

**DAN REITH**  
Chair

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**JOE PRESTON**  
Vice Chair

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

September 27, 2023

Over the summer months, the St. Thomas Police Services Board and the St. Thomas Police Association met to negotiate updates to the Uniform and Civilian Collective Agreements. Both Agreements are set to expire December 31, 2023 and have been renewed effective January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2028.

With policing facing a host of challenges around managing growing volumes of demand, the increased complexity of calls, the ever-present financial pressures on delivering an effective service to the public and the increasing dangers and risks, the Board entered this collective bargaining process with purpose and intentions to meet the modern moment in policing.

The strategic priorities of the St. Thomas Police Services Board is to ensure St. Thomas is a safe place to live work, play and pray. The Board is committed to finding resourceful and effective ways to carry out obligations to address the core functions of policing. Responding to the increasing demands within the health and human services realms is proving to be an unsustainable venture. STPS frontline officers have been increasingly responsible and expected to solve a variety of problems that develop in the community. The Board recognizes the unique challenges and concerns that have appeared in our community over recent years and will continue to ensure superior police services are readily available and delivered.

All individuals, communities, and service providers deserve to feel safe and to be safe. A growing and thriving City where everyone feels secure, enjoys a sense of belonging, has access to the services they require and can visit their downtown to experience the many shops, restaurants and businesses that await.

Police services are an essential part of community safety and well-being. In St. Thomas, the Board and the Chief of Police are working to find new and innovative ways to address the issues that contribute to feelings of safety and security. Similar to the City's passionate pursuance of contemporary affordable housing options, the St. Thomas Police Services Board and the Chief of Police are reimagining ways to be operationally responsive and cost effective. Such investments in the police service are essential in meeting the pressures of a growing community.

The St. Thomas Police Service continues to analyze trends, provide round the clock patrols and investigative services, prevent crime, assist victims, and deploy a highly trained team of Special Constables to focus solely on the downtown.

Innovative strategies are required to ensure police resources are not stretched too thin in areas that must be addressed by social and health professionals. As we are all aware, there has been a shift in the types of crime and disorder issues that have developed in St. Thomas in recent years. Socioeconomic impacts have manifested in many cities in recent years and St. Thomas has not been immune to these challenges.

As with many municipalities and police agencies, looking for ways to be cost-conscious while still providing excellent services is an ever-present challenge.

As such, two new Collective Agreements have been signed to address the extraordinary work that police professionals are engaged in every day.

“The Board recognizes the tremendous work that is being done each day to serve and protect our community, amidst unprecedented challenges and increasingly dangerous circumstances for police officers that have become the normalized reality. I am very proud of the work of our police officers, business professionals, and the Chief of Police and his Leadership Team, who continue to serve their community with such high levels of commitment. These updated agreements represent the Board’s recognition of the extraordinary work that our members are expected to accomplish on behalf of the community.” Chair Dan Reith – St. Thomas Police Services Board.

“The St. Thomas Police Association’s Bargaining Committee is pleased and proud to announce the ratification of a new Collective Agreement with the St. Thomas Police Services Board. The Association’s top priority was to recognize the exceptional work of our civilian and sworn staff through a competitive collective agreement. The challenges facing police staff across Canada are well-documented and it was important that a new collective agreement reflect these challenges. The Police Services Board recognized this goal with respectful dialogue and unwavering support, showing a true mutual dedication to the members that serve our community. The new collective agreement is groundbreaking with its commitment to resources to support our members’ wellness.” Constable Paul Tunks – President, St. Thomas Police Association

“These agreements have been designed and are intended for policing. Policing is a public sector service unlike any other. With the STPS reaching 25,000 calls for service per year, 60,000 calls received into the STPS Communications Centre per year, 15,000 911 calls, Crime Severity Index on the rise 13%, and the increased risks to those providing the public safety services, the agreements have been tailored to suit the climate in policing now and into the future. Relevant and competitive collective agreements that address police recruitment, member retention and wellness are examples of our Board’s strategic forethought.” Chief Marc Roskamp

Highlights from the updated Collective Agreements:

- 5 year contract
- Wage increases at: 3% (2024), 3% (2025), 3% (2026), 4% (2027), 5% (2028)
- Maternity and Parental Leave provisions updated
- Sick and Family Leave provisions updated
- Specialty Unit/Role remunerations updated
- WSIB Provision adjusted to meet modern member and organizational wellness benefits
- Experiential incentives and Constable tired-classification system increases geared to improve recruitment opportunities
- Experiential pay incentives for Communicators (911 Dispatchers/Call-Takers)