

HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

-INFORMATION-

DATE: March 12, 2020

REPORT TO: Chair and Members
Hamilton Police Services Board

FROM: Eric Girt
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: *Year End Report: Towing 2019*
PSB 20-018

BACKGROUND:

The Hamilton Police Service (HPS) began the 2019 year with 11 towing companies under contract for the towing of Security and Non-Security vehicles, as required. Since then, 5 more companies were added when the City contract C9-01-19 came into effect, resulting in a total of 16 tow companies with over 95 tow truck operators. The new contract commenced on November 1, 2019 and is for three (3) years, with two (2) one-year options.

The present and previous contract continues utilizing a Vehicle Management System (VMS), which is maintained by Extend Communications. It provides an inventory of all vehicles in the tow yards and is updated by the individual tow companies. The VMS is user-friendly and has been endorsed by all contracted tow companies.

Revenue was \$138,684.90 in 2019, compared to \$135,159.30 for 2018, and \$112,956.10 in 2017, which represents an increase of 2% and 22% respectively.

This equates to 3,892 vehicles towed in 2019, compared to 4,010 in 2018, and 3,739 in 2017. Despite fewer calls for service, an increase in the administration fee for tows under the new contract accounts for the increase in revenue per tow during the months that the contract was in force. The one-time purchase of tow operator cards by new companies, as well as replacement and exchange of cards by existing companies, also accounts for the increase, amounting to revenue of \$1,050.00. All tow operators, owners and drivers have photo identification cards and their photos are kept on file with the Hamilton Police Service. As of November 24, 2017 we started including HST (13%) in all our billing.

In 2019, 330 vehicles were not picked up by the registered owners, compared to 437 in 2018. Unclaimed vehicles were a result of various circumstances, most frequently tow/storage fees which exceeded the value of the vehicle, or vehicles involved in collisions where the owner had no insurance or no collision coverage. These figures reflect vehicles only, not e-bikes. As per the *Repair and Storage Liens Act*, these unclaimed vehicles were released to the tow companies after the 60 day storage period, removing them from the HPS inventory of seized vehicles.

In review, HPS paid out \$11,764.55 in towing fees to tow companies and registered owners. This compares to \$9,779.91 in 2018, representing an increase of 20%.

HPS will continue to monitor all towed vehicles to ensure proper procedures are followed.



Eric Girt
Chief of Police

EG/M. Schulenberg

cc: Ryan Diodati, Deputy Chief – Support
Marty Schulenberg, Superintendent – Support Services