

The Corporation of The City of Dryden

March 21, 2019

Minutes of Public Meetings regarding the Police Costing held at 1:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on the above date at The Centre, 100 Casimir Avenue.

Present: D. Thorne, C. Lins and V. Penner of MNP LLP, OPP Sgt. K. Withrow, Staff Sgt. E. Chwastyk Detachment Commander for the Dryden OPP, OPP Inspector C. Wesley, G. Cadieux, Case Manager with the Municipal Policing Bureau and Sgt. P. Marshall of the OPP.

Staff: CAO R. Nesbitt, Treasurer S. Lansdell-Roll, DPS Chief D. Palson, DPS Det. Sgt. J. Kaus, Deputy Clerk A. Euler and Clerk D. Kincaid.

Also

Present: Approximately twenty-three (23) invited stakeholders at the 1:00 p.m. meeting and approximately one hundred thirty-five (135) members of the public at the 6:30 p.m. meeting.

1. Welcome and Purpose of the Meeting - D. Thorne:

Mr. Thorne introduced himself and welcomed the attendees to the Public Consultation Meetings for the City of Dryden's Police Costing.

2. Meeting Procedures - D. Thorne:

Mr. Thorne advised introductions would be followed by opening remarks and presentations by the City of Dryden, the Dryden Police Service, the OPP and MNP LLP. He advised a question and answer period would then take place.

3. Introductions - D. Thorne:

Mr. Thorne asked those present on the stage to introduce themselves.

4. Opening Remarks and Presentations:

(a) Historic Context for the Police Costing - R. Nesbitt, City of Dryden CAO.

Mr. Nesbitt thanked those present for attending, noting their input is welcome and needed. He expressed his appreciation and gratitude to all of the police professionals in attendance. Mr. Nesbitt reviewed the history of the City of Dryden's Police Costing noting the OPP had provided their costing proposal to Council on November 28, 2018 which gave the City of Dryden six (6) months to make a decision. He advised MNP LLP had provided their report to Council on March 4, 2019.

(b) Opening Remarks - Dryden Police Service Chief D. Palson.

Chief Palson welcomed those in attendance. He advised he is totally supportive of the Dryden Police Service and its members and noted the OPP is a very professional, well-respected organization. He advised he is proud of the relationship the Dryden Police Service has with the local OPP detachment, and that he considers the OPP

members to be colleagues and friends. Chief Palson noted the different policing models used by the Dryden Police Service - local model - and the OPP - regional/integrated model and advised both models offer good quality. He thanked MNP LLP for their report and noted that policing is not a business; profit is not the number one concern. He noted the financial component of the MNP report is based on projections. Chief Palson congratulated the Dryden Police Service members on the way they have carried themselves during this very trying time.

(c) Opening Remarks - OPP Detachment Commander E. Chwastyk.

Commander Chwastyk thanked Chief Palson for his comments and welcomed those in attendance. He noted the OPP's long history of policing in the Dryden area with the Dryden Police Service and Treaty 3 Police stating they all work well together with respect for jurisdictions. Commander Chwastyk noted the OPP is always searching for ways to achieve maximum value for tax dollars using the best modern technology, using civilian staff to make follow-up calls that don't need an officer and using a closest to the call assignment. He advised that should the City of Dryden choose to amalgamate with the OPP they would focus on combatting drug use and sales that plague the community and the Dryden Area Situation Table and Well Being Committee would continue. He noted the hundreds of municipalities, many in Northwestern Ontario, served by the OPP, stating the OPP is a known quantity.

(d) MNP Presentation - C. Lins, MNP.

Mr. Lins thanked Mr. Nesbitt, Chief Palson and Commander Chwastyk for their comments. He then provided a high-level review of the MNP report, comparing and contrasting the Dryden Police Service and OPP in the areas of Service Levels, Governance and Financials.

5. Question and Answer Period - Moderated by D. Thorne:

AFTERNOON MEETING:

Comment/Question: This person stated the safety of the students and staff at Dryden High School are his concern. He noted the low number of calls that are made from the High School that are made to the Owen Sound dispatch centre as calls are often made directly to Dryden Police Service officers or to the local office and he noted that because of this, the calls for service numbers may be skewed. He advised that in his view sharing a Community Safety Officer with other municipalities would not work and he asked if there could be a time when there are no OPP officers in Dryden, for instance if the local OPP officers have been deployed to Ignace for an event.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised that under the OPP the Community Safety Officer would likely be in Dryden for the majority of the time. He advised it would be up to the Police Services Board what their priorities are and that the Board, OPP and community partners would collaborate to provide a service that they want.

