



## Township of Esquimalt

# TOWN HALL MEETING

Tuesday, June 2, 2009  
Esquimalt Municipal Hall, Council Chambers  
7:00 pm

## NOTES

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In attendance were; Mayor Barbara Desjardins, Township of Esquimalt; Chief Jamie Graham, Victoria Police Department; and Inspector Darrell McLean, West Division, Victoria Police Department

Mayor Desjardins advised that the purpose of this meeting is to get public input and have dialogue with the community regarding their concerns with policing in Esquimalt.

### **Mayor Desjardins introduced Chief Jamie Graham, Victoria Police Department**

Chief Graham gave a brief summary of his background. He started with the City of Victoria on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 as the Chief Constable and has a contract with the Police Board for five years. He noted that there is a police audit underway which includes the relationship between Victoria and Esquimalt. A report with the outcome of the audit will be produced and will either justify or recommend changes to the current system. Policing is a community service. He commented on the Crime Free Multi Housing project, run by Constable Derek Tolmie, which has had great results in the community. They train management and residents of apartment buildings. He recommended that if residents have a concern with tenants in a housing unit to contact the Victoria Police Department.

The rationale behind Esquimalt paying more for their policing services is that Esquimalt has more crime than other local municipalities. Victoria's crime rate is one of the highest in Canada and there are approximately 70 cases per officer.

### **Inspector Darrell McLean, West Division, Victoria Police Department was introduced**

Inspector McLean gave a brief summary of his background and that he started with West Division on June 1, 2009. He looks forward to working with the community and invited residents to stop by the office or give him a call.

Mayor Desjardins reported on the decision to request an audit of police services in the municipality. The community has concerns with the quality of policing, the perception that there is slower service to Esquimalt and also, that there is minimal police presence in the community. The key concerns from Mayor and Council are: does the level of service correlate to the cost of service; is the current cost formula reasonable; and the need to review the governance model for the Police Board.

### **PUBLIC INPUT FROM THE COMMUNITY**

Lorne Newson – noted that he was in policing since 1954 and a resident since 1978. He is suspicious of the word audit and that if it is not done properly will tell exactly what it set out to do. He expressed concern as a taxpayer. When a municipality contracts with another municipality, it loses its sovereignty. The police are deserving of respect. What about amalgamation of policing, why not have an RCMP detachment here in Esquimalt.

Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
Online Public Input

**1. What are the strengths of current policing in Esquimalt?**

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During a recent issue with a group of "young adults" renting a house across the street and causing disruption to the neighbourhood, I was pleased with the service I received from the Community Resource Officer. She contacted the owners who were unaware of the problems her tenants were causing. The tenants have now been evicted and the area is quiet again. It's nice to have a local police presence in the community

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Ready access to considerable resources and specially equipped units and services.

First of all, thanks for asking. Some of my comments may bounce around a bit, however, it is a bit awkward to follow from section to section in the survey form in this format. We do have a good base of services in Esquimalt and a good team of police assigned to us. I had the opportunity a few months ago to visit our Esquimalt precinct, and I was pleasantly impressed with the staff working out of Esquimalt. Inspector McLean and his team are doing a very good job of building better support for Esquimalt. I like the added bicycle patrols that are now in place. Having police staff that care about the safety and success of our community. We will never have enough budget to have enough police on patrol for everything. It is about how we do the best we can within our budgets. I also like the presence along Esquimalt road in our neighbourhoods and in our parks to help ensure a safe environment. I am also very pleased with the Block Watch program being run by Bev Stewart. Bev does an amazing amount for community awareness across all of Victoria and Esquimalt to help to involve our residents and businesses in our safety. Good job. I had the opportunity to attend recent recognition event at the Officers mess. You could tell by the participation that she is making a difference. She has some great ideas for further improvements

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In theory, there are more resources behind policing in Esquimalt if we are partnered with Victoria. Having said that, when was the last time we needed all of their extra resources. Besides, there are mutual aid agreements amongst all police forces in the region, so they could be accessed when really needed.

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I have yet to see strengths unfortunately we don't see enough of them in the community anymore.

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Having a large professional force at our service

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I feel that the ability for VicPd to respond and resource major crimes and serious calls is definitely a strength.

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One thing I was pleased to see was foot patrols around Esquimalt than just the cruise by. I think in the summer, bike patrols are an efficient way to patrol Esquimalt proper. Also enables officers to check parks etc I saw they were reserve constables which I thought was efficient, easy to call for back up should the occasion call for it, especially Friday nights at teen centre and recreation centre there should always be a couple hanging around.

Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
Online Public Input

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Victoria police are very good in my opinion. I think the strengths they bring to Esquimalt are information, resources, technology and experience. I like the idea of a larger, well equipped force looking after our municipality.

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Lower cost than having our own town specific force. Good visibility doesn't feel like a "Police State" (listed in order or priority)

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The only strength that I can think of is that if there is a need for a large police presence in Esquimalt, Victoria has a large enough force to respond to that kind of situation.

