

What is the Vancouver Police Board?

The Vancouver Police Board is the governing body for the Vancouver Police Department (VPD). The Police Board provides civilian governance and oversight of policing. Its mandate is set out in British Columbia's *Police Act*. The Board performs four main governance functions:

- sets policy and direction for the Vancouver Police Department, including strategic planning
- provides oversight of the Department's finances
- employs the Department's police officers and civilian staff
- receives and acts on complaints made about the Department's services and policies

Who is on the Board?

In 2011, Board members were:

Mayor Gregor Robertson, Chair
Mary Collins
Wade Grant
Jason McLean (retired December 31, 2011)
Patti Marfleet (term ended June 30, 2012)
Sheryl Williamson
Glenn Wong (term ended June 30, 2012)

In 2012, three new Board Members were appointed:

Wei Shao (appointed March 2012)
Donna Bridgeman (appointed July 2012)
Daljit Sidhu (appointed July 2012)

The Board has a staff of two: Shona McGlashan, Executive Director (until May 2012), and Rachelle Radiuk, Administrative Assistant (appointed Acting Executive Director May 2012).

What does the Board do?

Strategic planning

The Police Board sets the VPD's strategic goals and then monitors its progress in meeting them. In addition to briefings and updates given at public Board meetings, the Board receives regular reports on key performance indicators and progress on the VPD's annual business plans.

In 2011 the Board and Department finalized work on the 2012-2016 Strategic Plan. The Board held a day-long strategic planning session with the Chief and Deputy Chief Constables, allowing the Board and Executive to engage in in-depth discussions on the strategic direction of the VPD, succession planning, and the political landscape. During this time the Board also published its own strategic plan for the first time with a view to continually improving its independent civilian oversight, governance and strategic leadership to the Vancouver Police Department, all while reflecting the needs and values of the communities of Vancouver.

Policy Oversight

The Police Board approves all amendments to the VPD's *Regulations and Procedures Manual* (published at www.vpd.ca). In 2011 the Board approved changes to the VPD's policies on varied subjects including: patrol-based undercover operations, threats to members, rewards, parolees, seatbelts, seizing digital property, returning property to owner, domestic violence, search warrants and telewarrants, and donations and sponsorship to and of the VPD.

The Board also received briefings on topics including: internet child exploitation, gangs and drugs, crisis intervention training for police members, large event deployment, mental health issues, corporate sustainability, riot review recommendations and implementation, homicide trends in Vancouver, and freedom of information and simultaneous disclosure.

Board meetings and committees

The Vancouver Police Board meets monthly. Much of its business is conducted in public, and members of the public can attend the meetings, address the Board as a delegate, and ask questions. The Board publishes its meeting agendas and minutes online. The agendas of *in camera* (private) meetings are also posted online, together with the reason for each item being held *in camera* and a list of the decisions taken.

Over 2011, the Board heard 12 delegations and responded to questions from members of the public.

The **Finance Standing Committee** leads the Board's oversight and control of the Police Department's budget. The Committee receives regular financial variance reports and budget projections, and reviews all proposals with financial implications before they are considered by the Board. 2011 was a challenging year for the Department with extraordinary costs associated with policing the Stanley Cup playoffs, the ensuing riot and IRIT investigation, and the Occupy demonstrations. The Finance Standing Committee commends the Department for its fiscal management in this time of budget restraint.

In 2011 the Board received and responded to nine requests for access to records under Freedom of Information legislation, advised by the **Freedom of Information Standing Committee**.

The **Governance Standing Committee** oversees the Board's annual Board effectiveness evaluation, which now includes a peer evaluation component. The Committee also considers the work of the Board's Ethics Advisor, and ensures that all Board members are aware of the Board's code of conduct and conflict of interest guidelines.

The **Human Resources and Compensation Standing Committee** leads the annual evaluations of Chief Constable's performance; and considers labour matters and succession planning.

Service and Policy Complaints

The Vancouver Police Board is responsible for responding to complaints about the services or policies of the VPD. In 2011, the Board received eight such complaints. The outcomes of the Board's work on these complaints included:

- an examination of resources allocated to the Traffic Enforcement Unit
- improvement to existing training and communication surrounding checks of rooming houses
- an examination of the Department's Dog Squad training and procedures
- the implementation of improved procedures to police record check processes
- an examination of the Departments response to the Critical Mass bike ride

Other Highlights of the Board's work in 2011 include:

- In conjunction with the Province and City, the Police Board called for an independent review of the 2011 Riot
- Monitored the implementation of all recommendations coming from the independent Riot review
- Monitored the progress of the Missing Women Inquiry to ensure adequate representation at the hearings
- Continued to focus on the priority of Mental Health issues by developing partnerships with Coastal Health and implementing recommendations to improve response by both parties
- Increased the attention on complaints in order for the Board to ensure appropriate preventative actions and necessary follow-ups occur
- Oversaw the development of a new 4 year strategic plan for the Vancouver Police Department
- Oversaw the preparation of the VPD annual budget during a particularly challenging year

Contact information

For more information and contact details, please visit the Board's website at www.vancouverpoliceboard.ca