



NISHNAWBE ASKI POLICE SERVICE BOARD MEETING

**Chelsea Hotel, Toronto, ON
May 13 - 15, 2025**

PRESENT:

Frank McKay, Chair, Windigo First Nation
Russell Kakepetum, Sandy Lake First Nation, Independent First Nations
Stan Beardy, Muskrat Dam First Nation, IFNA (Attended Virtually)
Betty Bluecoat, Keewaytinook Okimakanak
Richard Allen, Matawa First Nations
Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council
Jason Batise, Wabun Tribal Council
DGC Mike Metatawabin, Nishnawbe Aski Nation
Barney Batise, Elder, Matachewan First Nation
Fabian Batise, Board Liaison
Terry Armstrong, Chief of Police, NAPS
Jason Poliszczak, Director of Finance (Presented Virtually)
Jeff Cooper, Inspectorate of Policing

REGRETS:

Keith Mason, Shibogama First Nations Council

RECORDER:

Kathleen Pilcher, Board Executive Assistant

TUESDAY MAY 13th, 2025

Meeting Called to Order at 9:10 am.

1. OPENING PRAYER

Barney Batise, Elder

Frank McKay did the opening comments and reminded the Board of the new expectations including the livestreaming of this meeting and future meetings, since signing on with the CSPA.

Welcomed and introduced Chief Richard Allen, Constance Lake First Nation, the new Board Member for Matawa First Nations. Introductions around the table.

Jeff Cooper from the Inspectorate of Policing introduced himself and gave a bit of his history.



MOTION 2025 – 05 – 13 - #01:

To approve Richard Allen as the new Matawa First Nations Board Representative.

MOVED BY: Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council

SECONDED BY: Jason Batise, Wabun Tribal Council

CARRIED.

2. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Frank McKay reviewed the draft agenda.

Betty Bluecoat mentioned she would be interested in seeing the DARE drug program being held in her community of Fort Severn First Nation.

MOTION 2025 – 05 – 13 - #02:

To accept the draft agenda of May 13th – 15th, 2025, as presented.

MOVED BY: Chief Richard Allen, Matawa First Nations

SECONDED BY: Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council

CARRIED.

3. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF DRAFT MINUTES:

Frank McKay:

- Minutes were emailed out and time was given to review the minutes on the google drive.

MOTION 2025 – 05 – 13 - #03:

To adopt the minutes of January 14-15, 2025, February 18, 2025, and April 23, 2025, as presented.

MOVED BY: Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council

SECONDED BY: Jason Batise, Wabun Tribal Council

CARRIED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

Business noted will be covered in reports from the Chief of Police, Finance Director, and Board Liaison.



5. FINANCIAL REPORT:

The financial report was reviewed by Jason Poliszczak, Director of Finance, highlighting a 6-month surplus of \$64,676.86 and a projected annual surplus of \$129 million. The purchase of the Sioux Lookout detachment was recently signed and is expected to be finalized by the end of the week. Questions regarding the completion of one-time capital projects for Neskantaga and Marten Falls were raised, with an update that the matter is being addressed and some leeway is anticipated due to delays. Funding flow was discussed, with assurances given that although there were election-related delays, funding should move more efficiently moving forward, and operations are not being held up.

Further discussion covered operational logistics, such as charter flight arrangements and the potential for future cost savings by acquiring organizational aircraft. The current reliance on leasing planes continues, with the possibility of using helicopters for short trips being explored as a more economical option. The difference in charter pricing was clarified, noting a reduced rate for additional charters as per the agreement, with logistics managed at headquarters. Additionally, it was noted that departments involved in public safety and funding are separate and not directly connected, which affects communication about funding disbursement processes.

Budget Overview

- Presented a breakdown of operational expenditures and funding sources for the fiscal year.
- Emphasized the importance of multi-year funding agreements to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Highlighted cost pressures related to inflation, recruitment, and infrastructure upgrades.

