

Report to / Rapport au:

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

25 January 2021 / 25 janvier 2021

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: 29 October 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: This is an open letter to all police officers. Your community supports you and appreciates you. We may not always show it, but we do. You are our brothers and sisters, our wives and husbands, our mothers and fathers, daughters and sons, our friends and neighbours. We support and appreciate you. When we are asleep in bed at night, you are out there protecting us from the darkness. When we are running away from danger, you are running towards it. When we are hurt or lost, you are

searching for us. For this we support and appreciate you. When we are celebrating holidays with our families, many of you are not. When we are hunkered down inside because the roads are not safe, you are outside in case we need you. If you have plans with your family, you understand and accept that you might have to cancel them last minute because someone in your community needs you. For that we support and appreciate you. Many of us wouldn't dream of working an 18-hour shift, but you gladly do when it is needed. You are so well trained that your expertise is invaluable. In fact, you do your job so well, sometimes we forget how much we need you. You know how to do things that most of us couldn't begin to comprehend. You've also seen things that most of us couldn't imagine. You are usually most needed when someone is at their worst. You answer the call and do your job, day in and day out. For this we support and appreciate you. You are brave, strong, and empathetic. You have answered the call that most people do not have the intestinal fortitude to answer. You put your life on the line for your community every day. Some of you have paid the ultimate price. For this we support and appreciate you. For all this and so much more we support you and we appreciate you. Thank you and please stay safe.

Date Received: 6 November 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: My brother-in-law was driving when he had a heart attack and was admitted to the ICU. I wanted to thank the officer who contacted us when we were trying to find his vehicle. Thank you for your patience and kindness. Stay safe and keep doing the wonderful work that you do to make all of our lives better.

Date Received: 7 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Luc Plante

Excerpt from Letter: I want to thank Constable Luc Plante for the professional and kind support when our family was in crisis. He went over and above — the best of community policing.

Date Received: 8 November 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt from Letter: To the motorcycle patrol team that set up shop on the northeast corner of Heron Road and Prince of Wales Drive, you were doing a community service by catching the dangerous speeders using the bus lane as their personal express service.

Date Received: 11 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Sergeant Jeremy House, Constables Chad Fawcett and Kevin Handsperger

Excerpt from Letter: I just wanted to take a moment to recognize the outstanding service of these officers who responded to a "drunk and disorderly" disturbance call at a store in Kanata. In particular, I wanted to commend the professional, kind, and respectful demeanor of Sergeant Jeremy House and his partner. As a person with a disability and a visible minority, caught in an unfortunate scenario in which my personal, human and civil rights were infringed upon, Sgt. House was an exemplary embodiment of professionalism but most crucially, trust, respect and integrity.

Date Received: 12 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Tristan Bailey

Excerpt of letter: There are some massive problems with drug housing in our neighbourhood, and Constable Tristan Bailey has helped by increasing patrols and keeping an eye on our street. His presence has been a real help in reducing drugs being sold and people using those drugs at the local school and around the street. In the last few weeks on our street there was an overdose in one of the drug houses, a murder, and right across the street from us there was someone dealing and cooking meth amphetamine. We wanted to thank you for all the help and patrols. Our street would be interested in being more engaged with the Ottawa Police and working together to keep our streets safe and violence free.

Date Received: 18 November 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: A few months ago I called 9-1-1, responding to an aggressively suicidal man on my street. The police responded by partially blocking the street to slow down traffic and took the time to talk with the man on the sidewalk. The police were calm and thorough, and the man was eventually gently transferred to an ambulance. Well done, very professional.

Date Received: 19 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Jamie Collins

Excerpt of letter: I just had a wonderful conversation with Constable Jamie Collins, who was at the intersection of Laurier Avenue East doing traffic control due to the protest. We talked about professionalism and conduct, his own professional insight was quite noticeable. Although it was just a simple conversation, his demeanour should be commended, he represented Ottawa Police well.

Date Received: 20 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Meagan Blair and Laura Koulsi

Excerpt of letter: The police were called to my location for a wellness check. I have experienced these checks before and I have never felt really good about them. That day I was in trouble, I needed to go to the hospital but I couldn't bring myself to go there. I remember when I actually agreed to the transport, but when i got to the hospital I didn't want to go in. The officers didn't leave and asked if I needed them to come in with me. I didn't want to say yes. They came in and stayed with me. I thought I was going to kill myself that day and these two officers did their job well and got me to where I needed to be. I wouldn't have gone otherwise. I did get some help and I just wanted to say thank you. These things may seem irrelevant to the police considering the things you deal with, but in an indirect way, they saved me from myself that day.

