



SPECIAL MEETING

Ottawa Police Services Board

Minutes 52

Friday, 11 February 2022, 3:00 PM

Via Zoom

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Board Members:

Chair: Councillor D. Deans

Vice Chair: L.A. (Sandy) Smallwood

Members: B. Johnson, Councillor R. King, Councillor C. Meehan, D. Nirman, R. Swaita

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

That the Ottawa Police Services Board confirm the agenda of the 11 February 2022 meeting.

CONFIRMED

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. CHIEF AND COMMAND UPDATE ON ONGOING DEMONSTRATIONS

Chief's verbal

Chief Sloly provided opening remarks, indicating that there remained sensitivity surrounding the OPS' operational plans. He noted that demonstrators were now subject to higher penalties and fines. The Service was aware that more people were planning to return to Ottawa over the weekend, and they were deploying all available resources. The Chief indicated that although progress was being made, the key remained resourcing.

The Service noted that their messaging had remained consistent, and that they continued to tell demonstrators not to come to Ottawa. The OPS were increasing efforts and tactics based on available resources. It was believed that the fine increases would embolden OPS efforts. Their focus remained on neighbourhood safety, but the overarching priority was ending the occupation in the red zone. Residents of Ottawa were reminded to report crimes to the police.

On the question of number of additional resources having been deployed in Ottawa, the Service indicated that their request for 1,800 resources was still underway. It was further noted that they could not discuss the specifics of resourcing in a public meeting.

The Service was still awaiting the full description of added policing powers that would be granted under the newly declared provincial state of emergency. Once information had been received from the province, the OPS' legal services team was going to translate the regulations into actionable enforcement items for the

Service. Once briefed, OPS members would begin enforcement.

A challenge being faced by Service members since the onset of the occupation was being able to safely intervene, interdict, and enforce. The OPS indicated that they were enforcing to the extent possible given the resources available.

Further, the Service noted that they were enforcing all laws available to them, including the new powers under the injunction on honking. Their ability to enforce the new laws related directly to the availability of new resources. Reducing the number of demonstrators and vehicles would equate to a reduction in number of required resources in the downtown red zone, which would alleviate pressures. The Service indicated requiring additional resources in order to gain enforcement capacity. Even so, the Chief noted that the new powers enacted by the provincial state of emergency would be helpful, and that frontline members would enforce them to the extent possible. The OPS continued to work with all levels of government. Their legal team continued to work in conjunction with that of the City's. They continued to seek additional resourcing support.

A question was raised regarding why the City and Service had not yet acquired an injunction for idling. The Service noted that they had been in conversation with the City's legal department even before the convoy's arrival, and that an injunction had been discussed from the start. Concern was raised by the Board given that they had previously been informed by the City of Ottawa that the Service had delayed the injunction process, however the Board was at this meeting hearing that the Service believed that the City had been the delay. Given that no legal representatives from the City were present, it was decided that the question would be posed to City of Ottawa legal counsel as a take-away.

In terms of whether the protest still consisted of a small minority of people, the Service noted not having an estimate of how many people across the country were participating in or supporters of the ongoing demonstrations. It was suggested that there are a number of different reasons that individuals might be demonstrating, and that there was no one line of thinking. The demonstrations had become a local, provincial, national and even international issue. Money and supports had been identified as coming in from other countries, including the United States.

In order to maximize their resources, the OPS had members working 12-hour shifts, rather than 10, and members were being given fewer days off. Some members were then being sent home after having worked 16 consecutive days. The Service noted that the Ottawa Police Association had been very cooperative

in renegotiating shift schedules.

A question was raised regarding whether the Service had adequate resources to protect the citizens in the most impacted neighbourhoods, and if they did not, what could the Board do to change that. It was noted that the Service had been protecting all residents of Ottawa as best as they could with the resources they had. The Service had been encouraging residents to report incidents of harassment from the beginning of the demonstrations. Since then, they had been able to expand on their efforts and had implemented a surge and contain strategy. They continued to take threats very seriously and were deploying additional resources to those neighbourhoods to prevent further such incidents from occurring. Since the beginning of the occupation, the Service to date had received 150 reports of criminal incidents, which were under investigation. 25 people had been charged with criminal activity.

A point was raised by the Service that those living within the perimeter of the demonstrations were the most vulnerable and victimized, however OPS members were also tired. The Service was opening all their meetings with brief wellness checks, and they noted providing support to one another. Some members were being sent home for rest. The OPS requested that the community express their support, suggesting that would go a long way. They were also ensuring that members were aware of the support programs available.

The Service had been in conversation regarding the mitigation of risks associated with counterprotest. It was indicated that their plan was fluid and updated on an hourly basis.

Given the size of the demonstration area, the Service was unable to stop people from entering the core. The OPS noted that they were holding people accountable to the extent possible given their resourcing level. They continued to attempt to interject the demonstrators' supplies including their fuel.

Intelligence information continued to support the Services efforts. Some convoys had been seen participating in "slow roll," where they drive slowly throughout the city streets, impeding traffic. Although some social media information suggested that schools might be targeted, the Service had yet to see that develop. They had applied additional resources to the surrounding areas of schools as a preventative method.

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

RECEIVED

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Regular Meeting - Monday, 28 February 2022, 4:00 PM