Audit & Financial Health

- Shared results from the 2022–2023 audit, confirming compliance and sound financial management.
- Noted improvements in financial reporting transparency and internal controls.

Capital Projects

- Discussed ongoing and upcoming capital investments, including:
 - New headquarters facility
 - Technology upgrades
 - Fleet expansion

Staffing & Compensation

- Addressed pension parity and shift schedule changes aimed at improving officer retention.
- Budget allocations for training, recruitment, and mental health supports were outlined.

Strategic Priorities

- Reinforced the need for stable funding to meet legislative requirements under the Community Safety and Policing Act.
- Positioned NAPS as a model for First Nations policing, advocating for recognition as an essential service.



MOTION 2025 – 05 – 13 - #04:

To approve the financial report dated February 28, 2025, as presented.

MOVED BY: Jason Batise, Wabun Tribal Council
SECONDED BY: Stan Beardy, Muskrat Dam First Nation, IFNA
CARRIED.

6. IN-CAMERA PORTION:

MOTION 2025 – 05 – 13 - #05:

To go into an In-Camera session for the purpose of receiving legal advice.

MOVED BY: Chief Allen, Matawa First Nations
SECONDED BY: Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council
CARRIED.

7. HR INTERNAL INVESTIGATION UPDATE:

MOTION 2025 – 05 – 13 - #06:

To accept the report from Gerry McNeilly.

MOVED BY: Chief Allen, Matawa First Nations
SECONDED BY: Betty Bluecoat, Keewaytinook Okimakanak
CARRIED.

MOTION 2025 – 05 – 13 - #07:

To return to meeting from an In-Camera session.

MOVED BY: Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council
SECONDED BY: Betty Bluecoat, Keewaytinook Okimakanak
CARRIED.

LUNCH**8. CSPA TRAINING:**

WEDNESDAY MAY 14th, 2025

Meeting Called to Order at 9:00 am.

1. CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT:

Leadership & Transition

- Chief Terry Armstrong returned in an interim role, expressing gratitude and a strong sense of duty to lead NAPS during a pivotal time.
- His presentation emphasized the significance of NAPS becoming the first legislated Indigenous police service under Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA).

Legislative Journey & Compliance

- The transition to constitution under the CSPA introduces enhancement to oversight, accountability, and operational standards.
- Officers are undergoing specialized training to meet new legislative requirements.
- NAPS is working closely with oversight bodies to ensure full compliance and readiness.

Infrastructure & Expansion

- NAPS relocated its general headquarters to Balmoral Street in Thunder Bay, improving operational capacity.
- Plans are underway for new headquarters in Sioux Lookout and the northeast region, supported by provincial funding.
- The service is expanding from 260 to over 500 officers, backed by a \$514 million investment from the province.

Staffing & Human Resources

- Focus on pension parity, shift schedule changes, and mental health supports to improve retention and wellness.
- Recruitment efforts include tuition waivers, officer exchanges, and community engagement to attract talent.

Cultural Commitment & Community Policing

- NAPS remains committed to culturally appropriate policing, rooted in the traditions of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.
- The Chief highlighted ongoing collaboration with Tribal Councils and First Nations leadership to tailor services to community needs.

Strategic Priorities

- The presentation reinforced NAPS's role as a model for First Nations policing, advocating for recognition as an essential service.
- Emphasis on stable funding, community safety, and justice transformation as long-term goals.



Recruitment and Representation: Harold Gunner emphasized the need to improve the recruitment of Indigenous officers, noting that the percentage of Indigenous officers has decreased since NAPS first started. He suggested planning sessions to address this issue and continuing to attend recruitment events.

Chief's Report and Inspectorate Requirements: Fabian Batise questioned whether the Chief's report met the requirements of the Inspectorate, and Jeff Cooper confirmed that the process had been covered.

