



## **MINUTES**

### **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 4:00 P.M.  
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre,  
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

Members:

- Councillor S. Armstrong, Chair
- Councillor H. Eastmure
- J. Bowen, At Large Member
- S. Brodie, At Large Member
- K. Coulthard, At Large Member
- D. Cowling, At Large Member
- D. Herman, At Large Member
- K. Lambert, At Large Member
- C. Middleton, At Large Member
- J. Millbank, At Large Member\* (joined 4:33 p.m.)
- R. Taylor, At Large Member

Staff:

- B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
- Inspector A. Burton, Nanaimo RCMP
- T. Doyle, Fire Chief
- J. Elliot, Director, Public Works
- S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
- J. Holm, Director, Planning and Development
- D. LaBerge, Director, Public Safety
- E. Lloyd, Manager, Emergency Planning
- J. Rose, Manager, Transportation
- C. Wood, Manager, Social Planning
- N. Sponaule, Communications Advisor
- K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary

#### **1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:**

The Public Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

\* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:**

- (a) Add presentation titled "Community Safety and Wellbeing - City of Nanaimo's Fire Rescue Statistics" as Agenda Item 5(b), and reorder the remaining items accordingly.

**3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, as amended, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Public Safety Committee Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Wednesday, 2024-FEB-21 at 4:00 p.m. be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

Committee discussion took place regarding the 2024-FEB-21 Public Safety Committee recommendation regarding the Nanaimo Neighborhood Network.

**5. PRESENTATIONS:**

a. 2024 Public Safety Statistics

Inspector Andrew Burton, Nanaimo RCMP, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- Introduced Chief Superintendent, Shawna Baher
- Since 2019, calls for service have been steadily decreasing; however, the severity of crime is increasing as indicated by the Crime Severity Index
- Drug possession files have dropped drastically, largely due to decriminalization of drugs under 2.5 grams
- Property crime has decreased 29% between 2019 and 2023
- Presented the 5-year overview statistics for calls for service and changes between 2019 and 2020

Committee discussion took place regarding the drop in total calls for service, and the introduction of the Community Safety Officers (CSOs) sharing the some of the responsibilities that would normally be faced solely by the RCMP.

Inspector Andrew Burton, Nanaimo RCMP, continued the presentation:

- Presented the 5-year overview statistics for violent crime between 2019 and 2023

- Presented the 5-year overview statistics for drugs, traffic and mental health between 2019 and 2023

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Statistics can be interpreted in various ways and are a tool used by the RCMP for identifying areas needing increased enforcement

Inspector Andrew Burton, Nanaimo RCMP, spoke regarding the positive relationship between the RCMP and the CSOs and recognized the social issues shared with other communities across BC.

Committee discussion continued:

- The CSOs respond to approximately 1000 calls per month which frees up RCMP resources
- Downtown community stakeholders have direct access to CSOs and the rest of the community can reach the CSOs through the City of Nanaimo's Bylaw Department and Public Works Department
- A review of the CSO program is scheduled for the 2024-APR-29 Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting

Inspector Andrew Burton, Nanaimo RCMP, continued the presentation and provided an overview of the 2024-2025 Nanaimo RCMP Detachment Annual Performance Plan (APP) policing priorities. Highlights included:

- The five 2024-2025 Nanaimo RCMP Detachment priorities include Crime Reduction, Employee Wellness, Inclusion & Reconciliation, Community Public Safety and Recruitment
- Crime reduction through Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative (REVOII), Special Investigation and Targeted Enforcement (SITE) and Provincial Tactical Enforcement Priority (PTEP)
- Youth gang awareness and strategies
- Positive relationship between the RCMP and School District 68
- Employee morale and recognizing that policing can take a toll on employees

Jennifer Millbank joined the meeting electronically at 4:33 p.m.

- Building trust through enhanced communication with First Nation communities to improve inclusion and reconciliation

Committee discussion took place regarding outreach recruiting in Indigenous communities, and the RCMP's pre-posting agreement.

Inspector Andrew Burton, Nanaimo RCMP, continued the presentation and spoke regarding the APP priority of Community Public Safety.

- Mental health issues are a significant part of RCMP calls
- Specialized team of mental health liaison officer partnered with a psychiatric nurse

Committee discussion took place regarding the availability of the specialized team service which is currently not able to be provided 24hrs.

Inspector Andrew Burton, Nanaimo RCMP, continued the presentation and spoke regarding the APP priority of Recruiting.

