



PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTORS' COMMITTEE  
MEETING WITH THE RCMP  
MINUTES

MA-2

**DRAFT**

DATE: February 23, 2011

TIME: 11 a.m.

PLACE: Regional District Office Boardroom, Dawson Creek, BC

PRESENT:

Directors: Karen Goodings, Electoral Area 'B' and Meeting Chair  
Wayne Hiebert, Electoral Area 'D'

RCMP S/Sgt Brad Reed, Advisory NCO Peace Liard, Dawson Creek Detachment  
Inspector Pat Egan, Officer in Charge, Fort St. John Detachment  
S/Sgt Tom Roy, NCO I/C, Northern Rockies Detachment  
Cpl Darren Woroshelo, Detachment Commander, Hudson's Hope  
Cpl Scott Hromadnik, Chetwynd Detachment  
Cpl Jim Toye, Chetwynd Detachment  
Cst Darrin Sanderson, SP Traffic Services, Dawson Creek Detachment  
Cst Gary Peebles, NP Traffic Services, Fort St. John Detachment  
Sgt Kurt Render, Tumbler Ridge Detachment  
S/Sgt Darren Traichevich, Detachment Commander, Dawson Creek  
S/Sgt Marcel Guilbault, Operational NCO, Fort St. John Detachment  
Sgt Steve Perret, Operations Support NCO, Fort St. John Detachment

Staff: Fred Banham, Chief Administrative Officer  
Trish Morgan, Manager Community Services  
Barb Coburn, Recording Secretary

- 1) Call to Order Chair Goodings called the meeting to order at 11 a.m.
- 2) Introductions Chair Goodings welcomed the RCMP officers and advised that there was no agenda for today's meeting and that unfortunately two Directors, Arthur Hadland, Electoral Area 'C' and Tim Caton, Electoral Area 'E' were not available to attend the meeting. She then asked that everyone introduce themselves.

**DISCUSSION**

- 3) Items of Business Chair Goodings asked if the RCMP had anything specific that they wished to discuss. She distributed a letter that Director Arthur Hadland, Electoral Area 'C' would like to have discussed at this meeting. The letter, from Jennifer Portious a resident in the Shady Acres Trailer Park, describes a recent incident with what she considers to be dangerous dogs.

S/Sgt. Reed advised that, as the RCMP are beginning the annual performance planning, they would appreciate input from the directors regarding the issues they are experiencing in each Electoral Area and requested that they prioritize the issues that they would like the police to address.

- 4) Next of Kin Notification Chair Goodings mentioned that there are concerns regarding how the news of an accident and who the deceased are has been spread before the next of kin can be advised. There was a recent incident where the children learned of the death of their parents before they could be properly notified.

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**DISCUSSION** (continued)

4) Next of Kin Notification (continued) She read from the February 2, 2011 letter from Rich Coleman, Solicitor General regarding who can pronounce an accident victim as deceased. In the letter Mr. Coleman advised that there is no requirement for a coroner to pronounce a death in BC. The Coroners Service is not made aware until after another party has determined that a person is deceased.

Inspector Pat Egan confirmed that this is the case; that a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner can declare a death. At that point the coroner is advised of the death which will trigger an investigation process. A paramedic at the scene calls a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, who can pronounce a death without having to attend the scene. Usually the telephone call is made by the paramedic as the medical professionals are more comfortable getting the particulars from another medical professional; however on occasion, they have pronounced a death through a call from a police officer.

It is the obligation of the police to ensure that correct identification has been made, they must be absolutely sure of the identification prior to calling any family member. In Fort St. John the RCMP contacted the media outlets who have undertaken to be discrete about releasing pictures, licence plate numbers or names until after notification has taken place.

5) Priority Planning S/Sgt Brad Reed advised that each detachment typically identify traffic enforcement, youth initiatives, alcohol and substance abuse, organized crime, and violence as concerns to be prioritized and addressed. He asked what the concerns were for each of the Electoral Areas.

6) Traffic Director Hiebert advised that in his area, which covers Tomslake, Farmington, Doe River, Rolla and south to Tumbler Ridge, the major concern is traffic and speeding. With the increased activity in the oil patch, traffic has also increased and even though the major companies do have controls on their vehicles, the contractors don't seem to. Chair Goodings agreed and stated that this is a major concern in all four areas. Some residents have also complained about tailgating and missing headlights.

The officers advised that they don't often patrol the private oil and gas roads. There has been some talk of the oil and gas companies may provide some funding toward the RCMP budget to assist with patrolling those roads. In January road checks on commercial truckers were done. When the truckers saw the large group of police officers, they were more likely to be more careful. Perhaps they could attempt to do something on a monthly basis on commercial vehicles.

7) Oil and Gas Exploration A discussion regarding the expectation that oil patch activity is to increase again ensued. There is expected to be more activity in the Cutbank and Tomslake areas which will increase traffic and the transient population.