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The police are more visible in the community than they were when they took over policing duties.

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Large number of units with better detection methods.

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Police present during the daylight hours. Bodies in police station to talk to. Police on foot and bicycles during the summer hours.

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They have the resources of the whole Victoria police dept behind them including special investigative tools and K9s.

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They do a good job in the case of an emergency.

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Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
Online Public Input

**2. What are the weaknesses of current policing in Esquimalt?**

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I live on a major artery, Lampson St. I must say I don't see as many patrols considering I am on an emergency route. I fear the Blue Bridge reconstruction will make our area feel "cut off" from prompt services. I think if the bridge is to be a construction zone for any period of time, that a plan should be in place to have a full service policing station on this side of the bridge during the disruption.

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With a municipal tax structure relying heavily on residential taxes the cost per house hold is incredibly high. There needs to be a push for business investment to help shift the tax burden from residential to commercial.

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I think we could do even better with community involvement and participation across both Victoria and Esquimalt. It should not just be primarily the police's responsibility to keep us all safe. We need to partner even more to help the police to help us. CrimeStoppers with TipSoft (from CrimeReports.com) is one of the tools to help citizens help our police. Challenges of working within tight budgets and fitting in with other priorities across communities. Each area has its own set of challenges. Better understanding of this and how we deal with the root cause of activity that impacts our community safety. If we shift to Saanich or RCMP, we will have different challenges and also have ramp up time. This will also impact our police members that know Esquimalt. I think that we need to fix/improve what we have. Most if not all of our police force are just people with families who care about helping to make our community safe. I expect that they have ideas on how to help us.

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Out of touch with the community. NO visibility other than numerous police cars parked at the Public Safety Building 24/7 (weekend and evenings when there isn't a cop for 5 miles yet 6 police cars parked there) , which tends to make me think of Esquimalt as 'their' parking lot rather than a community to become a part of.

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lack of presence within the community unavailable when we have contacted for assistance when there is visible issues that require police presence for example illegal drug activity, fighting, as well as prostitution within a residential street that borders on Vic West and Esquimalt - response to issues when called have not been addressed as the response on the opposite end of the phone is we don't have any cruisers available at this time - very frustrating and have quit calling and do know of and unfortunately have seen where citizens have been in danger because of the frustration of less than desirable activity taking place and police unavailable - not to mention speeding down side streets is out of control through 30KM/H posted signs and nobody enforcing it.....

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Political interference

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Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
Online Public Input

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Esquimalt is a smaller community with a population of about 15 000 people. Esquimalt expects and deserves a more community based policing model. VicPd can and does offer great services for a "Big" city model. I don't think that VicPd does deliver on the "no call too small" model. Tax payers and residents of Esquimalt expect this and cannot and will not entertain explanations from VicPd that resources were required D/T, etc. To police a city, municipality, etc you must identify with the community and be proud to protect the same. I don't see that with the current policing services provided by VicPD.

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I would like to see reserve constables hanging out at Macaulay and Esquimalt rd to grab the losers coming home from the bar who scream and holler and disturb the peace at least 3-4 times a months usually Friday and Saturday nights after closing. However at this time I also see quite a few speeders too.

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Maybe, manpower hours. We need to deter criminals from committing crimes, I wonder if more of a presence would help. Having said that, the crimes that happen in our community are not because of poor policing. They are more about social issues in my opinion. I am not sure if there is a weakness.

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Selective responses - i.e. they don't come, or come too late for minor issues. Very few weaknesses. If Esquimalt wants to see improved response, we should be willing to pay for it (i.e. overtime). We do not appear to be. This causes an imbalance of service, so will lead to a weakness for service to Esquimalt.

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Having the police actually stationed here in Esquimalt instead of downtown for response to calls. When the discussion comes up for a separate police force, we seem to have a greater presence of police here for the duration of the discussions then it seems to reduce again.

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Police sitting in Tim Horton's or Sirius Coffee in the Plaza is not my interpretation of being visible in the community. The police should have a coffee "boat" in 500 Park Place, at their expense, and should devote more time to patrolling sensitive areas where there is a history of bad behaviour present or developing. Presence is a deterrent but not when it's invisible.

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Lack of street patrol that we had with our own force.

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Having to talk to a box on the outside of the police station after normal working hours.

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They don't have a "small community" understanding of what we do here and as a result, they don't spend enough time here as individuals. The outcome is that when they have to respond to a call, they don't know the area or the people, so they're less effective.

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Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
Online Public Input

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Loss of community relations and contact. Last Saturday night I phoned to inform the police that a large number of teenagers were partying in the dark in the school playground behind my home and to suggest that a patrol car might check it out. It took seven or eight minutes before I got an answer from the report desk and then they wanted to know if I saw the teenagers doing anything wrong. It was so dark all I could do was hear them so I could not tell them they were doing anything wrong and I was about to go over by myself in the dark to check it out. I figure that just might be the job of a policeman! The report desk officer instructed me to phone back if the partying escalated. I did not bother to phone again. The next morning I went over to the school grounds where I picked up beer cans, orange juice containers and three 26 ounce empty liquor bottles. Is it not an offense for minors to be drinking liquor? This is not the first time that I have experienced a similar response in attempting to report happenings in the neighbourhood. My experiences have discouraged me from attempting to notify the police about things I see happening in our community. It seems that they are far too busy responding to more serious crimes. We have lost the personal relationship with our police.

