

Springfield Police Board Meeting Wednesday, September 9, 2020

WITHOUT PREJUDICE (E&OE)

Springfield Police Service

There is an article in the September 17th issue of The Clipper, back page, about the new Police Chief, Stephen Hitchon. While in view of the fact that Cpl. Monkman has resigned and Cst. Froese has reduced his hours to part-time, even though they have recently hired a new constable full time and have another part time, one would have thought his priority would be in his own words "getting on the road as much as possible and getting to know people in Springfield" as quoted in the article. It would appear that, as the accompanying picture implies and the article more or less states, policy and procedures seem to take precedence over actual policing of the RM of Springfield. He sat through the Police Board meeting but commented very little, and he has attended both the Committee of the Whole meeting on September 8 and the Council Meeting on September 15th. I hear from people in Oakbank that the Police vehicles are usually parked in the lot adjacent to the station, which is causing a lot of comment around town. This is true also of evenings and weekends which makes one wonder who is actually doing the policing of the municipality aside from the R.C.M.P. who serve both Springfield and Brokenhead, including Beausejour. He does not appear to have touched base with the **Staff Sgt. of the R.C.M.P.** which one would think would be a number one priority. Another would be meeting with members of **Citizens on Patrol** to discuss what they consider priorities in policing. The Police Board was to have completed a Risk Assessment a year or more ago and it is still not done. This also would have provided direction. When that was being discussed at the recent Police Board meeting, Chief Hitchon merely sat observing and did not contribute to the conversation. When support for the Criminal Code amendment letter was being discussed at the August 4th meeting, Chief Hitchon similarly had nothing to contribute when one would have thought he would have been consulted as he was sitting in one of the Councillor's seats. He had nothing to say when the new Firearms Policy by-law was being discussed although he was present. In short, it is my opinion that Chief Hitchon is long on policy and short on action. His priority is writing policy, not boots on the ground policing. I attend all Police Board and Council meetings but I have heard no mention of the hiring of Scott Turner as a Constable for the Springfield Service. I would be interested in knowing what his qualifications are, how he was recruited and by whom, and why there was never any mention of it at either a Police Board or a Council Meeting. He has now been promoted to Sergeant but how long has he served in SPS and for what reason was he promoted? For that matter, I do not believe the Chair mentioned how Scott Turner and Jesse Zillman were selected as police officers and how they were hired.



Present on the Board were: Anne Wowchuk, Chair; Michael Beward; Peter Williams (Councillor); Greg Penner. **Absent:** Mayor Fell directing from back door.

Wowchuk called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and introduced the new volunteer Board Administrator, Tyler Kelly who will take the Minutes and keep record of their documentation and "I am hoping he would have his training done to get things updated on the web site in a more timely manner than what they have been", she stated. **NOTE: How was the volunteer Board Administrator selected? Historically the clerk of the Springfield Police Service also took the minutes of the Police Board. When did the volunteer minute taker at the Police Board meetings evolve into an administrative position?**

Approval of Agenda - Greg Penner made changes to the agenda as follows: striking Closed Minutes, then he added 7.4, 2 and 3 - 7.42 Appointment Policy and 7.43 Code of Conduct. He so MOVED as amended and Beward seconded. Wowchuk called the vote but didn't mention Carried.

Approval of Minutes June 17, 2020 - Moved by Williams, seconded by Penner, again no mention of Carried by Wowchuk, all she said was "Excellent".

- **REPORTS - 4.1 Financial** - Wowchuk mentioned there will have to be a background meeting of Chief Hitchon and the RM Financial Manager on their plate. Beward said sure, the first time around and then Stephen just sends out a report and he put in his 2 cents worth. She asked Beward for an update. Beward: "The good thing is well no I'm going to start with the bad news, there will be overspending on some line items, uh the good news is they're small line items. The percentage increase is huge but the dollar amounts are minimal". Necessary with regard to the Health and Safety regulations to bring things up to code so might be overspending there. Shortfall in ticket revenue due to staff shortfall but savings in salary as a result. People costs is other biggest "chunk of change". More than a third left in the budget and now two thirds through the year so should pretty much be on budget. As things change will advise. I am going to categorically say we're in pretty good shape. If there is a shortfall, it should be identified by the next meeting and it won't be any more than ten thousand bucks, worst case scenario but things can change. Do you have anything to add to that? Hitchon said no but of the different GLs on spreadsheet, 5 were over, 4 completely out of our control, like Hydro, the other is the cost of vests. The discussion continued and can be heard by listening for the audio file. Hitchon said on traffic tickets the RM gets 33.3% of the revenue and turning cheque over for \$3800. to RM for last 2 months,

returns should increase in the next few months. Breward went on about how he is ultra conservative when doing the budget because if you are under budget by \$10,000. no one says much but if you are over budget by \$1 buck everyone has a problem with that. **NOTE: In short, Mr. Breward's report was long on rhetoric** (language designed to have a persuasive or impressive effect on its audience, but often regarded as lacking in sincerity or meaningful content) **and short on detailed information.**

4.2 Police Monthly Reports - Wowchuk - There has been some by-law enforcement, render traffic assistance, and some criminal offences.

