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BV Council signs contract with OPP

Contract ensures strong police presence in township

By Gerald Tracey
 News Editor

Eganville -- The mayor of Bonnechere Valley Township said Friday she is absolutely thrilled with the township's decision to sign an agreement for contract policing with the Ontario Provincial Police.

"I think for the extra money it is going to cost us, in the long run the accountability of the OPP to the residents of Bonnechere Valley, there's no measure of money there, it's priceless to us," Mayor Jennifer Murphy said. Effective today (Wednesday) the township will be policed under Section 10 of the Police Services Act. Prior to the change, BV was policed under the 5.1 contract formula as are all of the other municipalities in the local detachment area.

Mayor Murphy described the agreement as one of the first major changes in the township under her leadership.

"I know that waste management will be another major thing, but I think that this was something I've been thinking about since our meeting in Barry's Bay (with the OPP and the Community Policing Advisory Committee)."

The meeting she was referring to took place last spring when municipal leaders in the Killaloe/Whitney OPP detachment area expressed their concerns over sharp increases in policing costs to the municipalities.

"I'm very happy that council has made the decision to go forward with it," she said of contract policing.

As part of the Section 10 agreement, the township will create a community policing office in the municipal office and also establish a Police Services Board (PSB) which will meet quarterly. The three-person board will be made up of one member of council, an individual appointed by the province and a township resident appointed by council.

Mayor Murphy said she likes the idea of a police services board over the CPAC because a PSB has more say in the style of policing delivered to the municipality.

"I know that CPAC is invaluable, but I think our own police services board, where we are able to come up with some mandates of our own in Bonnechere Valley -- and I'm not trying to create a silo here for policing -- but I feel that each municipality has its different challenges when it comes to policing," she said.

Mayor Murphy said knowing there will be a police presence throughout the township for a good portion of time is important to reducing vandalism and other crimes and just the feeling of a police presence.

"Don't get me wrong, I don't want to be over-policed," she said. "I'm not asking our OPP to sit in downtown Eganville 24/7 just waiting on crime or a problem," she said. "And I'm not asking for a heavy presence where people are afraid, but I think that a police presence gives a feeling of, maybe, relaxation to residents."

One of the biggest benefits to contract policing Mayor Murphy visualizes is more of an emphasis on community policing.

"I know that we can't have specific

officers in Bonnechere Valley at all times, however Staff Sgt. (Paul) Dowdall said the OPP tends to work zones which is advantageous because, if you have a few of the same officers around all of the time, that gives your community the opportunity to know those officers and for the officers to know your community.

"I am excited," she said. "I think this is great." Mayor Murphy said she believes in trying different things for the municipality, but also noted if something isn't working, she will be the first one to admit it.

"I'm not afraid of saying I was wrong," she said. "Let's try a community development officer, let's try a fair, let's try contract policing. I think that that's the way we move forward with our municipality, by saying yes and trying new things."

S/Sgt. Dowdall said he too is looking forward to working with the township under the new contract. While a Section 10 contract will give the municipality a greater say in the service it is receiving from the OPP, S/Sgt. Dowdall added it does not allow the township to direct policing operations.

"It speaks more to style or priorities," he said.

"There's certainly going to be a change with respect to the governance and reporting structure," he added. "There is more of a direct reporting relationship with the detachment commander and the Police Services Board (of the municipality). They will be getting a more detailed report with our monthly hours that we are putting in. They'll be able to see on a monthly basis exactly where their hours are."

Although the PSB will be excluded from directing policing operations, it will be able to recommend where more officer presence should be directed and also suggest other initiatives it would like the officers to undertake. The local board will also have a say in the selection of a detachment commander and the opportunity to rate the performance of the commander.

S/Sgt. Dowdall said the detachment will be working collaboratively to identify with the PSB where it would like the OPP to focus its attention in addition to regular policing duties in BV.

He said having an office in Eganville will give the detachment a good foothold in the east end of the large detachment area, which runs from Eganville in the east to the west gate of Algonquin Park.

