

**Investigation Report Released on Police Response in Baby Tanner Brass Case:
Chief announces retirement to protect discipline process**

Today the Saskatchewan Public Complaints Commission released its Report on its independent investigation, findings and recommendations in regard to the response of Prince Albert Police Service members to a domestic violence dispatch last year.

There has been much public attention to this case. The background is that on February 10th, 2022 Prince Albert police officers were dispatched to a private residence to address the complaint of a domestic dispute. The police members attended and left the personal residence with the female complainant. The woman's infant child was found deceased after Prince Albert Police were called back to the residence later that same date.

Criminal charges were laid against the father, and those charges are scheduled for trial in 2024.

The Chief of Police is responsible to review the manner in which the Prince Albert Police Service and its members responded to and handled this situation, at the residence, and at the police station.

You will recall that over past months there have been offered into the media from public sources and agencies many emotional and accusatory statements and allegations as to what happened that day. At the time, to ensure transparency and accountability, to ensure compliance to Police Act legislation, the investigation of our police response to the dispatch was placed in the hands of the Public Complaints Commission, an independent provincial agency, in order that an arms-length investigation of the police handling of the matter would be conducted. The two members involved in the dispatch were taken off-duty pending the investigation.

The scope of the independent investigation was to include a full investigation of the nature and implications of the response undertaken by the two officers who attended the first call to the residence, based on legal standards imposed on police by legislation and by police conduct regulations. The role of supervising members of the police service was also investigated.

The Public Complaints Commission Report was released today with the results from its independent investigation. The Report comes to me, as Chief of Police, with evidence, analysis and recommendations for my follow up. There are 4 key results of that investigation. These are:

- #1. The officers who attended the residence were found to have had a duty to ensure the safety of persons at the residence, and had authority and cause to enter the residence. In that they did not, it is recommended that they be held accountable under police conduct and discipline regulations for neglect of duty.
- #2. The Report indicates that no neglect of duty was identified in respect of the members' supervising officers. The Report found that the two members attending the residence did not contact supervisors to ask for assistance.
- #3. As required by legislation, the Public Complaints Commission referred the matter to the Public Prosecutions for a full review. It was determined that no criminal charges were appropriate to these circumstances.

#4. The Report confirms that the investigation had the full benefit of audio and video recordings from the police vehicle and from the police detention centre. What it concluded is that much of what was alleged by private and public sources in the media was contradicted by the audio and video recordings.

Now that this Investigation Report has been completed, the Public Complaints Commission has concluded its work and involvement, and under legislation the matter comes back to the Chief of Police – to me – to consider appropriate disciplinary action. It also comes back to me, as Chief, to decide if further relevant evidence may be available to supplement the evidence the Report has identified.

This is where it is necessary to give serious consideration to my continuing role in this process.

It is very public knowledge that my decisions as Chief in this matter have become the subject of escalating criticism and personal attack from a specific core of current and past members of the Prince Albert Police Service. The media has reported that a select group has been anonymously offering a very personal criticism of me, and of members of my team, including personal attacks and allegations aimed not just at me, but also at my Deputy Chief, Farica Prince and others.

I have 25 years invested deeply in the good men and women of the Prince Albert Police Service and over 27 years in the profession of policing. Serving with these brave people, in protection of the community I grew up in, has been a privilege and an honour I consider of highest order. As a result, my decisions as Chief, decisions that may affect and cause concern in my colleagues on the service, these are decisions that weigh heavy with me.

My decision to refer the matter for an independent investigation at arms-length from the Service was roundly criticised by members preferring that the Prince Albert Police Service should investigate itself. My decision to remove the two members involved from active service pending the Public Complaints Commission's review of the matter has resulted in very vocal criticism that the Service has left those members unsupported and vulnerable. This weighs heavy with me.

However, leadership with integrity often calls for hard personal decisions. These decisions have been personally difficult for me, as have other decisions that I have made that have motivated a very persistent and extraordinary assault on my character, harassment of my family, and criticism of members of my executive team over the past 3 years. Yet I stand by these decisions, today and always, as being best for our community, for the restoration of its confidence in its Police Service, as a demonstration of the integrity that must guide us as servants of the public.

I will always stand accountable for those decisions, and am open to honest and thoughtful scrutiny, or even criticism for them. But what I did not expect from my Service and the community I trust and value, is the level of aggressive personal attack and contrived character assassination of me and my leadership team, and the cruel and misdirected emotional assault on my family, orchestrated by a select few. Largely the attacks have been cowardly and anonymous. For much of the last 3 years, it has been very public and relentless.

It is for these reasons that I will make one further difficult personal decision in what I consider is in the best interests of my Police Service and my community. The circumstances of the attacks on my family leave me in a position that, if I were to accept the responsibilities on me as Chief of Police under the Investigation Report

released today - to discipline members, or to further investigate supervising members - it could be misrepresented as biased and influenced by the manner in which my family has been treated.

In September, I offered my retirement to the Board of Police Commissioners. I was convinced by the Board's urging at that time to stay on for the balance of a second 5-year contract. I feel today, however, that I am unable to take on my next responsibilities, those under the Public Complaints Commission's Report, and that for sake of integrity I must leave those responsibilities now to be handled under the leadership of a new Chief of Police.

I am, for these reasons, and with a very full heart, announcing my retirement from the Prince Albert Police Service after 25 years. I will in the coming days assist in the transition with an effective retirement date of May 31st.

I have discussed this at length with our Board of Police Commissioners, and with Deputy Chief Prince.

We are of the common view that the Board should immediately appoint an interim Chief of Police, seconded from an external police agency, who is of highest character and can assume these immediate responsibilities, removed from any history of personal attack or defamation, and who can bridge the Prince Albert Police Service with effective leadership until a permanent Chief can be recruited and hired.

I am authorized by the Board at this time to report to the community that we have been able to arrange in cooperation with the Saskatoon Police Service the secondment of an interim Chief of Police. We feel fortunate to have arranged this appointment on an interim basis to assume the duties as Prince Albert's Chief of Police, until such time as the Board can recruit and hire my replacement. In the coming days, I will assist in this transition of leadership with further details to soon be announced on the secondment.

I would on behalf of my executive team and my Board extend our deep gratitude to Saskatoon Police Service, for their understanding and for so generously agreeing to support us in this transition of leadership. For myself, I would wish to express to my Board of Police Commissioners, for their unwavering confidence in me; to Deputy Chief Prince and my executive leadership team, for all their faithful support; and most especially, to the men and women of the Prince Albert Police Service, for the privilege of serving and protecting with them; my deepest thanks and admiration. I am very proud of all we have accomplished together. I wish you every success going forward from here.

To the community of Prince Albert, my life's home: it has been my greatest honour to serve you.

Those are my remarks. Thank you.

