



Amherst Board of Police Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Agenda

Date: **Tuesday, September 9, 2025**
Time: **3:00 pm**
Location: **Council Chambers, Town Hall**

	Pages
1. Call To Order	
1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement	
"I would like to acknowledge that our gathering today is taking place in Mi'kma'ki (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw people. I would also like to acknowledge that Nova Scotia has another unique people, the people of African descent whose legacy and contributions date back over 400 years predating confederation of this land. We are all treaty people."	
1.2 Amendments to Agenda	
1.3 Approval of Agenda	
1.4 Acceptance of Minutes - June 17, 2025	1 - 2
2. APD Strategic Plan Update	3 - 3
3. APD Inspector Position Verbal Update	
4. Chief's Report	4 - 6
5. Next Meeting	
6. Closed Session	
6.1 Approval of Closed Session Agenda	
6.2 Acceptance of Closed Session Minutes - June 17, 2025	
6.3 MGA 22(2)(h) - public security	
6.4 MGA 22(2)(c) - personnel matters	

7. Adjournment

**Town of Amherst
Amherst Board of Police Commissioners
Minutes**

Date: June 17, 2025
Time: 3:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Commissioner Hal Davidson, Vice Chair
Commissioner Charlie Chambers
Commissioner Nic Furlong (via Zoom)
Commissioner Angela Ryan Bourgeois
Commissioner Caprice Barbour
Commissioner George Baker

Staff Present Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Tim Hunter, Deputy Chief
Brian Gairns, Inspector, Police
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk/Board Secretary

1. Call To Order

The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

The Vice-Chair gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

**Moved By Commissioner Barbour
Seconded By Commissioner Ryan Bourgeois
That the agenda be approved as circulated.**

Motion Carried

1.3 Acceptance of Minutes - May 13, 2025

The Vice-Chair called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the May 13, 2025 meeting of the Amherst Board of Police Commissioners were accepted as included in the agenda package.

2. Auxiliary Policing Verbal Update

Deputy Chief Hunter and Chief Pike gave a verbal update on the Auxiliary Policing program. Information item only.

3. Chief's Report

Chief Pike reviewed his report, included in the agenda package.

4. Next Meeting

Commissioner Chambers arrived at the meeting at this time.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.

5. Closed Session

**Moved By Commissioner Ryan Bourgeois
Seconded By Commissioner Chambers
To go into Closed Session.**

Motion Carried

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Vice-Chair adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk/Board Secretary

Hal Davidson
Vice-Chair

MEMORANDUM

To: Amherst Board of Police Commissioners
From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Date: September 9th, 2025
Subject: Strategic Plan Update

The 5-year Amherst Police Department Strategic Plan runs from 2025 to 2030 and utilized community and partner input to design our approach to community safety. Our strategic goals were focused on 4 different areas: Recruitment and Retention, Training, Community Partnerships and Communication.

Recruitment and Retention: Over the past few months, we have focused on this issue, starting with the development of an Auxiliary Policing Program tailored to get local people involved in our department in the hopes of also finding candidates interested in a career in Policing. While we started with five candidates for the auxiliary program, one of the candidates has already been selected and is currently attending the Atlantic Police Academy. A second 'auxiliary' is also going through our local cadet selection process for the APA Class starting in January 2026. We are also exploring how we can best attract cadets who would be interested in a career with APD. The current auxiliary candidates are receiving on-going training and have been involved in various APD functions.

Training: We have identified training areas for our members, most notably in the areas of Major Case Management and Major Case Team Leaders. As a result, we recently trained 5 people in Major Case Management by hosting the course in Amherst. We also trained 2 members in Major Case Team Leader by hosting locally. This cut our training costs drastically while providing much needed training that results in well-trained and resourced officers. This fall, we are also putting on another Major Case Management Course as well as another CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) course to better equip our members when dealing with mental health calls. We also recently exercised our Major Crime MOU with Truro, New Glasgow, Stellarton and Westville by engaging in a table-top exercise designed to test our abilities and interoperability.

