

**GRANDE PRAIRIE POLICE COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**January 18, 2024**

**Al Robertson Room, Centre 2000**

Attendees: Commissioner Dan Wong  
Commissioner Natalia Reiman  
Commissioner Timothy Burnham  
Commissioner Donna Koch  
Commissioner Lois Duke  
Commissioner Sandeep Sharma  
Commissioner Warren Travasso  
Councillor Kevin O'Toole  
Councillor Dylan Bressey

Others: Lorrie Sitler, Executive Director (Commission)  
Dwayne Lakusta, Chief of Police  
John Respet, Superintendent  
Darrin Balanik, Executive Director (GPPS)  
Jacqueline Daigneault (Admin), City of Grande Prairie

Regrets: Greg Redl, Superintendent

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Executive Director Lorrie Sitler called the meeting to order at 3:09 PM.

2. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We respectfully acknowledge the Beaver, Cree, Dene, and Métis people as the original caretakers of these Lands and surrounding areas. We are grateful to live, learn, work and play on Treaty 8 territory within Turtle Island and acknowledge these Lands have been home to diverse and sovereign First Nations and Inuit People since Time Immemorial.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion to approve the agenda as presented.

**Moved by:** Dylan Bressey  
**Carried Unanimously**

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion to approve the minutes of December 21, 2023, Monthly Meeting as presented.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Koch  
**Carried Unanimously**

Chair

ED

**5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

5.1. Chair

Call for Nominations for the Chair of the Grande Prairie Police Commission. One recommendation for the position of Chair as Dan Wong.

Call for additional nominations. No additional nominations received. Nominations closed.

Motion to appoint Dan Wong as Chair of the Grande Prairie Police Commission.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Travasso

**Carried Unanimously**

Chair Wong takes over the meeting at 2:12 PM

5.2. Vice Chair

Call for Nominations for the Vice Chair of the Grande Prairie Policing Committee. One recommendation for the position of Vice Chair as Natalia Reiman.

Call for further nominations. No additional nominations received. Nominations closed.

Motion to appoint Natalia Reiman as Vice Chair of the Grande Prairie Police Commission.

**Moved by:** Sandeep Sharma

**Carried Unanimously**

**6. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

The following committee appointments are recommended by the Chair:

6.1. **Personnel Committee**

- Consist of Commissioner Wong, Commissioner Reiman and Councillor O’Toole
- Chair of the Personnel Committee will be Commissioner Reiman

6.2. **Policy and Governance Committee**

- Consist of Commissioner Koch, Commissioner Duke and Councillor Bressey
- Chair of the Policy & Governance Committee will be Commissioner Koch

6.3. **Finance Committee**

- Consist of Commissioner Burnham, Commissioner Travasso and Commissioner Sharma
- Chair of the Finance Committee will be Commissioner Burnham

Councillor Bressey asked if a committee must be made up of 3? Curious if there were concerns with Commissioner Burnham being the only experienced member on the Finance Committee. No concerns.

Chair

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Motion to approve the committee appointments as recommended.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Sharma

**Carried Unanimously**

**7. BUSINESS ARISING**

**8. STANDING ITEMS**

8.1. Chair Report

- Quarterly meetings with Mayor, Chief and City Manager – took place January 16<sup>th</sup>  
There will be informal touch points 2-3 times yearly.
- Updates to Council – March 19<sup>th</sup>, May 28<sup>th</sup>, and October 1<sup>st</sup>. March 19<sup>th</sup> will be Commission's 2023 Annual Report and 3-Year Strategic Plan. May 28<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> will include Chief Lakusta. May 28 will include 2023 financial report.
- Outstanding Commissioner items:
  - Enhanced Security Clearances and Fingerprints
  - Online provincial learning modules. \*Apple devices not compatible.
  - Commission self-evaluations.

