

Chief's Verbal Report
Monday, November 28, 2016
Ottawa Police Services Board Meeting

Robbery Unit

I want to begin by highlighting some excellent work by patrol officers and our robbery investigators.

At about 8 p.m. on November 3, 2016 a series of three swarmings occurred in the Heatherington–Herongate neighbourhoods. Four or five suspects were confronting people and taking property. Frontline officers flooded the area and arrested four suspects. The Robbery Unit was already investigating three recent robberies from the same area and were able to connect some of the suspects to other robberies both in that area and also in the Bayswater area.

Also, in October, the Robbery Unit laid 27 criminal charges against one suspect in relation to 4 gunpoint robberies. That unit, led by Staff Sgt. Mike Haarbosch has seen a 13% increase in its swarming solvency rate compared to this time last year.

These are just a few examples of the great work we are seeing on robberies.

K9

Throughout October and November, the Canine Unit has successfully tracked a number of suspects who fled from crime scenes. In fact, three armed suspects, a violent person wanted for partner related offences, a robbery suspect, a 38 caliber handgun, and a loaded 357 Magnum were all tracked by the skilled work of Cst. Desormeaux and his canine Frigo, Cst. Richard and his partner Spartak, Cst. Rochette alongside canine Nika and Cst. Mozes with police dog, Copper.

Marijuana Dispensaries

We continue to monitor and investigate marijuana dispensaries. On November 3rd and 4th, the Drug Unit executed warrants at seven (7) different Ottawa dispensaries leading to multiple seizures and charges.

As we expected, some of those dispensaries have since reopened. Our investigators are aware of these developments. These investigations focus on drug trafficking. But they are conducted in a landscape where viewpoints and laws on marijuana are changing rapidly.

Each of these warrants require a great deal of investigative time and resources, however, we will continue to investigate dispensaries as complaints come forward and work with landlords to work to keep them from opening.

Crime Prevention Week and Safety Awards

I would like to extend my congratulations to the police officers and members of the public who received or were nominated for awards at this year's Community Safety Awards held on November 7th. The event is organized by Crime Prevention Ottawa.

The awards recognize the people, groups and programs that have made a difference in preventing crime and making communities safer across the city. This event also included the launch of Crime Prevention Week from November 7th to 12th. This year's theme, Personal Fraud and scams, brought members of the public out to learn about fraud prevention. Thank you to our members, volunteers and partners who organized presentations, information tables and more across the City.

November 24th Traffic Stop Meeting

Last Thursday, we held a community session to review the findings of the Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project with about 120 people in attendance. The York Research Team was present to answer questions on their report and the meeting gave members of the community a chance to provide comments and feedback on what they read.

Community-police engagement will continue to play a critical role in this project to ensure that we understand the report, review the recommendations and create a multi-year plan that goes beyond just action planning the report's recommendations.

I am pleased to announce that this next phase will be lead by Acting Superintendent Chris Rheaume.

We took on this project because there are questions and concerns amongst some in our community about bias and racial profiling that we can't ignore. I think it is leading to an important discussion about how we police our city and how we can ensure our policing model is sensitive to the perceptions of the people we serve.

Update on Regulated Interactions

The new provincial regulation provides for voluntary police-public interactions. They are designed to ensure that the regulated interactions are without bias or discrimination. The new rules focus on data collection, retention, access and management, training and policy and procedures with audit and public reporting requirements.

After January 1st all sworn members who conduct regulated interactions (formerly known as Street Checks) must have completed the eight hour training. The requirements present significant unplanned pressure on the organization, particularly on training, data management processes and storage, auditing and reporting. However, we are working closely with the provincial working group and our members to ensure compliance with the new regulations by January 1, 2017.

An update report will be provided to the Board in December.

Grey Cup

And Finally, I want to send a big congratulation on behalf of the Ottawa Police Service to the Redblacks on winning the Grey Cup. Our Emergency Operations Directorate has been working with the City to ensure plans are in place for a parade running from the Loblaws parking lot on Isabella St., along Pretoria, and South on Bank to Exhibition Way and Lansdowne Park. It was a great game and a great season.

DC Keeley

In closing, I want to advise the board that Deputy Chief Ed Keeley will be taking leave starting December 3rd until his retirement date January 31st.

I want to congratulate Ed on his 31 year career in policing and thank him for the many contributions he has made to the Ottawa Police Service and this community. His work ethic, his commitment to members and his belief in service are important reminders to all of us that despite the changes that we face in policing, the core principles of what we do always remain, serving and protecting with Honour, Courage and Service.

Thank you.