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**Meeting:** Community Safety and Well-Being Integration Table  
**Date:** October 4, 2022  
**Time:** 10:00 A.M.  
**Location:** Webex

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**Attendees:** Mayor Joe Preston, City of St. Thomas, Chair  
Warden Mary French – County of Elgin  
Emilian Siman, Elgin Workforce Development Network  
Danielle Neilson, Housing and Homelessness Action Table  
Sandra McCabe, Elgin Mental Health and Addiction Network  
Marcia Van Wylie, Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Steering Committee  
Julie Gonyou, Chief Administrative Officer – County of Elgin  
Carolyn Krahn, Manager of Economic Development & Strategic Initiatives – County of Elgin  
Jenna Fentie, Manager of Administrative Services – County of Elgin

**Regrets:** Chief Chris Herridge, Public Safety Action Table  
Sandra Datars Bere, City Manager – City of St. Thomas

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## Minutes

### 1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

### 2. Approval of Minutes from June 9, 2022

The minutes were approved as presented.

### 3. Roundtable – Action Tables

- i. Education and Skills Development – Elgin Workforce Development Network, Emilian Siman

The Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning & Development Board is working on a number of different projects:

- Study on Migration and Mobility

- Labour Market Information Made Easy
- Acceptability of Micro-Credentials
- Assessing the Growing Labour Market
- Data Visualizations
  - Canadian Business Counts
  - Employment Services Outcomes
  - 2021 Census
- Community Conversations
  - Local Labour Market Plan

Mayor Preston asked how the Workforce Planning & Development Board was supporting current workforce needs. E. Siman responded that the Board supports local employers through the provision of data, which they can then use for planning purposes. The Board also supports employers through research. The Board is working on a survey with the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation to study how employers have adapted to the changing labour market. This information will help improve employer decision making.

ii. Housing Security – Housing and Homelessness Action Table, Danielle Neilson

The first phase of the Indwell project (high support micro units) is seeing great outcomes for tenants. The build for the second phase is well underway with the goal of opening its doors in early 2023. Once the second phase opens up, tenants from the micro units will be able to move up and free up the higher acuity spots. This will allow people on the By Names List to move into these spots. Phase three of the project will see the creation of more affordable housing units.

The Built for Zero program has confirmed the City's first milestone for reducing homelessness. The City has seen a 25% reduction and is working toward the next milestone of a 50% reduction in people experiencing chronic homelessness. The emergency shelter remains open 24/7.

There remains a long waitlist for social housing, and alternatives to social housing are being provided to community members, including rent supplements.

iii. Mental Health and Well-Being – Elgin Mental Health and Addiction Network, Sandra McCabe

CMHA Elgin continues to support the community using a hybrid model, which includes virtual and face-to-face services. They are reviewing space needs in Elgin County in order to consolidate services to offer a one stop hub service model.

iv. Substance Use and Addiction – Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Steering Committee, Marcia Van Wylie

Work continues on the Drug and Alcohol Strategy. Community consultations wrapped up in April, and the Committee is working on two (2) reports – a summary report and a recommendations report. The work is centred on the four (4) pillars of prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and justice. Following the strategy reports, an implementation plan will be developed with short, medium, and long-term priorities.

v. Public Safety – Public Safety Action Table, Chief Chris Herridge

Chief Herridge sent his regrets and provided a written update (see attached).

4. Date of Next Meeting

A doodle poll will be circulated at the beginning of 2023 to establish a meeting date for January.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 1:37 p.m.



Report No.  
STPS-02-22

File No.

**Directed to:** Mayor Joe Preston and Members of City Council

**Date Authored:**  
04 July 2022  
**Meeting Date:**  
11 July 2022

**Department:** St. Thomas Police Service

**Attachment**

**Prepared By:** Chief Chris Herridge

**Subject:** STPS Community Resource Officer Unit

**Recommendation:**

THAT: Council receive Report #STPS-02-22 relating to the creation of a Community Resource Officer (CRO) Unit for the St. Thomas Police Service.

**Background:**

Community Resource Unit Model

We believe it is time to take a different approach with our Downtown Foot Patrol Unit to enhance the Service's efficiencies and effectiveness, especially when interacting with citizens impacted by mental health, substance use disorder, homelessness and poverty in downtown St. Thomas.