8.2. Chief Report

a) Chief's Update

- Took command of RCMP employees (administrative oversight) and are paying attention to jobs, roles, etc.
- Completing review of all employees
- January 1, we took over Municipal Enforcement and Mobile Outreach.
  - Supt. Respet conducting thorough review. Pulse check – what is working, what is not.
- Current posting for Municipal Enforcement, over 80 applications.
- Posting for 2 new supervisors, losing a supervisor to retirement, and creating a 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Met with transition Governance Committee- local, provincial and federal to finalize HR plan. Will discuss further in closed session.
- PIO Erica Fisher – creating promo materials.
- Working on joint press release with City and GPPS.
- Our website served our purpose, need something professional and robust.
- Supt. Redl said we have engaged with vendors regarding our kit, uniforms, badges, and shoulder flashes. Received our first allotment of firearms at the end of December. We are pleased with the support we have received from vendors. Utilizing new technology, GP will be one of the first deploying new weapon systems.
- First fleet of vehicles- 10 arriving in September, full police package. Will have 2 mobilized within 6 weeks.
  - March 31, 2025 – 9 RCMP vehicles will be ready for retirement. Going to recommend not to purchase more. Must work with public safety Canada and RCMP regarding these decisions.
- Recruitment and training- First job posting went out first week of January for Experienced Officers. seeing interest locally and across province.
  - Posted for new recruits Monday, already 18 applicants. Very good response.
  - Completing final steps of Experienced Officer, can finish process by end of

Chair

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month.

- First week of January- the training unit attended Edmonton for a 2 day workshop.
  - Control tactics instructor course with EPS – firearms unit to help develop our firearms program, required equipment and purchases. Leaning on EPS, great partnership.
- Primary space will be at the CCC- Second week of February moving out of City on 99. Solidified office space at NWP. Storefront location with 3 offices for interviews, right in mix with a great demographic.
- In consultation with EPS – EVOC training, we have identified space.
- Robin Mo was onboarded, and will develop entire IT System, will recruit and train tech team.
- Next week the executive team, Executive Director Balanik, Supt. Respect, Supt. Redl & Staff Sgt. Lefebvre going to Southern AB- Medicine Hat, Lethbridge police service and Lethbridge college to share best practices, pp gap analysis, and gain insight as to what's working in agencies like us. This includes business intelligence, specialized resources & HR Plan.
- Councillor Bressey asked about Mobile Outreach and the recent cold snap, heard concern about calls to MOP and very long response time. Chief Lakusta - It has not come to my attention. Supt. Respect - will look into it.
- Commissioner Duke brought up an incident where a young man got frostbite on hands and was in hospital. Happened because he wasn't allowed in Wapiti House. Councillor Bressey – that's not Mobile Outreach. But there were no bans at wapiti and if they did show up wapiti will put them in hotel.
- Commissioner Reiman – are you finding enough community members are aware of MO or could more advocacies be done? Chief Lakusta- There is more we can do, were only 18 days in. We will make significant changes. Chair Wong- Street engaged are very aware of Mobile Outreach.
- Chair Wong asked about vehicle life span referred to in report. Chief Lakusta- can't give an exact quote but based on mileage and engine hours. Developing policy on this. Executive Director Balanik- generally 180,000 KM but other wear and tear can reduce this number. Typically, a vehicle wont go over 180,000, lasting about 3 years. Chair Wong - Will there be formal ceremony for the first? Chief Lakusta - yes
- Chair Wong- asked if GPPS will be in touch with the RCMP regarding the camera program? Chief Lakusta- we are aware and will capitalize on & enhance it, not replace it.
- Commissioner Burnham – There are a lot of applicants for new recruits, seemed it wasn't as robust of a response for EO's? Chief Lakusta- we're early, there has been lots of interest. Commissioner Burnham- will we meet targets? Chief Lakusta- Yes.
- Commissioner Koch – loved the logo, could Erica Fisher come and present materials and how they're being used? Chief Lakusta - Yes, and we have arranged for some training with city comms for Erica and EPS social media team.
- Commissioner Duke asked about recruitment, are we getting applicants that were not successful in other police forces? Chief Lakusta- we'll flush that out, this is an extremely lengthy process.
- Chair Wong asked when we will be able to see uniforms. Chief Lakusta- coming in pieces, within coming weeks we will see several uniforms to try. Everyone will be in different brands. We have a basic idea but want comfort and durability. Chair Wong asked if the commission could have a look. Chief Lakusta- yes, this can be arranged.
- Commissioner Reiman asked about the speed of recruitment- are you moving in expedited fashion or are you losing quality candidates due to length of process? Chief Lakusta - We're reaching out individually to keep engaged and moving quickly.

