

Speaking Notes for the Toronto Police Services Board meeting January 23, 2013

I plan to speak today concerning carding, or what is more formally known as the Field Information Reports. But before I do that I wanted to make reference to another occasion when we sought to influence the TPSB in its actions.

In the year 2000, the Toronto Police Association started endorsing political candidates, contrary to section 46 of the Police Services Act. Over the following years submissions were made to this Board to try and end that practice. The Board, then chaired by Norm Gardner, showed no interest in having the Police Association endorsing of candidates end. Then Police Chief Julian Fantino had no interest in ending the Police Association endorsing of candidates. The lack of action by Chief Fantino and Norm Gardner had not come as much of a surprise. The TPA, under Craig Bromell, was endorsing Progressive Conservatives, the party that both Fantino and Gardner supported.

The TPSB attitude on the Police Association endorsing candidates started to change in 2004 when Alan Heisey was chair of the Board. On December 16, 2004, when Counselor Pam McConnell was chair of the board, and you, Mr. Mukherjee, were Vice Chair, it all changed. The Board policy became:

- (1) The endorsement or opposition of political candidates by municipal police officers is prohibited by the Police Services Act and its Regulations
- (2) Members of the Toronto Police Association or its Executive are subject to the Police Services Act and its Regulations
- (3) The Chief of Police shall communicate with the Service each time an election campaign commences to reiterate that police officers are prohibited from using their status as police officers to endorse or oppose candidates during an election
- (4) The Chief of Police shall discipline any police officer who contravenes this policy

In 2006 this Board provided detailed information to the Ottawa Police Services Board and helped them stop the Ottawa Police Association from endorsing candidates.

Unfortunately I have not seen anything like the same quality of work done by this Board on the carding issue. Others have spoken and will speak about the propriety and constitutionality of the police gathering and storing information obtained by the police officers in Toronto using the Field Information Reports.

I have followed the debate and have been aware of the efforts by TPAC and the Law Union of Ontario to get the TPSB to deal with this carding issue. What I decided to do, while waiting to see if there will be any Board action on carding, was to prepare a two-page information sheet and make it as available as possible to the young people in our city. If this information is spread widely enough, those subject to carding, who are mainly the young ethnic minority people in our city, hopefully will have enough information to be able to exercise their free will when deciding whether to provide information to the police that will end up in the police computer system.