

## Hamilton Police Service



## MEMORANDUM

To:

From:

Chair Lloyd Ferguson

Chief Eric Girt

Date: September 21, 2017

**Reference: Hess Village Paid Duties**

Hess Village paid Duties assist police to keep the peace in Hess Village and surrounding neighborhoods and prevent crime. Not having Paid Duty Officers would lead to an increase in disorder in this entertainment area and policing would largely be re-active.

We know the demand for policing remains high, evident by the number of calls for service, even with, at times, decreased attendance. This is often due to poor weather, which is difficult to predict, or competing events.

Calls to Hess Village include; robberies, assaults, vandalism, disturbances, shots fired, sexual offences, drug/alcohol violations, weapons offences and medical assistance calls.

When handling calls at Hess Village, at night on the weekend, the incidents often involve large crowds of patrons who have been consuming alcohol or other substances. This creates an issue of public safety by those attending the immediate area, and areas adjacent to the main Village, and safety issues for officers responding to the calls. By deploying Special Duty officers, solely dedicated to deterring public disorder earlier in the night, and by providing a larger response to incidents without impacting the ability of beat officers to respond to other, equally emergent calls for service across the downtown core, the ability to increase public safety is enhanced.

Demographics have shown that patrons at Hess Village tend to be younger than those attending other bars and restaurants such as James St N, King William St. and the Augusta St. areas. The seating capacity of the establishments is also much higher at Hess versus Augusta. The 10 bars/restaurants at Hess combine for 3144 seating capacity compared to the four establishments at Augusta with 495 combined capacity.

**Supporting facts:**

- Call analysis from January 1<sup>st</sup> to September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 shows that Hess Village continues to be a high call volume location:
  - Hess Village – 675 Calls (224 Priority 1's)
  - Augusta St./John St – 341 Calls (109 Priority 1's) – 50% fewer calls
  - Downtown Core Area – 1236 Calls (321 Priority 1's) – **Hess has 54% of call volume of the whole downtown core area.**
- Calls for service throughout the City continue to increase resulting in increased demands on staffing :
  - 911 Calls in 2015: 183,793, 2016: 194,784, projected 2017: 195,521

- CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) events – 2015: 288,392, 2016: 301,730, projected 2017: 308,449
- By-law officers attend and perform counts at Hess when they are able. However they do not remain on site the entire evening – recent counts by officers indicate high attendance (unfortunately counts are not performed each evening):
  - June 17 – 2220 patrons
  - July 8 – 3000 patrons
  - July 15 – 3000 patrons (one bar 200 patrons over capacity)
  - Aug. 4 – 1500 patrons
  - Aug. 5 – 2000-2300 patrons
  - Aug. 19 – 2000-2300 patrons
- In addition in 2017 officers in Hess have dealt with numerous medical calls, multiple disturbances, and assaults. Officer presence alone prevents untold issues which are impossible to measure.

#### **Recommendation:**

- **The current by-law allows for up to 10 officers beginning in April and ending in November, deployed on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.**
- **The Service has worked with the bar owners to reduce the costs, given the change in attendance and we have not acted unreasonably.**
- **Hess Village bar owners have been charged for 4 Constables and 2 Sergeant paid duties, Friday and Saturday, in 2017. Deployment was altered to begin on the May 24<sup>th</sup> weekend and ends on the last weekend of September.**
- **In 2016 the amount spent from the HPS budget was \$31,524.48.**
- **We recommend that the HPS further reduce the policing response to 3 Constables and 1 Sergeant, continuing 2 nights a week. HPS would continue to pay for 1 Dispatcher and 3 mobile patrol Constables. This would make the bill for policing services a near even split between the Hess Village Bar Owners and the HPS/City of Hamilton, at projected total of approximately \$48,000.00 each.**