



Date 4 May 2012

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor Canfield & Members of Council

From: Lisa Oakes

**Re: Mayors Coalition Steering Committee for Affordable,
Sustainable, Accountable Policing**

Recommendation

That Council hereby participate and fund the Mayors Coalition Steering Committee for Affordable, sustainable, accountable policing; and

That a copy of the resolution be forwarded to the Mayors Coalition Steering Committee.

Background:

One of the serious issues we face, particularly in rural and small town Ontario is the rising costs for OPP services. Last year, policing in Ontario cost municipal tax payers 3.8 billion dollars. In most cases policing accounted for more than a quarter of Municipal operating budgets, some municipalities at 50% (Kenora approx. 27%).

The provincial government, without consultation and having no accountability or transparency will increase the OPP salary, in 2014, another 8.5% which will add another 50 million dollars to the salary line. Our citizens will be the ones paying, not the provincial government.

Binding arbitration is debilitating. The arbitrator is presented with recent police contract agreements in other Ontario cities/large urban centers as a baseline. This results in high-cost settlements that drive the cost of municipal policing upwards. We, at the smaller municipal level, are standing on the sidelines with no ability to control the direction of police costs. The price of policing is now unsustainable because the pattern of spending and service levels dictated to us is out of control at the Provincial level.

A group of Mayors/Wardens and Staff from various municipalities held many meetings last year to discuss this issue and to craft a move forward plan. During the 2011 AMO conference, 22 municipalities met with Provincial Ministers and Opposition party critics and asked the Minister to commit to three things:

- That there be transparency and accountability with regard to costs being assigned to municipalities for OPP services

- That information on applicable deployment models is made available to municipalities in a timely manner, prior to the 2012 budget year
- That a review be undertaken of OPP costs, formulas, and deployment models to identify efficiencies and that this review take place in full consultation with the municipal sector.

The Minister verbally agreed to these items, and 2012 budget came and went without any progress.

The Minister has launched a taskforce for this group that includes AMO, OAPSB and three of our CAO's as the group voice. While the taskforce is welcomed, the terms of the taskforce light in the fact that discussion cannot be had on three important elements. The group cannot speak to changes to:

- The province-wide model for developing municipal police costs
- The adequacy standards and/or other legislative or regulatory requirements for policy
- The policy or practice for collective bargaining with the OPPA.

The group met again at OGRA/ROMA conference and identified the need to form a Mayors Coalition, to speak as one strong and united municipal voice. The Mayor's Coalition assigned a group of 6 Mayors to a steering committee role. The Mayor's Coalition is aware that the issue of high costs of OPP policing will require time, commitment, on-going lobbying, public relations and all the other elements that come into play on an issue this large. They have met three times and identified the need for the following:

- 1) Lobbying funding
- 2) The need for bilingual communications
- 3) Develop a common letterhead for press releases and correspondence to Minister/Task Force
- 4) Travel expenses for Ministry meetings
- 5) Updates to the fellow municipalities
- 6) Develop web site for communication to municipalities
- 7) Public Relations – hire a PR firm and establish a media campaign that is ready to be launched
- 8) Engage a "Drummond" like third party to assist
- 9) Administrative costs, such as conference calls, paper and other supplies.

These items require financial support and they are asking that each of the 343 OPP serviced communities/municipalities contribute \$1,000 to get this initiative up and running. They promise to return any unused portion at the end of this effort.

Budget: \$1,000 (one thousand dollars) to the Mayors Coalition Steering Committee.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Resolution required.