



Minutes of the Olds Policing Advisory Committee meeting conducted electronically through ZOOM on Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Present – Committee Members:

Michael Keeling-Barrand, Marnie Joleen, Jody Tomm, James Cummings, Tony Hammer, Councillor Mary Anne Overwater, Councillor Heather Ryan, and OPAC Alternate, Councillor Mitch Thomson.

Present – Staff:

Sgt. Eric Christensen, Senior Community Peace Officer, S/Sgt. Jim MacDonald, Olds RCMP Detachment, Doug Wagstaff, Director of Community Services, Jennifer Lutz, Meeting Facilitator and Recorder.

Regrets: Justin Andrew, Director of Protective Services.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Jennifer Lutz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A.) SWEARING IN CEREMONY: Office of Oath

Michael Keeling-Barrand, Marnie Joleen, Jody Tomm, James Cummings, Tony Hammer, Councillor Mary Anne Overwater, Councillor Heather Ryan, and OPAC Alternate Councillor Mitch Thomson repeated the following declaration and were sworn in as OPAC members.

I, do solemnly and sincerely swear (or affirm) that I will diligently, faithfully, and to the best of my skill and knowledge, execute the powers, and perform the duties entrusted to me as an Olds Policing Advisory Committee Member. I promise to respect and maintain confidentiality for matters associated with the Olds Policing Advisory Committee.

B.) ADDED ITEMS (S)

No items were added.

C.) ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Councillor Heather Ryan requested item D) Elect Chair and Vice Chair be moved to item A) under New Business.

Moved by Councillor Heather Ryan, “to accept the agenda as amended”.

Motion Carried.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

A.) All participants shares their hopes for the committee and some background information about themselves.

3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

OPAC inaugural meeting, there are no previous meeting minutes.

4. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

A.) Background Information – How did we get here?

As per the **Alberta Police Act** RSA 2000, C-P-17, Section 23, municipalities which have an agreement with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (R.C.M.P.) may establish a Policing Committee, Policing Advisory Committee or the municipal responsibilities of policing governance can be left in the hands of the elected Council of the day.

In 1995, the Olds and District Community Policing Advisory Society was formed. The group disbanded in 2016, as it was felt it was no longer serving the needs of the community. Council believed community engagement with policing is a priority and there were lessons learned from the former group. A new group should focus on the Olds area, with a smaller member base consisting of members, living or working in the Town of Olds committed to this process. The prior group used a delegated approach and the group evolved to a reporting body, without consistent representation.

Providing a safe, secure and healthy community is a key strategic goal of Council so Administration was tasked to relook at Community-based Police Governance options.

Key differences in committee structures:

A Policing Commission, such as the City of Calgary Police, establishes its own policing service. This was not viewed as something the Town of Olds wanted to look at.

A Policing Committee must follow prescribed actions as outlined in the *Police Act*, such as the creation of a bylaw and the appointment of a Public Complaint Director. The Alberta Soliter Generals office official recognizes this structure and may offer more support because a community is following their prescribed processes.

A Policing Advisory Committee has more autonomy and can use a Terms of Reference as a guidance document for the committee.

In either a Community Police Committee or a Community Police Advisory committee, Council remains responsible to oversee budgets related to policing and remains the signing authority of the Municipal Police Service Agreement.

Benefits of Citizen Involvement:

- Having a say – community input for policing priorities and goals
- More robust communication the community and local police and community
- Provide advice to council
- A different way to reach members of the community who want to engage, such as;
 - Support community members who have concerned regarding a perceived power imbalance with the RCMP;
 - For members of the community that are vocal about policing but are reluctant to engage directly with RCMP or a formal institution for help; and to
 - Guide the process with public complaints about service delivery or a police officer conduct.

After much research and discussion, Council approved the formation of a Policing Advisory Committee in June 2020.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES / UNFINISHED BUSINESS

OPAC inaugural meeting - N/A.

6. NEW BUSINESS

St/Sgt MacDonald requested that we drop rank and title and refer to members by first name only, OPAC Committee Members agreed.

A) ELECT CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR THE COMMITTEE

Heather Ryan nominated Mary Anne Overwater as Chair, seconded by James Cummings. There were no other nominations and Mary Anne agreed to serve as Committee Chair.

