

Report to / Rapport au:

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

26 October 2020 / 26 octobre 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: 8 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Sergeant Jean Luc Bonin

Excerpt from Letter: I am a 48-year-old old black man, born and raised in Ottawa, but I have been living in Brooklyn, New York, since 1996. I've been back for three days visiting family with my two boys and I thought I would share my wonderful experiences with your officers on two random incidents. Day 1; my nephew's pitbull dog ran out the door and I wound up having to chase him. While running after him, a police officer in a

cruiser spotted me and he began to drive towards me. In my mind, being from New York City, and seeing a white officer approaching me I was concerned. He pulled up beside me and asked; "Is your dog friendly?" I said "yes", then he pulled out rice crispy square from his lunch and the dog ran towards it and the officer scooped him up and put him in the back of his car, then drove us both home. Day 3; I was walking with my two kids and five nephews to play football. All young black boys ranging in ages 10 to 29. My oldest nephew saw a police officer driving towards us they caught eyes. Sergeant Jean Luc Bonin instantly stopped and reversed and came towards us and spent time showing the kids his vehicle and answering their questions. Coming home to Ottawa is always so refreshing and I'm always so proud to say to my American counterparts that I grew up in a city where myself and friends of colour NEVER experienced any form of racial profiling or violence between the police and us. Sgt. Bonin exemplifies community policing and breaking down racial barriers. I believe he clearly is a reflection of the OPS officers, safeguarding our wonderful city.

Date Received: 10 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Ken Bruce

Excerpt from Letter: As today is International Suicide Prevention Day, I would like to thank the officers who attended to my husband's suicide. I know that their jobs are not easy sometimes and that they often witness traumatic events. I met Constable Ken Bruce at the hospital, and I wanted to say thank you for being there for us.

Date Received: 10 September 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: One of my duties as Manager of Security and Emergency Services is to represent our section in a group called the Circle of Care. This group identifies students who require resources or are at risk and connect them to the supports they may need. In our meeting today, the agenda consisted of dialogue around calling 911 for student wellness checks, what can be expected from security responses on campus and more importantly police responses on and off campus. What I wanted to share with you was the overwhelming praise and support from each of the sections I referenced for the Ottawa Police frontline responders but specifically the work of the Mental Health Unit. The dedication, passion and professionalism of your team was highlighted and repeated by all throughout the meeting. Each one had examples of incidents where OPS attended and/or had dealings with the MHU and spoke glowingly of what an excellent job they had done and how thankful they are that OPS does what they do in the area of Mental Health. It was a proud moment for this retired member and I felt

compelled to share this outpouring of support with you especially when the membership is currently facing so many challenges in this area.

Date Received: 14 September 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I see a lot of hate posts on the social media page. I just want you to know that the silent majority support you. We just don't want to engage in useless wars on social media. I support you all. I always have and always will. Thank you for your service. It's a hard time for police now more than ever. I am a Registered Nurse and I have always felt supported and safe with your care. You are my family. Thank you for your service.

Date Received: 15 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Robert Griffin

Excerpt from Letter: Yesterday, my mother and I had the pleasure of interacting with Constable Robert Griffin. He was friendly, courteous, professional and engaged. I wanted to write a short note thanking him - although the interaction was minor, it was truly a pleasure to meet him.

Date Received: 18 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Sergeant Len Vaz

Excerpt from Letter: Hello, I want to acknowledge the kind assistance of Sergeant Len Vaz. I was caught up in a tricky situation involving a disabled government-issued car, and two tow truck operators. Sgt Vaz did a great job de-escalating the situation, and bringing it to a conclusion that satisfied all parties. It is this kind of thoughtful policing that makes the citizens of Ottawa proud of the OPS.

Date Received: 20 September 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I just wanted to say a big thanks to all officers involved with the initiative to reduce dangerous driving around Merivale/Meadowlands area. A lot of residents have been concerned and the police presence, and interventions, have made a big difference for the neighbourhood! Your work is greatly appreciated.

