

Wendy Cuthbert, February 1st, 2008

We put a lot of time and resources into preparing the request for proposal. Many interviews were done with stakeholders throughout the entire community. Data was collected and verified, and through this process we identified policing needs that are specific to our community.

The request for proposal identifies policing services that are a minimum requirement for our community and asks the questions of how those services would be delivered, at what level and at what cost.

I feel both the Kenora Police Service and the Ontario Provincial Police proposal meet the requirements of the request for proposal. Each proposal was prepared with the best interest of our community in mind and it is obvious to me a lot of time, effort and consideration went into each one and the expertise of Chief Jorgensen and Staff Sergeant Case is evident.

There are a couple of areas I would like to address.

Regarding the “46 minimum officer” statement;

The proposal by the Kenora Police Service of a 51 officer compliment and the proactive policing approach even as a stand alone model as presented, I believe would be adequate. However, a 46 officer proposal, in a stand alone model, as offered at the January 14th Council meeting by Chief Jorgensen of the Kenora Police Service, worries me, especially since it is not the choice our Chief recommends and I don’t feel a compromise would be wise.

The 42.56 officer proposal and its integrated model which provides an 82 officer compliment as proposed in the Ontario Provincial Police proactive policing model I feel is adequate and meet the requirements of the request for proposal. I would not want to have to increase to 46 officers and have the municipality bare the expense just for the sake of having 46 officers. I am confident that both Chief Jorgensen and Staff Sergeant Case know policing better then any of us and I support their recommendations.

Regarding the Police Service Board’s role and the control of it. We have little control now, none when it comes to budgets, salaries and benefits. There is only the illusion of control and I find it quite frustrating. The selection of either the KPS or the OPP would not change the PSB role or function and it would remain in tact. The province would still appoint only two members, as they do now.

Both the KPS and the OPP “extra bill” at the end of the year for salaries, benefits and overtime – both would continue to do so. Costs are always a factor in decision making as it too directly affects the city budget and therefore the taxpayer.

Both the KPS and the OPP are staffed with our local citizens, all of whom live, work and play in our community. Both services provide adequate policing and both genuinely care about our community. Neither is perfect, and both have their baggage. My decision on this issue is not personal, but what I believe is best for our community. I do not have the luxury to make a vote based on emotion.

After careful consideration, I will be voting in favour of accepting the OPP bid for policing in Kenora.