

Dylan Bresse
Councillor

September 9, 2019

To Chair Clayton and the Infrastructure and Protective Services Committee;

I am requesting that your Committee recommend Council direct administration to initiate the process of forming a Policing Committee.

Section 23 of the Police Act allows Councils of RCMP policed jurisdictions to form Policing Committees. According to the Act, Policing Committees shall:

- a) oversee the administration of the agreement made under section 22,
- b) assist in selecting the officer in charge,
- c) represent the interests of the council to the officer in charge,
- d) in consultation with the officer in charge, develop a yearly plan of priorities and strategies for municipal policing,
- e) issue instructions to the officer in charge respecting the implementation and operation of the yearly plan,
- f) represent the interests and concerns of the public to the officer in charge,
- g) assist the officer in charge in resolving complaints, and
- h) appoint a Public Complaint Director.

The Police Act grants Policing Committees more oversight of local RCMP than it allows Councils to have on their own.

There are two big reasons our Council should consider forming a Policing Committee:

- 1) **Greater accountability and transparency.** There is a great deal of concern in our community about whether the RCMP are delivering on local priorities. Through a yearly plan, Policing Committees can have a much higher degree of input into priorities and strategies than legislation allows Councils to have. Additionally, their greater involvement makes Policing Committee members more equipped to respond to the concerns of the public than City Council members can be.
- 2) **Build local capacity to respond to changes in contract policing.** Surrey recently cancelled its RCMP contract. Red Deer and other RCMP contracted municipalities are reviewing their police service delivery models. The conversations happening in other municipalities may change the RCMP's approach to municipal contracts. Additionally, the unionization of the RCMP is likely to increase costs, which will also drive discussions about change. To effectively respond to change, we need local people experienced with police policy and oversight. A Policing Committee will allow us to grow this governance capacity in our community.

As we discuss police governance, questions about how to involve our regional partners should be raised. As it is currently written, my assessment is that the Police Act does not allow for a Regional Policing Committee that would adequately allow for representation of the residents of the City of Grande Prairie. However, we might consider asking other municipalities to join us in forming a body to offer advice to the Policing Committee. We might also consider asking our neighbours to join us in lobbying for changes to the Police Act that would allow for a Regional Policing Committee.

Please find attached Section 23 of the Police Act.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely;

Dylan Bresse

Policing committees

23(1) In this section, “officer in charge” means the officer in charge of the unit of the police service that is providing policing services to a municipality under section 22.

(2) A council that has entered into an agreement under section 22 may establish a policing committee.

(3) A council that establishes a policing committee shall, subject to the regulations

(a) prescribe the rules governing the operation of the policing committee, and

(b) appoint the members of the policing committee.

(4) A policing committee shall consist of not fewer than 3 nor more than 12 members.

(5) If

(a) 4 or fewer members are appointed under subsection (3), one of them may be a member of the council or an employee of the municipality, or

(b) 5 or more members are appointed under subsection (3), 2 of them may be members of the council or employees of the municipality.

(6) The council may provide for the payment of reasonable remuneration or of a gratuity or allowance to members of the policing committee.

(7) The term of office of a person appointed to a policing committee is

(a) 3 years, or

(b) a term of less than 3 years, but not less than 2 years, as may be fixed by bylaw.

(8) Notwithstanding subsection (7), a majority of the members appointed to a newly established policing committee shall be appointed for 3 years, and the remaining members shall be appointed for 2 years.

(9) The members of a policing committee shall, at the first meeting of the policing committee in each year, elect from among their members a chair and one or more vice-chairs.

(10) A member who is a member of the council or an employee of the municipality is not eligible to be elected as chair or vice-chair of the committee.

(11) A member of a policing committee is eligible for reappointment if the reappointment does not result in more than 10 consecutive years of service by that member.

(12) If a person who is a member of a council is a member of the policing committee, that person's appointment to the policing committee terminates on that person's ceasing to be a member of the council.

(13) The appointment of a member to the policing committee may not be revoked by the council except for cause.

(14) A policing committee shall, with respect to the municipality for which it is established,

(a) oversee the administration of the agreement made under section 22,

(b) assist in selecting the officer in charge,

(c) represent the interests of the council to the officer in charge,

(d) in consultation with the officer in charge, develop a yearly plan of priorities and strategies for municipal policing,

(e) issue instructions to the officer in charge respecting the implementation and operation of the yearly plan,

(f) represent the interests and concerns of the public to the officer in charge,

(g) assist the officer in charge in resolving complaints, and

(h) appoint a Public Complaint Director.

(15) All persons appointed to a policing committee shall take the oath set out in Schedule 2.