

Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Board of Police Commissioners Minutes

September 3, 2025

10:00 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers

Commission Members

Commissioner Glenn Paruch, Chair (Left at 10:08 a.m.)

Commissioner Kim Sheppard-Campbell, Vice-Chair (Arrived at 10:08 a.m.)

Commissioner Paul Nickituk

Commissioner Ken Tracey, Citizen Appointee

Commissioner Matthew Conner, Citizen Appointee

Commissioner Tom Vickers, Citizen Appointee

Commissioner Noelle Gouthro, Provincial Appointee

Staff

Cecil P. Clarke, Mayor

Demetri Kachafanas, KC, Chief Administrative Officer

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services

Robert Walsh, Chief of Police

Stephen MacKinnon, Deputy Chief of Police

Reginald Hutchings, Superintendent

Joe Farrell, Inspector

Bill Turner, Inspector

Desiree Magnus, Communications / Public Relations Advisor

Gordon MacDonald, Councillor, District One

Dave MacKeigan, Councillor, District Nine

Sean Tobin, Chief of Staff

Jenna MacQueen, Communications Advisor

Spencer Merrill, Information Technology Technician

Yuecong Cao, Administrative Assistant, Clerk's Department

Kelly McDonald, Recording Secretary

The following does not represent a word for word record of the proceedings of this meeting. The agenda, reports, supporting documents, information items circulated, and video (if available) are online at www.cbrm.ns.ca.

Commissioner Glenn Paruch, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Land Acknowledgment

1. Administration of the Oaths of Office for Newly Appointed Commissioners – Noelle Gouthro

The Municipal Clerk administered the Oath of Office for the newly appointed member, Noelle Gouthro, of the CBRM Board of Police Commissioners.

2. Roll Call

Kelly McDonald, Recording Secretary, conducted the roll call attendance.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion

Moved by Commissioner Tracey, seconded by Commissioner Conner, to approve the September 3, 2025, CBRM board of police commissioners agenda and addendum as presented.

Motion Carried

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion

Moved by Commissioner Nickituk, seconded by Commissioner Tracey, to approve the CBRM board of police commissioners minutes from:

- June 18, 2025

Motion Carried

5. Standard Operating Procedures – Police Commission Communications

Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk / Director of Corporate Information Services, reviewed the staff report included in the agenda package. Following the meeting, it was identified that the staff report included in the agenda package contained an incorrect date. The report should reference December 11, 2023, rather than December 13, 2025. This correction is noted for the record. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Commissioner Vickers, seconded by Commissioner Tracey, to adopt the proposed operating procedure for intake and triage of commission emails, as presented, and direct the Clerk to implement it.

Motion Carried

6. Body-Worn, In-Car, and Downtown Cameras Update

Director Dicks reviewed the staff information report included in the agenda package. Director Dicks informed the Commission of an additional project currently underway involving the implementation of a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, noting that upgrades to the existing CAD infrastructure will be necessary to ensure proper integration with new equipment. It was further noted that the scope of the project may be greater than initially anticipated, which could result in budgetary pressures.

Vice Chair Sheppard-Campbell assumed the Chair at 10:08 a.m.

Chief Walsh provided a brief update on recent equipment and technology upgrades within Police Services. Notable improvements this year include the acquisition of mobile data terminals for police vehicles, additional tasers, pistols, lights, sights, and holsters. Training related to the new equipment is currently being scheduled.

Furthermore, additional speed monitoring devices have been purchased and are now operational. Discussion also took place regarding the use of cameras and the storage of recorded footage.

For Information Only

7. Police Commission Policies

Director Dicks reviewed the staff report included in the agenda package. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Commissioner Nickituk, seconded by Commissioner Conner, to undertake a review of board policies, procedures, and terms of reference to align with CBRM Council's organizational wide policy review, and where required, make recommendations to Council for adoption.

