



**Special Police Services Board Meeting
June 23, 2021 at 10:30 am
via Zoom Meeting
MINUTES**

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**ATTENDANCE**

- Attendees: Mayor Doug Lawrance, Municipality of Sioux Lookout  
Christine Sawanis, Darlene Angeconeb, Chairperson
- OPP Representative(s): Inspector Karl Duewel
- Staff: Michelle Larose, CAO  
Tiffany Thompson, Executive Assistant
- Guests: Jennifer Thomas, Executive Director, Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre  
Lindsay Gillett – NODIN Mental Health Services  
Lori Kendall – Manager, Nitawin Community Development Corporation  
Tana Troniak – Manager, Sioux Lookout Supportive Housing  
Susan Barclay – Manage, Out of the Cold Shelter  
Evan J – Leaning Centre  
Henry Wall – CAO, Kenora District Services Board  
Joanna Jelenic – Northwest EMS  
Dave Hamilton – Northwest EMS  
Sherry Baum – Executive Director, Dryden/Sioux Lookout Community Living

**1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER – DARELEN ANGECONEB (Chairperson)**

Mayor Doug Lawrance called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

**2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – MAYOR DOUG LAWRENCE=**

**3. AGENDA**

- a) Introduction of Amendments to the Agenda - NIL
- b) Confirmation of Agenda



**Moved By:** Doug Lawrance  
**Seconded By:** Christine Sawanis

THAT the Agenda for the June 23, 2021, Special Police Services Board meeting be approved.

**CARRIED**

#### **4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

##### **a) Camp behind 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue**

Mayor Lawrance opened the discussion with a brief history about how the Police Services Board came about in Sioux Lookout for all the guests who are not normally attending the meetings.

He advised that there were 18 people staying at the Out of the Cold shelter and 20 people staying in the bush camp as of the week of June 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>.

**A Discussion took place with reference to the Camp on First Ave and the following were some of the concerns:**

- Lori Kendall advised that she has received several complaints via phone call and via email about the bush camp from the residents in the supportive housing on First Avenue.
- The complaints varied from theft of the resident's property that was out on their deck, to residents being harassed by the people in the camp. The complaints now have become overwhelming for staff.
- Inspector Duewel advised that the OPP concern about the camp is for public safety. He said it's for the tenants that live in the area buildings and also for the people who reside in the camp.
  - There have been at least 23 calls directly related to the camp this year. He said that at least 6 to 10 of those calls involve some pretty serious victim crimes.
- Susan Barclay advised that there are women who are experiencing theft, assault and sexual assault inside the camp.
  - Also, there possibly are people in the camp from out of town and there has been people at the shelter that potentially have links to organized crime and it is spilling over into the camp.



**The members in attendance discussed what is being done at the Camp to address some of the concerns:**

- The OPP has stepped up the patrol presence at the camp due to the concerns from the Municipality, as well as the concerns from the housing authorities. There have been several night patrols and there is a zero tolerance policy if someone is intoxicated. If they are intoxicated, they are arrested for their safety and for the public's safety.

**Henry Wall left the meeting at 11:00 am with regrets.**

Short term, mid-term and long term solutions were discussed.

Mayor Doug Lawrance advised that there are not enough services in Sioux Lookout and that there are huge gaps to address the issues.

Mayor Lawrance advised the Group of delegation asks that the Municipality has presented to various governments for a detox centre starting from 2016 and going all the way to the present.

#### **Short Term Solutions:**

- Mayor Lawrance advised that the camp needs to come down, but it needs to be done in a respectful way. He said they cannot encourage this camp to become the centre for assaults, illegal activities and a place where people in and around the camp feel unsafe and said we need to set a date of 5 days from now to have the camp taken down.

#### **Mid-Term Solutions:**

- Jennifer Thomas advised she would like to see us moving forward on the harm reduction side and possibly having some safe injection sites in the community. This would probably stop most of the gatherings outdoors, as they would have a safe place to go.
- Tana Troniak advised that the drop in centre in the downtown core really helped because people would talk to the workers about some of the issues they are encountering and the workers would help them out by connecting them with the right services needed at that time.
- Henry Wall advised that KDSB can fund a drop in centre, he just needs to be aware of where it is going to be.
- Susan advised that Tana and herself have been looking for a space downtown, but cannot find an available location.

**Long Term Solutions:**

- Jennifer Thomas advised that the community needs more supportive housing, as the only have 20 rooms available and if they could build another 20 rooms they would be filled for sure.
- Chair Darlene Angeconeb advised that the Mayor and the OPP have asked the Government for money to build a detox centre to take these people to instead of jail. This would allow them to get the treatment they so desperately need.

Inspector Karl Duewel advised that He would like to know if the camp is going to stay, how will the public be kept safe and if it's going to go, how as community organizations is this going to be handled in regards to the taking down of the camp?

He suggested that the different organizations go in and speak with the members of the camps and give them pamphlets with options, i.e.: the shelter will help to send them home, they can stay at the shelter if they don't want to go home etc. This has to be an immediate plan as it is not safe to allow it to stay up.

Susan Barclay advised that in the short term they need to approach people as individuals and that if the NODIN outreach workers could take the lead on this it would be great and that she has background information on most of the occupants that she would share with NODIN.

**Sherry Baum left the meeting at 11:22 a.m. with regrets.**

**Henry Wall rejoined the meeting at 11:26 a.m.**

**Joanna Jelenic left the meeting at 11:30 a.m. with regrets.**

**Dave Hamilton left the meeting at 11:30 a.m. with regrets.**

Henry Wall advised that they are seeing similar situations happening in other communities like Kenora and Dryden. There are similar housing complexes like Nitawin in Dryden that are near the camps and are experiencing the same circumstances. Until the safety concerns are addressed they are keeping those housing complexes empty.

Mayor Lawrance advised that taking down the camp should not be all police lead, but they are the best agency to be co-ordinating the effort and perhaps play a background figure in the actual take down of the camp. The Municipality will have a presence as well and it will be done in a respectful manner.



Lindsay Gillett advised that she is a little concerned about how involved NODIN should be with the actual dismantling of the camp as her workers have built up trust with some of these people living in the camp and is afraid that if they are directly involved it would break that trust.

Inspector Duewel suggested that the Police Services Board and the other agencies on the call be part of some messaging being put out to the community. So it shows that everyone is doing this as a team.

Jennifer Thomas advised that she probably could establish a team at the Friendship Centre to go into the camp and talk with the occupants about what is going to happen and try to get them connected to the right services if that is what they choose to do.

Susan Barclay advised that her and her staff will work with the OPP in anyway they can to talk to the residents of the camp and advise them of what is going to happen.

Mayor Lawrance asked Michelle Larose if the Municipality could prepare a one-page correspondence that comes from the Police Services Board and the other agencies that sums up the direction that we are taking and that the camp will be coming down? This letter can be provided to the different agencies and they can distribute it to their clients who live in the camp.

**8. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next Regular Police Service Meeting will be held on Wednesday July 21, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom Meeting.

**9. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**Moved By: Christine Sawanis**

**Seconded By: Doug Lawrance**

THAT the June 23, 2021 meeting of the Special Police Services Board be adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

**CARRIED**

Adopted as presented this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

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Darlene Angecone, Chairperson

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Michelle Larose, Staff Resource