



**HALTON
POLICE
BOARD**
EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE

APPENDIX TO PRESS RELEASE JANUARY 21, 2021

Resolution

WHEREAS:

Halton Region Police Chief Stephen Tanner requested the Halton Police Board Chair's permission to travel to the state of Florida in the United States amid the COVID19 global pandemic on or about December 21, 2020;

Chief Tanner cited the essential need to travel to address extensive damage to a residential property for which he has a significant personal financial interest. He further needed to arrange the house's sale as the significant damage and the pandemic delayed the ability to list the property for sale resulting in mounting financial losses and concern for him and his common-law partner;

The then Halton Police Board Chair permitted Chief Tanner to travel without seeking the Board's authority or other Board Members' knowledge;

Chief Tanner booked five weeks of time off for his planned trip to the United States, including three weeks away and two weeks in quarantine upon returning with all such time to be deducted from his vacation allocation under his employment contract;

As is customary, Chief Tanner advised his staff and Deputies of his planned travel, and he remained in constant contact at all times while out of the country. Since his return, he has worked from his home, notwithstanding being in quarantine and on his vacation time;

Chief Tanner departed Canada on December 26, 2020, and returned of his own volition on January 10, 2021, one week earlier than planned and as quickly as possible upon learning of the tragic on-duty passing of one of our members and upon securing the necessary COVID test required to fly home. He entered quarantine immediately upon his return and remains so at this time;

There are no air travel restrictions to the United States other than Canada's Government declaring a Level 3 Warning to Avoid non-essential travel. The Government advises that "It is up to you to decide what "non-essential travel" means, based on family or business requirements, knowledge of or familiarity with a country, territory or region, and other factors";

There are no policies within the Halton Regional Police Service barring travel outside of the country, providing staff follow quarantine requirements upon their return to Canada;

Chief Tanner violated no laws, orders, policies or contractual obligations that would constitute grounds for termination nor a penalty under his contract, the Police Services Act or any other relevant statute;

Mayor Rob Burton has apologized to the Board, members of the police service and the community



**HALTON
POLICE
BOARD**
EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE

for granting permission and has resigned as both a member and chair of the Board for his mistake in approving Chief Tanner's travel in light of the public health emergency and the sacrifices Halton residents are making throughout the pandemic;

Chief Tanner has apologized to the Board, members of the police service and the community for his error in judgement in seeking permission and travelling despite public health recommendations;

Chief Tanner is a highly successful police professional with a 39-year exemplary career featuring multiple public safety achievements, and is also a leader in professional policing associations in Ontario and Canada;

The Board appreciates the feedback from members of the public and the Service, especially the Halton Regional Police Association.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

The Halton Police Board has full and unequivocal confidence in Chief Stephen Tanner to remain the Halton Regional Police Service Chief;

The Board expresses its disappointment in both the former Chair, Mayor Rob Burton, for granting permission to Chief Tanner to travel to the United States, for not obtaining the consent of, nor notifying, the Board and in Chief Tanner for his decision to ask for permission and for travelling to the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic notwithstanding his property-related issues in Florida;

The Board accepts Chief Tanner's apology for his decision to travel and will take no further action;

The Board accepts former Chair, Mayor Rob Burton's apology and thanks him for his service to the Board and the Service;

The Board commits to reviewing its policies related to vacations, leave, continuity of leadership and the pandemic, especially international travel guidelines, and directs the CAO to subsequently develop and present amendment proposals for consideration at the earliest possible opportunity;

And to be transparent, the Board directs the Secretary to immediately release minutes of the special meetings held on January 15, 16 and 21, 2021, to the public.

Councillor Jeff Knoll

Chair Halton Police Board

Media Contact

Kimberly Calderbank

905.719.6989

media@haltonpoliceboard.ca