

From: Paul Hommersen

Sent: 2020/11/16 1:35 PM

To: Jackson, Tammi <Tammi.Jackson@brampton.ca>

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]Re: Brampton Community Safety Advisory Committee - Vulnerable Sector Checks

Hi Tammy,

Hope your weekend was pleasant and no one was swept away in the wind storm!

Please find attached the Canadian Civil Liberties Association 2014 research report and recommendations regarding the ever-expanding practice of criminal records checks, not to mention the more invasive VSS. I think this sums up all my main concerns better than I can with regard to requirements for checks. Specifically it highlights recommendations that should be considered when deciding whether a policy for requiring checks is actually needed in order to be in line with privacy rights (Recommendation 3.1).

As stated in the report, there is questionable value for predicting future offending from these types of checks, so these checks tend to be used to “prevent the ‘wrong people’ from volunteering,” which is what was used as the rationale in the last meeting. If record checks are actually warranted (e.g., members are actually working with vulnerable clients, have direct access to client information, etc.), any policy should clearly spell out all details regarding the purpose, use, and access, etc., prior to adoption, since these types of checks frequently include information that is above and beyond criminal charges (Recommendations 3.2 and 3.3).

The discussion at the last meeting was hasty, in my opinion. I understand that despite the vote, members cannot be forced to participate (which highlights the question about necessity and whether the utility really outweighs the costs, including financial, to privacy, and in the creation of barriers for all members of the community to equally engage in civic life). This also raises the issue regarding whether people feel free to decline, as the process can be perceived as coercive due to the implications of why someone might choose to decline.

I am disheartened that in the year and a half I have been on the committee very little has actually been accomplished. The vote to rush through a recommendation that flies in the face of either evidence or need, and which would actually be advised against by the CCLA, is one of the few accomplishments this committee has advised on. I think that is embarrassing considering some of the other current issues affecting Peel and Brampton, such as a pandemic.

I thank you and the committee for the opportunity, and wish the committee success in whatever future endeavours they eventually choose to focus on. However, I have come to realize that perhaps my values and aims for what constitute Community Safety and those of the committee are quite different, since I was the only one to express the above reservations. As such, I think it best that I resign and focus my time and efforts elsewhere.

Regards,
Paul