



COMMISSION CHAIR'S REPORT AND OPENING COMMENTS

I would like to start my Chair's report this month by acknowledging how much pressure the members of the Calgary Police Service have been under since our last Commission meeting.

Our city has seen a deeply concerning number of shootings, random assaults and stabbings at CTrain stations, a number of women sexually assaulted by strangers, and property crimes increasing. The random nature of many of these crimes has left Calgarians shaken, but nothing more so than the tragic death of Angela McKenzie. Our thoughts are with all the victims of these crimes, and our hearts are especially heavy for the McKenzie family in this time of unimaginable grief.

While nothing can undo the damage, hurt and loss these events have caused for those involved, we are grateful to all the members of the Service who have worked tirelessly to identify and locate suspects and bring them to justice. Over and over again, we have seen that our city is blessed to have police officers with the professionalism, expertise and dedication to protect our community and bring victims and their families some level of justice.

I was honoured to attend the Beacons of Hope event with a few other representatives from the Commission two weekends ago to show our gratitude for all that the members of the Calgary Police Service do for our community. Looking back on all that has happened in the past two months, I feel it is also important to express that gratitude here on behalf of the Commission.

Thank you.

The past two months have also been a busy time for our Commission members. We were proud last week to help welcome 26 new police officers to the Service at the Class 240 Graduation. We were also thankful we could participate in a Community Safety Townhall organized by the North of McKnight Communities Society, where we listened to Calgarian's concerns around the crime trends in our community.

Work also continues to improve the relationship between the Commission, the Service and members of the Calgary Police Service. We have had several productive meetings where we have discussed how we can better work together. Implementation of the Commission's direction that officers no longer wear the thin blue line patch continues and we now have a firm date of May 31 as being when on-duty members of the Service will be required to remove the patch.



I want to once again say that our decision on the thin blue line patch was in no way an expression of non-confidence in the members of the Calgary Police Service. The Commission and the community value those who serve and strongly support visually honouring the fallen officers who gave their lives to protect our city.

Calgarians and the Commission are grateful for the outstanding work the sworn and civilian members of the Service do every day to keep us safe.

The Commission also does not question whether Calgary's police officers wear the symbol with good intentions or to express positive things. Our unanimous decision was always based simply on the symbol having mixed meanings to a significant number of people in our city.

We look forward to continuing conversations with members of the Service on this and the other concerns they have raised.

I would be remiss today if I did not also mention that it is International Missing Children's Day. While the Amber Alert system in our province is great at helping find some of the children that go missing each year, there are many who do not meet the criteria. Today is a good day for Calgarians to look at other ways they can also be alerted to missing children, such as the Missing Children Society of Canada's Rescu app.

Today is also the second anniversary of the murder of George Floyd. His death at the hands of a police officer led to so many important and difficult conversations about policing, including here in Calgary.

Our Commission is proud of the anti-racism and police reform work that grew out of the summer of 2020. We are also thankful to the Service for all their anti-racism and reconciliation work so far and appreciate their ongoing commitment to delivering on the promises made to Calgarians.

There is a lot of work left to do, but today is also a day that we can reflect on all that we have done the last two years.