

Public meeting announced for review of Thunder Bay Police

OIPRD looking into Indigenous death and missing person investigations

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Thunder Bay Police Service

The Office of the Independent Police Review Director will hold a public meeting in Thunder Bay this month as part of its probe into how police investigate Indigenous death and missing person cases.

The OIPRD investigation was announced last November, and in May was expanded to include the cases of 17-year-old Tammy Keeash and 14-year-old Josiah Begg, who were found dead in local waterways that same month.

The meeting will take place September 25 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Da Vinci Centre.

In a news release, the OIPRD says topics for discussion will include:

- Police – Indigenous – community relations: perceptions, realities and recommendations
- Racism and bias in policing: reflections of the community
- Effective policing: successes, barriers and recommendations

OIPRD director Gerald McNeilly said he is inviting perspectives, suggestions and guidance from the public to help him better understand community relations and policing, as he examines "allegations of systemic discrimination and deficient investigations."

Since the review of the policies, practices and attitudes of the Thunder Bay Police service began, McNeilly and a review team have visited Thunder Bay almost two dozen times and have met with over 100 people including Indigenous leaders and communities, Indigenous organizations, community and service organizations, and members of the Thunder Bay Police Service and the TBPS board.

The OIPRD has said its review will also take into account the findings and recommendations of the coroner's jury arising from the deaths of seven Indigenous youths, TBPS investigations of Indigenous deaths, investigations of officer misconduct, and complaints received by the OIPRD.