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Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
Online Public Input

**3. Opportunities: Are there any functions or services that you want the police to perform that they are not currently performing?**

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I think that there is a hesitation from Esquimalt citizens to call Victoria police for low risk calls because of the rising costs to the taxpayer. I too think twice before calling about suspicious activity just to keep our policing bill low. I would say my neighbours also feel the same. It takes too long for Victoria police to get there if they think it is low risk and those calls only add to our costs. A small full time, dedicated local station would ensure timely investigations and responses. It would give a sense of security to the residents.

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Have a vision and then a set of S.M.A.R.T. goals, objectives, strategies, accountabilities and projects which can be measured. Be realistic in what we can get done. Be innovative. We need to think outside the box, and find ways to resolve the root cause of our crime/safety incidents. Potentially closer involvement with our community through tools like CrimeReports.com that help to build better community support, awareness and communications. We need a way to involve our community in an ongoing conversation on safety and crime prevention (such as crimereports.com - neighbourhood central). This could provide potential timely leads to our police so that they can more easily be at the right place and the right time to help to keep us safer. We could benefit from some camera surveillance of problem areas. If this is done by businesses and residents, there may be less public uproar. We need safe communities. I have cameras setup on my front and back yard as we are near a public path, and have had problems at times over the years. See new Logitech system with crimereports.com .  
<http://www.logitech.com/en-us/903/7600?WT.ac=ps%7C7259>  
[http://www.logitech.com/en-us/alert/digital-video-security-system?wt.mc\\_id=global\\_redirect\\_alert](http://www.logitech.com/en-us/alert/digital-video-security-system?wt.mc_id=global_redirect_alert) I also recently found some excellent info on Apple site on cost-effective security monitoring which is complementary to the CrimeReports and Logitech solution.  
[http://www.seminars.apple.com/seminaronline/videosecurity/apple/index.html?s=203&locs=us\\_en](http://www.seminars.apple.com/seminaronline/videosecurity/apple/index.html?s=203&locs=us_en) The world is shifting to the use of social media. Help them to use it so that we can provide more leads and also to help our neighbourhoods be safer. IF we are able to twitter our local concerns (such as does anyone know the person hanging out on our street, or have you seen our cat), we can make a safer neighbourhood. When our neighbourhoods pitch in a bite, we will have enough police as we will have a safer community. We also need a place (such as the proposed work farm a few years ago) for street people to learn new skills and get back into our community. Allowing them to live on our streets leads to more crime and unrest. If they know that they need to work get help help, I think we could reduce the problem by at least 85-90%. The other 10-15% is the advanced crime and the people that do need extra help. Open up the schools and school grounds for more evening activities in partnership with the YM/YWCA and Big Brothers and Sisters. We also need an update to our Esquimalt Strategic Plan that shows what it could like here in Esquimalt in 2020 and 2030. A vision that people buy into and help to build will help to foster a safer community. It is not just about what we are paying, and how many police we have when I Esquimalt. Lets work together to fix the right problem. Let's be a model of how communities can work together better, that

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we can be proud of... Let's consider a partnership of the VicPD with the Saanich PD. I expect that they already do this, let's see what we can do to have tools and shared resources to make this even better. Do we realize that this is definitely not just a resource problem? If we HAD 80% less money and less police force, we WOULD HAVE TO WORK BETTER TOGETHER with our residents, our business, and our neighbouring communities.... ... or we would have a lot more crime and safety issues  
Again, thanks for asking.

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Community Policing.....open and accessible.

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No

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As outlined in #2 VicPd have to police Esquimalt like as a smaller community and not take the "Big City" approach. VicPD does have the proper programs in place but I don't believe they are dedicated to ensuring the programs and functions are carried out. I see more MP patrol vehicles on Esquimalt streets than I do VicPD vehicles. I have been approached by VicPD members in Rockheights and asked if there were kids up on the "Cairn" knowing that the officer would not have checked the Cairn if I had said no. I believe that VicPD had made checking the Cairn a function. Esquimalt council must insist on dedicated police officers for Esquimalt. The police must become proactive and not reactive. Officers must become involved in the community, understand the concerns citizens have, meet with and listen to Business Owners.

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To save costs, stop sending 4 or 5 cars to simple calls, on several occasions I see numerous cars responding to calls. It would make more sense to send a couple gage situation and then have more cars show up. I read the next day in the paper it's just some idiot by himself and wonder what 8 cars are for. That's a lot of gas and manpower.