NOTE: Why did the Chair not defer to the Police Chief who was sitting right there to give the Police Monthly Report? He has been in the RM for 6 months and has yet to provide a detailed report either to Council or to the Police Board. Hitchon did speak to Wowchuk's report and said the main ones are traffic and by-law but the criminal side is picking up.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - 5.1 Public Meeting for priorities of Springfield Police Service - Wowchuk said last meeting they did talk about Public Meeting for priorities of Springfield Police Service. Coming up to 2021 I should be discussing meeting date, time and location, how that meeting will be formatted, whether it is come and go or sit down, how to reach out to our partners and get some input prior to the meeting and by partners I mean C.O.P.P.S, the Chamber and with the whole of Council, not just one or two people and their opinions, and Board input along with the Police Service. Wanted ideas as to how to go about reaching out to the partners re COVID. Williams said one way to engage public is by on-line survey. Wowchuk had a problem with that because one got sent to her e-mail and her husband could not fill it out, he had to do it by paper???. **(Not sure what her complaint is, that only she has e-mail and therefore if he wanted to participate independent of her, he had to download the form and do it on hard copy ? or that he was not familiar with filling out forms on the computer. One would think they could both express their collective opinions on the same form unless the form was so restrictive that it did not allow for comments.)** She advised the CAO. She thinks the Police Service is too important to rely on one method of surveying and wanted other suggestions. Breward said could be mailed out survey. She suggested a come and go open house at one of the community centres but might have to restrict numbers allowed in. Williams said would require ad in Clipper and e-blast would get to most in Springfield and suggested the Springfield Police Board should have a dedicated RM of Springfield Police Board e-mail which he didn't think would be difficult to set up. Wowchuk did not have a problem with that as long as only Board members could access it re privacy issues. Williams will look into it. He mentioned Erika as the resource. Wowchuk said she set up her g-mail account just for the Police Board correspondence to ensure Confidentiality. **(NOTE: It is the same one she had back when she was on the previous Police Board between 2015 and 2018.)** She seemed unaware of if there would be a charge for using the community centre and to whom to contact. Peter didn't think there would be a charge and suggested Sandy King as contact. She will e-mail COPPS and Chamber. Peter will advise Council. Suggested for public portion they shoot for Wednesday the 28th of October starting at 6:30. Second choice the 26th. Also was suggestion for **Council, the Board, and Chief Hitchon to meet privately to discuss priorities.** **(NOTE: When it comes to policing, I think the priorities of the community should take precedence over the opinions of Council.)** **5.2 Agreement between RCMP and Council and SPS update** - The working agreement is in its final stages and hopefully will be signed later this month between the Service, the Board, and Council. **Another item under Unfinished Business from the previous meeting** might have been the fact that the Province has still not appointed a **replacement Provincial Representative** on the Board following the abrupt departure on Municipal Election Day of Angela Temple two years ago. Has this been followed up with the Province and what is the ETA of said replacement? Until that position is filled, it is Unfinished Business and deserves some type of update.

CORRESPONDENCE - Williams evidently forwarded her an e-mail about thefts in Dugald. Williams passed it on to Chief Hitchon who passed it on to the R.C.M.P. **NOTE: What was the purpose of putting this item on the agenda when no details of the thefts are being provided and the SPS chose not to investigate it independent of the R.C.M.P.**

