



COUNTY of ANNAPOLIS  
NATURALLY BUILT



A regular meeting of Joint Police Advisory Board was held at the Middleton Town Hall on Thursday, September 18, 2025, starting at 11:00am.

**PRESENT**

Chairing the meeting, Nile Harding, Warden, Diane LeBlanc, Councillor Sandra Fournier. Citizens John Thompson, Carol Greentree, Patricia Leslie, William Street, Corporal Tim Hawkes (arrived at 12:01pm) CAO Ashley Crocker and Recording Secretary, Sara Marceau.

Regrets: Councillor John Bartlett; CAO Rob Frost

Also in attendance: Nine (9) citizens

**1. WELCOME**

At 11:01am, Chair Harding welcomed everyone to the Joint Police Advisory Board.

**2. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

No additions to report.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**250918.01** It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion carried.**

**4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

~~4.1. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes~~

2025.06.19 Meeting Minutes

No errors or omissions were noted, and the minutes were considered approved.

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

### 5.1. Update on N.S. Policing Review

Chair Harding reviewed a report from Deloitte and the Province and prepared a summary of the findings.

The key findings in the reports were:

- Inequity in Service Levels: Rural and smaller communities experience lower response times and lower visibility
- Rising Policing Costs: Municipalities – especially those policed by RCMP, face increasing financial pressures under current finding models
- Governance Challenge: Police boards and advisory bodies report high turnover, limited training, and unclear mandates
  - Sharon Elliott will be a great resource for the County of Annapolis and the Town of Middleton...
- Technology Gaps: Use of three (3) different RMS systems in NS limits real-time coordination and oversight
- Expanded Police Roles: Officers frequently respond to mental health, addictions, and social services gaps, straining capacity

Recommended Next Steps:

- Receive Presentation from the Police Advisory Board at an upcoming Committee of the Whole or Council meeting
- Request Staff Briefing (with RCMP/DOJ input) on projected financial impacts of billing changes and policing standards
- Consider advocacy engaging with neighboring municipalities and the NSFM to ensure rural voices are represented in upcoming policing reforms

There was a lengthy discussion around the report that Chair Harding provided.

CAO Crocker stated that on September 29th there will be an informal Joint Council Meeting, and the president of NSFM will be attending to lead the discussion around policing.

CAO Crocker noted that the NSFM Conference wasn't well received. The Minister of Justice presented for an hour and then left. On September 17th, the Town of Middleton sent a letter to the Minister expressing the Town's displeasure.

Bill Street stated that bylaw officers do not always follow guidelines and sometimes overstep their authority. He asked if there would be any oversight or control. The bylaw

officers shouldn't be armed and should only handle tasks like traffic tickets and animal control. He emphasized that they don't want to overwork or burn out the bylaw officers, who serve as peace officers.

Carol Greentree asked if there is a set date or timeline for implementation.

- Chair Harding responded that it will begin right away, noting that they are already moving forward with billing and the records management system

Chair Harding stated Deloitte recommended a provincial police force as the most expensive option. The second-best option was expansion.

Bill Street noted that policing has shifted from proactive to reactive. Municipalities need to be able to share their policing records management systems.

CAO Crocker discussed proactive policing. The GDPRM is usually initiated by the Department of Justice (DOJ), but in this case, it was initiated by the RCMP. The Annapolis District RCMP was short 8–9 officers relative to the level of activity and crime. One metric used in the GDPRM is proactive policing, and they were experiencing negative proactive policing due to the shortage of officers. Last year, 4 officers were added; this year, 2 more; and next year, another 2 are planned. Compared to other municipal units, they are in better shape but still lack foot patrols because of insufficient staffing.

- Chair Harding noted that the report identified the amount of time it takes officers to travel from point A to point B. For example, officers often have to drive from the County to the Kentville hospital. Sgt. Maxwell mentioned encountering peace officers at the hospital while working in other provinces. There could be an official handover where the peace officer stays with the patient, allowing police officers to return without delay.

## 5.2. RCMP Quarterly Report

The RCMP quarterly report for the period of April 2025 to June 2025 was circulated to all Board members.

Chair Harding reviewed the RCMP quarterly report for the period of April to June 2025 until Corporal Tim Hawkes arrived.

Upon his arrival, Corporal Hawkes presented the remainder of the RCMP quarterly report.

- **New Fiscal Year:**

Every year April 1<sup>st</sup> marks the beginning of a new fiscal year in the RCMP and a new reporting period. This year's focus will be on:

1. Intelligence Led Policing
2. Reduction of Property Crime
3. Road Safety and Impaired Driving
4. Police Visibility and Community Engagement
5. Domestic Violence

- Calls for Service
- Intelligence Led Policing
- Road Safety and Impaired Driving
- Police Visibility and Community Engagement
- Domestic Violence

~~Warden LeBlanc commended the police for their efforts on the roads and in responding to the fire in West Dalhousie and expressed her gratitude by saying thank you.~~

**Public Engagement:**

Chair Harding invited members of the public to share their thoughts or concerns.

One citizen extended an invitation to community members and any board members who would like to attend the Wilmot Community Watch.

Dave Smith inquired about when the Middleton Police Department office would be reopening.

- Corporal Hawkes explained that they are in the process of rehiring front counter staff. He advised that residents can either call the Bridgetown Detachment to find out when the Middleton office is open or simply knock on the door to see if someone is inside.

Mr. Preece: Kids are riding their dirt bikes on the roads and at Rotary Park, but there's no police presence in Middleton. We never see any police presence at all.

- ~~Chair Harding reiterated that Staff Sergeant Maxwell has consistently encouraged the public to call and report anything they see~~
- Corporal Hawkes explained that while they may not be able to apprehend the vehicle in question, the calls will help establish a pattern based on when they are received

Mr. Hillsley inquired about noise level restrictions for loud vehicles.

- Corporal Hawkes stated that it is governed by the *Motor Vehicle Act* and the Town's Noise Bylaw.
- CAO Crocker stated that if staff receive a noise complaint, they will provide the bylaw enforcement contact number.

Deputy Mayor Gary Marshall stated that the primary request is to see an increased police presence. He noted the lack of visible patrols and inquired whether there is a way to enhance police visibility in Middleton.

- Chair Harding acknowledged his frustrations and concerns

Councillor Dan Smith stated that hiring two additional officers will not bring about significant change, adding that the community has been failed by current policing efforts.

- Chair Harding emphasized that, in our advisory capacity, it is not our role to criticize the RCMP. Many of the issues raised are addressed in the provincial report, and the focus should be on working toward solutions.

Councillor Archibald inquired about the percentage of calls originating from the County versus those from Middleton. He also noted that uploading videos and pictures to the website has proven to be challenging.

- Corporal Hawkes explained that if you report the incident to the detachment, they can send you a link through which you can upload the relevant files.

**6. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, November 13th, at 11:00am, in the Municipality of the County of Annapolis Council Chambers.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45pm.



Chair



Recording Secretary