S/Sgt Tom Roy advised that the Oil and Gas Commission had contributed a one-time only contribution of \$400,000 to the Northern Rockies Detachment toward accommodations and policing of the Seirra Yoyo Desan (SYD) Road under an agreement that guaranteed there would be police presence on the SYD.

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DISCUSSION (continued)

- 7) Oil and Gas Exploration (continued) There has been an upsurge in activity (now eleven major companies in the area) which is a concern of due diligence. They are contemplating on approaching the Oil and Gas Commission for another influx of funding to address the increase and maintain a presence on the road.
- 8) RCMP Staffing A discussion regarding how the number of officers for each detachment is determined. They were advised that the process takes into consideration the number of crimes and the population in an area. The higher the crime count, the larger the number of officers. It was also mentioned that industry is also concerned about the low number of officers in a large area and has suggested that perhaps industry and the Regional District could get together to approach the provincial government to reiterate that the crime/capita formula does not work for a region as large as this one.
- A discussion continued regarding the issues of staffing. It depends on community size, history, population and crime statistics; a wealthy municipality can support more police. Chair Goodings mentioned that there is some talk of the Electoral Areas providing some funding to enhance what the municipalities contribute toward staffing. She is sure the Directors in this region would be pleased to contribute.
- 10) Priorities Chair Goodings stated that in her area the first issue is around drugs and the drug trade, i.e., grow ops. She also stated that enforcement should focus more on the supplier rather than the user. Some of the Region's community parks have been used as havens for drug trafficking. In some parks the contractors have been diligent in reporting people who stay for an extended period of time and any suspicious vehicles in the area as well as any vandalism that occurs; in the Montney, Blackfoot, and Minaker parks in particular. There is also the Spencer Tuck Park in the region, but that is a day camp. There are also concerns of the same activities taking place in the abandoned Beatton River Park.
- There was a discussion regarding road closures due to fatal traffic accidents. It was noted that it is difficult to divert traffic in the Pine Pass; however, there have been discussions with Cariboo Road Service to put a neon road traffic sign across the highway at the west side of the Village of Chetwynd to advise travellers about road conditions and closures in the pass.
- The Rural Farm Watch in Tomslake and Farmington and the Drug Aware Society of Fort St. John were discussed. They work well for broadcasting to others regarding suspicious activity or vehicles; however, getting the word around to everyone can be slow, due to the lack of high-speed internet service.
- The Chetwynd RCMP target youth involved with drugs; traffic issues and vandalism especially with all the wood carvings they have. In Hudson's Hope, the priorities are traffic and drug enforcement. They have a 'Dare' program in the schools where an officer will go to the schools to target the anti-drug message from a health point-of-view. They also explain to the students how soon they could items such as a car if they were to save the money spent on cigarettes, etc..

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DISCUSSION (continued)

- 10) Priorities (continued) In Fort St. John; the three priorities are traffic in the downtown core; the cocaine trade and youth vandalism and boredom. In Dawson Creek organized crime and grow ops are front and center. Last year vandalism in the oil field was also a concern and with the increased activity expected it could become a concern again this year. Tumbler Ridge has the same basic concerns with traffic control and the drug trade. People driving ATV's and snowmobiles has also been a problem but a new trail system for these vehicle has been built which now makes it legal to ride on the designated paths.
- S/Sgt Brad Reed stated that is it important to maintain the line of communication. Through input and feedback from stakeholders issues can be identified and incorporated into the priority planning process.
- 11) Letter re: Vicious Dog A discussion regarding the dog attack described in the letter from Jennifer Portious was discussed. It was pointed out that Ms. Portious had contacted the RCMP who did respond and was able to capture one dog and tie up the other; however, even though the dog-owner had said the vicious dog would be disposed of, it was soon back at the residence and let loose to run around the community. It was also noted that a police officer of the Crown can enforce Section 49 the Community Charter whether there is a by-law in place or not. Inspector Pat Egan advised that he would look into the situation and report back to both Director Goodings and Ms. Portious. It was also mentioned that, in some cases, a civil suit can be brought against the owners of vicious animals.
- 12) Meetings It was mentioned that when meetings are be planned for rural communities, an attempt is made to accommodate more than one meeting at a time as the distance that the residents have to travel can be vast. Therefore, the effort is made to organize as many topics as possible in one meeting. The RCMP would be happy to attend meetings to discuss issues and concerns with the residents and to speak about priorities; how they meet, identify and address issues.
- The officers expressed their appreciation of the Directors for taking the time to meet and discuss priorities. S/Sgt Brad Reed requested that the minutes be forwarded to each detachment in order to be included in their planning process. He also suggested that another meeting be planned for the fall for the same purpose.
- Chair Goodings thanked the RCMP officers for attending the meeting and openly discussing the issues. It was unfortunate that Directors Hadland and Caton were not able to attend the meeting today; however, if they have any further concerns, they could contact the local detachment to advise of the priorities they would like to have addressed. It was agreed that the RCMP would be invited to a regular Electoral Area Directors' Committee meeting in both the spring and fall each year.
- 13) Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.