Lease Arrangements and Community Involvement: Jason Batise discussed the interest of some communities in lease arrangements for detachments and the need to expedite this process. He also raised concerns about the policy on providing accommodations for officers and the need for a clear policy.

Service Equality and Housing Development: Chief Allen echoed the complaints about the inequality between remote and road access communities. He suggested recruiting more First Nation officers and developing housing for professionals in the community. He also emphasized the need for cross-cultural training for officers.

Community Awareness and Drug Issues: Mike Metatawabin highlighted the need to make communities aware of the changes in NAPS since it became legislated and the importance of focusing on young people. He also mentioned the ongoing drug issues in the communities.

Service Standards and Officer Numbers: Frank McKay noted that NAPS is on par with OPP standards and is increasing the number of officers to 500. He emphasized the importance of providing a fair service to all communities.

ACTION:

- Housing Policy development for Officers is required.

MOTION 2025 – 05 – 14 - #01:

To approve the Chief of Police Report dated May 14, 2025, as presented.

MOVED BY: Chief Allen, Matawa First Nations

SECONDED BY: Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council

CARRIED.

2. COMMUNITY ISSUES:

Chief Allen:

Mentioned some other communities in Matawa that may want to jump on board with NAPS ie. Long Lake and Ginoogaming, but don't know where they are at in the process. Warrant issue in the communities and overseeing their houses and collaborating with the justice system. How do we address the drug issue more? The warrant system and addressing it right away because people see it. With the Legislation will bring change but then what bylaw we can implement to coexist with NAPS and the court system that's not illegal.



Harold Gunner:

Noted the significant improvement in the presence of officers within the community, indicating that previous concerns about lack of visibility have been addressed. Efforts to engage with officers reveal that morale has notably increased, with personnel expressing excitement for future changes related to new legislation. Additionally, the Moose Factory detachment stands out as one of the strongest, largely because most of its officers are local to the area.

Betty Bluecoat:

While the winter road season has ended, officers remained busy during that period. There is ongoing concern about the impact of drugs in the community, with officers monitoring both their own well-being and the growing drug problem. The effects of drug use are particularly hard on families and children, and there is a shared sense of fatigue and frustration regarding this ongoing struggle. The community is awaiting further developments now that the new legislation has been enacted.

Jason Batise:

The Chief of Police report highlighted several key issues, including concerns about the Brunswick House detachment project, particularly regarding the impact of tariffs and uncertainty about contractor responses. There is frustration over community budgets being fixed without adjustments, though optimism remains about the upcoming construction. It was also noted that the police force has grown to 280 officers, which is considered positive news to share with community Chiefs.

Stan Beardy:

Muskrat Dam is currently the only IFNA community participating in NAPS, though there is interest from other communities in joining. Officers maintain a strong and visible presence, especially when airplanes arrive at the airport, which is seen as a positive development. Additionally, it is necessary to keep Chief and Council updated on progress regarding the new detachment.

Russell Kakepetum:

Represents Sandy Lake—one of four independent First Nations—reports a population of approximately 3,000 on-reserve and 1,000 off-reserve. The community faces significant challenges from drug trafficking, with frequent medivacs (4–5 per night) linked to drug issues. Enforcement is difficult; by the time warrants are completed, drugs have often disappeared. The Council has recently hired 10 guardians and continues to conduct raids, with NAPS present for safety. Homebrewing is prevalent, resulting in health issues. The Council handles suspicious mail and is considering acquiring a K9 unit for drug detection, especially for mail screening. Still have ongoing issues with the communications centre. Was a request from Peawanuck for an old snowmobile in the community.

Fabian Batise:

Rod Brown continues to work on implementing 911 service in the communities and there is a possibility he will present an update at an upcoming NAN Chiefs Meeting.



Frank McKay:

Raised two main issues: illegal drugs coming into the communities and bylaw enforcement and the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA). The focus on illegal drugs includes training on how to deal with the issue, hiring local security, and using a private room at the airport for searches.