The Eganville office will be equipped with a computer compatible with those in the detachment at Killaloe, allowing officers to complete reports of incidents while working in this area. Officers will also be able to conduct witness interviews, saving travel time to and from Killaloe.

"It's going to be a change for the detachment and for the community," S/Sgt. Dowdall said. "I think we need some open dialogue and I think we need to be prepared to speak up on both sides."



Getting the bugs out

Little Rory Jamieson of Eganville was asked during Saturday night's Robbie Burns event at the Royal Canadian Legion to assist in getting the bugs out of the new bass drum for the Renfrew Highland Pipe and Drum Band. Here, Rory gets some help from father, Rob Jamieson, and drummer Dan Foy who try to direct the toddler to give the drum a big hit. Over 100 people attended the supper at the annual event which included a performance by the pipe band and entertainment from Guy Jamieson and Friends band.

Ernie Bimm was a former reeve of village and community leader



Ernie Bimm, a former long-time Eganville businessman, reeve and founding president of the Eganville Rotary Club, passed away last week at age 97. He is shown at a Rotary event in Eganville in 2005.

By Leader Staff

Renfrew -- A memorial service was held on Monday at St. James Lutheran Church in Renfrew for former Eganville businessman, reeve and community leader Ernie Bimm.

Well-known in his native Eganville, Mr. Bimm moved to Renfrew following his retirement from the grocery store business and died at Bonnechere Manor last Thursday at age 97.

Mr. Bimm operated the Red and White Store in Eganville for 34 years, representing the third generation of the family business started by his grandfather, Ernest, following the 1911 fire which destroyed much of Eganville. Ernest was a blacksmith prior to the fire and his three sons, Ernest, Robert and Kunibert, grew up in his shop where the former Eganville Creamery is now located.

Ernest went into the retail food business with Albert Luloff following the fire and Alex Mills built the shop on Bridge Street where Serendipity on the River is located today.

E. Bimm and Sons were general merchants, selling everything from coal oil to whole sides of meat, wool, hay and, of course, food.

From the time he learned to walk, this was the environment young Ernie was raised in. As he grew, he spent every summer there, right up until his university days. It was only natural he eventually took over the store after first serving in World War II.

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Body of Ottawa man found

Greg Etue was missing since January 16

Brudenell -- The search for a missing Ottawa husband and father ended tragically on Monday afternoon when the body of Ottawa pharmacist Greg Etue was found in a van outside the hamlet.

Police do not suspect foul play in the death and an autopsy was being conducted in Ottawa on Tuesday. Mr. Etue, 56, was the husband of well-known CTV Ottawa anchor Carol Anne Meehan and there had been a great deal of publicity about his disappearance two weeks ago.

On Monday, members of the Ontario Provincial Police found the abandoned 2008 Pontiac Montana van parked on High Crest Lane.

Mr. Etue was living with multiple sclerosis and had been battling cancer for the last two years. Ms. Meehan, who is on the six o'clock news, has been off the air since her husband disappeared.

CTV Ottawa General Manager Richard Gray said the mood at the station after the body was found was very sombre.

"This was an extremely sad story that everybody hoped would turn out very differently," he said. "Carol Anne and her family are absolutely devastated as they were continuing to hope that her husband Greg would return home safe and sound."

"This has been a tough story for our news organization to have to tell," he said. "It's a very sad story that everyone hoped would turn out very differently."

Mr. Etue was reported missing on January 16.

Because his wife was so well known to the public, there was an unusual amount of public attention on his disappearance with Ottawa police receiving a lot of calls and tips. Since his disappearance Ms. Meehan has remained at home in Manotick with her young family.

In a press release, the OPP say foul play is not suspected, although anyone with information is asked to contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Missing man is found in good health

Renfrew -- A 26-year-old Pembroke man who had been reported missing since December 4, was located by members of the Renfrew OPP on Saturday.

Levi Jess was found in good health at a cottage in the Whitewater Region.

Mr. Jess is a former resident of the Brudenell area. He was the subject of massive search by OPP officers in the Eganville area last year when he was located along the McGrath Road.

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