

1. Update on Policing

NSFM represents all municipalities in Nova Scotia and works on their behalf to support strong, sustainable, safe communities. Providing policing services is primarily a municipal responsibility in Nova Scotia and NSFM has been engaged in recent developments related to the RCMP. This update is meant to ensure that all members are informed on these recent developments.

Retroactive Pay for RCMP Officers

The first round of collective bargaining between the federal government and the National Policing Federation (NPF) resulted in retroactive payments for RCMP officers below the rank of Inspector. The federal government indicated that contract partners should prepare for these costs. NSFM worked with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to challenge this decision while we awaited further clarification on what these costs would be and how they would be paid. In the presentation of the 2023 budget, the federal government indicated the decision to distribute these costs with the regular cost-share formula. NSFM worked closely with municipalities that have Municipal Policing Service Agreements (MPSA) as they received invoices for retroactive pay amounts shortly after the federal budget was announced. Minimal details were again provided by the federal government about when payment was due and how municipalities could apply for the optional two-year extended payment plan being offered by Public Safety Canada. NSFM continued to work with FCM and with counterparts across the country on the RCMP Contract Management Committee (CMC) to urge the federal government to rethink this decision and provide financial relief to municipalities. NSFM sent a letter to the Minister of Public Safety on behalf of MPSAs to make this request directly. In the end, municipalities were given the option of a two-year extended timeline ending March 2025 to pay these amounts.

The Province of Nova Scotia has also challenged this decision. The Province, as the contract holder of the Provincial Policing Service Agreement (PPSA) in Nova Scotia, received an invoice for retroactive pay costs. NSFM has written letters to both the Minister of Justice, Hon. Brad Johns, and to the Deputy Minister of the Department of Justice, urging them to absorb this cost rather than pass it on through the regular cost-sharing mechanisms. In response to these letters, Department of Justice staff have informed NSFM that the Province is pushing back on these costs by using the PPSA dispute resolution mechanism. Department of Justice staff have further informed NSFM that they have not received any response from the federal Department of Public Safety yet. NSFM will continue to keep members who are party to the PPSA informed as this dispute process develops.

NSFM Monday Memo Summary Sheet

June 20 – July 17, 2023



After meeting with the Department of Public Safety Canada directly, FCM reported that it is not likely that the federal government will reverse this decision. While NSFM stands with the Province in questioning these costs, we believe that our time and efforts will be best used preparing for other concerns that are more costly and apply to all policing models in Nova Scotia.

Update on Collective Bargaining

The first collective agreement between the Government of Canada (Treasury Board of Canada) and NPF (representing the RCMP employees) expired on March 31, 2023. The second round of collective bargaining commenced on January 23, 2023. The Treasury Board has prioritized negotiating a new collective agreement as soon as possible to minimize any retroactive pay.

CMC officials recently received an update from the Treasury Board Secretariat delivered by Stephen Diotte, Chief Negotiator for the Government of Canada. CMC members were advised that negotiations with NPF are now primarily focused on monetary considerations. The most recent negotiation sessions took place on June 6-8. The Treasury Board Secretariat reported that this round of collective bargaining has gone well, and they are now awaiting a response from NPF. NSFM will continue to update members as negotiations are concluded.

Consultation on Contract Policing

NSFM has written letters to both the provincial Department of Justice and the federal Department of Public Safety asking when Nova Scotian municipalities will have a chance to participate in this consultation. As 39 municipalities in Nova Scotia use contract policing, they certainly have valuable insights to contribute to this assessment.

NSFM has recently confirmed with the Department of Justice that the Province will include NSFM in their consultation sessions with the federal government. NSFM has also received a response from the Department of Public Safety Canada stating they will be engaging with municipalities, grouped by jurisdiction, as part of the upcoming second phase of their engagement. Public Safety Canada has also informed NSFM that they welcome a written submission to this consultation by the end of this summer. NSFM plans to make a written submission to this consultation based on staff research and direct engagement with NSFM members. NSFM will continue to keep members informed of opportunities to contribute to this assessment.

2. Municipal Observer

The Spring/summer edition of the Municipal Observer is out now. It can be viewed here:

https://nsfm.ca/doclink/mo-summer-2023/eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJzdWwiOiJtby1zdW1tZXItMjAyMyIsImhhdCI6MTY4NjgzMzk1MywiZXhwIjoxNjg2OTIwMzUzZmQ.CzbUrw88lIPqXWT2VF_NCpGzRsFgsY9D4-PZqPjRG8

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NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION
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A reminder that Monday Memos are sent each Monday to NSFM members by email. The memo has noteworthy items, event highlights, upcoming meeting reminders, media mentions and member messages in one weekly package. Articles and updates from the NSFM Monday Memos can also be found here: <https://www.nsfm.ca/table/news/monday-memo/>.