Mike Metatwabin:

Highlights the complexities faced by Indigenous communities regarding policing and justice. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the geographic and historical context, noting that communities have suffered from unjust policies and unresolved trauma, which often manifest as mental health and intimate partner violence issues—challenges that policing alone cannot address. Despite increasing police personnel from 181 to 280, there remains a significant shortfall, with 520 required by legislation and 240 positions yet to be filled. The stress on the system persists, compounded by issues such as housing. The discussion is now focused on the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) level and addresses the challenges posed by the current court system.

3. BOARD LIAISON REPORT:

MOTION 2025 – 05 – 14 - #02:

To table the Board Liaison Report until the next NAPS Board Meeting.

MOVED BY: Chief Richard Allen, Matawa First Nations

SECONDED BY: Harold Gunner, Mushkegowuk Council

CARRIED.

4. DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT BOARD MEETING:

August 25-29, 2025, at Old Post Lodge, Mishkeegogamang First Nation

LUNCH

5. CSPA TRAINING

THURSDAY MAY 15th, 2025

Meeting Called to Order at 8:30 am.

1. INSPECTORATE OF POLICING PRESENTATION:

Background & Legislative Reform

- The Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA) came into force on April 1, 2024, replacing outdated policing legislation in Ontario.



- It introduces a new statutory framework for First Nations policing and modernizes board responsibilities, oversight processes, and police accountability.
- New organizations were created, such as:
 - Inspector General (IG) of Policing
 - Law Enforcement Complaints Agency (LECA), replacing the Office of the Independent Police Review Director
 - Eventual dissolution of the Ontario Civilian Police Commission, with oversight roles transferring to the IG

Role of the Inspector General:

- The IG is granted independent oversight authority to:
 - Monitor, assess, and inspect legislated policing entities
 - Investigate complaints related to service delivery or conduct
 - Issue Directions and Impose Measures when entities fail to comply
 - Publicly report inspection outcomes
- Measures can include suspending or removing police board members, dissolving a police board, or appointing an administrator.

Organizational Structure of the Inspectorate:

- Investigations, Inspections & Liaison Branch (IILB) includes:
 - First Nations Policing Unit
 - Police Services Liaison Unit
 - Policing Investigations Unit
 - Policing Inspections Unit
- Each unit has designated roles under the CSPA, including:
 - Planning and conducting inspections
 - Responding to complaints
 - Advising police services and boards

Centre for Data Intelligence and Innovation (CDII):

- Supports evidence-based policing oversight through:
 - Analytics
 - Performance measurement
 - Research and reporting
- Enhances transparency, innovation, and responsiveness in policing services

Inspection Models:

- Inspections are delivered in three categories:
 - Thematic: Broad issues affecting multiple entities
 - Issue-specific: Targeted reviews based on complaints or identified non-compliance
 - Systemic: Large-scale proactive investigations requiring extensive fieldwork

This presentation sets the stage for stronger governance, accountability, and culturally responsive policing tailored to First Nations communities.



2. SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT (SIU) PRESENTATION:

Mission & Core Mandate:

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is a civilian law enforcement agency established to investigate incidents involving police where a civilian has:

- Experienced serious injury
- Been subjected to sexual assault
- Died due to police involvement
- Been affected by the discharge of a firearm

Its purpose is to build public trust by ensuring accountability and transparency in such investigations. The guiding principle: One Law, meaning everyone is subject to the same legal standards—including police officers.

Historical Foundations:

SIU has evolved through three pivotal phases:

- SIU 1.0: Following high-profile cases (Albert Johnson, Lester Donaldson, Michael Wade Lawson), communities called for impartial oversight. This led to the formation of the Task Force on Race Relations and Policing (1988).
- SIU 2.0: Formal creation under the Police Services Act of 1990, making SIU operational and independent.
- SIU 3.0: The SIU Act (2019) expanded legal powers and further reinforced SIU's independence from police services and government.

