



July 24, 2020

Honourable Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General
George Drew Bldg 18th Flr
25 Grosvenor St
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y6

Dear Honourable Sylvia Jones:

On behalf of Council of the Town of Mono, I wish to add my support to the resolution passed by the Council of the Town of Orangeville on June 8, 2020 regarding the necessity to develop a comprehensive diversity training program for municipal police services, including the Ontario Provincial Police. It is important that we acknowledge the reality that individuals within communities, and communities within larger populations, differ in many ways. Police services must have a broad understanding of what constitutes these differences so they can recognize them and strive to ensure equitable treatment of people. This can include differences in gender, race, age, culture, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that helps to shape a person's perspective.

The unique role of law enforcement officials in our community makes cross-cultural understanding imperative. In addition to the need to ensure officer-to-officer sensitivity, and to accurately represent our constituents, law enforcement officials need understanding, respect, and a willingness to communicate in a culturally sensitive manner with all segments of our society. We need to critically examine stereotypes and cultural assumptions that are often held by the community and by the law enforcement professionals who serve the community.

I encourage you to ensure that a comprehensive diversity training program is developed to ensure that our police services are in a position to recognize and respond appropriately to the lived experience of members of all communities within our society. The training program should examine how people perceive the police and how this impacts officer effectiveness and, ultimately, the safety of both officers and the members of all of our communities.

Regards,

TOWN OF MONO

Laura Ryan
Mayor

Enclosure: Town of Orangeville Resolution regarding Police Diversity Training

Copies:

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Diversity Training Program

Town of Orangeville Resolution 2020-194, passed June 8, 2020

Moved by Mayor Brown, Seconded by Deputy Mayor Macintosh

WHEREAS The Town of Orangeville recognizes there have been questions in the public related to both diversity training and use of force training and protocols for Police Services, including in Ontario;

WHEREAS the Town recognizes that police officers join this profession out of a desire to do good, to serve and to protect the communities they serve;

AND WHEREAS an understanding of community diversity can foster authentic inclusion;

AND WHEREAS empathy training, and de-escalation training, can support understanding other people's perspectives;

AND WHEREAS the Town recognizes that policing can be a dangerous profession, and officer as well as community safety are critical considerations in law enforcement;

AND WHEREAS the Ontario Provincial Police have indicated they have a comprehensive diversity training program, however there may not be the same resources available across the entire province for smaller Police Services;

AND WHEREAS there is concern in the public about the boundaries of use of force, such as neck restraints, and oversight;

AND WHEREAS there isn't clarity on a common bar on diversity and empathy training or on use of force and oversight;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor write to the Solicitor General to encourage common training requirements for all members of Police Services in Ontario as it relates to diversity, empathy and use of force;

AND THAT the Solicitor General provide clarity on police oversight going forward given the anticipated changes to legislation to ensure effective accountability continues;

AND THAT annual updates or refresher courses be mandatory to ensure our Police Services have the best and current information available to them;

AND THAT THE TOWN request that the use of force protocols be reviewed to ensure they are safe and would meet current standards, and then shared across the province;

AND THAT THE TOWN circulate this resolution to all Ontario municipalities seeking their support.

"Carried"