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I want to see our township helping the police to help ourselves. I also want the police to work with the township (which I am sure it already does) to help us. What can WE do? Determine where crime is a problem. Use lighting, Alarms, cameras, security, prune trees and shrubs in areas of concern. All businesses should have to maintain their buildings and surroundings so that they do not look "tired". Rental property owners should be notified if their buildings or houses are looking rundown. Their must be by-laws that can be enforced. I want the police and the town to make criminals feel very uncomfortable so citizens can feel comfortable.

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No.

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More night time patrols of the Esquimalt area, because of break and enters. Our street is used as a cut through for cabbies and others (speeding) and patrons of the pubs to avoid Road blocks. Rockheights Ave

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More foot, bike, vehicle patrols in sensitive areas such as along the beach and other known trouble spots.

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Online Public Input

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Enforce no parking when the bylaw officer off (nights & weekends)

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Manning the Esquimalt station 24/7

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I have complained at length about the speeding problem on Old Esquimalt Rd, 1100 block and the police and the mayor (B. Desjardins) have been very good listeners. Initially, they responded by sending police units here to conduct radar and digital speed boards on some occasions. However, even though they said it would take about 8-10 weeks, there is still a significant speeding problem and there has been no further radar or digital speed board on the street for weeks now. I've been at home for the last week and I've witnessed serious speeding on many occasions. For example, on Wed, 20 Oct at 1400 hrs, a small red car drove westerly past my house at about 90 kph. (no kidding). I couldn't get the licence number. Sure wish the police had been here!!!

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Refer to number 2

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Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
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**4. Barriers: With respect to question #3, what may prevent us from getting there?**

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Money money money I think Esquimalt should be the municipality that puts amalgamation on the table. In the next min. elections we should let all of Greater Victoria vote! We are a strong community, with a dedicated Mayor and Council. Barriers are temporary; we find the path around it and move forward!

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The current, what looks to be, confrontational approach to trying to work better with Victoria PD Better community involvement. Most People are busy and just want everything to just be ok. We need more community activities to get our kids off the streets and out of mischief especially at night. Our School Boards and Ministry of Education is a current major barrier to using our schools. Our schools originally were community centers and need to become them again. We need people that CAN make this work, not just tell us why not. We sued to do it and others in BC are. Consider adding senior's centers to some of our Schools. Seniors can be a calming influence on the kids and this can also add interesting activities for those seniors that are interested. - this has been done in many areas quite successfully see intergenerational schools. We need better monitoring (not necessarily by the police) of problem areas, wherever they are. Lack of "work farm" to help our street people get new skills (farming, cooking, cleaning, building, computing, etc. skills). There as one proposed a few years ago in Central Saanich. It would have helped if you optionally asked us to provide our names for follow-up.

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Attitude of higher ups in Victoria who want our money but cannot provide the kind of community policing I would like to see. The approach seems to me, to be a reactive police force for Esquimalt, where yes they will attend a call (eventually) but they are not integrating with the citizens of Esquimalt.

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lack of funding - I would hope not though knowing what we pay for property taxes in Esquimalt is much higher than some other municipalities that have their own police force!

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It all comes down to buying into the program and that starts at the top and works it way down. VicPD membership all have to understand how we as Esquimalt residents expect to be policed and accept nothing less. I do not believe this or can be delivered with the current model being provided by VicPD or its current leadership.

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I think there are more efficient ways to police, there are always savings and better ways to do things, this survey should be sent out yearly if not twice a year to business and a sampling of residents from different areas in Esquimalt.

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Esquimalt Policing Advisory Board  
Online Public Input

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Money and determination. A community with a safe reputation will be well off because that is where people will want to live. Esquimalt is a very beautiful place with great proximity to everything. We have upgraded the roads, our gardens are beautiful, we are working on the downtown core but none of this will matter if we can not figure out how to deter crime.

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A lack of resources allocated to the Esquimalt Area?

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Pleading lack of resources.

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lack of cooperation

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Resoures, resources, resources. There are only 7 police persons available to deal with speeding issues all over Victoria. This city is growing fast, and the traffic volume is increasing. No one can argue with that! Because of those two factors, people get frustrated and speed up to cut down on time wasted waiting for traffic to dissipate....hence speeders. **SOMEONE IS GOING TO GET KILLED !!!**

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Response: Esquimalt could enter into a contract with RCMP but recruitment for the RCMP is not going well. Possibly when new Solicitor General comes in. Esquimalt is currently not contracting out their police services. This may be a valuable option.

Paul Newcombe – noted that property taxes are up 5% and 24% is for policing. He commented that all the police vehicles seem large and must have high operating costs.

Response: Inspector McLean commented that post 1996 snowstorm, the department recruited 4 wheel drives to respond to emergencies, snowstorms, flooding and other natural disasters. Also, the average police officer is very tall. Because of high use of vehicles, safety issues, putting people inside the cars, costs for repairs, the larger vehicles are more practical. The Crown Victoria's are made specially for police, they are safer for officers, easy to repair and as they are bought in quantity, costs are a reasonable.

