

WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO THE TORONTO POLICE SERVICES BOARD VIRTUAL TOWN HALL MEETINGS JULY 9, 10, 15, AND 16, 2020

To whom it may concern:

I am a Toronto resident invested in public safety and the reshaping of the role of policing in our city. I want to contribute some suggestions to the ongoing discussion about what community safety may look like.

Firstly, I suggest that the TPSB make Town Hall meetings and other public consultations more accessible by holding some events outside of business hours, allowing more interested citizens to make deputations. Also, while the virtual format may allow more people to attend, it requires access to the Internet which may not be accessible for all interested parties, especially while libraries have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I support greater transparency from the TPSB and the Toronto Police Services and greater accountability to non-police officer Torontonians.

Furthermore...

- I echo the suggestions of the Toronto Police Accountability Coalition that
  - the Board formally state its intent to adopt and implement the motions approved by City Council on June 29, including those pertaining to auditing the Toronto Police Service, and
  - the Board include racialized community members in the process of selecting a new Chief of Police and setting priorities for policing in the city in an ongoing, meaningful way, and publicly report how they have done so (e.g. through the Anti-Black racism unit, and an Accountability Table).
- I request the TPSB suggest introducing more training for the Toronto Police Services with greater emphasis on crisis response, de-escalation, and the impact of systemic racism in Canadian policing on marginalized communities, both for new officers and with regular (at least yearly) refresher training and re-examination.
- I request the TPSB suggest that the Chief reduce the scope and permitted uses of lethal and non-lethal weapons available to the Toronto Police Service (especially military-style weapons like chemical weapons), dispose of weapons like sound cannons, and publicly commit to not accepting or advocating for use of military-style weaponry.
- I request the TPSB proactively identify situations in which armed officers do not need to be primary responders (starting with the suggestions made in the motion by Councillors Matlow and Wong-Tam) and suggest reassigning those duties to unarmed civilians.
- I request the TPSB suggest increasing internal disciplinary options for addressing misconduct within Toronto Police Services, including broadening the scope of when suspension without pay can be applied.

I look forward to following your response to this community consultation, to future widely-accessible community consultations and to meaningful, concrete action from the TPSB toward reducing the role of reactive policing in public safety in Toronto.