



April 16, 2021

Hon. Sylvia Jones,
Solicitor General
18th Floor, 25 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Y6

Dear Madame Minister:

We are in receipt of your letter of March 17, 2021 regarding a OPP Detachment Board Framework. This response includes comments on your proposal and incorporates suggestions we were in the process of developing when your letter arrived.

Police Service Board Experience in the Town of Mono

At the outset, you should know the current Police Services Board (PSB) model has served Mono well since 1998 when we became one of the first municipalities in Ontario to enter into a contract with the OPP.

The original contract reflected the same level of policing we received prior to 1998. Within a few years we elected to further contract for three-quarters of a full-time officer specifically to address speeding and other Highway Traffic Act offences. That arrangement has worked so well that last year, we increased this enhancement by a further 50% of a full-time officer's time.

Our PSB has three members, one of whom is appointed from the community, the other is a member of Mono Council while the third is a provincial appointee. A member of Mono staff serves as secretary. The Mono PSB meets at most quarterly. Meetings are open to the public. Per diems paid last year totalled \$540. The Council representative is not remunerated and the municipality remunerates the Province's appointee.

The Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO) Position on PSBs

All municipalities should have representation on a Detachment PSB.

We agree.

The Province should cease making appointments to OPP Detachment PSBs.

We agree.

AMO argues provincially appointed members bring nothing to their role that isn't covered by community members appointed by municipalities. There is good precedence for exclusive municipal appointment of community representatives, Alberta, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Manitoba being examples of provinces where municipalities name community representatives.

Moreover, the rate at which provincial appointees are named is a problem that spans multiple governments and is on-going. There are currently no fewer than 31 vacancies province wide representing over 12% of all provincially appointed PSB positions including one in Melancthon; vacant now for 3 years.

The Detachment Model as Applies to Dufferin

When the process to examine PSB structure started we were assured of two things. First, flexibility to meet local circumstances and second, consultation. Dufferin County's opportunity to participate in a Regional Roundtable on PSB structure occurred on February 28, 2020 in Orillia. Due to one of the worst storms that winter, only one person from Dufferin was able to attend this last in a series of consultations. An email was sent that day to Ministry organizers asking for another opportunity to present our views. It went unanswered.

The current request for a position on PSB structure lacks any flexibility. We are directed to submit a form to be filled out by one municipality on behalf of all municipalities. The Province's insistence on matching local community appointments effectively forces us to choose between elected or community representation on PSBs or potentially no representation at all for some if we are to keep PSBs reasonably sized.

Dufferin County is not monolithic in terms of policing needs and priorities. Orangeville and Shelburne have challenges and issues not shared by rural neighbours including a recent transition to OPP policing. Rural municipalities have issues with speeding and property issues not shared to the same extent by urbanized municipalities.

All municipalities share in common a very sharp decline in Provincial Offence charge revenue (50% or more) This revenue offsets, at least in part, policing costs. This is a problem that remains unaddressed by the Province and the Courts.

Options for Dufferin

Our preferred option is to leave the current structure and governance in place, at least for the time being. The Provincial initiative appears to be a solution searching for a problem. Local PSBs cost the Province nothing as we remunerate membership. If the issue is that OPP Detachment Commanders are forced to attend too many meetings, this can be addressed. We take no issue with capping the number of meetings or per diem paid to PSB members. If there are other problems with some PSBs, then address those problems individually.

If the status quo is not possible, another possible model could be three PSBs representing the following municipal groupings:

1. Orangeville and Shelburne
2. Amaranth, Grand Valley and East Garafraxa
3. Mono, Mulmur and Melancthon

Rationale

Orangeville and Shelburne are urbanized and share similar challenges. Moreover, they are new to OPP policing and will have transitional issues for some time.

The other two municipal groupings: Amaranth, Grand Valley and East Garafraxa; and Mono, Mulmur and Melancthon, have very similar policing issues and challenges. Both groupings have urbanized areas but are predominantly rural in nature.

Membership

The overall objective is to ensure council, local and Provincial representation in an appropriate balance. This can be achieved with each municipality appointing at least one councillor and a member of the public. If the Province also appoints a representative, it will result in 9 member PSBs for Mono, Mulmur and Melancthon; and Amaranth, Grand Valley and East Garafraxa.

The PSB for Orangeville/Shelburne could have three councillors for each municipality along with one community member appointed by each Council. If matched by Provincial appointments, the result would be a 10 member board. This option would reduce the number of attendances for the Detachment Commander while preserving elected and community representation on Dufferin PSBs.

We are pleased to discuss this further with you and your officials.

Regards,

TOWN OF MONO



Laura Ryan
Mayor

cc: All Dufferin Municipalities