Vicki McGavich – Ms. McGavish remarked on the location of an escort service next to the consignment store on Craigflower Road. She thanked the police department on the way they handled the death of a boy last week. She feels the escort service is too close to a daycare facility. Police need to have consistency when dealing with these types of services in a community. She suggested that there needs to be a needle exchange and to have some disbursed in the community.

Dino Fiorin – Mr. Fiorin commented on the speeding, traffic safety on Old Esquimalt Road, as there are two schools there.

Response: information will be conveyed to the traffic division.

Brian Gray – Mr. Gray noted that he is one of two community representatives on the Policing in Esquimalt Advisory Committee. Residents want to see more police presence, especially on Friday and Saturday nights. Officers spend a lot of time on writing up reports, most people are not aware how much time is spent on this. He suggested the audit could look at how much time is spent on paperwork and changing legislation.

Response: Inspector McLean suggested that the system would benefit from a drug court not a criminal court. He stressed the important role that paperwork serves in the legal system. As most patrol cars are now fitted with computers, officers can write up their paperwork much quicker.

Terry Fiorin – Mr. Fiorin reported on an incident where he called the police three times and there was limited response. He commended Constable Chantal Ziegler on a great job trying to clean up the beach and that he has noticed an increased police presence in Esquimalt.

Response: Chief Graham will look into this incident. Normally, the reason the response is not immediate is that the patrol car is busy dealing with another incident in another location. If residents call the police and there is no response or an unsatisfactory response, please contact either Inspector McLean or himself as this is not appropriate service.

Gloria Edwards – Ms. Edwards feels that the police service in Esquimalt is disappointing and that she usually sees them headed back to Victoria. She reported on an incident where she was not impressed with the police response to her request for help. She also noted an additional incident where the police did not even respond. She commented that the intent of

the amalgamation was to increase the service to Esquimalt. Her concern is that there is no community involvement with police services and that Esquimalt does not have assigned officers on a regular basis for continuity. She noted that the attitude with Esquimalt being somehow inferior to Victoria is still common, officers should want to be in Esquimalt.

Muriel Dunn – remarked on speeding on Old Esquimalt Road. Another concern from the community is that the police station is only open from 9 – 5, Monday through Friday. She thanked the police for their efforts but the community wants police services available all the time.

Penny Campbell – Ms. Campbell voiced her appreciation for the police and what has been done and thank you to the SWAT team. She is concerned for her safety in Saxe Point Park and that there is no police presence there, she would like to see them there on a bike or a car. She stated the police do an amazing job but she would like to feel safe in Saxe Point Park.

Linda David – Ms. David is concerned that there is no police presence in Esquimalt/Gorge Park. There has been theft from numerous vehicles and on the weekends there are lots of parties. The crime rate is terrible in that area.

Response: Chief Graham reiterated that if residents do not feel they are getting good service, to contact Inspector McLean or himself.

The Mayor commented on the importance of recording calls made to the police to ensure that there is follow-up and to get a file number or some kind of record. If residents are not satisfied with their police service, again contact Inspector McLean or Chief Graham.

Sheila Fiorin – Ms. Fiorin remarked on unsatisfactory police services and not getting anything resolved. The police suggested that she get involved with Block Watch. She noted a concern that policies are changing and suggested that the community needs help in knowing better ways of reporting and communicating with the Victoria Police and how to follow through when service has not been satisfactory. Ms. Fiorin also gave Kudos to the municipality by installing signs stating no public access from dawn to dusk at Fleming Beach.

Response: Chief Graham noted the importance of residents recording times and dates to report on poor service.

The Mayor suggested that the municipality may be able to facilitate communication by adding information about police reporting on the municipal website.

Sandy Rozon – Mrs. Rozon is a community representative on the Policing in Esquimalt Advisory Group. She hopes this group continues to meet. Mrs. Rozon reported that 911 calls were not being responded to because they were not serious enough. There is a need for more police presence in Esquimalt.

Response: Inspector McLean advised that the Policing in Esquimalt Advisory Group will continue to meet.

Terry Prentice – Mr. Prentice asked Inspector McLean what his vision of policing in Esquimalt was. He also asked Chief Graham his vision of policing in Victoria in the next five years and in the region. He also asked Mayor Desjardins about her vision for the Police Board in Esquimalt.

He asked about coming to their offices to pick these up.

Response: Chief Graham advised that he would like to see the combined policing in Victoria and Esquimalt be the best it can make be, face the budget issue, deliver quality service, have dedicated officers and be the best police department in the country. He believes in the philosophy of community policing and working with the community to solve problems and that quality service is important.

Mayor Desjardins reported that she hoped to see the police provide the best service to the community.

Inspector McLean stated that over the next three years, the Victoria Police Department will be providing better service to this community. He has heard loud and clear that Esquimalt residents expect more physical and visual presence in the community. He is excited to be working in the community and will be out and about communicating with residents.

Mayor Desjardins advised that she meets with Kathy Mick, Council Appointee to the Police Board, and Inspector McLean monthly to help address issues in the community. She noted that she does not support stores selling crack pipe paraphernalia in this community. She does not wish to provide opportunities to allow an increase in these situations.

