

**Remarks by: Mayor Gary McNamara  
Politics and Policing Governance Panel  
Canadian Association of Police Governance Conference**

**Winnipeg, Manitoba  
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It is a pleasure for me to be here today and thank you very much for the invitation.

I'm honoured to be on this panel with committed policing leaders. Bruce Chapman, Dr. Mukherjee and I have spent many hours together at Ontario's Future of Policing Advisory Committee over the past six years. It is a pleasure to be with you again.

I am especially grateful to meet the Honourable Stephen Goudge. In my opinion, his 2014 paper represented a watershed moment for policing in Canada.

The report is a tremendous contribution to the quality of research on policing in this country. It remains a highly recommended read.

In my remarks today, I'm going to focus on the issue of effective governance. What can we do to be as effective as possible? My experience is in Ontario so I'm going to narrow the scope of my remarks to the Ontario context.

What civilian overseers do, is incredibly important. The overall objective is clear – the democratic regulation of police.

To use Justice Goudge's words, "Appropriate governance is central to generating policing according to

societal values.”

Justice Morden has written that, “Civilian oversight of our police is essential.”

Clive Weighill, the Past President of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has said, “civilian oversight builds trust and legitimacy.”

We need good people to serve that function. We would not live in a democratic society without officers fulfilling their functions and without the people in this room to make sure society’s value are reflected in how policing happens.

Boards need the police to function and the police need boards for legitimacy. As a mayor, my community needs public safety and security that is effectively and efficiently delivered. Municipal Councils seek the dollars from citizens for all of the local services that keep people safe and healthy. That includes policing.

In other words, we’re all in this together. We need one another. We need to understand one another. And we will occasionally disagree.

As Justice Goudge and others have found, there is room to improve governance. It needs to be better supported, it needs to be better understood by the public, and that responsibility needs to be shared.

The Provincial Government needs to support the training of board members on a continuous basis. The Provincial Government also needs to make its appointments to boards in a timely way.

There is no greater impediment to good governance than a seat that is unfilled for months on end.

Representatives of the people need to be at the table for a board to function.

I would also point out, and we highlighted this issue in our Policing Modernization Paper as did Justice Michael Tulloch in his oversight review, that a measure of self-governance is also needed. Doctors, teachers, nurses, lawyers, they all have bodies that fulfill some measure of self-governance.

A college of policing that could manage professional development, deal with some forms of misconduct, establish promotion criteria, etc. is a worthy idea. I would argue that this approach would help boards to focus on the big questions and issues.

In my mind, answering the big questions is central to what boards and overseers should be doing:

- Is direction on policy that governs operational matters being followed?
- Is legitimate police independence regarding operational decisions being preserved?
- Are police boards taking appropriate responsibility for policing policy and outcomes?
- Are taxpayers getting optimal value for their money?

Investing in governance and what is intended by good governance helps to prevent crisis and turmoil.

As the University of Toronto academic Kent Roach has written, too often we react to turmoil.

We have a great deal of experience in over investing energies and resources in events and what happened. In other words, responding to a crisis after the fact.

We have a great deal of experience in under investing our energies and resources in what is intended by good governance. In other words, preventing turmoil in the first place.

We tend to be reactive rather than proactive. I would argue that good governance that focuses on effectiveness and efficiency should be a bigger focus.

I'll give you an example. Ontario's oversight agencies – the OCPC, the SIU, the OIPRD - they focus on property and legality after the fact. There is no agency to support good governance.

We simply have not invested the resources necessary to help train board members and to help boards succeed and fulfill their functions.

Ontario's new policing legislation includes the establishment of an Inspector General position whose responsibility will be to monitor and conduct inspections of boards. I would hope that those duties are fulfilled in ways that support good governance.

Let me sum up some of the key ways in which I think effectiveness can be improved:

1. AMO supported mandatory training for Board members in our discussions on the future of policing. The development of quality training programs is important. And we also need to help the public understand the role of a board.
2. Police Officers, through the establishment of a college of policing, similar to other professions, should assume a degree of self-governance responsibility.
3. The province needs to support good governance. The provincial government needs to provide the resources for training.

4. The government needs to make their appointments to boards in a timely way. And I hope the new Inspector General for Ontario acts in a way that is supportive of good governance.

5. Boards need to focus on the big questions – is policy being followed, are outcomes appropriate, is value for money being delivered?

6. Finally, boards must be proactive and not simply reactive. Good governance prevents turmoil. The last thing I would like to say is this: thank you. Being a civilian overseer is a big responsibility. It is not necessarily an easy task. You help ensure your community's values are reflected in how your community is policed. That's a very specific, but a very important task.

As board members, as police officers, as mayors, or as citizens; we all have a vested interest in public safety and security. We're in this together. We can't forget that.

Thank you.

Mayor Gary McNamara