Date Received: 23 November 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: Since last March I have dealt with 16 police officers due to my son's severe autism. I would like to thank them all. They were all amazing and I appreciate it so much. In a moment of crisis there were no other options but to call 911 to assist my son and I did so without hesitation. They were all so helpful. Thank you for being so understanding in such unique circumstances.

Date Received: 24 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Cynthia Brennan

Excerpt of letter: I was having a lot of problems completing the online application for a Vulnerable Persons police check, and Cynthia Brennan was so prompt in helping me with all of my issues. She really seemed to understand and care. I was very impressed with how quickly she responded to my emails and how she was able to truly help me. She is an exemplary example of the kind of employee you can be proud to have on your team.

Date Received: 25 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Rachel Robinson

Excerpt of letter: I had attended a Mass at St. Patrick's Basilica and stayed in the Church to pray afterwards. After some time, a man entered from the main door and walked up the centre aisle. As he got closer to me I sensed he was moving to my side of the aisle. He leaned into me, spat on me, and then continued on his way to the front where he appeared to hit a gentleman praying at the altar rail. I was quite shaken and

agreed to wait for the police to arrive. A while later Constable Rachel Robinson came in and treated me with such professional courtesy as she explained my options and what it meant to file charges. She explained everything clearly and calmly and made sure I understood what the process entailed. I am writing today because I believe she should be thanked for her actions that morning. So, thank you, Cst. Robinson, for helping me through a difficult morning.

Date Received: 26 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Melanie Arbour

Excerpt of letter: I was rear ended in my car at a very busy time and location and Constable Melanie Arbour assisted with sorting it out. The young man who hit my car was a bit difficult and did not want to report the accident or give me his insurance, which is why I called the police. Cst. Arbour was so calming and heard us both out in a very professional manner. The young man was quite agitated, but she calmed him, and he became quite cooperative. She just made a stressful situation much easier and I am pleased we have such a competent and kind person on the OPS. Whoever recruited and trained Melanie should be proud.

Date Received: 29 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Thomas Mondoux and Michael Wheaton, Sergeant David Cameron

Excerpt of letter: Hi I just wanted to say thank you to the 911 operator and the brave police officers who helped save my father today. He suffered a stroke this morning but was able to call 911, his speech was severely impaired and I'm sure that the operator was unable to understand a single word he was trying to say but I'm assuming they knew right away he was suffering from a stroke and they sent units to his address in Bells Corners. The responding officers made the decision to break down his front door when they didn't get a response, and by making that decision they may just have saved his life. Our family cannot thank them enough for being so brave. They passed it off as "just doing our job" but they truly went above and beyond and there is no doubt they are heroes and deserve a shout out. My father is doing better as of this evening and although we do not know how things are going to turn out yet at least we have a chance; thank you very much for saving our Dad.

Date Received: 30 November 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Special Constable Sue Graham

Excerpt of letter: In Ottawa, Special Constable Suzanne Kelly collects winter coats, hats, mitts, and boots for those who would otherwise be released from the courthouse in inadequate clothing. With no funding, the Ottawa program relies on volunteers and community donations. Each year, as temperatures in Ottawa drop below freezing, Special Constable Kelly sends out her yearly email message looking for donations of winter gear. She collects the donations, searches them for safety, stores them and distributes them. She does this on her own time, and it is only because of her compassion and the generosity of the community that there are not more tragedies.

Date Received: 2 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable William Fairchild

Excerpt of letter: We filed a police report for harassment, and Constable William Fairchild came to our home. I just wanted to mention that Cst. Fairchild did such a wonderful job and he was patient and understanding while taking note of our case. He also gave great advice on how to handle things going forward. We really appreciated how professional and kind he was. Thank you all for the great work you do!

Date Received: 3 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Quinn McCabe

Excerpt of letter: Constable Quinn McCabe came to our house as our son (who suffers from addiction and mental health problems) was very distressed, and he managed to help him de-escalate and agree to calmly go to the hospital. Cst. McCabe was kind during this stressful situation and assured us that while we had no control over what the doctor's at emergency would decide to do, he would do his best to try to get them to help him. We have no idea what further conversations Cst. McCabe had with him and while he did end up leaving the hospital later that night, we wanted to let you know, you and your team had a positive impact on our son. As of August 31st, our son has been sober and is getting treatment. He is a completely different person, happy and feeling blessed. We wanted to take a moment to thank you for your help; for taking the time to understand the complex situation and making a difference in his and our family's lives. Your efforts make a difference. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your work in our communities. And thank you for making a difference.