Chair

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In 2 weeks, we offer the first cognitive testing. That's top of mind for us.

Motion to accept the Chief's Update dated January 10, 2024.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Burnham

**Carried Unanimously.**

8.3. Public Complaint Director Report

Nothing to report

8.4. Executive Director Report

- Provided Annual Notice of Declaration of Conflict of Interest in packages, please sign and return.
- 3 informal touchpoints with Personnel Committee- April 24 2:30, Sept 18 9:30, Dec 4 9:00 am. Let her know if you want to attend one.
- Annual Commission meeting calendar. Will circulate now that all committees have completed their meeting doodle polls. This will support strategic initiatives.
- 3-year Strategic Plan at graphics, will be completed by March 1st.
- Working on a timeline to integrate initiatives into annual work plans for 2024, 2025 and 2026. Will bring to policy and governance committee for their first meeting.
- Working on a 2023 Social Media Report. Would like some feedback from Commission on social media to date.
- Logo is at city procurement for the RFQ process. Have asked for a timeline that has a logo completed by March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Committees - Chief Lakusta has discussed with ED Sitler about having a police service executive representative sit on Finance and Policy and Governance committees. Not really a purpose on personnel committee.
- There is a need for critical incident policy. This should be flagged.
- Moving Day update is end of February.
- Commissioner Burnham – back to complaints report with municipal services rolling in, might we get any regarding EO? Executive Director Sitler- The complaint process is different, not legislated under police act. Chief Lakusta- PO act commission has no oversight over. Commissioner Burnham – this might be one of those things where we haven't contemplated during legislation, just wanted to raise the question Councillor Bressey – Mobile Outreach, does this fall under city whistle blower? Executive Director Sitler- working through these pieces along with other suggested Bylaw amendment suggestions.

Motion to refer discussion, complaints, and bylaw outreach to Policy and Governance committee.

**Moved By:** Councillor Bressey

**Carried Unanimously.**

- Commissioner Duke asked a question regarding police service executive on



committees, can we explain? What do other commissions do? Executive Director Sitler- yes, they have representatives from police service Executive on their Committees. Helps with avoiding conflicts with operations. For example: Policy and Governance committee considering policy change or update that can be an issue operationally, expertise is right at the table. Executive Director Balanik- understanding we are not Police of Jurisdiction (POJ) yet. As we become POJ there will be presentations (reports for annual police plan, use of force) this will come to committee meetings first and become part of public commission meeting presentations as we go forward. To be part early on adds value to both parties to develop the relationship and provide guidance back and forth. Commissioner Reiman asked for clarification on this. Would it be a non-voting position on committee? Executive Director Sitler- yes. Commissioner Burnham – Regarding Finance, most have had chief or designate in attendance, this is helpful. We had one meeting where the chief was not involved, and it would have been just fine having attendance there. Most big numbers are not the commissions budget but the services budget. Having the right people at the table is important. Councillor Bressey- push for members at meeting, weird to talk policies without them there. Commissioner Reiman –In terms of reference, should they all be updated to have one member from police service chief or designate as determined by chief? Do we need motion on this? Chair Wong- Executive Director Sitler hasnotes. Commissioner Duke - how does this look to the public? Is it clear that this is an advisory role and not influencing the Commission? Commissioner Reiman explained that the non-voting part would do this.

