



ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE CHIEF OF POLICE

Cobourg Police Service

Paul VandeGraaf
Chief of Police

Board Report:

In Camera Session: NO

Date of report: January 12, 2021
Date of meeting: January 19, 2021

Mr. D. Pepper, Chair
And members of the
Cobourg Police Services Board

Subject: Management of Police Records

Chief's Recommendation: "That the Cobourg Police Services Board receives the following for information."

Motion: "That the Cobourg Police Services Board receives the report."

Background:

Subject to the Police Services Act of Ontario and associated regulations it is incumbent on the Chief of Police to ensure that there is a Procedure covering the Management of Police Records. As per the Adequacy and Effectiveness Standards O. Reg 3/99, this Procedure, commonly known as AI-007, covers all elements of the expectations for our records retention. In 2020 the Provincial LEARN (Law Enforcement and Records (managers) Network) committee released a long-awaited retention tool kit. This tool kit was exhaustive in its content and resources.

As such, an immediate review of our current status for record retention was undertaken.

Report

As a result, if the release of the new LEARN tool kit, it was identified that application of the previous Board By-Law had not been current. In fact, there had been very little destruction of any records for many years. Immediately, Ms. Christine Zealand was assigned the duties of adapting the tool kit to our use and completing the update of the associated Procedure. This was not a new position, rather it was assigned to Ms. Zealand as a new duty in her role in Executive Services.

On September 14, 2020 after months of planning the Cobourg Police Services Board Retention Bylaw was assumed by the Cobourg Police Service as the Management of Police Records Procedure (AI-007) and from there a retention schedule was created. Prior to the approval date we prepared for the purging of 25 years' worth of records, files, videos etc.

Three months were spent in the basement and the storage room meticulously going through box after box of records and files to determine what could be destroyed and what had to be retained. Sexual assault cases are one of the longest retained documents and cannot be destroyed for 25 years. All records pertaining to sexual assaults, less than 25 years old, were boxed up appropriately and restored until such time they can be destroyed. There were some documents that were retained for historic purposes such as a schedule from the 1960's as well as numerous newspaper clippings.

All boxes that were able to be destroyed were stored until such time the final approval was made on AI-007, a shredding truck was booked and a large destruction of the documents could be completed on site at the Cobourg Police Station. This was done on September 18, 2020 and approximately 220 boxes have been destroyed to date, from all departments, since the inception of AI-007.

The purging of documents is ongoing as we move through each department more thoroughly and bring everything up to the most current retention periods through the Cobourg Police Service.

The process for following our Retention Bylaw is the following:

- Refer to retention periods provided by the Law Enforcement And Records (Managers) Network (LEARN) which we were able to compile into a retention schedule for the Cobourg Police Service.
- Purge documents based on the retention schedule
- Provide the "Request for the purging of police documents" form to Chief of Police for final approval (attached)
- Destroy documents in the manner outlined by LEARN
- Keep an ongoing retention schedule record that tracks all documents that have been purged by:
 - Subject
 - Description
 - Date of Record
 - Date Collected
 - By Whom
 - Authorized by Chief
 - Date Destroyed
 - By Whom

Conclusion

This task was monumental due to over two decades of record stock piling. The Cobourg Police Service is almost current in all areas. The remaining areas to be completed will be surveyed and complaint to 2021 by the end of the first quarter 2021.

The next step for later in 2021 will be the destruction of digital or electronic records, which will be another monumental task set before our team. We would not have gained this level of success without the amazing job performance of our team led by Ms. Zealand. As Chief of Police, I can safely say that we are currently exceeding any Provincial Standard as stated in AI-007.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul VandeGraaf
Chief of Police