weekend trip for the first time to see Nation's capital. While having a quick meal, when my kids (4 and 7) saw a police car and wanted to meet the officer to say hello. The kids asked Constable James Wilson so many questions which he responded in an age-appropriate manner. The officer was very polite and while talking to the kids, he actually knelt down on one knee on ground to talk to my daughter, since she is small and he wanted to be able to communicate with her clearly. It was such a humble act from him that words can't really explain. We took a photo with my kids who then asked to see the inside of his car, but Cst. Wilson wouldn't allow it due to COVID, which is perfectly understandable. My kids were very happy, encouraged, and now have an increased confidence in the police, and most importantly both kids want to be police officers when they grow up! We wanted to write a few words of appreciation for Cst. Wilson for his professionalism, positivity, patience and communication.

Date Received: 9 August 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Mercedes Nash and Melanie Lemieux

Excerpt from Letter: Thank you so much for your excellent response to my 911 call yesterday when I reported that my partner, who has Parkinson's and moderate dementia, went missing. The 911 responder was wonderful. As I gave her information she quickly realized that someone had called in describing a similar person who was wandering in their back yard. She stayed on the line and directed me to where my partner was located. I also want to thank Constable Mercedes Nash who followed up. She was compassionate and made sure all was well. Thanks to everyone involved. Well done.

Date Received: 10 August 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable David Cameron

Excerpt from Letter: I am a community case manager who works with clients who struggle with mental health and problematic substance-use disorder, and who also have history of being homeless. Constable David Cameron responded to a call made when I did a wellness check on a client and found him deceased. Cst. Cameron (and the others) were incredibly compassionate, respectful and kind. I had requested to be notified when the removal crew were coming so I could return and be present to pay respect and give my client some dignity. Given it could be many hours, I had half

expected to be forgotten. However, as promised, I received that call from Cst. Cameron. I met him at the building and was given a quiet moment. The level of empathy and professionalism from him had a significant and lasting impact that he likely has no knowledge about. I wanted to thank him for his help during this difficult time.

Date Received: 17 August 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: Three of your officers attended a residence in Vanier in response to a 911 call involving a forced eviction. We (the landlords) were blown away by your officers' ability to assess facts and parties involved, willingness to speak to our lawyer by phone, tour the interior of the building (in a COVID era), before declaring themselves 'peacekeepers' and mediating an agreement. Frankly, I don't know what we would have done without the OPS. What an astute, quick, polite-but-firm, professional trio. Kudos, and deepest thanks.

Date Received: 22 August 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: Kudos to those who worked so hard to clear out the traditional Friday night gathering at a fast food shop. I'm sure it wasn't easy. We drove by last week to a greatly reduced crowd, and noticed at least two Ottawa Police motorcycle officers chatting with a group of people. This week, the parking lot seemed strangely empty. There were numerous spaced groups of six or less, many still with lawn chairs, probably wondering what was going on, scattered throughout the parking lot. Please, OPS continue to drive-by on Friday nights during COVID, in case folks start to gather again. Your success brings tears to my eyes. I thought these mass gatherings, like continuous COVID infections, were impossible to fight. Maybe now we have a chance against both. With the greatest sincerity, I thank you because I truly believe that our community has gotten just a little bit safer.

Date Received: 25 August 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: A troubling episode of minor front-door "mischief" prompted me to write this: Occasionally I see your officers around/in my building, friendly and prompt has been my experience. Thanks for your services.

Date Received: 26 August 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I saw a police officer in my area helping a person who was obviously in distress. The policeman was very compassionate and caring. Just saying, that in times like these, there is too much unfair bad news about police.

Date Received: 29 August 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Megan Arbuthnot, Bradley Doyle and Sebastien Lemay

Excerpt from Letter: Just wanted to give a shout out to the NRT guys in the market. They have been doing a fantastic job around the stores and in the market itself. There was something that happened yesterday which was amazing: A male crashed his bicycle in front of two members of the NRT. The male damaged his bicycle and they spent 15 minutes helping him fix it. It was just an awesome thing to see.

Date Received: 1 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Constable Nicholas Tookenay, Jessy Pedersen and Jonathan Thebault

Excerpt from Letter: I'm currently sitting in my office watching three of your officers tending to a mentally-ill transgendered individual. They are really doing a great job! They are being patient, gentle and understanding as the individual is yelling accusations at them. Their professionalism is exemplary.

Date Received: 14 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable J.F. Desjardins

Excerpt from Letter: I am a retired Chief Warrant Officer and a 35-year veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces. I suspected that I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder but never had the courage to seek help. Constable J.F. Desjardins pulled me over and could smell alcohol on my breath. He had me do a roadside test three times, which I failed. Subsequently I was arrested for DUI. While in cells, I completely lost control and attempted suicide. They were going to bring me to the hospital but I asked if I could go to my friend's place instead. Cst. Desjardins discussed this with Sergeant Scott Kendall and they both agreed to my request. During the drive to my friend's house, Cst. Desjardins gave me some tough love. He explained to me what I needed to do prior to court (i.e. seek medical help, go to AA and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC)). The following morning I acted on his recommendations. Cst. Desjardins' compassionate and professional approach to policing saved my life. His quick analysis of the situation not only saved me but, but also put me on the road to recovery. Please pass on my sincere thank you.

Date Received: 16 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Eva Savage

Excerpt from Letter: I would just like to convey my gratitude and deep appreciation for

the Victim Crisis Unit of the Ottawa Police Service. I live in Newfoundland and had called 911 for a wellness check on my mother in Ottawa. At 2 a.m. they called me back and told me they were so sorry for my loss. I was in complete shock and barely put myself on the plane to Ottawa. She was my only living family and I had loved her very much. As soon as I landed in Ottawa, a representative from Victim Crisis Unit contacted me, and helped me to just focus on the things I needed to do. As you can imagine, since I had no one in Ottawa, without the crucial services provided by the Victim Crisis Unit, I would have felt helpless to deal with this alone. Eva Savage from the VCU put me in touch with legal aid to understand my next-of-kin rights, helped me walk in to my mother's apartment for the first time, guided me on next steps, and was always there when I felt stuck with the bureaucratic process. I hope that this crucial unit continues to be a vital part of the police service. In these challenging times, it gives the Service such a humane face, and is a preventive measure - which will likely help many of us not fall victims ourselves to people who would try take advantage of us when we may not be at our best. Thank you to the OPS once again for taking care of me and my mom.