



Toronto Police Services Board Report

December 5, 2019

To: Members
Toronto Police Services Board

From: Jim Hart, Chair

Subject: Memorandum of Understanding between the Toronto Police Services Board and Midaynta Community Services

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board approve the attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) and Midaynta Community Services (Midaynta), and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board in execution of the MOU. For the purpose of this MOU, Midaynta acts as a representative of the group of mothers from Toronto's Somali community who form the Mending a Crack in the Sky (MCIS) initiative.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendations contained within this report.

Background/Purpose:

At the July 2019 Board meeting, mothers from the MCIS initiative presented to the Board, outlining the challenges that the Somali-Canadian community in the north-west part of the City is facing. Importantly, they also presented opportunities for the Board, Service and MCIS to be able to work together in an effort to build trust and address these challenges.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Board approved the following motion:

THAT the Board receive the presentation and direct staff and appropriate members of the ARAP and MHAAP to work with the Somali Mothers Movement (Midaynta Community Services) to pursue opportunities for partnership with a view to establishing an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) and to bring it for approval at the September Board Meeting.

Following this Board direction, Board Staff began to work with the mothers from the MCIS initiative to better understand and synthesize what the mothers were looking to have addressed through the MOU. Although it was to be brought forward to the Board in

September, it took longer than anticipated to consult and develop what MCIS was proposing. The MOU attached to this report was ultimately developed in partnership with the Toronto Police Services Board and Midaynta, and through consultation with the Toronto Police Service (TPS). Midaynta has advised that the MOU as drafted is agreed upon.

The purpose of this MOU is to establish a formal and equal working relationship between the Board, the TPS, and Midaynta, who are all interested in improving community safety. Given its mandate, Midaynta is specifically focused on improving the safety of young Somali males – in particular, in relation to their safety from gun violence that is currently impacting the Somali-Canadian community through collaboration with the Board and the TPS.

Discussion:

MCIS comprises a group of mothers, many of them survivors of acute trauma, who organized a dynamic program to provide immediate support to youth and families impacted by gun violence. MCIS is organized under Midaynta Community Services as a leader in transformative community change, activism, and outreach.

MCIS also includes additional community members and leaders who respect the leadership of the mothers and support them in reaching their goals of creating safe spaces for healing and support, and importantly, seeking tangible solutions to address acute violence in their community.

MCIS stresses the violence they respond to is concentrated among Canadian-born Somali youth whose communities face disproportionate levels of homicide, gun and gang violence, mental illness, and incarceration. MCIS' proposed relationship with the Board emphasizes culturally sensitive programming and healing which align with the City of Toronto's pioneering leadership in addressing anti-Black racism and mental health. The group's proposed model is unprecedented and innovated to be effective for members of the Somali-Canadian community in Toronto.

At the July 2019 presentation to the Board, the mothers highlighted three areas that they wanted to directly partner on with the Board and TPS: Transparency, Building Trust, and Community Safety.

Transparency

To increase transparency and understanding within the affected communities, MCIS proposed the development of a community-focused Scorecard based on *The Way Forward* model, as an innovative means of ensuring accountability and an effective avenue for collaboration on community safety. It is believed that this will lead to deeper engagement by Somali-Canadian community members with respect to policing initiatives and modernization initiatives that are occurring. Through this Scorecard initiative, community members would have the opportunity to provide input and

feedback into the creation of neighbourhood Scorecards with the aim of measuring community sentiment, safety initiatives, and modernization efforts from a community perspective. This opportunity would be accompanied by training that would help community members better understand how the Service collects and analyzes information that impacts on updates to the Scorecard. From the Board's perspective, it is hoped that this aspect of the MOU will serve as a 'pilot' for a neighbourhood-based Scorecard model that may be replicated throughout the city.

Building Trust

In order to continue to build trust with the TPS and its Members, MCIS proposed taking steps to develop a close working relationship with particular TPS Divisions in which there are large populations of Somali community members. These TPS Divisions are: 12, 13, 22, 23, 31, and 32. In addition, MCIS highlighted the importance of building a direct relationship with the Service's Neighbourhood Community Officer Program, and local Neighbourhood Community Officers in the above-identified Divisions. It is believed that these relationships – both at the Divisional and Neighbourhood Community Officer levels – will drive proactive and vital collaboration between members of Toronto's Somali community and the Service.