NEW BUSINESS - 7.1 Police Service Staff Changes - Corp. Sara Monkman has resigned. Cst. Tyler Froese has requested he serve only Part-Time and that was acceptable. The Board discussed it and went ahead and hired a part time person and another full time person to replace Sara. The part-time person is Scott Morris and the full time person is Jesse Zillman and they both started in the last week or so. She apparently felt they needed a motion saying Chief Hitchon and Human Resource Officer did the hiring. Also felt a motion needed to give Chief Hitchon authority over police staff and to some extent administration staff. Thanks him for taking that on???. **(NOTE: This is no doubt in response to my notes of the June 17, 2020 Police Board meeting wherein I state they have not as yet rescinded Resolution 2019-01 as follows: LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Springfield Police Board appointed by the Rural Municipality of Springfield Council for the term October 2018 to October 2022 hereby delegates Chief Mark Kane to appoint eligible persons to serve as police officers in the police service as per Section 23(1) of the Police Services Act of Manitoba. Chief Kane left the service in the Fall of 2019 and therefore until this was rescinded or a new resolution approved by the Board, one must question who had the authority to hire Scott Morris and Jesse Zillman. The Board is actually the hiring authority for Police Officers according to the Policy and Procedures Manual unless they delegate it to the Chief. By naming the Chief in the resolution, it would have required rescinding the original resolution or approving a new one as Chief Hitchon is not named as the delegated authority. Now is a bit late in the game and one questions the legality of the appointments. However the only 2020 audio file posted is the June 17th. one. There is no audio files yet posted for the March 11th. and May 2nd. Special Meeting, as mentioned in my notes of the June 17th meeting. Is there some reason for this? The minutes of the Special Meeting and the 2019 Annual Report which were also not on the web site at the time are now posted.)** I also note there is no **7.2 on the agenda...it skips to 7.3.)** **7.3 Policy and Procedures from Police Service** - Wowchuk - "Chief Hitchon developed and disseminated to the Board Policy on Bomb Threats, Dress and Department, Evidence, Interview, Interview Room and Statements, Notebooks, Search of Persons, Vehicle Pursuits, Violence in Relationships, and Weapons Vault". Have the members reviewed those? Williams said insofar as Bomb Threats policy, it has "better specificity" than our current Emergency Preparedness Plan. He feels this should be adopted in the RM Emergency Preparedness Plan. Emergency Plan needs overhauling and they have talked about contracting out for a consultant to address that. SOPs for Fire Service not consistent with municipal Human Resource policies. Motion to adopt. **ADOPTED 4-0 7.4 Policy and Procedures from Police Board** - Wowchuk said in March they were assigned some policies to "look at" but they were not recorded in the Minutes and our Vice-Chair has "shown us up" because he actually wrote down exactly what he is responsible for um and she just wants to make sure that they were all covered off so that they can get their policies and procedures up to date. Greg said Page 120. She mentions that Breward was to be working with the police on Risk Management. Is that going to be for December then? (bunch of laughing) **NOTE: Michael Breward was to have been working on Risk Management during his term on the last Police Board and**

never delivered. Why would Chair Wowchuk think that re-assigning this task to him would have a different outcome since she is now the Chair? Roles and Responsibilities for Members, that was you (yes) and Respectful Workplace and Diversity, that was you (yes)...Michael Breward. Conflict of interest and Code of Conduct, that was you Greg (yes) ...discussion goes on about who was doing what. Greg said he would do Rules of Procedure and Committees for December. Wowchuk said she would do the Complaint one and could do Training and Remuneration. More discussion. Can be reviewed next September and should be reviewed annually. Greg Penner then presented those he has worked on. The first one was Length of Tenure. It was developed in closeness with the Policy & Procedure Manual and the relevant legislation and it takes into account the Police Board is established by the Springfield By-law 15-02. Then it goes into a number of policy statements which are drawn from the Police Services Act and the Policy Manual as well as the Police Board Regulations attachment to the Police Services Act which goes over number of members, eligibility, etc. and the only thing he referenced was 3.4 and the Springfield By-law 15-02 which is the by-law that is the Police Board one. **NOTE: Police Board is mandated under Section 26 of the Police Services Act.** If there are no questions, the second one is Conflict of Interest which is in the manual from the Police Commission as sub point under Code of Conduct. Outlines Police Board Policy and Procedural manual that requires a Code of Conduct for Board members and they must abide by the Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct policy which have to be signed before you come on the Board and every year. These are the things that don't have their own policy in the Policy Manual. Williams asked if those policies were in this manual and Greg said they were not, but bits and pieces scattered and he's just cobbled them together. Williams then said "so there's no separate document on Code of Ethical Conduct?". Greg says there's just this Section 3.2, this one there is this one for Code of Conduct - it's the appointment one in the specific Police Board section. He took this and added in the Police Services sections. Referenced one in the appendix. This 3 page one with all the bullet points. I can tidy that up. They then had a vote on the 3 policies. Breward moved, **ADOPTED 4-0.** Wowchuk then said she would advise Hitchon that they have to do a Bias Free Policing policy on the guidelines. Chief Hitchon said viz-a-viz that is already done. Wowchuk then said if any of the SPS members need Cultural Sensitivity Training, they are going back to old school and training will be sought out for any needing it. Hitchon said they are already doing GBA (General Base Analysis plus) mandated for Federal forces available on a web site. Wowchuk was not aware of it and Hitchon said it was not for the public. RCMP and Military have to take it so made arrangements for SPS staff to take. Wowchuk then ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 8:03.