Date Received: 21 September 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I live near Dundonald park. Not a day goes by that I don't watch the police manage the homeless and drunks with unyielding patience and professionalism. I have no words for the people that made the chalk impressions in the sidewalk this

week. I do not want to know a city without our police officers. Thank you so much for all your hard work.

Date Received: 22 September 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I would like to congratulate the OPS on their successful negotiation for the situation in Barrhaven yesterday. Congratulations to all; especially the negotiators. Great work!

Date Received: 28 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Derek Van Zutphen and Ben Mitchell

Excerpt from Letter: I want to thank Constables Derek Van Zutphen and Ben Mitchell for assisting me to get home when I was lost on my scooter. These two officers went above and beyond helping a senior get home.

Date Received: 28 September 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Brayden Moore

Excerpt from Letter: Kudos to the officers who helped a very distressed young woman today. Their patience and professionalism are to be commended! Thanks to all OPS officers for their service during these very difficult times.

Date Received: 2 October 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Kevin Graham and Ricardo Menendez

Excerpt from Letter: I witnessed Constables Kevin Graham and Ricardo Menendez help a mother during a very volatile situation. They handled it in a very professional and human way. They were patient and took the time to explain the situation to the mother, which calmed her down. And everything went peacefully, and all were happy by the end. I'm very happy to see police like that, before I came to Canada I was a military commander so I know that the way they handled everything was very professional and caring.

Date Received: 3 October 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Samson Vo

Excerpt from Letter: Constable Samson Vo and his partner attended our home after my 15-year-old daughter's friend contacted the police, concerned for my daughter's mental health and well being. My daughter and I were treated with the utmost kindness and respect. My daughter told me she felt validated by Cst. Vo's gentle communication and

respectful approach. He sat with her on the couch, he listened to her, and he patiently waited as my daughter developed a solution that would diffuse her escalated emotions. Though the entire intervention I had a confidence that both officers had my family's needs on the forefront of their minds. We are very thankful for their professional, skilled approach in such a challenging moment in our lives. Please pass on our thanks.

Date Received: 5 October 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: I work in the Orleans area, and I wanted to say "thank you!" to the people involved in keeping us all safe. I've lived and worked in different parts of the world; Africa, South East Asia, South America, and now Canada. A safe, respectful environment enables people to grow and prosper, and absolutely depends on effective policing. There is no need for armed guards at work, I no longer need to be armed, and each time I leave my car I know that it's very likely to be there when I come back to it. I am less vigilant when out and about, and my stress levels decreased a lot. My wife and I also decided that we would start a family; in the other countries I wouldn't have as it would have just exposed them to trauma. She is now pregnant. I realize how difficult and dangerous the work can be, so I wish you all the best, please know that you are all valued and respected.

Date Received: 8 October 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Chandra Rose

Excerpt from Letter: I would like to commend Constable Chanda Rose for her excellent work. Cst. Rose supported us as we dealt with the suicide of a tenant who resided in our basement apartment. Cst. Rose managed to balance being friendly, professional and empathetic during a very stressful time. She is an excellent police officer and she should be recognized for her tremendous work and management of a very challenging situation, not only for us but for the family of the young person who was renting an apartment in our house. COVID-19 has had a very negative impact on the mental health of so many and we greatly appreciated her extra care during these very challenging times.

Date Received: 8 October 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Jayme Simzer and Stephen Irvine

Excerpt from Letter: I'd like to thank OPS for their response when I called for help. Constables Jayme Simzer and Stephen Irvine put me at ease, so that I could help them do their jobs. The officers were easy to talk to, and helpful during the rest of the

process. Regardless of the outcome of my case, I would like to thank OPS for its response, you deserve my appreciation and thanks.

Date Received: 11 October 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Sergeant Lila Shibley

Excerpt from Letter: I met Sergeant Lila Shibley on one of the worst days of my life and she was so nice to me. I can't thank her enough for being that calm voice that I really needed that day, and for giving me hope that all would be fine. I appreciated her presence that day. Thank you for that hug at the end when I needed it. I never thought a hug could mean so much but that hug did. You weren't even the officer assigned to my case but you saw me sitting there shaking with fear and came out to offer me comfort. You're awesome.