



May 8, 2015

Members of Muskoka District Council
50 Pine Street
Bracebridge, Ontario
P1L 1N3

Attention: District Chair and Members of District Council

Dear Elected Representatives:

Re: Allocation of OPP Policing Costs by District to Constituent Municipalities

On behalf of our respective associations and our 4,300 members and families, we write this letter to express our concerns on the District's preferred method of allocating the increased OPP Policing Costs to constituent municipalities, which we understand to be to allocate these costs by way of a general levy on the assessed property tax base. The costs allocated to the municipalities for 2015 based on this method ("General Levy Method") are set out at page 2 of the presentation entitled "OPP Policing Distribution" of the District of Muskoka dated April 23, 2015 and updated April 27, 2015.

Page 3 of the presentation, referenced above, indicates an alternate method of allocating these costs to the municipalities. Under this method, these costs are allocated based on the actual cost of policing services to each municipality as calculated by the OPP ("Special Area Levy Method").

Municipality	Special Area Levy (A)	General Levy Costs (B)	Difference (A-B)
Bracebridge	\$2,455,771	\$1,471,916	-\$983,855
Gravenhurst	2,226,812	1,579,408	-647,404
Huntsville	3,111,815	1,785,965	-1,325,850
Muskoka Lakes	2,100,901	4,373,971	\$2,273,070
Georgian Bay	1,064,959	1,308,450	243,491
Lake of Bays	939,125	1,379,671	440,546

Source:

* page 3 District OPP Policing Distribution presentation dated April 23, 2015, updated April 27, 2015

** page 4 OPP Policing Distribution presentation dated April 23, 2015, updated April 27, 2015

Our collective associations and approximately 4,300 property owners we represent in the Muskoka region, would suggest the actual policing cost allocation would be much fairer and representative of the cost of service delivery. The table indicates the costs that each municipality would bear for policing using both the Special Area Levy and General Levy Methods in the second and third columns, respectively.

The table shows that under the General Levy Method District Towns would pay significantly less for policing costs than the actual cost of delivering such services to them as calculated by the OPP. In the most extreme cases, the Towns of Huntsville and Bracebridge would pay **43% and 40% less than the actual policing costs** and the Townships of Muskoka Lakes and Lake of Bays would pay **108% and 47% more than the actual cost of policing**. *We believe this would be an inequitable and unfair result. As a result, we urge members of District Council to reject the General Levy Method for allocating policing costs.*

On the other hand, the Special Area Levy Method allocates policing costs to municipalities based on the actual cost of delivering these services to each municipality as calculated by the OPP. It is difficult to conceive of any compelling rationale that would not support this allocation method. We are also aware that two separate legal opinions, one by Aird & Berlis and the other by Barriston, both of which have been received by the District confirm the feasibility of the Special Area Levy Method and that this method is presently used by a number of municipalities in the Province. *As such, we believe the Special Area Levy Method is the most fair and appropriate method for allocating these costs and we strongly urge members of District Council to adopt the Special Area Levy Method for allocating policing costs to the District's constituent municipalities.*

We understand that this issue will be dealt with finally by District Council at its upcoming May 19, 2015 meeting. For the sake and benefit of all Muskokans and that of the District level of government, we encourage all members of District Council to approach this issue with a view to acting fairly, reasonably and in the best interests of all Muskokans and not just those of any one individual municipality. In doing so, we hope and expect the Special Levy Method of allocating policing costs to constituent municipalities will be adopted by the District.

Thank you for receiving and considering this request.

Yours very truly,

GEORGIAN BAY ASSOCIATION



Bob Duncanson
Executive Director

LAKE OF BAYS ASSOCIATION



Ian Beverley
President

MUSKOKA LAKES ASSOCIATION



Michael Hart
President