Answer: Chief Palson advised it is ok for the High School to call the Owen Sound dispatch centre, the Dryden Police Service office or officers directly as all calls were counted. He advised no call is too small.

Comment/Question: The next individual commented on the very good relationship that exists between the Dryden Regional Health Centre and both the Dryden Police Service and the OPP. She noted that she does not want to see a cookie cutter approach to the City's mental health transportation and hospital security issues. She noted that with the OPP a mental health transport involves an OPP cruiser and an ambulance which removes the ambulance from Dryden. She also noted the Situation Table that is going very well and is much needed in the community.

Answer: Chief Palson advised the Dryden Police Service is willing to assume the liability risk of transporting mental health patients so as not to take the ambulance out of the community.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised the police authority ends once a Form 1 has been signed by a doctor, noting the back of a police cruiser is not the place to put a mental health patient. He advised that once a Form 1 has been signed, the police have no authority to transport medical patients, stating that is up to the healthcare system, not the police. He noted the stigma associated with transporting mentally ill patients in police cruisers.

Comment/Question: This member of the Dryden Police Association asked the OPP and MNP if the OPP have a dedicated Community Safety Officer as indicated in the MNP report.

Answer: MNP advised that since the report was presented they had learned that there is not a dedicated CSO and that a revised report with the correct information has been posted to the City's website.

Comment/Question: This member of the Dryden Police Association advised many Dryden Police Service services and events are not reflected in the MNP report - Kids & Cops Fishing, Seniors and Cops Fishing, Polar Plunge, Stuff the Cruiser and Christmas Cheer for example. She asked why they hadn't been included.

Answer: MNP advised there are many community initiatives undertaken by both police forces and that it was impossible to list them all in the report.

Comment/Question: This individual asked MNP if there had been consultation directly with the local schools.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised the Police Costing Committee had created a list of stakeholders to be invited to this meeting where the local schools could provide their input.

Comment/Question: This individual spoke to the great relationship her school has with both police services. She advised she wants to thank the Dryden Police Service Community Safety Officer for all that she does, noting that she is available to schools 100% of the time and that she doesn't want to see that reduced to 90% of the time.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised the OPP would be looking to provide a great CSO in their model, noting the CSO plays an important role in recommending programs to be supported and provided in the community.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised there is the possibility of enhancements for a dedicated CSO with the OPP even though that isn't shown in the model. He advised that this enhancement would come at an additional cost.

Comment/Question: The President of the Dryden Police Association asked the OPP if local officers are deployed outside of the City of Dryden to other events, would other officers be called in to Dryden to backfill?

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised this would be left to the discretion of the supervisor, noting the reverse is also true in that they'd be able to bring in officers from outside of the City zone into the City in case of an event in Dryden.

Comment/Question: The President of the Dryden Police Association asked if the OPP can guarantee a two to ten (2-10) minute response time 90-95% of the time.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised there were no guarantees. He advised that with GPS in their vehicles and the closest to the call response strategy, every effort is made to respond quickly to calls with the appropriate resources.

Comment/Question: The President of the Dryden Police Senior Officers Association acknowledged the professionalism of the Dryden Police Service staff under these very trying times. She stated the Dryden Police Service is not in financial trouble and since 2013 the Financial Information Returns (FIR) show a decrease in costs associated with the Dryden Police Service, noting the DPS has been approximately fifteen percent (15%) of the City's budget for the last five (5) years. She asked MNP if they had used the City's FIRs or just the OPP costing tool for their projections.

Answer: MNP advised they had just used the OPP tool as that was the scope, to compare the Dryden Police Service to the OPP.

Comment/Question: The President of the Dryden Police Senior Officers Association asked the OPP if they had weighed in on the MNP report and endorse it. She also asked if the OPP endorse the savings shown in the MNP report.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised the City of Dryden had requested the report from MNP and the OPP won't comment on it. He also advised the OPP had no input on the savings projected in the MNP report.

Comment/Question: The President of the Dryden Senior Officers Association asked how large events, such as the Northern Bands Hockey Tournament, would be reconciled in the OPP model and if local special events and their associated costs had been considered and included in the report.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised events are covered on a paid duty recovery basis. He advised events that bring in other OPP resources, such as canine and search and rescue, are a provincial responsibility.