Joe Richards – Mr. Richards reported on information from 2004. He had attended 30 years of Police Board meetings. He wanted to know when the police force was going to be up to speed and that more police are needed for Victoria. He wants Police Board meetings in public and hopes to see people at the Joint Police Board/Council meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup>. He reported that he was robbed and that it took the police an hour to get there. He does not feel safe in Esquimalt.

Response: Chief Graham stated that the full strength of the Police Department is 241.

John Lucas – he noted that the consensus of residents was that there is no police presence in Esquimalt. He would like to see cars patrolling, go slow, and take their time so that people in the community could wave them down. Let the residents know you are here.

Bob Campbell – do we have a core of officers assigned to Esquimalt?

Response: Inspector McLean reported that there are youth investigators and rotating support from Headquarters. West Division includes Burnside and Gorge corridor. He will try to meet or exceed your expectations. Chief Graham noted that the borders for West Division are flexible.

John Costos – Mr. Costos noted that many residents are policed by military police and asked whether this would factor into the police budget and what type of relationship does the Victoria Police Department have with the military police. He misses community policing.

Response: Inspector McLean advised that the military police do not impact the police budget and that they have an excellent working relationship with the military police.

Discussion took place regarding having a regional amalgamated police force.

Steve Brame – Mr. Brame requested information on what happens in the event of a natural

disaster.

Response: Inspector McLean commented that the Victoria Police Department building is earthquake proof. The linking bridges may be lost in the event of a natural disaster. This location has the Mayor, Finance, and Fire as well as two marine response units. This community has to stand on their own two feet and be prepared to take care of themselves for 72 hours. The municipality will set up the EOC and delegate.

Campbell – how many patrol cars are assigned to Esquimalt? We need to have more units based in Esquimalt.

Response: Three patrol cars are based in Esquimalt.

Sandy Rozon – is there ever anyone in the police station at night?

Response: Inspector McLean noted that the K9 unit is based out of there and work evening shifts.

Mayor Desjardins thanked Chief Graham and Inspector McLean. She addressed the community saying that she had received input that can be taken to the Police Board and that the police have heard what the community is saying. She suggested having another Town Hall meeting in future. Members of Esquimalt Council were attending this meeting and have heard from the community. She requested that residents feel free to contact herself, Chief Graham or Inspector McLean with concerns.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.



## Township of Esquimalt

# TOWN HALL MEETING

Tuesday, September 22, 2009  
Esquimalt Municipal Hall, Council Chambers  
7:00 pm

## NOTES

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In attendance were; Mayor Barbara Desjardins, Township of Esquimalt; Chief Jamie Graham, Victoria Police Department; and Inspector Darrell McLean, West Division, Victoria Police Department

### **Mayor Desjardins introduced Chief Jamie Graham and Inspector Darrell McLean, West Division, Victoria Police Department**

Inspector McLean gave a brief summary on what he has accomplished since he started working for Esquimalt on June 1, 2009. He noted the following:

- Incorporated CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) to change the environment on areas of concern such as L'Ecole Victor Brodeur and Esquimalt Recreation Centre;
- Increased public safety regarding traffic by increasing traffic control on Old Esquimalt Road, increased School Zone enforcement;
- Increased visibility of police vehicles in Esquimalt;
- Worked with the Township on installation of a Cross walk in front of the Renaissance Retirement Home on Esquimalt Road;
- A mobile youth services team is located in Esquimalt;
- Partnered with downtown Victoria regarding working with youth sex trade workers;
- Had a West Bay Block Watch meeting;
- Have met with three tiers of management from McDonalds Restaurant on Esquimalt Road and are already making strides – have put up signs, significant increase in litter pickup and used CPTED to address other issues.

He reported that the summer action plan had a positive impact on issues in Esquimalt parks in July, August and September.

### **PUBLIC INPUT FROM THE COMMUNITY**

Dino Fiorin – Mr. Fiorin thanked Victoria Police officers for their role in the reduction of speed on Old Esquimalt Road in school zones.

Pat Hendrickson, 710 Lampson Street – Ms. Hendrickson reported on an issue and that she enjoyed the way the office staff handled the incident.

Rod Lavergne – Mr. Lavergne asked if there were still two officers in Esquimalt because of CREST. Has anyone thought of billing CREST for additional officers?

Inspector McLean responded that there are three units dedicated to Esquimalt, 2-2 person units and one singular. There are also 12 staff working out of the Esquimalt office, a K9 Unit and a school resource officer. Inspector McLean did agree there is a cost factor due to CREST.

Chief Graham reported that CREST was adopted in 2002 as a result of high profile incidents. There are still concerns with the system and the department is tracking trouble reports. The reception is worse in Esquimalt. A consultant has been hired to study the system. It may be that this is the wrong system for this geological terrain and the department may require a hybrid system. A report is expected by November to identify what is required to keep the officers safe. There is no provision to bill back to CREST. The Police Board is heavily committed to getting a system that works all the time.