Motion Carried.

Mary Anne Overwater nominated Marnie Joleen as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations and Marnie agreed to serve as Committee Vice Chair.

Motion Carried.

B) REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE

As OPAC is a Committee of Council, any amendments to the Terms of Reference would need to go back to Council for approval. It was suggested amendments are captured and bundled so when the document is taken back to council, there is a better understanding of any potential changes that are required once we start functioning as a group.

The Terms of reference was reviewed line by line. There was question/answer and general discussion.

The value statement was incorporated Town of Olds focus to on “Welcome and Inclusive Communities initiative”.

Committee Composition listed potential background suggestions, such as social services background, to give the public and potential members an indication of skills that make by helpful to the committee but the list includes members-at-large to ensure inclusivity.

There was a suggestion to include Cst. Morley Statchuk, RCMP Community Resource Officer as a participant in the Terms of Reference. It was noted at any time, OPAC members or staff are able to invite guests or resources that would complement a meeting. Those resource people do not have to be named in the Terms of Reference document.

How does the public at large engage with the committee? How do we deal with Complaints? It was initially thought that the general public would primarily access the committee through an OPAC email address or staff contact which would then be brought forward to the committee. A policy manual has been started and will be shared after this meeting. A formalized complaint process will be included once it is accepted by the committee. It was noted the Committee can't act on the behalf of a member of the public or bring a formal complaint to the RCMP as the RCMP needs to hear that complaint first hand. OPAC and the formal RCMP structure process will need to work hand in hand. Policing Committees have a procedure in place that could use as a guideline.

A communication strategy needs to be created to ensure the role-out of the committee to the public. It is important to have a process in place before the community engagement begins. The opportunity to leverage Zoom within the community and potentially host a town hall zoom.

As a new committee, a few more short meetings may be needed to help establish process to engage the community.

Olds Policing Advisory Committee

A suggestion was made to re-word **Frequency of Meetings f)** in the Terms of Reference as the verbiage seems formal, outdated and a potential barrier for the public to participate. We need to communicate OPAC isn't just a committee of Town Council and Staff, but includes their peers.

There was a desire to reduce barriers for people to participate, but members want to ensure there is process and structure to support productive conversations with the public in emotionally charged situations.

It was suggested it is important to allot time to have confidential and candid conversations. The former group was big and lost the ability to do this.

The Committee need processes to ensure members who may have different roles in the community, are not put in uncomfortable situations.

A question regarding Liability Insurance was asked. Doug Wagstaff will confirm and report back.

C) OPAC POLICY MANUAL AND TRAINING

OPAC has an annual budget of \$2500 to support the work of this committee, including training and conferences. There are two related conference coming up:

- [Alberta Association of Police Governance](#)
- <https://aapq.ca/conferences/> April 23 & 24, 2021 (Hosted in Brooks)
- [Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association](#)
- <https://www.albertacrimeprevention.com/2021-conference/> May 10-13, 2021 (Virtual)

An initial draft policy manual and information regarding upcoming conferences will be circulated to the committee after the meeting.

D) COMMUNITY SWOT – TABLED

Final thoughts/meeting reflections

- Members agreed that a follow-up meeting is needed before the next quarter
- It would be good for the committee to have an opportunity to learn how the RCMP works, various roles and responsibilities within the detachment are and post-COVID-19 a tour.
- Understanding the relationship between RCMP and Municipal Enforcement
- Ensure committee is able to have candid conversations
- Balancing the public engagement piece
- Would like to road-map next steps
- Second or third Thursday evenings work for this group
- A big thank you and best wishes to Jim MacDonald on his upcoming retirement

7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by James Cummings “that this meeting be adjourned at 8:57 p.m.” Motion Carried

These minutes were approved on the eleventh day of February 2021.

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#	Action Items:	Assigned To	Due Date	Closed
1	Circulate Draft Process Manual	JL	ASAP	X
2	Circulate AAPG & ACCPA Conference information	JL	ASAP	X
3	Check on Liability Insurance	DW	ASAP	X
4	Co-chairs to connect for pre-planning	MAO, MJ	Feb 11	
5				