Community Partnership: We continue to build relationships with our partners in promoting community safety and well-being. The CIT training is an excellent example of this initiative as well as the work being completed as a result of funding being made available for community outreach workers and Crisis Intervention workers. Our focus is working together to utilize our combined resources and strengths to serve our community. This includes working towards a Neighbourhood Watch/Citizens on Patrol Program that would be suitable for our community needs. We have also started work on the launch of our 'APD Camera Registry' which will provide the community the opportunity to be involved by supplying digital video evidence to our investigators. The web link is now up and we will start advertising shortly to get the program up and running.

Communication: We have continued to increase our communications with our community, including the use of weekly reports on police activities and regular updates/media releases. Recently, as a result of a social media post, we were able to safely locate a vulnerable senior citizen who went missing from a local nursing home. A local person who had seen the Facebook post observed the male and called Police. We had numerous first responders, including over 20 members of the Amherst Fire Department as well as the Sheriff Department and our 'auxiliaries' out assisting in a local search. We have also increased our foot patrols, especially in the downtown area, engaging with our citizens and business owners. We are also working on a media blitz to ensure that our emergency number is an easily recognized number for all.

Chief's Report
Amherst Board of Police Commissioners
September 9th, 2025
This report covers the month of August 2025



GENERAL OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

Inspector Gairns – Retirement: After completing over 36 years of policing with the Amherst Police Department, Inspector Brian Gairns advised of his intentions to retire at the end of August. Brian came to APD in 1989 from Prince Edward Island and for his first few years here, worked as our drug investigator. Fast forward a few years and Brian was promoted to Sergeant, followed by Staff Sergeant until the rank was changed to Inspector. Brian will be greatly missed by the members and staff. He has taken a new position with the Nova Scotia Health Authority, managing security concerns and issues in the hospitals, something that he had advocated for during his policing career. We will continue to work with Brian in his new role and wish him all the best!



Vehicle Collision - August 6th, 2025: A Lunenburg County woman is facing multiple charges following a motor vehicle collision on Victoria Street which occurred in Amherst on August 6th, 2025. Emergency Services and the Amherst Fire Department assisted with the call that resulted in the 33-year-old female driver facing several charges and a second person being transported to the hospital. Stacey Dykstra, aged 33, has been charged with numerous charges that include impaired driving, Criminal Negligence Causing Bodily Harm, Possession of Property Obtained by Crime Under \$5,000.00 and Resisting/Obstructing a Peace Officer. On August 6th, 2025, at approximately 10:40am, members of the Amherst Police Department were patrolling in the area of Victoria Street and came upon the scene of an accident. One of the vehicles involved in the accident, a KIA Forte, was facing westbound on the wrong side of the road and had collided with a parked car facing eastbound in front of a local business. Responding officers noted that the driver of the vehicle displayed signs of drug impairment and she was subsequently placed under arrest. During the investigation, police also learned that the KIA had been reported stolen from the Halifax area and that the driver was the subject of an outstanding arrest warrant. Dykstra had been remanded into custody. She was scheduled to appear in court on Thursday, August 7th, 2025, on the charges. The passenger in the KIA sustained moderate injuries and was transported to the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre by EHS. The matter is still under investigation.

Missing Person – August 14th, 2025: A vulnerable man was located safely with the assistance of multiple first responder agencies and the public. A patient at Gables Nursing Home was able to make his way from the building and was reported missing. When police were contacted, hours had passed and the weather had changed, with rain, wind, thunder and lightning. A Facebook post with a description and details of the male was posted and our members, and over 20 volunteers and staff from the Amherst Fire Department assisted. Additional resources from the Amherst Sheriff Department and our auxiliaries-in-training also assisted and the APD/AFD Drone was utilized. The matter was resolved when a motorist travelling on the 104 observed the male and had seen the Facebook posting. She recognized the missing person and one of our members located the person on the highway near Exit 5.

Recognition - August 21st, 2025 – The quick thinking of 2 Amherst Little League employees may have saved the life of a male who had been observed lying on the ground near the Little League field. Isaac Vansnick and Daniel Terrio had been working at the Little League field and responded, placing the male in the recovery position and contacted 911. Both were recognized by the Town of Amherst and presented with certificates of recognition for their actions.



Cram-A Cruiser – August 22nd, 2025: The annual Cram-A-Cruiser was held on August 22nd to support students by supplying school supplies for the upcoming year, including backpacks, lunch bags, pencil cases etc. Several community partners and business partnered with the Amherst Police Department for this successful initiative.



