

**NATIONAL
POLICE
FEDERATION**



**FEDERATION
DE LA POLICE
NATIONALE**

August 27, 2020

Surrey Police Board

Sent by email to:

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Re: Recruitment of Chief Constable

Dear Board Members:

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of the ~850 Members of the National Police Federation who currently provide policing services to the City of Surrey regarding the current rushed and cursory search for the proposed Surrey Police Services' first Chief Constable. Our Members are dedicated officers who want to continue to serve under the RCMP in Surrey, and believe this process is just the latest in a string of flawed decisions that should give the Surrey Police Board reason to pause this transition.

Selecting the first Chief Constable is one of the most important governance functions that the Board will perform. In keeping with its mandate to govern in the public interest, it is important that the process undertaken to hire this key position not mirror the perfunctory and political transition process to date. The Chief Constable selection process should be developed and overseen by the Board, well planned and executed with engagement of key stakeholders and the public. Anything less contravenes and degrades the Board's mandate and credibility.

Mayor Doug McCallum has repeatedly made public promises related to his personal desire for an expedited process for the recruitment of the Chief Constable. The Mayor's predominant will was confirmed with the announcement that the application period for the Chief Constable position commenced on August 13 and will close on August 28 at 4 p.m. The Board must question the appropriateness and thoroughness of a two-week nationwide search for a Chief Constable, when the recruitment process actually began and whether the Board's powers were usurped in the conception and haste of the process.

A two-week application period in the peak of summer for such an important position will not yield a wide range of qualified candidates. The report of the Provincial Municipal Policing Transition Study Committee (December 2019 Oppal Report) provides for a lengthy period of several months for the recruitment and selection of a Chief Constable¹. Why is the Board not working within the timelines contemplated by the Committee? Simply put, a two-week search is improper, incomplete and flawed. Our Members and the community of Surrey deserve answers from the Board on why this is occurring.

When comparing Surrey's search to that of other jurisdictions across Canada who are currently recruiting Chief Constables, it is clear that Surrey is pursuing the most rushed method for one of the most complex and delicate policing positions in Canada. Municipalities like New Westminster, Vancouver, Delta, Region of Peel, Toronto, Medicine Hat and Calgary are all conducting searches for a Chief Constable over a minimum of three months and typically a lot longer. Many of these communities are similar to the City of Surrey and have existing police departments requiring an easier transition for the new Chief than will be the case in Surrey with an entirely new force.

In Toronto, the Board is developing a comprehensive Chief selection process that will include significant periods of public consultation, seeking input from the community in a meaningful and proactive way.² The Mayor of Surrey has frequently referred to building "a modern urban police service" – words that ring particularly hollow when this recruitment process is compared to how other modern urban police forces are conducting their searches for a new Chief Constable. Why is the Surrey Police Board not engaging in a similarly comprehensive process that engages the citizens of Surrey and those who currently police this community?

Our Members remain deeply concerned that this is just the latest in a series of politicized and rushed decisions. Surrey residents deserve better than for the Surrey Police Board to go along with this flawed recruitment effort. We believe the Board should exercise its mandate, govern in the public interest, and question why the search for a Chief Constable is rushed and completely ignores public consultation.

Sincerely,



Brian Sauvé
President
National Police Federation

¹ (see page 70 to 71 of 151)

² <https://torontosun.com/news/local-news/search-for-torontos-new-police-chief-begins>