

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Shane Bourke, City Manager	DATE: July 8, 2025
FROM: Dan Lemieux, Chief Public & Protective Services Officer	MEETING: Public & Protective Services Committee
REPORT WRITER: Melissa Byers, Senior Strategic Advisor, Grande Prairie Police Service	
SUBJECT: Definition of 'Peace Officer' Amending Bylaw	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Public and Protective Services Committee recommend that Council give three readings to the attached Bylaw C-1489, being the Definition of 'Peace Officer' Amending Bylaw (the "Proposed Bylaw").

PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

None.

BACKGROUND

A recent City bylaw review identified an opportunity to standardize the definition of 'Peace Officer' across many City bylaws to formally include sworn members of the Grande Prairie Police Service (GPPS) within that definition, thereby ensuring that GPPS sworn members have the authority to enforce those bylaws. The review also identified an opportunity to replace gendered language in those same bylaws with gender neutral language in accordance with modern drafting standards. Finally, the review identified an opportunity to align appeals provisions under four (4) bylaws to the processes set out in the General Appeal Board Bylaw.

ANALYSIS

The Proposed Bylaw makes the following key changes across nineteen (19) City bylaws:

- 1. Definition of "Peace Officer":** a single, consistent definition of "Peace Officer":
 "Peace Officer" means a sworn member of the Grande Prairie Police Service, a sworn member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a bylaw enforcement officer of the City, or a community peace officer of the City".
- 2. Gender Neutral Language:** gendered pronouns such as "his", "he", and "him" are replaced with neutral terms like "their", "the person", or a specific title, aligning the bylaws with modern drafting standards.

3. General Appeal Board: the provisions within the following bylaws related to requesting an appeal are amended to clarify that such appeals shall be submitted in accordance with the General Appeal Board Bylaw:

- Appeals related to Livestock Exemption Permits under the Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw;
- Appeals related to vicious dog declarations under the Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw;
- Appeals related to decisions of the Director of Parks under the Parkland Bylaw;
- Appeals related to decisions of the License Inspector under the Business License Bylaw; and
- Appeals related to decisions of the Chief License Inspector under the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw.

By bundling these amendments into a single Proposed Bylaw, Administration is utilizing an efficient process that saves administrative and Council time.

Relationship to City Council's Areas of Focus / Strategic Priorities

Innovative Efficiencies & Economic Readiness: Enhances administrative excellence and efficiency through the standardization and modernization of local governance documents.

Quality of Life: Contributes to community safety by clarifying and standardizing enforcement authority for all Peace Officers, including GPPS sworn members.

Environmental Impact

There are no identified environmental impacts associated with this report.

Economic Impact

There are no identified economic impacts associated with this report.

Social Impact

Modernizing bylaw language to align with current drafting standards improves clarity and accessibility for the public.

Relevant Statutes / Master Plans / City Documents

- *Municipal Government Act*
- Various City Bylaws as identified in the Proposed Bylaw.

Risk

Inaction poses the risk of continued inconsistency across bylaws, which could lead to public confusion and create potential legal challenges to enforcement authority. Leaving GPPS sworn members without explicit bylaw enforcement authority would create an operational gap in public safety.

Alternatives

1. **Maintain Status Quo:** Council could choose not to proceed with the Proposed Bylaw. This would leave inconsistencies and gendered language within the applicable bylaws, fail to formally grant bylaw enforcement authority to GPPS sworn members, and fail to provide consistent appeals processes in accordance with the General Appeal Board Bylaw.

2. **Amend Bylaws Individually:** Council could direct Administration to bring forward separate amending bylaws for each of the applicable bylaws. This would require the use of additional administrative and Council resources.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Engagement has been internal, involving Enforcement Services, Legislative & Executive Services, and the City Solicitor to ensure the proposed changes are operationally sound, legally accurate, and aligned with best practices.

BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The proposed Definition of ‘Peace Officer’ Amending Bylaw is an omnibus housekeeping initiative that will ensure legal consistency across numerous bylaws while aligning them with the City's current enforcement structure, modern drafting standards, and standardized appeals processes. Administration recommends approval.

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Proposed “Definition of ‘Peace Officer’ Amending Bylaw” (Bylaw C-1489)
- Appendix B: Comparison showing amendments in affected bylaws