Theft of Wire – August 25th, 2025: Police are investigating theft of wire from Nova Scotia Power after the Amherst Fire Department was dispatched to a complaint of sparking power lines. On arrival, they discovered a male who appeared to be engaged in the theft of active/charged power lines. The suspect fled on foot and the Amherst Police are continuing to investigate.

Stolen Side by Side – Recovered - August 24th, 2025: Police are investigating the theft of a 2012 Polaris Razor 900xp that occurred overnight on July 23, 2025 from the Brownell Avenue area. It is suspected that it was pushed from the yard and onto Eddy Street where it was driven onto the Eddy Road. The Side by Side was recovered on August 24th, 2025 by the Street Crime Unit after information was received concerning its whereabouts. It was located in a wooded area outside of town and has been returned to the owner. The matter is still under investigation.



GENERAL OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

Police Pursuits/Failing to Stop: Police had 4 incidents of motorists failing to stop for police. This compares to 7 incidents in July, no incidents in June and 10 incidents in May.

- On August 3rd, at approximately 1:47am, patrols attempted to stop a vehicle that had been speeding on Albion Street. The vehicle, a grey Buick with a New Brunswick plate turned onto Church Street and increased speed and the officer disengaged. The vehicle has reportedly been involved in other incidents in other jurisdictions and the matter is being investigated.
- On August 18th at approximately midnight, patrols observed a Honda Odyssey with the driver's side window smashed out and damage. The plate also did not match the vehicle. When the officer attempted to close in on the vehicle and to pull the vehicle over, the vehicle sped off on East Pleasant Street. The matter is still under investigation.
- On August 26th, at 2:00pm, a Ford Fiesta fled from police when an attempt was made to pull the vehicle over. The plate did not belong to the vehicle and the owner of the plate had been deceased for many years. The vehicle was later located parked on the side of the road and was towed by police. The matter is still under investigation.
- On August 26th at 5:15pm, a blue off-road motorcycle fled from police when police attempted to stop it. The motorcycle fled through the industrial park and across several properties. Police did not pursue.

In all these cases, the pursuits were terminated as per policy and as a public safety issue. All pursuit files are subject to a review to ensure that members are following policy.

Shoplifting/Theft Complaints: In August, police responded to 15 complaints of shoplifting from local businesses. This compares to 12 In July. In total for August, police also responded to 26 additional complaints of theft. Three of these incidents were regarding gas drive-offs, three were in regard to theft of wire and there was one stolen vehicle. On August 5th, police received a report of a stolen Dodge charger from the East Victoria Street area. The vehicle had been taken sometime overnight and was located the following day in the East Hants area and had been completely destroyed by fire. The matter is till under investigation.

Homelessness Files: APD has been tracking homelessness complaints for the past few years. For the month of August, police logged 43 complaints that were associated to homelessness, as compared to 38 complaints in July. As in previous homelessness stats, the vast majority of complaints are around 2-3 of the same people. Many of the complaints are concerning trespassing type issues, suspicious persons, or well-being checks.

OPERATIONAL STATS – August 2025

Total Occurrences:	464
911 act	6
Abandoned vehicles	2
Animal calls	3
Assault	12
Assault on Police Officer	1
Assist General Public	8
Assist another agency	16
Breach of peace	2
Break and enter	8
Controlled Drugs and Substances Act	8
Sudden Death (not suspicious)	2
Crime prevention	16
Criminal harassment	3
Dangerous driving	4
Causing a disturbance	6
Driving without due care and attention	7
Fail to stop at accident	4
False alarms	9
Fraud	11
Harassing communications	10
Information file	3
Lost/found items	22
Liquor Control Act	3
Mental Health Act	11
Mischief – Damage	12
Mischief – Obstruct enjoyment of property	9
Flight from Police	4
Operation while impaired	7
Other theft	20
Person reported missing	3
Property check	7
Sex Offender Registration – Compliance Checks	4
Sexual assault	1
Suspicious person/vehicle/property	45
Theft of bicycle	4
Shoplifting	15
Traffic Collision	17
Trespass Act (Provincial Act)	22
Trespass at night	4
Uttering threats	16
Wellbeing check	15