8.5. Committee Updates

- a) Finance Committee – Chair, Commissioner Burnham  
Nothing to report
- b) Policy & Governance Committee – Chair, Commissioner Koch
  - i. Grande Prairie Police Commission Policy and Procedure Manual review. Areas with suggested changes are highlighted. Any questions?
    - o Chair Wong- page 28, the public members presentation. When the agenda hits public, we're asking anyone who may want to speak to submit in writing 7 days in advance. Our agenda doesn't come out for 7 days. Councillor Bressey- we could consider city council bylaw. Required to register 72 hours before if new but can register business day of if addressing something on agenda. Need time to prep. Please amend this. Executive Director Balanik - member of the public doing presentation? The way it works with large police services is part of the agenda for public input. Anyone can come but the commission chair will address, and they provide name. receive max 5 minutes to give overview of comments & concerns, any follow up questions will be followed up on by the Executive Director, Strategic Advisor or Deputy Chief (research and follow up). Executive Director Sitler- 72 hours gives opportunity to be prepared. Councillor O'Toole- we ask at council for prior submission of presentation. Chair Wong- easy to make minor amendments, not in rush to pass today. Commissioner Burnham – 72 hours falls in line with many other groups, haven't had a time of public engagement but have heard complaints regarding transparency. Want to give enough time for both sides to be prepared. Chair Wong- would like to see order around presentations from public. At least inform of

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topic at very least. Amend from 7 days to 72 hours on page 28.

Motion to approve the Grande Prairie Police Commission Policy and Procedure Manual as amended and allow the Personnel Committee to amend Appendix H once the Chief's Annual Review process is finalized.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Koch

**Carried Unanimously**

- c) Personnel Committee – Chair, Commissioner Reiman
  - i. Executive Director contract – Will be covered in closed session.

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

### 9.1. Canadian Mental Health Association presentation – Randy Arsenault

- Provided an overview of their services.
- Sometimes Enforcement isn't the best approach, would love to support training.
- Clients can be highly complex. Offers disability services. Appreciate support from the City, RCMP.
- Chief Lakusta agreed- enforcement is not the best approach and wants to further connect. Executive Director Balanik will be in touch.
- Chair Wong- remembers when will place went up. Organization that has had the least impact on neighbors, never felt unsafe.
- Commissioner Koch- strategic plan- many are providing operational services like AHS. CMHA can do this at less cost, and staff high satisfaction. Any clinical programs that board is looking at for Grande Prairie? Mr. Arsenault - We are accredited with Canada Accreditation.
- Commissioner Travasso- at this stage is there anything provided for assisted living? Mr. Arsenault - No. Willow place is the main focus. Without Willow Place there would be 57 people on the street. Plus, we understand their needs. Give warnings, etc.
- Commissioner Reiman – needs vs capacity. Will expansion put a dent in this? Mr. Arsenault - 6 on waitlist, always a waitlist or they try other places. The more people know about Willow Place the more interested they are.
- Chair Wong- asked for more info on mobile outreach. Mr. Arsenault - Had 2 vans funded through Alberta health for 2 fulltime individuals. One is outreach/team lead, and one is outreach. They will pick people up, provide them with personal products, take them to willow place until treatment, not just GP but rural too.
- Executive Director Balanik- partnerships with this type of work are key to success of GPPS and public safety. Want to teach members continuum, last resort is enforcement.

### 9.2. Correspondence

- a) AAPG Membership Renewal



Motion to renew AAPG membership for 2024.

**Moved by:** Councillor O'Toole

**Carried Unanimously**

Councillor Bressey left at 4:34 PM

b) 2023 CAPG Review letter

Motion to accept 2023 CAPG Review letter as information.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Burnham

**Carried Unanimously**

**10. ROUND TABLE**

**11. CLOSED SESSION**

- 11.1. Personnel – FOIP – Sec. 17(4)
- 11.2. Law Enforcement Matters – FOIP – Sec. 20(1)
- 11.3. Public Complaint Director – FOIP – Sec. 24(1)
- 11.4. Professional Standards – FOIP – Sec. 17(4)

Motion to move into closed session in accordance with Section 197 of the Municipal Government Act and specified sections of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

**Moved By:** Commissioner Koch

**Carried unanimously**

Motion to return to open session.

**Moved By:** Commissioner Burnham

**Carried unanimously**

**12. BUSINESS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION**

- 12.1. Executive Director Contract

Motion to have Chair Wong execute the contract for the Executive Director.

**Moved By:** Commissioner Reiman

**Carried unanimously**





13. **NEXT MEETING** – February 15, 2024, at 3:00 pm, City Hall – North Conference Room

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director

Chair

ED