

OIPRD report starts process toward misconduct hearing

about 22 hours ago by: TbNewsWatch.com Staff



THUNDER BAY -- The Thunder Bay Police Services Board will consider whether a hearing should be held into the conduct of several officers named in the OIPRD report on the investigation into the death of Stacy DeBungee.

A spokesperson for Ontario's Office of the Independent Police Review Director says the OIPRD is currently preparing a submission directing the chief of police to bring an application to the Thunder Bay Police Services Board to permit a Notice of Hearing under the Police Services Act to be served.

Thunder Bay Police issued a statement Monday morning on behalf of Inspector Don Lewis of the TBPS professional standards branch.



It said the police service cannot make any public comment on the case "until the OIPRD directs a hearing into any allegation of misconduct."

The statement continued: "While the OIPRD has directed hearings in this matter, a Notice of Hearing has yet to be served on the affected officers. Before this occurs an application must first be heard by the Police Services board as a result of the passage of time."

The investigation began in September, 2016.

According to the OIPRD spokesperson, specific legal requirements apply to Police Act charges where an investigation has taken more than six months to complete. A Notice of Hearing cannot be served on an officer unless the local police board believes the delay was reasonable.

Details of the OIPRD report were to be released to the media Monday by the family of Stacy DeBungee and by the chief of Rainy River First Nations.

The body of the 41-year-old man was found Oct. 19, 2015 in the McIntyre River. Police ruled the death non-criminal shortly after his body was found.

The office of Julian Falconer, which represents the DeBungee family, said in a news release Sunday that the OIPRD found that police "failed to take the most basic investigative steps such as protecting the scene, interviewing witnesses and seizing evidence."

The police board is expected to hear a request on April 6 from the chief of police to authorize serving a hearing notice to three officers who were involved in the investigation.