Mayor Desjardins stated the bottom line is that the officers need to be safe.

Rod Lavergne - Mr. Lavergne also reported on a recent incident on Fraser Street where the constables were excellent and went out of their way to make his wife feel safe.

Chief Graham reported on a recent stabbing incident where the community came together to work with the police and solve the case. He advised that after the last Town Hall in meeting in June, he worked with staff to ensure that callbacks are positive. The public can sit in on the call centre if they wish. The Police provide a service and there has to be quality control. He stressed that if residents have an unsatisfactory encounter with a call centre, please let him know.

Muriel Dunn – Mrs. Dunn requested the open hours for the police station in Esquimalt. She asked if there was anything that taxpayers could do to increase the open hours for the station.

Inspector McLean responded that the station is open from 8:30 am – 5 pm, Monday through Friday and not staffed on weekends. There are no funds available to staff the station more hours.

Chief Graham responded that they can ask for more money but there is no more money. Very few police stations offer 24/7 police staffing. The public should call 911 if they require police services.

Mayor Desjardins advised that they are still looking at cost allocation for staffing and the possibility of reconfiguring policing for Esquimalt.

Sherri Robinson – Mrs. Robinson congratulated police on doing an exceptional job. She stated how proud she was of Constable Chantal Zeigler for doing the Tour de Rock! Great work!

April Green, 980 Wordsley – Ms. Green reported that there have been three or four arsons at her address.

Inspector McLean advised her to contact him to discuss this issue.

Terry Fiorin, 424 Lampson Street – Mr. Fiorin congratulated the police on doing a good job during the day but there is not much of a presence in the evening and traffic is bad.

Chief Graham noted that there is more traffic activity during the day therefore that is when the police are there.

Pete – Good job cleaning up Memorial Park, 60% done.

Canadian Motorcycle Cruisers – a member of the group reported that the club is a family based organization. The group was in town for a dance on September 12<sup>th</sup>. The police were aware of the event. The member reported that although the Victoria Police were aware of their presence at the Comfort Inn, they still hassled them. They were also subjected to police checks and the police drove by to check on them. They asked why they were targeted. When they asked police about it they were told it was a routine check.

Chief Graham apologized if the group felt they were unfairly treated. He requested whether they had made a formal complaint. Chief Graham stated that he would follow up with this matter.

Chief Graham reported on the Torch Relay and the fact that there may be some people who may be disruptive during the event. The Police are expecting large turnouts for the event and are providing extra security during that time. They do not get extra funding to provide security for the Torch Relay. He also reported on the Crime Free Multi Housing initiative provided by Derek Tolmie. This program puts building managers through specific training. Trouble calls have decreased on numerous buildings because of the training for this program. When a community provides Crime Free Multi Housing, it reduces taxes. The program is very successful in Esquimalt.

Mike Horner – Mr. Horner, member of Canadian Motorcycle Cruisers, reported that members have coffee every Sunday at Serious Coffee and were being photographed by the police. He advised that he has a great relationship with Inspector McLean.

Chief Graham advised him to send an email, informing him of dates and details.

Mayor Desjardins reinforced that the public needs to contact Chief Graham, Inspector McLean or herself if they have police issues that need to be dealt with.

Chief Graham advised that sometimes the police make mistakes.

Mayor Desjardins thanked Chief Graham and Inspector McLean. She addressed the community saying that she had received input that can be taken to the Police Board and that the police have heard what the community is saying. She suggested having another Town Hall meeting in future. Members of Esquimalt Council were attending this meeting and have heard from the community. She requested that residents feel free to contact herself, Chief Graham or Inspector McLean with concerns.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

## **Business Input Meeting – November 10, 2010**

### **1. What are the strengths of our current policing in Esquimalt?**

- “The Crime Free program is excellent and changed our neighbourhood for the better”
- “Responsiveness – willingness to work with citizen/business to solve neighbourhood issues.”
- “public safety; city’s looking (outside)”
- “- community liaison cop  
- accessible to Esquimalt Neighbourhood House  
- have responded to Esquimalt Neighbourhood House’s concerns when identifying issues that can’t be handled by them”
- “Visibility – I see patrols regularly & they increased on our street in response to issues.”
- “Police Liaison is great. Want to keep”
- Knowing the Community. Who are the bad guy & who are the good guys.

### **2. What are the weaknesses of our current policing in Esquimalt?**

- “Not good at listening to victim – who ends up being further victimized. Need communication skills”
- “- Valuable site of tourist attraction (West Bay beach, Saxe Point park, etc...) need more promotion  
- Improved policing means better community  
- Make one specialty for city attract more people & business coming”
- “We need a police store front in Esquimalt Rd”
- “Public Image - there is a feeling that policing in Esquimalt is secondary or satellite to downtown”
- “Lack of presence. Need foot patrol”
- “Not enough police on the ground. The bicycle patrols are a way of alleviating this.”
- “- Slow response to calls  
- Slow response after thief apprehended.  
- bike police great  
- need”

3.

