

## **Chair D. Deans' Verbal Report, OPSB Meeting June 28, 2021**

Good afternoon everyone.

I would like to begin by taking a moment to remember Rabbi Bulka, who passed away this weekend. Rabbi Bulka was an important community and spiritual leader who has positively touched many lives in Ottawa and beyond. My condolences to his family and friends.

I would now like to address the alleged corruption charges that were brought forward last week against two OPS officers.

As this is the subject of an ongoing investigation by the RCMP, the Board has not issued a statement.

I would, however, like to take this opportunity as Chair of the OPSB to emphasize that generally speaking, it is unacceptable for any police services member to engage in criminal behavior or corrupt practices.

We rely on the trust and confidence from the public for effective policing in Ottawa. Charges such as those laid last week can serve to damage that trust.

As a Board, we will continue to support and work with the Chief to ensure that the Ottawa Police Service remains an ethical, professional, inclusive, and lawful police service.

I would now like to share an update about the development of the Mental Health Response Strategy.

As I reported last month, Ottawa City Council asked the City Manager to take the lead in consulting with relevant stakeholders to develop a recommended path forward to coordinate the City's efforts regarding the development of a Mental Health Response Strategy with those currently being undertaken by the Ottawa Police Service.

I am pleased to share that the development of the Mental Health Response Strategy will be transitioning to a City-led Initiative.

We've been hearing loud and clear that many community members do not want the development of this strategy to be led by police.

I firmly believe that the City, under the umbrella of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan, is best positioned to lead the coordination of this strategy. Their strong connections with stakeholders across Ottawa will help to ensure a diversity of voices and ideas are heard and considered.

Further details about the transition will be shared over the coming months.

One implication for the Board is that there will be a shift in the reporting structure with respect to the Strategy Development, as responsibility will sit with the City. Despite the shift in reporting, the Service will continue to provide the OPSB with updates about the initiative.

I would also like to take a moment to talk about the Board's work plan, as we have been busy recruiting two firms to support our work plan over the last several months.

At last months' Board meeting, I brought forward a report about hiring PACE Public Affairs & Community Engagement, a firm that will be working with the Board to support us in developing new processes for engaging with the community.

Over the summer months, they will be carrying out several semi-structured interviews and small group discussions with racialized community members to identify opportunities and processes to strengthen community members participation and voice in future planning processes.

We recognize that our current processes for consultation, and in particular our monthly Board meetings, do not meet the community's increasing desire to engage with and be heard by the Board.

We hope that the outcome from this work is ultimately a more deliberate process for engagement beyond monthly Board meetings – one that centers around dialogue and the co-creation of solutions to issues facing the community. The Board's

intention is to incorporate recommendations from this work into future community engagement processes, including those related to the 2022 budget.

I have also brought forward a report today to recommend hiring StrategyCorp, a public affairs, communications and management consulting advisory firm, to support the Board with three separate but related work packages.

The first is a use of force policy review, which will be conducted to identify gaps and areas for improvement to strengthen existing policies to better reflect current best practices.

The second is the development of a recommended strategic planning process and accompanying strategic direction paper that will set the Board up to develop a new Strategic Plan in 2022. The new Plan will be firmly situated within the broader context of community safety and wellbeing and will respond to the shifting narrative around policing.

The third is support to further refine the Board's ongoing work to reduce or freeze the 2022 budget at 2021 levels. Strategy Corp will provide analytical support to the Board to identify opportunities for cost containment in the 2022 budget.

In November 2020, the Board committed to making a concerted effort to reduce or freeze the budget at 2021 levels.

The budget direction that was released last week came from the City of Ottawa and did not include input from the OPSB. A 3% budget increase is not set in stone, and the Board remains committed to reducing costs while continuing to provide effective policing in the City of Ottawa.

One final update I would like to share relates the CAO recruitment process.

The Board's recruitment for a new Chief Administrative Officer was officially launched on May 13.

The Board has received numerous applications through Odgers Berndtson, the search firm we retained to assist us with our search.

The Board will be conducting interviews in July.

This concludes my verbal update.