Our strategy combines conventional police officers with other service providers who have limited authorities. These other service providers can include special constables, civilians, volunteers and community partners. The overall goal is to create efficiencies, free up resources for sworn members to focus on the core functions of policing, broaden our service delivery capabilities and ensure staff are not overwhelmed by non-police related incidents.

Hiring specialized civilians with a social service background results in an improved use of assets to deal with other complex activity in the community. A large percentage of the work that we now do is social related and not criminal in nature. As a result, we need to find alternative service delivery options and collaborate with agencies to better support people facing social vulnerabilities.

The Mobile Outreach and Support Team (MOST) is an example of a tiered policing partnership, where STPS and CMHA work together to deploy social workers to mental health/substance use disorder calls alongside of officers.

Many communities in western Canada utilize various cost effective policing programs including Community Peace Officers, Community Resources Officers and Special Constables, assisting sworn members in areas such as foot patrol, community service, special events, bylaw, traffic enforcement and other non-safety related incidents. The number of full-time equivalent special constables across Canada in 2019 grew by 3% over the previous year. The number of civilians working for police services continued to grow, increasing 2% in 2019.

We believe a Community Resource Officer Unit is an enhanced option potentially evolving even further to traffic enforcement related duties. Even the new Ontario Community Safety and Policing Act has identified outsourcing as an option and allowing for certain duties to be off-loaded from sworn members to special constables or civilians. Our new CRO Team members have a combination of social services and lived experience backgrounds.

Other police services have already been inquiring about this new initiative for our community.

## Approval of Appointment as Special Constable

Special Constables are civilian employees that are appointed by the Police Services Board and the Ministry of the Solicitor General. The appointment of a special constable may confer on them the powers of a police officer, to the extent and for the specific purpose set out in the appointment. However, special constables shall not be employed by a police service to perform on a permanent basis, whether part-time or full-time, all the usual duties of a police officer. The special constables will have limited police officer authorities in accordance with Section 53 of the Police Services Act.

All special constables in the Community Resource Officer Unit will swear an oath-of-office and undertake police/peace officer duties as set out in Section 42 of the Police Services Act, granting them powers to enforce the following legislation:

- Highway Traffic Act,
- Liquor Licence Act,
- Trespass to Property Act,
- Provincial Offences Act, and
- Safe Streets Act.

Commencing in August 2022, the four Community Resource Officers will be dedicated to promoting safety and security primarily in the downtown core, between 8am and 11pm Monday to Friday (weekends as needed) and will focus on:

- Discouraging antisocial behavior by being a visible, uniformed presence and engaging with citizens.
- Interacting with merchants to assist with addressing their concerns.
- Help persons facing vulnerabilities navigate social support systems.
- Responding to calls for service and investigating incidents.
- Enforcing provincial and municipal legislation.
- Conducting proactive patrols in high-need areas.
- Participating in community events.
- Conducting joint patrols with sworn members.

The CRO Team is currently receiving six weeks of training from various members of our Service and will deploy with Constable Katherine McNeil for mentoring and public introduction.

## Uniforms and Equipment

Members of the CRO Unit will be issued:

- Uniforms distinct from that of a traditional police officer or special constable at the Elgin County Courthouse.
- Duty belt including Handcuffs, ASP Baton, OC Spray, Police Radio and Flashlight.
- Ball Cap
- Internal Body Armour
- A Community Services van has been repurposed for the CRO Unit.



Downtown Substation

We are a downtown police service and we know that citizens would like to see our presence enhanced in the core. It is about building a better service model, growing the police service to be more successful, changing our culture, and adapting to the demands of the public. One of those demands is well known – our downtown.

I think we would all agree on the importance of having an increased police presence downtown, which is critical for our businesses as well as their customers to feel safe and secure. Businesses and visitors in the core need a sense of security and a substation will enable us to effectively make our presence felt in the downtown area.

We are currently searching for a suitable location in the downtown to establish a STPS satellite office space.

Financial Implications

The CRO Team members are fulltime STPS employees and will receive all of the benefits offered through the Civilian Collective Agreement.

The current salary grid as of July 2022 for a Special Constable is as follows:

- Start: \$50,539.27 Plus 28% Benefits
- 12 Months: \$61,369.13
- 24 Months: \$72,186.91
- 10 Years: \$74,364.96

The monthly lease cost for a downtown satellite office is unknown at this time.

Thank you,



Chief Chris Herridge

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Reviewed By:

Sandra Datars  
Bere  
City Manager



Chris Herridge  
Police Chief