Date Received: 5 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Sergeant Michael Cathcart

Excerpt of letter: I would sincerely like to thank Sergeant Michael Cathcart for demonstrating both compassion and empathy towards me when I called in to the OPS

after a very sad situation occurred in our home. I am both grateful and thankful that he took the time to listen. My world is a bit better for it now. Thank you Sgt. Cathcart, may only good things come your way.

Date Received: 6 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Michael Serson and Matthew MacGowan

Excerpt of letter: Thank you to Constables Michael Serson and Matthew MacGowan for helping my daughter; they were completely amazing in every way. They made everyone (except my dog) very confident we were being treated fairly and respectfully. They had a trauma-informed approach that made my daughter immediately comfortable, yet they let her know how serious the situation was. These officers are wonderful community members and how much we appreciate them (and the entire Ottawa Police Service) Efforts made that day have my daughter safe today.

Date Received: 9 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Sherry Jordan, Sean Cunningham, Jason Meehan and Stephen Cruickshanks

Excerpt of letter: I wanted to write to you to let you know how outstanding your Constables have been. Over the last five years we have experienced brutal criminal activity at our business. The pure dedication of your officers gave us hope that things would improve, and after five long years it finally has. Constables Sherry Jordan, Jason Meehan, Sean Cunningham and Stephen Cruickshanks have been a saving grace not just to our business, but to our community. Their dedication to their job has been inspiring to all of us. We could always count on them to ensure that we were heard and safe. Being at work and seeing them out patrolling was reassuring as we worked with the fear of never knowing what the day would bring us. My staff would be so grateful to see them at the vulnerable hours. The interaction they had with my team really put their minds at ease. You are blessed to have such outstanding officers on your force. We will be forever grateful for your dedication to keep us safe, all while risking your own safety.

Date Received: 11 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Paul Cahill, Rheanna Kendrick, and Sergeant Mark Gatien

Excerpt of letter: Would you be so kind to thank these three officers that were on site on Monday night for my friend's accident; they were amazing and caring.

Date Received: 15 December 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: I called the Service today because my brother had been out of communication and absent from work. The lady on the phone was calm and extremely helpful. We discussed options and she said she would call me back in ten minutes. In the ten minutes, I called the hospital and found him in surgery. The police service called back as she said she would and had further information for me. Thank you for being understanding, helpful and courteous at this stressful time. Great job!

Date Received: 16 December 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: Hello, I want to thank the two policemen that rescued me from the Bayshore ramp at the 417 a few weeks ago. I had car problems and forgot my cellphone at home. I was able to use one of officer's phone to call CAA. He was unable to stay, so another policeman showed up soon after and stayed with me until the tow truck showed up. I really appreciated. Thank you so much and I'm so very grateful for our police service.

Date Received: 16 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Chantal Despatie, Constables Daniel Tetreault and Vincent Dupont-Choiniere

Excerpt of letter: J'aimerais remercier tous les officiers qui ont répondu à mon appel. J'aimerais également remercier l'opératrice 911 qui m'a accompagné lors de ce moment difficile.

Date Received: 20 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Kevin Graham

Excerpt of letter: We were touring Ottawa from Base Petawawa and just met Constable Kevin Graham downtown in the ByWard Market. I was with my 12-year-old daughter and her best friend. The girls were awestruck and the officers were so kind, it made our trip! Thank you!

Date Received: 26 December 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: I wanted to thank the young officer that assisted me. I didn't get his name but when my car decided not to start after I dropped off a gift for my uncle, the officer took the time to give my car a boost. I know he didn't need to but taking that time made me to feel safe in that neighbourhood and it lifted my spirits. He was friendly and calm and had a great sense of humour, as he sang Christmas songs in the street. I just wanted to give him a shout out to him and say how happy this made me feel that

Christmas spirit is alive and well in Ottawa! Thank you, officer! Your kindness won't be forgotten.

Date Received: 26 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Gustavo De Souza Lima, Jean Benoit, Kenny Davis Ntolla and Iain Campbell, and Sergeant Jean-Philippe Normand

Excerpt of letter: I called 911 because of an attack on a young neighbour. I just wanted to say how impressed I was with the kindness, professionalism, politeness and respectfulness with which all the officers and EMT's conducted themselves through such a stressful event.

