

**Joint Municipal and Police Services Board Meeting
Re: Essex County OPP Detachment Board**

Minutes

Date: Thursday, May 13, 2021
Time: 9:00 am
Location: Electronic meeting using Zoom

Present:

Municipality of Lakeshore

Mayor Tom Bain
Francis Kennette, PSB Chair
Kristen Newman, Director of Legislative and Legal Services

Municipality of Leamington

Mayor Hilda MacDonald
Peter Neufeld, Chief Administrative Officer
Ruth Orton, Director of Legal and Legislative Services

Town of Essex

Councillor Kim Verbeek, PSB Chair
Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer

Town of Kingsville

Mayor Nelson Santos
William Chisholm, PSB Vice Chair
John Norton, Chief Administrative Officer

Town of Tecumseh

Mayor Gary McNamara – Meeting Chair
Christopher Hales, PSB Chair
Margaret Misk-Evans, Chief Administrative Officer

Township of Pelee

Mayor Ray Durocher

Also Present:

Councillor Kimberley DeYong, Town of Kingsville (observer)
Ellen Preuschat, Recording Secretary, Tecumseh PSB

1. Welcome and Introduction

Mayor Gary McNamara called the meeting to order at 9:05 am, conducted the roll call and thanked everyone for their participation.

2. Purpose of the Meeting and How to Reach Consensus

Mayor McNamara summarized the agenda and outlined the purpose of the meeting:

- Based on the Solicitor General's recent correspondence and Virtual Information Sessions (See meeting agenda Attachment 1 – Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019: Ontario Provincial Police Detachment Board Framework and Proposal Submission Process, Virtual Information Session, April 20, 2021), municipalities and First Nations within each detachment area are to submit one proposal indicating the composition of their new OPP detachment board and, if requested, their rationale for multiple boards.
- This group needs to settle on a board composition proposal to take to each municipal Council for a resolution prior to submitting the form to the Ministry of the Solicitor General.
- The proposal form is to be submitted by June 7, 2021, although it now appears there is some flexibility to extend this time frame.
- The Solicitor General will establish a ministerial working group to review each proposal received.
- This meeting will consider two different proposal models.
- Following presentations on the proposal models, Leamington is invited to provide an update on policing in their community and then the Mayors and elected officials at today's meeting will be given first opportunity to voice their opinions.

Mayor McNamara noted the Caldwell First Nation (Caldwell FN) was invited to attend, however a response was not received from them.

Discussion followed on how best to reach a consensus today on a board composition proposal. Mayor Santos observed that this joint group does not have the authority to bind anyone, but a 'preferred option' could be recommended to all Councils to support. Mayor McNamara emphasized the importance of developing a proposal so that the final decision on board composition does not rest with the Ministry.

Moved by Mayor Tom Bain, Lakeshore
Seconded by Mayor Ray Durocher, Pelee

That the result of a majority vote by the Mayors or other elected official from the municipalities participating in this meeting represent a consensus on the Essex County OPP detachment board model to be presented to the respective Councils as the preferred option for submission to the Solicitor General.

Carried

3. Presentation – Lakeshore PSB Proposed Detachment Board Model

Kristen Newman summarized the two-board model proposed by the Lakeshore PSB and supported by Lakeshore Council (See meeting agenda Attachment 2 – "Two Board Approach"). The rationale for this model is that it:

- reflects the current operational reality of the OPP Essex Detachment;
- reflects that demographic and industry clusters are similarly aligned in the communities north and south of County Road 8; and

- results in a more manageable size of detachment board that maximizes opportunities for input from communities.

Three versions of the two-board model were presented, in which the Town of Essex either (1) joins Tecumseh and Lakeshore, (2) joins Kingsville, Leamington, Pelee Island, and Caldwell FN, or (3) is split between the two boards.

4. Presentation – Proposed Detachment Board Model based on Foresight Management Consulting Report

Margaret Misek-Evans summarized the detachment board framework contained in the “OPP Detachment Board Report” by Foresight Management Consulting (Foresight Report). This report resulted from a joint municipal and PSB meeting held on December 19, 2019. (See meeting agenda Attachment 3 – “Analysis of Foresight Report Detachment Board Framework.”) She noted that Caldwell FN was not included in the analysis, as no communications had been received from them. It may be necessary to increase the number of Provincial appointees to three, rather than two as recommended by the Foresight Report, to meet the threshold of 20% set by the Solicitor General subsequent to the writing of the Foresight Report.

5. Update on Policing Services from Leamington

Ruth Orton reported that Leamington is holding a Special Council Meeting on May 18, 2021, with respect to policing services, and that Administration is recommending Council not accept any proposal submitted in response to the RFP for Police Services.

She noted that even if a proposal were to be accepted there would be a one-year transition period, so in her opinion, Leamington would be part of the Essex County OPP detachment board in the short term.

