

MINUTES

P.O.A. SUB-COMMITTEE TO THE LEEDS AND GRENVILLE JOINT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Members Present:

Bill Gooch, Ron Holman, Mel Campbell, Jim Garrah, Larry Dishaw, Mike Kalivas, Suzanne Dodge

Others Present:

Frank Kinsella, Roger Haley, Jim Pickard

Staff Present:

Steven Silver, Nigel White, Lesley Todd, Jennifer Stenhouse (recording secretary)

1.0 Opening Remarks

Mr. Gooch called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

2.0 Disclosure of Interest - None

3.0 Adoption of Committee Minutes – February 3, 2009

POA 2009-12	Moved by:	Ms. Dodge
	Seconded by:	Mr. Garrah

**THAT the minutes of the previous meeting, held
March 3, 2009, be approved as circulated.
Carried.**

4.0 Delegations/Presentations – No Report

5.0 Correspondence, Communications and Petitions

5.0.1 Provincial Offences Act – Streamlining Review Consultation Paper

5.0.2 AMO Comments – Provincial Offences Act Streamlining Review

5.0.3 AMCTO Comments – Provincial Offences Act Streamlining

Mrs. Todd advised that she and Mrs. Gilligan will be attending a Municipal Court Managers Conference at the end of May and will receive more information on this streamlining process. The Municipal Court Managers group has recently published a response to the streamlining review and this will be reviewed by staff this week. UCLG staff have not drafted a response as it was felt that the response from the Municipal Court Managers would cover the local issues.

There is likely no difference in how the POA is administrated in a County system vs. a City system except that larger cities have more staff. AMCTO, MFOA and the Association of Tax Collectors are also interested in the streamlining process.

Mr. Campbell spoke with Minister Watson last year about adding fines to tax bills and was told the Minister was waiting for this streamlining report. Mr. Campbell indicated that he was concerned that this report may be too forgiving noting it has to be fair not only to the accused but also to those paying the bills.

Another issue to consider from the streamlining consultation report is the “early resolution” process - the ability for someone to come and see the Prosecutor and Justice of the Peace in a less formal court setting (especially helpful in areas with shortage of Justice of the Peace staff). The Prosecutors for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville are not on staff and therefore this option becomes a cost issue. However, an individual may pay their fine after this meeting. POA staff will have the ability to look at this and review cost implications.

6.0 Information Items Available Upon Request – No Report

7.0 Staff Reports

7.0.1 Summary of 2009 Revenue

Mrs. Todd reported that the POA revenue is approximately \$118,000 less compared to this time last year. In the current economy it may be harder to collect fines.

7.0.2 Update on Courtroom (verbal)

Mrs. Todd reported that the court facility is almost ready to go. Construction is complete. POA staff and court officers have met to discuss issues that may arise (e.g., scheduling of officers time). There is now the opportunity to have a morning and afternoon court session. Currently, scheduling court times in ICON will automatically schedule a full morning before starting to schedule afternoon time and this may be an issue for officers. Staff will look at this and see what other courts are doing.

Mrs. Todd reviewed the security issues discussed with the Brockville Police Department and during POA court there are usually many officers in attendance so a dedicated Court Security Officer is not required. A process has been put in place to have additional security in place if needed.

If jail time is possible, there will be an officer there to take the defendant to a holding cell located in the main Court House. Staff are currently reviewing protocols for emergency situations and will likely mirror what the other court is already doing. Crowd control may become another issue and this will be monitored.

The first court date will be May 13.

7.0.3 Update on Collection Activities (verbal)

Mrs. Todd advised she will provide a detailed report at the next meeting but noted that there is \$5.6 million dollars in outstanding fines. About 7000 past due notices were sent out last year and about 2600 fines (\$461,000) were written off in 2008. The new CAMS system will ensure documentation is up to date on each case. Staff are preparing to send some files to a collection agency. The \$25 in-house fee and collection agency commission fees are now attached to all fines assigned to a collection agency. This information still has to be entered into the system by staff which is a time consuming job.

Staff are looking at pursuing the use of a second collection agency. If so, an area-wide RFP may be done. Mrs. Todd advised she has spoken with our purchasing coordinator about the possibly of UCLG taking the lead on this. She will discuss this with the Eastern Ontario Court Managers group at end of May.

8.0 Sub-Committee, Special and AdHoc Committee Reports – No Report

9.0 New Business

There was no new business.

10.0 Unfinished Business – None

11.0 Other Business

There was no other business

12.0 By-Laws (notice of) – No Report

13.0 Chair's Announcements – None

14.0 Media Question Period – None

15.0 In Camera – No Report

