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2010 March 21

Edmonton Police Commission
171-10235 101 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5J 3E9

Attention: Joe RODGERS, Executive Director

Dear Sir,

Re: 'Lighting the Way' – A Stakeholder Conversation with Professional Standards Branch

The purpose of this correspondence is twofold. The first is to update you as to the outcomes of the PSB strategic planning process you participated in back in November, 2010. The second is to sincerely thank you for your contributions.

As you are aware, over the past number of years PSB has faced challenges in reconciling the varied expectations of a diverse group of stakeholders. Concerns have resulted in studies by external consultants as well as an internal audit of the branch carried out in 2010. Each of these processes identified perceived deficiencies and resulted in a variety of recommendations to address them. While all well intended, many of these recommendations did not address the fact that PSB did not have a stable human resource platform that deeply understood and intentionally directed its own business. In short, without stable staffing, the difficulties that were being experienced were certain to continue going forward, particularly given the complexity of the police disciplinary environment.

As a means of better understanding our business, as well as the expectations of our stakeholders, PSB initiated a strategic planning process in 2010. It began with conversations with branch staff that resulted in a new mission, values, and crest for the branch.

Professional Standards Branch Mission:

Our mission is to resolve complaints with pride, professionalism and investigative excellence. We work to deserve the respect, trust and confidence of all those we serve and support.

We Value:

- Truth
- Integrity
- Courage
- Honour



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PSB Crest:



The conversations continued in September, 2010, with our internal constituents. During this session we came to understand a couple of things. The first was the manner in which PSB was viewed by other key areas of the organization and how our work impacts upon their work. The second thing we came to understand is that the work of PSB and the people of PSB are supported by the larger organization. There was good dialogue around the challenges inherent in our environment and how best to address them. There was a clear desire to support PSB's self-improvement efforts.

The consultation process continued in November, 2010, at which time we hosted conversations with external stakeholders. This was the session you attended. This was an excellent opportunity for a diverse group of stakeholders who are rarely ever together in the same room to meet and to discuss the police disciplinary environment and, specifically, their expectations of PSB. We received excellent input about the type of PSB individuals and groups felt was required for the future.

The whole of this consultative process resulted in the development of 5 strategic objectives or pillars that will guide the work of PSB over the next 3-5 years. These are:

- **Investigative Excellence:** To carry out thorough, objective and timely investigations into complaints.
- **Talent Management:** To attract, develop and retain high quality and committed personnel in all roles in order to achieve and demonstrate investigative and administrative excellence.
- **Process Innovation:** To standardize and streamline appropriate PSB processes in order to demonstrate enhanced efficiency, accountability, and outstanding case management.
- **Marketing:** To increase awareness and understanding of professional standards and the mission of the Professional Standards Branch.
- **Customer Service:** To respond quickly, consistently and professionally to the needs and concerns of our clients and constituents throughout all phases of the complaint investigation / resolution process.
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From here our management team brainstormed, formalized, and prioritized a number of tangible action items that would support each of the pillars. These were outlined in the 2011 PSB Operating Plan. We realized that, in order to support the plan, a number of staffing and structural changes were required. These were presented to Chief's Committee and the EPC in December, 2010, in a report titled, "PSB - Moving Forward".

Although we wanted to engage in dialogue with our constituents to better understand their perspectives, the overarching goal was to take what we learned and translate it into tangible actions toward meaningful change. Over the last number of months we have worked diligently at that. This has resulted in changes within PSB that include: The hiring of a largely civilian managerial team, the restructuring of Intake Section, more rigorous evaluation of complaints at the time of receipt, expanded use of informal resolutions, more training opportunities for staff, the introduction of major case management methodologies, improvements in the quality of PSB investigations, a variety of process refinements, the creation of an executive review panel, and a move toward electronic file storage and disclosure. In short, we have identified certain goals for our branch and, as we carry out our day to day work, we are being very intentional about achieving them. In fact, a number of working groups have been established within the branch as a means of carrying out action items proposed for 2011. In short, the whole branch is involved in the efforts to achieve our strategic objectives.

This is an exciting time for PSB. This branch represents a busy and challenging assignment where quality employees can do meaningful work. I believe that our morale is positive and our lines of communication are established and open. We are working hard to better understand our work and to streamline the processes necessary to respond in partnership with others to demonstrate our commitment to effectively handling complaints. I continue to receive positive comments about our people and the work we are doing this year and have been approached by substantive rank detectives with inquiries about opportunities to work in our branch. Oddly enough, we have no current openings and our staffing has been largely stable since last summer. We are poised to move to a hybrid model of internal investigation where sworn investigators work with non-sworn, civilian investigators. The reclassification of 4 of 10 PSB investigator positions has been approved by Chief's Committee. Although we are ready to move forward with these hires, we do not have the vacancies required to accommodate the change at this time.

At this point, I felt it was important to 'connect the dots' between a number of recent positive developments and the work we collectively did as part of the strategic planning process which laid the foundation for this growth. I am thrilled with our people, our plan and our possibilities. I thank you for your valuable contributions to this process. I consider you to be an important constituent of PSB. As we continue our efforts toward improvement, I invite you to contact me at any time to discuss PSB processes or activities that seem to be working, as well as those that you feel require further refinement. I am convinced that, together, we can improve this area of EPS operations.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Neufeld', written over a horizontal line.

Inspector Mark NEUFELD
Professional Standards Branch
MN/bk