6. Discussion/Decision on Proposed Detachment Board Models

The Chair opened discussion with an invitation to the Mayors and elected officials to speak first. The following comments were offered during the discussion on the proposed detachment board models:

Mayor Bain – Lakeshore feels strongly that the best way to keep strong representation and a strong voice on the board is through the two board model. The economic activities in the north and south municipalities are quite different, with the Tecumseh and Lakeshore being more industrially oriented and Essex, Kingsville, Leamington and Pelee being more focused on agriculture, including greenhouse industry, and tourism.

Mayor Santos – A single board would be very large, and no community wants to lose representation. Kingsville is very concerned with fair local representation. A two board model best maintains local representation. We need a proposal that would provide balanced representation while meeting the Solicitor General’s requirements.

Mayor MacDonald – It is important that the board not be unwieldy and that the unique needs of each municipality are recognized. Leamington, for example, is dealing with more cannabis related issues than the northern municipalities currently are. A two board system would keep the dialogue more specific. Essex will need to determine its preference.

Mayor Durocher – Pelee is small and does not share the same concerns, but acknowledges that Pelee resembles Leamington and Kingsville to an extent. Recommend the two board system, but not splitting Essex between two boards.

Kim Verbeek – A lot of work went into the Foresight Report and Essex supported it. However, there are valid reasons for considering a two board system, as presented today. Dividing Essex between boards is not recommended. Essex Council will need to consider the options.

Christopher Hales – Wellington County provides a good example of how a board at an amalgamated level functions very differently than a municipal board – it deals only with high level governance matters. In Wellington County, the OPP Detachment Commander meets with the Mayors on a monthly basis to discuss specific municipal policing concerns. (Mayor McNamara noted that all of Wellington County is policed by the OPP so the structure is different than it would be in Essex County.)

Francis Kennette – With the OPP and support staff added to the high number of members, a single board would be very large and cumbersome. An additional concern is that civilian oversight is needed over the provincial functions of the OPP (marine, highway patrol). The governance model should more closely reflect that of S. 31 boards.

Mayor MacDonald – Does not agree that Essex is comparable to Wellington County. Noted that it is important to Leamington to have a voice at the table. She sensed receptiveness to local input on policing by the new OPP Western Region Chief Superintendent during recent conversation.

Mayor McNamara – With respect to oversight of the OPP, both AMO and the Future of Policing Advisory Committee (FPAC) dealt extensively with this issue, and AMO is very supportive of an integrated model, although representation must not be lost in an integrated model. It is important we are unified in addressing oversight locally. There appears to be a preference for a two board system, although splitting Essex is not recommended. It is vitally important that a decision on our local approach not be left up to the Solicitor General. Expressed some reservation between the concept of “the north and the south” as he does not want to convey any divisiveness in Essex County.

Mayor Bain – If we move to a two board system, we should continue holding joint PSB meetings on a regular basis, as we have in the past, to address matters of mutual interest.

Francis Kennette – The inclusion of an at-large member would provide some flexibility to add representation from Indigenous or marginalized groups.

Mayor McNamara – Noted that Caldwell FN has the option to constitute its own board.

Peter Neufeld – With respect to Caldwell FN, Leamington has been in preliminary discussions with them regarding municipal service agreements. It is an urban reserve that they are establishing, and they are looking for service integration. He opined that Caldwell FN may be waiting for Leamington to make a decision on the future direction of its policing service.

Mayor Durocher – Raised the possibility of Pelee Island having a second representative on the two board model.

Moved by Mayor Tom Bain, Lakeshore
Seconded by Mayor Hilda MacDonald, Leamington

That the consensus of the elected officials attending today is to recommend a two-board model to our municipal Councils for consideration of support, permitting the Town of Essex to determine which board they wish to join;

And that the municipal Councils and Caldwell First Nation be provided with this motion and the minutes from today's meeting.

Carried

7. Nomination of Municipality to Submit Detachment Board Proposal to Ministry of the Solicitor General (deadline June 7, 2021)

Moved by Francis Kennette, Lakeshore PSB Chair
Seconded by Mayor Hilda MacDonald, Leamington

That the Town of Tecumseh submit the Essex County OPP detachment board proposal to the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

Carried

8. Next Steps

Mayor McNamara advised that the meeting minutes will be distributed.

The next step is for all municipalities to submit the consensus recommendation on detachment board composition to their respective Councils for consideration of endorsement.

A decision on which two-board model is preferred by the Town of Essex is required.

All Council motions are to be submitted to Tecumseh for inclusion in the final detachment board proposal to the Solicitor General.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Mayor Nelson Santos, Kingsville
Seconded by William Chisholm, Kingsville PSB Vice Chair

That there being no further business to discuss, the Joint Municipal and Police Services Board Meeting regarding the Essex County OPP Detachment Board, adjourn at 10:34 a.m.

Carried

Attachment: Meeting Agenda of the Joint Municipal and PSB Meeting re: Essex County OPP Detachment Board, Thursday, May 13, 2021 by Zoom teleconference.