Answer: Chief Palson advised special events are shown in the Dryden Police Service calls for service. He advised preplanning for events allows the detachment to schedule the number of officers needed as well as the redeployment of officers to ensure coverage. He noted some overtime is incurred with these events and the costs are absorbed within the current Dryden Police Service budget.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised Chief Palson and the Police Services Board are very financially responsible. He noted the municipality is looking for cost savings and that the police costing is not a reflection of the Dryden Police Service.

EVENING MEETING:

Comment/Question: The first person asked what the current annual costs for the Dryden Police Service are.

ANSWER: Chief Palson advised the 2019 operating budget is approximately \$4 million plus \$65,000 in capital.

Comment/Question: The next person asked why the income generated by the Dryden Police Service through Provincial Offenses fines weren't included in the MNP report.

ANSWER: Mr. Lins and Mr. Lansdell-Roll advised Provincial Offenses aren't part of the Dryden Police Service and that that income is netted out in the report.

Comment/Question: This person asked how MNP was able to settle on 75% of municipal officers moving to the OPP if amalgamation was to occur when in Midland less than 50% of the municipal officers were accepted by the OPP. He commented that there is no guarantee that any Dryden Police Service officers would be taken by the OPP, that the whole MNP report is a supposition. He advised it is not fiscally responsible for the City of Dryden to be looking at amalgamation currently, the Dryden Police Service isn't broken and there are too many unknowns in the MNP report.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised the Police Costing Committee had reviewed all of the information including recent transitions to the OPP and that the 75% transition number is only an estimate.

Comment/Question: The next person asked the OPP how they decide the percentage of officers the OPP will take.

Answer: Sgt. Marshall advised there is no certain percentage of officers that would move to the OPP. Dryden Police Service officers wanting to apply to the OPP would follow the application process.

Comment/Question: This individual asked about the difference in size between the Dryden Police Service and OPP patrol areas. She noted it is 66 square km for the Dryden Police Service and 16,000 square km for the OPP and asked how many OPP officers would be in that 16,000 square km at any given time.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised that of the 47 full time equivalent OPP officers, 24.84 would be paid for by the City of Dryden. He advised

there would be seven or eight (7 or 8) officers per platoon with five or six (5 or 6) working each shift. He advised the City of Dryden would be its own zone, there would be an Ignace zone and a Highway zone and that three to four (3 to 4) officers would be routinely assigned to the Dryden zone. He reminded the public of the closest to the call technology that allows officers to respond to calls efficiently and to be moved based on priorities.

Comment/Question: This person asked the OPP if they expect a shortage of officers in Dryden as has been seen in Kenora.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised that in January of 2019 the OPP had changed its application process and since that time applications are up. He noted Dryden is an extremely desirable posting in Northwestern Ontario and the retention rate is very good. He advised there are currently eight (8) Constables and one (1) Sergeant on a waitlist to come to Dryden.

Comment/Question: The next individual asked the City where they would be getting the money to pay the upfront costs of amalgamation and if there are grants available to transition the service.

Answer: Mr. Lansdell-Roll advised Council would have to decide how to pay the costs. He advised there are no grants and the City cannot borrow for the operating impact of the change. He noted the initial cost would come out of reserves and the City's debt may have to be restructured to cover the general operating costs.

Comment/Question: The next person asked the OPP what their organization would give the City of Dryden that is above the current standard of service.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised this isn't a competition and the OPP isn't selling anything. He noted it could be the same officers serving Dryden as today but under one department with the integrated style of policing.

Comment/Question: This person noted that there is a lot of money needed to transition the service and asked if the City has the money to make that transition at a time when it is trying to lower its debt.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised the City is looking at financial options but stated the final decision rests with Council.

Comment/Question: This person asked the OPP that since there is a waitlist of people wanting to work at the Dryden detachment, where would the officers transitioning from the Dryden Police Service fall on that list.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised the amalgamating force recruitment would occur before the OPP would look at the existing waitlist.

Comment/Question: The next individual asked if the City of Dryden amalgamates with the OPP and later finds the costs too high, how much would it cost to return to a municipal police force.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised it would be very difficult and expensive to return to a municipal police force.

Comment/Question: The next individual asked if MNP used past Financial Information Returns of the City of Dryden, past trends, cost of living expenses or just the OPP costing tool for its budget projections.

Answer: Mr. Lins advised the scope of the engagement had been to compare the Dryden Police Service with the OPP, not to compare to any other municipal services, so only the OPP costing tool had been used. Mr. Nesbitt advised fiscal management for the Dryden Police Service lies with the Chief and the Police Services Board who do an excellent job of managing their finances.