Date Received: 29 December 2020

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: I live in Alta Vista and noticed earlier this afternoon that a police car was sitting and watching the intersection of a four-way stop. Thank you! This particular intersection is notorious for cars brazenly rolling through without stopping, sadly even when pedestrians are trying to cross. We have seen many aggressive drivers at this intersection recently. I thank and encourage OPS to give this intersection greater attention going forward.

Date Received: 31 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Robbilyn Parker

Excerpt of letter: One Saturday in early December, I pulled in to the Salvation Army Store on Montreal Road to drop off washed and still in good condition winter clothes. As I was parking, I noticed an Ottawa Police cruiser approaching and parking. The officer calmly got out of her cruiser at the entrance, walked directly into the store and returned quickly with a mask. She handed the person in her back seat the mask and escorted a young man into the entrance. He only had a t-shirt and jeans on. He looked lost, but he remembered to thank the officer for her kindness. I entered the store at the same time, just another customer. Curious I lingered. The officer spoke to a woman who worked at the store and got the man a warm winter coat, some boots and socks. The officer didn't judge or ask how this young man didn't have a coat or winter boots when it was -5 outside, too cold for a t-shirt and jeans. They offered him kindness and respect. I was honoured to hear and see this interaction.

Date Received: 31 December 2020

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Kevin Oreto

Excerpt of letter: Constable Kevin Oreto helped me and my wife deal with a major traffic accident during the summer. I wanted to thank him again, this time in writing, for providing extraordinary support to us in that time of crisis and being a consummate professional during that stressful night. To this day, the only nice memory of that night is Cst. Oreto checking in on my wife in the hospital even though she only sustained minor injuries. Thank you for being there for us when we need you most.

Date Received: 3 January 2021

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Eric Lepage and Feisal Bila Houssein

Excerpt of letter: I am a physician in the Emergency Room at the The Ottawa Hospital. There was a patient having a mental health crisis and two of your officers, Constables Eric Lepage and Feisel Bila Houssein were instrumental in the care of this patient. They conducted themselves in a truly exemplary manner, of the highest professional standard. They demonstrated an insightful understanding of what mental health patients need in a difficult crisis, and were effective not just at de-escalation, but indeed offering genuinely empathetic support and constructive ideas and positive reinforcement (on top of a ride home).

Date Received: 5 January 2021

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constables Eddie Wong, Kevin Myers, Martin Kovac, Christian Gardner, Paul France, Steve Irvine and Matthew Cook

Excerpt of letter: We had to place a call concerning our son who's been dealing with mental health issues (this was the third call we've had to make in recent months). After many hours our son ended up at CHEO because of the due diligence of all of these officers and as a result our son received supports from CHEO that he had not previously received. While I did not interact with each officer I know that, in speaking with my husband and our son, each officer showed incredible compassion and kindness (with a dose of reason) throughout the night. I am forever grateful for the words of compassion and encouragement they shared with me. At a time when I felt a failure as a mother they helped me to see otherwise and offered hope at a time of darkness for our son and our family. No parent imagines they will be faced with such challenges with a child and so having supportive and compassionate professionals while going through it makes all the difference. My husband and I are grateful for everything these officers did and truly believe that their words and actions helped our son and our family get the support that was finally put in place at CHEO. Cst. Eddie Wong also went out of his way and followed up with another visit and phone call. We cannot thank him enough for all he did, we are truly grateful and appreciative.

Date Received: 5 January 2021

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Lauren Dupasquier

Excerpt of letter: I am sending this to acknowledge the outstanding service we have received while dealing with Constable Lauren Dupasquier. Our son has been struggling with mental health issues over the past several months and this has resulted in several calls to OPS regarding concerns for his safety. I received a follow-up call from Cst. Dupasquier and once again was shown nothing but extraordinary compassion, understanding, kindness and professionalism. She offered her expertise while providing suggestions and resources and all with a touch of humour (something I truly value during times of stress!). She has continued to provide support with a follow-up "check in" visits with our son and our family. I cannot express the heartfelt gratitude I have for all she has done. During these challenging times it is hard to see the light and feel hope but when dealing with kind and caring professionals such as Cst. Dupasquier I am reminded that there is hope and am comforted by the support she has given. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Date Received: 6 January 2021

From: Member of the public

OPS member: Constable Garvin Chow Chong

Excerpt of letter: My husband and I had a very positive interaction with Constable Garvin Chow Chong today in relation to a traffic violation. He was extremely helpful and patient and we wanted to acknowledge his professionalism. He is a credit to the OPS.

Date Received: 9 January 2021

From: Member of the public

Excerpt of letter: Thank you for everything you do for our community. We love and appreciate you. Stay safe and have an amazing day.