Mother Outreach Worker Program

A third area of collaboration identified by MCIS was in relation to support for MCIS's ongoing development of MCIS's Mothers Outreach Worker (MOW) Program. The premise of the MOW Program is to connect mothers who have lost their children and loved ones to other mothers from the Somali community who will support them, using peer and crisis support models and a variety of proactive institutional and community resources which focus on gun and gang violence prevention, awareness, and education. In terms of background, MCIS' MOW program currently provides culturally sensitive interventions by:

- Acting as leaders in crisis and peer support;
- Providing a healing and recovery network for victims of trauma;
- Engaging in ongoing outreach to understand community trends and complex needs;
- Supporting community resident organizations in de-escalating crises, and mobilizing key community leaders that advise on unique cultural and neighbourhood dynamics and characteristics;
- Establishing strong, trusting relationships with community members/organizations as a proven means to reduce community violence and enhance public safety and well-being;
- Brokering and partnering in the implementation of policy and program interventions, like the establishment and implementation of this MOU; and
- Acting as education and awareness liaisons, and providing resource referrals for the community.

MCIS will continue to operate and further develop its MOW program and manage the staff and personnel who administer it. In this MOU, MCIS is seeking to establish a framework for how TPS could support the MOW Program through education and training on crime prevention initiatives and victim/witness supports. These are essential subject areas that are critical to the work of those that participate in the MOW Program, and through the contemplated partnership, will assist in providing the MOW Program with access to up-to-date, relevant and applicable information.

Conclusion:

It is recommended that that the Board approve the attached MOU, and authorize me, as Chair, to sign it on behalf of the Board in execution of this MOU. This MOU represents an important opportunity to demonstrate through action a commitment to partnership in an effort to enhance community safety. I look forward to remaining engaged, with the Board Office, in working closely with Midaynta and the TPS to ensure that this program is successful.

In addition to myself and Ryan Teschner, the Board's Executive Director, and representatives of MCIS will be in attendance and to respond to any questions that the Board may have regarding this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed

Jim Hart, Chair
Toronto Police Services Board

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

TORONTO POLICE SERVICES BOARD (“Board”)

and

MIDAYNTA COMMUNITY SERVICES (“Midaynta”)

1. PURPOSE

On July 31, 2019, a group of mothers provided a presentation to the Board on “A Crack in the Sky” (MCIS). The presentation was based on a Somali proverb that states that “if people come together, they can even mend a crack in the sky.” This sentiment is the basis of a community led action plan to address the alarming rates of youth violence among Somali-Canadians, which violence has increased community trauma and fragmentation.

In their presentation, the group highlighted three core elements that they wanted to directly collaborate with the Board on: Transparency, Building Trust, and Community Safety.

The Board received the presentation and agreed to pursue opportunities for partnership with Midaynta to improve community safety in the Somali-Canadian community in the City of Toronto.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of both Parties in this partnership.

2. DEFINITIONS

“Divisions” means 12, 13, 22, 23, 31, and 32 of the TPS.

“Midaynta Community Services” or “Midaynta” means the registered Canadian charitable organization that provides settlement services and other programs that advances education by providing courses, seminars, meetings, counseling and other support services for refugees, immigrants and youths in need. Midaynta is a social and settlement services agency, working to improve the quality of life of newcomers in Toronto and vicinity. For the purpose of this MOU, Midaynta will act as a representative of the group of mothers from Toronto’s Somali community who form the MCIS initiative.

“Neighbourhood Community Officers” or “NCO” means members of the TPS who act as ambassadors for the TPS and who work in partnership with local residents and community-based organizations to address crime, disorder and community safety issues.

“Parties” means the Board and Midaynta and “Party” means either the Board or Midaynta.

“Toronto Police Services Board” or “Board” means the seven member civilian body, comprised of provincial and municipal appointees, that is responsible for the provision of adequate and effective police services in the City of Toronto pursuant to *Police Services Act*, R.S.O. 1990 Chap. P-15 (*PSA*), setting priorities and objectives for the TPS, approving the annual police budget and selecting the Chief of Police (Chief).

“Toronto Police Service” or “TPS” means the organization that delivers police services to the City of Toronto in accordance with the *PSA*.