Comment/Question: This individual asked the OPP if they weigh in on the MNP report given that they provided the calculation tool.

Answer: Sgt. Marshall advised the OPP had no say or input into the report except where they were consulted. He advised the OPP had nothing to do with the numbers.

Comment/Question: The next person stated the final decision on this issue rests with the citizens of Dryden as they will be the ones that pay the bill. He advised the commitment was made by the current members of Council to put the question to a vote by the local residents. He asked if that was still true.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised that Council would be making the decision by a Council vote.

Comment/Question: The next individual asked the OPP if the number of officers is increased at the current OPP facility how they will be accommodated in the building and on the property they have.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised the OPP would be able to handle the increased capacity in the existing structure. He noted the facility would require some structural changes to accommodate the increase and some changes would be needed on the property as well.

Comment/Question: The next person asked the OPP to list the extra billable services and to advise how much that would be annually.

Answer: Sgt. Marshall advised extra billable items include overtime and prisoner transport and these are included in the current costing proposal by allotting a certain number of hours to each full-time officer in the detachment. He stated there is no way to estimate any year end extra billing costs above those budgeted.

Comment/Question: This person asked the OPP how much area municipalities have been billed through the reconciliation process at the end of each year.

Answer: Sgt. Marshall advised they don't have that information. Mr. Cadieux advised any year end reconciliation amounts are divided up into the next year's payments and are not required to be paid upfront at one time. He noted some municipalities receive rebates rather than year end invoices too. He advised the fluctuation between the budgeted amount and the year end reconciliation isn't considerable.

Comment/Question: The next person asked the OPP if the current OPP building will be sufficient and if new vehicles would be required for the additional officers and if these capital costs are included in the costing proposal on an ongoing basis. He asked if the building is upgraded how the OPP determine or apportion the ongoing costs between the municipalities being served by the Dryden OPP detachment, noting currently the City of Dryden doesn't contribute to the cost of the OPP detachment.

Answer: Sgt. Marshall advised the proposal has one-time costs for the first year. They advised the City of Dryden would be paying for the full-time officers and a portion of the maintenance and accommodation fees.

Comment/Question: The next individual asked the City what the plans are for the current Dryden Police Service building should amalgamation occur.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised that hasn't been considered yet. He advised the police costing decision has to be made before the building's future can be determined.

Comment/Question: The next person asked if the City would be using Social Media and a survey to make this important decision, noting there are people who aren't Dryden residents who are completing the survey.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised many sources of input are being used including the survey, stakeholder meetings and public consultation. He advised the survey is just one more piece of information.

Comment/Question: This person asked if Council would be allowing the public to vote on this issue.

Answer: Mr. Nesbitt advised it would be a Council decision to put any question on the ballot.

Comment/Question: The next person asked if amalgamation was soft language for a takeover. She noted that if current Dryden Police Service personnel don't apply for a position and get accepted by the OPP they may be out of a job.

Answer: Commander Chwastyk advised there is an application process for both officer and civilian positions. Mr. Nesbitt advised the estimated number of employees in the report who would move to the OPP is an estimate provided by the City of Dryden, not the OPP.

Comment/Question: The next person asked if the provincial government has anything to do with the overall budget of the OPP, noting the number of cuts recently made by that government and wondering of municipalities would have to make up any difference.

Answer: Sgt. Marshall advised the provincial government approves their budget but also noted that any police force is legislated to provide an adequate level and standard of policing per the Police Services Act. He advised they are not aware of any cuts in policing personnel.

Comment/Question: The next person spoke to a news article in which he says Mayor Wilson commented that the policing issue would be put to a public vote. He asked if the Mayor had been speaking based on the

consensus of the current Council. He also stated there had been clear commitment at the candidates' meeting that the costing decision would be put to a public vote.

Answer: Mr. Thorne advised the rules of engagement for this session, with members of Council in the room, do not allow for comments by Council. Mr. Nesbitt noted Council members are present strictly to observe.

6. Next Steps - D. Thorne:

Mr. Thorne thanked those who had attended. He noted the questions and answers would be posted on the Police Costing page of the City of Dryden website and he reminded the public that the Police Costing survey closes tonight. He advised the costing discussion would continue stating that the Police Costing Committee would make a recommendation to Council and that Council would then discuss the issue and make a decision prior to the May 28, 2019 deadline. He asked the public to continue to reach out to members of Council or to submit their comments in writing to Council on this important issue.

7. Closing - D. Thorne:

The afternoon meeting adjourned at 3:12 p.m. The evening meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.