

POLICE BOARD MEMBERS' PRESENT:

Mayor Ross Siemens, Chair
Gordon Holloway, Vice-Chair
Mandy Padda
Paula Olmstead
Amrik Narang
Amar Rai
Shannon Charney

REGRETS:

MINUTE RECORDER:

Sangeeta Hussain

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM & STAFF PRESENT:

Chief Constable Colin Watson
Deputy Chief Constable Jason Burrows – Administration
Deputy Chief Constable Dan Culbertson – Operations
Director Bea Nicolato – Finance & Budget Branch
Insp. Lydia Brown-John
Insp. Mike Sikora
Sergeant Ryan Gray

GUEST(S):

Aird Flavelle*

The meeting was called to order at 8.30 am.

1. Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by A. Narang and seconded by P. Olmstead that the Agenda be **approved**, the motion was **adopted**.

2. Presentations (*Insp Lydia Brown-John, Insp. Mike Sikora and Seargent Ryan Gray*)

Topic: Homelessness and Highway 1 Encampments and Experiences from City of Abbotsford and AbbyPd.

The presentation highlighted that homelessness and encampments in Abbotsford are rapidly increasing and driven by a complex intersection of housing unaffordability, mental health, addiction, and income instability, with current resources significantly insufficient to meet demand. Encampments present both public safety challenges and humanitarian concerns, requiring coordinated responses that balance enforcement with outreach and support. While the province provides the majority of funding and services, municipalities have limited control and rely heavily on advocacy and partnerships. Local police and outreach teams emphasized relationship-based approaches as more effective than enforcement alone, with a recent coordinated decampment effort (related to Cole Rd) successfully housing a significant number of individuals demonstrating the value of integrated, multi-agency collaboration. However, major systemic gaps remain, particularly in detox and treatment capacity, access to appropriate housing, and the ability to support individuals who are unwilling or unable to accept services.

Discussion focused on the significant gaps in detox, treatment, and housing capacity, and the challenges these create for both service providers and enforcement. Board Members explored the difficulty of supporting individuals who refuse treatment or housing, highlighting the tension between personal choice and community safety. There was strong interest in the outcomes of recent successful decampment efforts, particularly the need for longer-term follow-up data to assess sustainability. Participants also raised concerns about coordination and engagement with Fraser Health Authority and provincial partners, noting fragmentation and barriers to access. Additional discussion emphasized the importance of prevention strategies, culturally appropriate supports (including Indigenous housing needs), and the need for continued advocacy, collaboration, and balanced approaches that address both community impacts and compassionate care.

3. Consent Agenda

For Item (c) Crime Report

A clarification was requested regarding the methodology used for crime statistics, specifically the population base for “per 1,000” reporting, which was addressed.

For Item (d) Media Reports & (e) Compliments Report

The compliments and media reports were noted positively, highlighting the compassionate approach of officers in balancing public safety with community care. Members acknowledged that these reports provide an important snapshot of the positive work being done and help reinforce public confidence. Feedback indicated that communications have been well received, particularly given the challenges of conveying complex realities, with appreciation expressed for the overall transparency and messaging efforts.

It was moved by A. Narang and seconded by S. Charney that the consent agenda be **approved**, the motion was **adopted**.

4. ACF Award Board Representation.

The Board reviewed the Abbotsford Community Foundation Annual Award process, which is administered externally on behalf of the Police Board. Discussion clarified that while administrative aspects are handled by the Foundation, there has been prior Board involvement in reviewing applications and selecting recipients. Members expressed interest in maintaining awareness and potential participation in the selection process to ensure appropriate representation. Upcoming award presentation dates (June 21 & 23rd) were noted, and Board members’ attendance was discussed.

Discussion / Considerations

Members raised questions regarding the current selection process and governance, noting inconsistencies with past practice where Board representatives reviewed applications. There was general agreement that Board involvement in recipient selection would be appropriate, along with a need to clarify roles and ensure transparency. Flexibility in participation was supported, with openness to assigning representatives rather than full Board involvement.

Decision

Approved in principle participation in the Abbotsford Community Foundation Annual Award program.

It was moved by A. Narang and seconded by P. Olmstead that the **ACF Award Board Representation be approved**, the **motion was adopted**.

Action

Chief Constable C. Watson to review and confirm the award selection process, including opportunities for Board involvement; Board members to coordinate attendance at award presentations through Executive Assistant -S. Hussain.

Wednesday, 27 May 2026 at 8:30 AM

AbbyPD HQ (3rd Floor Boardroom), 2838 Justice Way, Abbotsford, BC, and Video Conference*

5. Board Correspondence

There were no updates reported.

6. BCAPB Report

BCAPB Conference May 20-22 (G Holloway)

Board members who attended the BC Association of Police Boards conference reported it was a valuable and well-received event, providing relevant insights into policing governance and opportunities for engagement with peers across jurisdictions.

Discussion / Considerations

No additional comments were raised beyond the written report submitted by G. Holloway; attendees noted positive overall experience and alignment with broader policing discussions.

7. Chief's Report

The Chief provided operational and strategic updates, including continued progress on extortion investigations, with no new local incidents reported in the past four months and an overall downward regional trend, while investigations and national coordination efforts remain ongoing. Additional updates highlighted community engagement initiatives, volunteer recognition activities, and strong progress on the strategic framework, which has been positively received as a flexible, evolving approach to guiding policing priorities.

Discussion / Considerations

Discussion reinforced confidence in the police response to extortion and the importance of ongoing collaboration at regional and national levels. Members highlighted positive feedback on the strategic framework, particularly its adaptability and responsiveness to changing community needs, as well as the value of continued community outreach and partnerships.

8. Standing Board Committee Reports

a) Finance Committee

There were no updates reported.

b) Governance & Policy Committee

There were no updates reported.

c) Human Resources Committee

There were no updates reported.

9. Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting proceeded to adjournment.

Upon motion duly made and carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:47 am.


Chair – Ross Siemens


Minute Recorder – Sangeeta Hussain