### **Opportunities**

**Are there any functions or services that you want the police to perform that they are not currently doing?**

- “Proactive rather than reactive to current or potential social issues’
- “Youth Officer or School Liaison”
- “Business Block Watch”
- “Social Issues:
  - panhandling
  - open drug activity
  - new shelter
    - where will those folks move
  - recycling depot is changing e.g. more chronic homeless
  - Esquimalt is not equipped to deal with increased and/or high needs social issues
    - issues will move to Esquimalt Neighbourhood House – not equipped and not the mandate. Children and families would be impacted”
- “- Response to theft/shrinkage
  - Loss prevention – cannot hold someone long enough”
- “need police response to house alarms and business alarms”
- “More community centred approach to policing”
- “Historical/cultural site should be built”
- “Traffic control/safety”

4.

### **Barriers**

**With respect to Question # 3, what may prevent us from getting there?**

- “Not enough community involvement – this is our problem to work with police”
- “Police perception. The current attitude in the public arena may be a barrier to reaching the goals as the public may perceive the goals as not met even when they are.”
- “Police need adjust suit for economic changing”
- “The fact what we lost the Police in the first place may prevent us from getting them BACK”

## **Community Input Meeting – October 27, 2010**

### **1. What are the strengths of our current policing in Esquimalt?**

- “School Liaisons Great”
- “Current Police Inspector is Great”
- “Local office at Firehall is friendly & helpful. Police that I have met while walking are friendly & say hello.”
- “Professionalism of Individual Officers Excellent”
- “Younger Police Officers seem great”
- “When distress situation occurs, great response”
- “Reserve Constables available for functions such as Lantern Festival, Walk/Run Events”

### **2. What are the weaknesses of our current policing in Esquimalt?**

- “Must Regionalize
  - Criminal Investigations and legal services from local policing costs
  - Administrative overhead – too costly for small community. Currently dealing with too many facets”
- “Weaknesses
  - Public view of police eg. –news stories of police mis-deeds
  - Public not want to get involved – bad guys could enact retribution
  - Repeat Offenders – the revolving door
  - Plea Bargains
  - Who you know influences the penalties
  - Minimum sentences for serious crimes”
- “Fairness of service and our contribution.  
Hardly a fair Media coverage”
- “Fairness of service provided and cost of service  
Media unfair coverage”
- “Admin overhead deals with more facets of policing than community needs. This takes \$ away from ‘man on the street’ services. However, the service, when it arrives shows a high level of professional delivery.”
- “Fact that our police station in community closes. 9-5 service M-F”

- “Poor or slow response time on call  
Number of problem people pushed from downtown to Esquimalt  
Community Station closing time  
Low visibility of officers in Esquimalt without lights & sirens going”
- “Cost
  - Paying for Regional Policing
  - Only two municipalities are paying for the Regional events & Core issues”

3.

### Opportunities

**Are there any functions or services that you want the police to perform that they are not currently doing?**

- “Foot patrols important – feeling of safety  
Community events – need physical presence, not cars”
- “Establish auxiliary police to broaden the public presence  
Have an annual police-public interaction day where the public are able to tour a police station & vehicles; learn how their systems work.”
- “Visible presence @ special activities automatic”
- “Opportunity –
  - to develop policing model separate from criminal investigations
  - Regionalize criminal investigations & separate legal service and criminal investigations from local policing needs
  - Provincial support needed for criminal investigations, communities for policing ‘man on the street’ policing”
- “Foot patrols with K9s in streets & parks”
- “Buildings able to provide space to facilitate a connection with community”
- “Why don’t we amalgamation with the West Shore Communities? Rather than downtown Victoria?”
- “Town Plan opportunity to provide better space with new centre”
- “More employees to Block Watch. Neighbour helping neighbour”
- “Advertise meetings on Sports Centre and Rec. Centre to get participation”
- “Cabinet shuffle”
- “More convenience of hours with station (here) open”

4.

### Barriers

With respect to Question # 3, what may prevent us from getting there?

- “Having Victoria Police Officers monitoring public input to this set of meetings”
- “Too much police presence here”
- “Barriers
  - Current policing policy of Victoria
  - Downtown core events sets priority for police presence
  - \$ increase needed to satisfy criminal investigations vs. policing costs
  - Size of Esquimalt population & tax base limiting
  - Need priority
  - How much of policing costs depends on Navy or is it handled by the Military police”
- “Start telling the Solicitor General what to do. Don’t keep waiting for him.”
- “Cabinet shuffle”
- “Barriers
  - Money
  - Too much paperwork for police officers reduces their public presence.
  - Current legal system:
    - Protect the criminal
    - Hinder the police
    - Ignore the victim”
- “Johnson St. bridge work lessen response times?”
- “Expensive money”
- “Tax increases too high too fast”
- “Cost”
- “Time and money used in court appearances”
- “Media reporting about Esquimalt – negative events always reported”