Organizational Framework:

Led by a Director who reports to the Attorney General but operates independently, SIU is structured into specialized units:

- Legal Counsel & Executive Officer
- Investigation Division (with peace officer status)
- Forensic Identification Team
- Media & Public Outreach
- First Nations Liaison Program (FNIMPL)
- Administrative & Police Coordination (APC)

Investigation Process & Legal Powers:

Investigations are governed by key legislative sections:

- Section 15: Initiation of investigations
- Section 18, 31(1): Scope and authority
- Section 35(1), 16, 29: Reporting, compliance, and procedures

The SIU applies these laws to evaluate incidents involving “serious injury,” defined broadly to include sexual assault and firearm-related harm. Officers involved are classified as:

- Subject Officers (potentially responsible)
- Witness Officers (with relevant information)



Notification Protocols:

Police services are required to promptly notify SIU when incidents meet any of the criteria:

- Civilian death or serious injury
- Allegations of sexual assault
- Discharge of a firearm by an officer

For death investigations, SIU works in partnership with the Coroner's Office to ensure full accountability.

Community Context & Transparency:

The presentation emphasizes how SIU's existence stems from decades of community advocacy and demands for fairness. It continues to adapt based on public concerns and evolving legal frameworks to maintain integrity and public confidence—especially within Indigenous communities and marginalized populations.

3. LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPLAINTS AGENCY (LECA) PRESENTATION:

What Is LECA?

- LECA is Ontario's independent oversight agency for complaints about sworn police officers, Special Constables (Niagara Parks), and Peace Officers (Legislative Protective Service).
- It replaced the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) as of April 1, 2024, under the new Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA).
- First Nations police services, like NAPS, are included only if they opt into CSPA — which NAPS did on December 10, 2024.

Organizational Structure:

- Led by a **Complaints Director**, who must not be a current or former police officer.
- Five core units:
 - **Executive Office:** Leadership, oversight, and strategy.
 - **Case Management:** Handles complaint intake (88% via electronic forms).
 - **Investigations:** Conducts independent investigations or supervises police-led probes.
 - **Legal Services:** Provides counsel on policies and cases.
 - **Corporate Services:** Handles finance, HR, communications, data analytics, and mediation services.

Complaint Oversight Powers:

- Only deals with conduct complaints against officers.
- Separate bodies handle complaints about:
 - Police board member conduct (Inspector General of Policing)
 - Service adequacy (Inspectorate of Policing)

Notifications & Cross-Agency Collaboration:

- CSPA mandates cross-notification among LECA, the SIU, and the Inspector General.
- Notifications may come from:
 - Solicitor General



- Chiefs of Police and OPP Commissioner
 - Police boards and other oversight bodies
- These may trigger self-initiated investigations, even without a public complaint.

Self-Initiated Investigations:

- May occur when misconduct is:
 - Revealed during an unrelated complaint
 - Flagged via a notification or public source (e.g. media)
- Guided by public interest, not political or institutional preference.

Growing Caseload, Static Staffing:

- Caseload grew 40% over the last 3 years, doubling since 2014/15.
- Staffing has not increased, prompting LECA to streamline processes and improve turnaround times.

Complaints Process Highlights:

- Anyone can file a complaint—even non-residents.
- Must provide identification, signature, and contact details.
- Cannot file if:
 - You're a police officer complaining about someone in the same service
 - You're a board member or employee complaining about your own board

Complaint Lifecycle:

- Filed complaints are presumed valid unless screened out under Section 158 of CSPA.
- Investigations are either:
 - Led by police services
 - Retained by LECA
- Some complaints are resolved early via mediation or the Early Resolution Program.

This presentation reinforces LECA's role in delivering independent, transparent, and accountable oversight, particularly as NAPS transitions under the CSPA.

4. CLOSING PRAYER:

Barney Batise, Elder

Meeting adjourned at 11:00am

5. CSPA THEMATIC TRAINING