- The Nanaimo detachment is the biggest detachment on Vancouver Island and the RCMP is committed to holding a minimum of two recruiting sessions per year

Chief Superintendent, Shawna Baher, spoke regarding the anticipated number of recruitments in pre-posting agreements returning to BC.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Safety and the perception of public safety are two different initiatives
- Advocacy for more treatment beds, detox beds and more crown prosecutors
- The role of the Committee is to make recommendations to Council and recognizing that the Committee doesn't solely focus on the mental health/addiction crisis, but also other aspects of safety such as road safety

b. Community Safety and Wellbeing - City of Nanaimo's Fire Rescue Statistics

Tim Doyle, Fire Chief, provided a PowerPoint presentation and spoke regarding Nanaimo Fire Rescue Statistics. Highlights included:

- The objective of the Fire Department is to support the community through efficient response in an emergency
- A big initiative for Nanaimo Fire and Rescue is public education (FireSmart Program)
- Fire prevention officers conduct fire inspections, write fire orders, work on securing vacant buildings, homeless encampments and work closely with building and bylaw department
- Nanaimo Fire Department has strengthened their Fire Training Centre

- The Fire Department Master Plan is intended to provide more efficient response to emergencies
- Service calls naturally increase as the population increases
- Presented the Department's aspirational benchmark for incident responses based on National Fire Protection Association 1710
- Presented statistics of the distribution of incidents (types of calls)
- The Fire Department responds to all emergencies in the community
- Presented statistics of the distribution of incidents between 2019 and 2023
- Provided an overview of the increase/decrease of call types from 2023 to 2024
- Increase of overdose incidents of 164.8% between 2022 (688) and 2023 (1822)

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The dramatic growth in overdose incidents between 2022 and 2023
- Overdose incidents are recorded as the type of call and do not necessarily mean there was an intervention
- Statistics may be influenced based on adjustments to how calls are coded

c. Community Safety and Wellbeing – City of Nanaimo Initiatives and Programs

Introduced by Dave LaBerge, Director, Public Safety.

Presentation:

1. Christy Wood, Manager, Social Planning, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - Upstream initiatives are about creating a healthy, safe and secure community where everyone has opportunities
  - Examples of upstream initiatives include: housing initiatives, partnerships with BC Housing, ongoing advocacy, homelessness prevention rent bank and rent supplement program, youth resilience strategy, Parks, Recreation and Culture programs, social planning grants, and Neighbourhood Associations

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding funding for Neighbourhood Associations and how they play an important role in upstream initiatives.

Christy Wood, Manager, Social Planning, continued the presentation:

- Midstream initiatives help support more marginalized populations and work to reduce and respond to acutely elevated risk situations
- Examples of midstream initiatives include: The Health and Housing Action Plan, Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization, Community Policing Program, and the Situation Table
- Downstream initiatives focus on the City's ability to respond to emergencies
- Downstream initiatives include: HEART and HEARTH, Downtown Nanaimo Community Safety Action Plan, warming centres, Shower Program, Police Services, Nanaimo Fire Rescue, Breakfast Meal Program, and Surviving in Nanaimo

## **6. DELEGATIONS:**

### **a. Echo McNaughton re: Improving Pedestrian Safety in the South End**

Echo McNaughton provided a PowerPoint presentation requesting improved pedestrian safety in the south end of Nanaimo. She spoke regarding incidents and near misses at various locations, as well as the lack of sidewalks on the west side of Bayview School. She noted the neighbours' request for sidewalks, responses from the City, and the South End Neighborhood Plan. She requested that the Committee recommend that Council:

- Allocate funds for sidewalks with the planned upgrades scheduled for May around Bayview School
- Add sidewalks in the neighbourhood with any planned project
- Provide solutions that encourage drivers to slow down and see pedestrians
- Have quarterly communication between the City and the South End Community Association about the progress on these initiatives

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Having a priority program to ensure there are sidewalks within the vicinity of schools
- The Needham Street and Victoria Road intersection

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, spoke regarding the factors included in the process for identifying pedestrian infrastructure prioritization, the cost for sidewalks, storm infrastructure and staff capacity.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Opportunity to implement additional paving and pylons to the shoulder near Bayview School where there is no sidewalk
- Recommendation to Council to increase pedestrian funding
- Recognizing that other neighborhoods may also have the same concerns

It was moved and seconded that the Public Safety Committee recommend that Council consider options for additional funding for pedestrian safety initiatives near Bayview School and direct Staff to report back quarterly to the South End Community Association and to the Public Safety Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS:**

### **a. Committee Workplan Roundtable**

By unanimous consent, Agenda Item 7(a) Committee Workplan Roundtable was deferred to the 2024-JUN-12 Public Safety Committee Meeting.

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, requested that each member submit five priorities that they would like this committee to focus on.

Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, advised that a transportation overview could be provided at the next Public Safety Committee meeting.

Committee discussion took place regarding extending the start time of the 2024-JUN-12 Public Safety Committee meeting to 3:00 p.m. to allow more time for discussion around identifying priorities for the Public Safety Committee Workplan.

## **8. QUESTION PERIOD:**

The Committee received four questions from the public regarding agenda items.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved and seconded at 6:15 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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CORPORATE OFFICER