Motion Carried

8. Nova Scotia Policing Standards

Chief Walsh provided an update informing that the province introduced thirty-nine updated policing standards in late 2024, marking the first revision since 2003. These standards are designed to evolve with changes in legislation, technology, and lessons learned from major events such as the Desmond Fatality Inquiry and the Mass Casualty Commission. The standards emphasize the importance of consistent policing practices and maintaining public trust. The standards are organized into five categories: emergency management, police investigations, service delivery, records management, and use of force. The Cape Breton Regional Police Services (CBRPS) has conducted a thorough review of its operations and policies to ensure alignment with these standards and has submitted documentation to the Department of Justice confirming compliance. The service remains committed to continuous improvement through ongoing internal review and collaboration with provincial partners.

For Information Only

9. Summary of Police-Reported Crime Statistics in Canada, 2024

Chief Walsh informed that the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics released its annual crime data, showing a national decline in crime rates and severity in 2024 after three years of increases. Locally, the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) experienced a 9.49 percent decrease in its reported crime rate, with notable reductions in assault, child pornography, break and enter, fraud, shoplifting, impaired driving, theft over five thousand dollars, and arson. Some increases were noted in weapons violations, possession of stolen property, and theft under five thousand dollars. Overall, crime rates in the CBRM have declined by fifteen percent since 2022 and remain below both provincial and national averages, as well as other comparable municipalities.

The crime severity index, which accounts for the seriousness of offenses, also decreased by four percent in the CBRM. However, an increase in violent crime severity was noted due to three homicides in 2024, compared to none the previous year. The weighted clearance rate, reflecting the volume and seriousness of crimes solved, increased by sixteen percent, surpassing provincial and national benchmarks.

Chief Walsh emphasized that crime statistics represent only a portion of police work, with many services such as emergency response and community outreach not captured in these figures. To provide a fuller picture of police activity, CBRPS will begin publishing weekly reports on calls for service, made possible by recent upgrades to the records management system.

For Information Only

10. Commissioner Agenda Requests

10.1 Funding Request

Commissioner Vickers reviewed the commission agenda request form included in the agenda package and discussed the importance of the recommendation. The following motion was then put forward:

Motion

Moved by Commissioner Vickers, seconded by Commissioner Conner, to recommend to CBRM Council to include in the next budget a line item to provide funding for the CBRM Board of Police Commissioners.

Discussion:

- CBRM Chief of Police supports the Commission's motion

Motion Carried

ADDENDUM

10.2 Speeding Ticket Data

Vice Chair Sheppard-Campbell advised that this item will be deferred to the next meeting.

11. Divisional Reports

Inspector Joe Farrell presented the following sections of the report:

- Highlights and Initiatives
- Training
- Patrols
- Prisoner Care Facility
- Membertou
- K-9 Unit
- School Liaison Officers
- Community Officer
- Senior Safety Navigator

Discussion took place regarding the Collision Reporting Centre, foot patrol presence, and loud muffler inspections. The Commission requested that staff

prepare a report detailing the number of loud muffler inspections conducted, broken down by division, and that this information be provided to the Commission.

For Information Only

Inspector Bill Turner presented the following sections of the report:

- Traffic Safety Unit
- Street Crime / Drug Unit
- Community Safety Enforcement Unit
- Major Crime / Domestic Violence Unit
- General Investigation Section / Arson Investigator
- Internet Child Exploitation Unit (ICE) / Computer Forensic Unit
- Forensic Identification Unit
- Marine Unit
- Solid Waste
- Mental Health Liaison Officer
- Polygraph

Discussion took place regarding the Major Crimes Unit, the Domestic Violence Unit, solid waste charges, and resource challenges.

Commission recessed at 10:58 a.m.

Commission reconvened at 11:15 a.m.

Discussion continued regarding ceiling orders, Solid Waste Officer uniforms, and domestic violence units.

For Information Only

12. Correspondence:

12.1 Reappointment to the Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Board of Police Commissioners

For Information Only

Adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

Commissioner Glenn Paruch
Chair

Christa Dicks
Municipal Clerk
/km