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## Police Look To Improve Community Relations

Posted on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 14:22 PM

City police say they're developing a blueprint on how to deal with people in the community.

It's a policy being put together with the help of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and is expected to take several months to complete.

Part of the process is a workshop that was held this week which was headed by a Commission official.

The police have come under fire for how they treat members of the First Nation community and are currently facing a review by an independent police watchdog.

They've also publicly stated their frustration in dealing on a frequent basis with those in the city with mental health issues. (Photo supplied)





**February 15, 2017**

## **Update re OHRC & Thunder Bay Police Service**

Joint Written Statement

Ontario Human Rights Commission - Thunder Bay Police Service Update

The Thunder Bay Police Service is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan with the support of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The goal of this project is to provide organizational change and improved service delivery for all members of the communities we serve.

The Police Services Board, Senior Command and the Thunder Bay Police Association are working on a framework for this project which will address many of the key issues facing our organization. The human rights component will be one of key elements of this plan. The development of this plan will also benefit from the OIPRD's systemic review.

On Monday February 13, 2017, the Police Services Board, members of Senior Command-Administration along with the executive of the Thunder Bay Police Association participated in an educational session presented by Shaheen Azmi, PhD., Director of Policy, Education, Monitoring, and Outreach of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Dr. Azmi provided an excellent overview and examples of how change projects within organizations can address the gaps and human rights concerns which exist between police and the public.

Thunder Bay Police Services Board Chair Jackie Dojack: "The insights and knowledge provided by the Ontario Human Rights Commission will be extremely valuable to our change project. We have a responsibility to all members of community and in particular, we will work with the Indigenous community to improve our relationships."

Chief J.P. Levesque: "Monday's joint session with Dr. Azmi was an important step in helping us recognize the issues regarding humans rights and assisting us in developing a change project within our organization. We have a great deal of meaningful work ahead and I am confident that the members of this service and our community will work together for a common good."



Chris Adams, President of the Thunder Bay Senior Officers Association: "The success of this important project will require compassion and the ability to listen to the concerns of the community. As leaders, we are committed to this change."

Greg Stephenson, President of the Thunder Bay Police Association: "The Thunder Bay Police Association welcomes the additional training and assistance being provided by the Ontario Human Rights Commission. We are committed to all human rights and diversity concerns from within the Thunder Bay Police Service to our interactions with all members of our community. As we move ahead, we look forward to working with the Thunder Bay Police Service and the Ontario Human Rights Commission to ensure these obligations are achieved."

The formation of our formal plan continues. Updates and a formal announcement of the content of the plan will be made in the next few months. We are committed to the improvement of our relationships with the Indigenous community and the increase of our cultural competencies for all those we serve.

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