3. TERM

The term of this MOU is from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021. At the expiration of this term, the parties to this agreement will meet to discuss the next steps, including expanding, extending, or concluding this agreement.

Either Party may terminate or renew this MOU upon thirty (60) days written notice to the other Party.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Based on the three core elements presented to the Board, the Parties agree as follows:

A. Core Element One: Increasing Transparency and Understanding through the Service’s Implementation of the Scorecard Initiative

The development of a community-focused scorecard based on *The Way Forward* model, as an effective avenue for collaboration on community safety and a deeper engagement by community members with respect to policing initiatives and modernization initiatives that are occurring.

The TPSB agrees to direct the Chief to:

- a) produce a community facing scorecard at the Neighbourhood level that includes relevant socio-economic and demographic groups, including but not necessarily exclusive to the Somali group in any area.
- b) meet with representatives from Midaynta to:
 - a. understand what they would like included on the scorecard;
 - b. explain the process of how TPS surveys are developed and implemented;

- c. explain how the data is gathered (ie. telephone survey, focus groups, etc.);
- d. explain how the questions and answers received from the survey are populated into the scorecard.
- c) develop a survey relevant for identified neighbourhoods and Divisions across the City of Toronto.
- d) populate the information collected from the survey, into a scorecard, at a frequency associated with the data collection and synthesis.
- e) meet with representatives from Midaynta to discuss and explain the scorecard results.

Midaynta agrees to:

- a) identify representatives who will meet with the TPS and act as points of contact;
- b) participate in the development of the questions for survey;
- c) work with the TPS on the communication of the survey and scorecard, in particular to the Somali Community.

B) *Core Element Two: Building Trust through Integrated Collaboration with Divisions and Neighbourhood Community Officers (NCOs)*

To continue to build trust with the TPS and its members, and to drive proactive and vital collaboration between members of Toronto's Somali community and the TPS, the Parties agree to take the steps to develop a close working relationship with particular TPS Divisions

The TPSB agrees to direct the Chief to:

- a) meet with members of the Somali community and explain the role of an NCO.
- b) facilitate connection with local TPS Division Commanders and the TPS' Community Partnerships and Engagement Unit.
- c) affirm for the community that while this partnership is not premised on intelligence gathering, it is understood by both parties that improved community engagement and trust will result in safer communities.

Midaynta agrees to:

- a) meet with members of the TPS and Neighbourhood Community Officers.
- b) build a direct relationship with the TPS' Neighbourhood Community Officer Program and local Neighbourhood Community Officers.

C. *Core Element Three: Enhancing Community Safety through the Implementation of the Mothers Outreach Worker (MOW) Program*

Midaynta is requesting support from the Board for Midaynta's MOW Program which connects mothers who have lost their children and loved ones to other mothers from the Somali community who will support them, using the peer and crisis support models and a variety of

proactive institutional and community resources which focus on gun and gang violence prevention, awareness, and education.

The TPSB agrees to direct the Chief to:

- a) meet with Midaynta and the MOWs to understand what type of presentations they would like to receive and how the TPS can most effectively deliver these presentations that aim to provide education and awareness in a variety of crime prevention initiatives and victim/witness supports.

Midaynta agrees to:

- a) consult with the MOWs to understand what type of presentations they would like to receive from the TPS.
- b) provide input to the TPS on what information the MOWs would like to see at the public information sessions.

5. BOARD SUPPORT

The Board is committed to lending its organizational support (ie. writing supportive letters, convening meetings, connecting key stakeholders, etc), and where feasible for the Board, lending its administrative support in the implementation of this MOU.

6. REPORTING AND EVALUATION

Midaynta and the Board shall meet semi-annually to discuss the implementation and success of this MOU, any challenges identified and recommendations to address those challenges.

8. MODIFICATION

Any changes to this MOU shall be by written amendment signed by the Parties' authorized representatives. No changes shall be effective or shall be carried out in the absence of such an amendment.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have executed this MOU as of the dates written below.

TORONTO POLICE SERVICES BOARD

MIDAYNTA COMMUNITY SERVICES

Per:

Per:

Jim Hart
Chair

Mahad Yusuf
Executive Director

Date: _____

Date: _____