

# Pam McConnell



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April 7, 2011

Deirdre Williams  
Board Administrator  
Toronto Police Services Board  
40 College Street  
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TO: Members, Toronto Police Services Board

RE: April 7, 2011 Board Meeting Item 3 – Toronto Police Service, Police Paid Duty – Balancing Cost Effectiveness and Public Safety

Dear Members,

I am here today in full support of the Auditor General's report on the Toronto Police Service's Paid Duty system. I urge the Board and the Service to embrace the findings and implement the recommendations contained in the report.

As a former Chair and Vice Chair of the Board, I was always of the opinion that the system needed to be looked at closely in order to identify opportunities to achieve efficiencies in the Service's budget, reduce the amount of money that the City pays its own staff for additional work, clarify by-law and permit requirements, and improve officer safety. I would like to thank the Auditor General for agreeing to the Board's request to review this system. I believe that he has written a thorough report that addresses our questions and moves us closer to achieving these objectives.

In my role as Councillor, I have received numerous concerns from representatives of local Business Improvement Areas and neighbourhood associations about the costs associated with road closures for neighbourhood festivals, the prohibitive costs of hosting events in local parks when paid duty officers are required, from families who require police escorts for funerals, and from representatives of the film industry for the burden they face while doing a job that supports our local economy. This report addresses those concerns.

I won't speak to each of the recommendations, as I support them all. However, I would like to focus on a few points that the Auditor General raises in order to highlight their significance.

We know that there are few areas within the costs of policing where we can achieve significant savings. The same is true of the City as a whole. However, by adopting these recommendations we do in fact achieve both. Of particular concern is the additional million dollars that are absorbed within the operating budget to cover the costs of administering the central paid duty office. I would hope that when the operating budget is reviewed the Board will implement a more effective and efficient administration. It seems to me that 35 staff, including sworn officers, is a lot of people to

administer a 29 million dollar system. As the auditor states, public funds should not be used for this purpose. Indeed they are used currently both within the operating budget and embedded within the paid duty fees incurred by the City.

I am also particularly troubled by the instances of non-compliance with policies that are in place to protect the health and safety of our officers. Our officers are charged with an incredibly important responsibility to protect the public which requires them to be alert and aware at all times – especially while they carry tools that can potentially be used to apply lethal force. Individuals need a proper amount of time of rest between shifts which adequately accounts for travel time. I hope that policies that protect this time are reviewed and properly enforced. In addition, the instances of paid duty jobs interfering with regular duties – such as attending court – are absolutely inappropriate.

I would also like to highlight the rates charged for partial hours and the maximum number of hours on-duty police officers can be used at work sites before paid-duty officers are required. Anecdotally, I have heard from workers in the utility industry and from our water department that there are many jobs that last just over 3 hours, therefore triggering an additional 3 hour payment to the paid duty officer. While I don't believe that there is anything sinister behind this type of occurrence, I would like the Auditor General and the Chief in the follow-up report to this audit to look at that 3 hour maximum and carefully examine when on-duty officers are required and when paid duty officers are essential and request that this policy review be conducted by the Board.

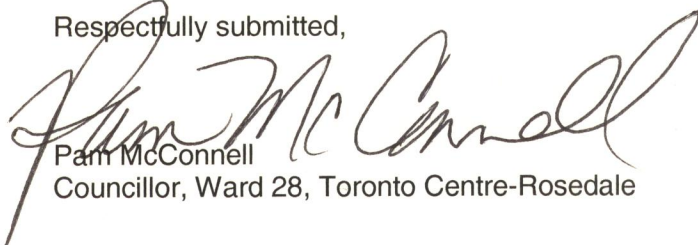
I will also be addressing the Audit Committee and City Council about the delay paid duty requirements cause the City when work is being done by our water department and workers arrive at the job site ahead of the paid duty officer requiring them to wait.

Discussions around paid duty have always been framed as if private interests are paying the cost. This report confirms my original belief that in many cases it is the public that is burdened with these costs. In a time in which we are attempting to tighten our belts this point takes on particular significance.

I would also like to point out that an exhaustive audit has not been completed on the paid duty costs incurred by Toronto Hydro, Toronto Water and other City divisions and agencies. We may discover that indeed far more than 27 percent of paid duty expenditures come out of the public purse and that there are further avenues to reduce costs. However, at a minimum I am pleased that we have an opportunity to realize the 2 million dollars in savings identified by the Auditor General in this initial review of paid duty.

In conclusion, I would like to again thank the Auditor General, Chief Blair and the Toronto Police Services Board for working cooperatively towards bringing this report forward, and hope that this spirit of cooperation continues as you move towards implementation of the recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,



Pam McConnell  
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