

OPS Budget posts no increase for 4th straight year

By Mike Pickford

The Orangeville Police Service (OPS) has maintained its position to keep costs down for area residents this year, announcing a zero percent increase in its 2018 budget.

This marks the fourth straight year the local force has curbed its spending, something Police Chief Wayne Kalinski is particularly pleased with.

"We are proud to once again show fiscal responsibility with our 2018 budget. To be able to maintain an exceptional level of service while exercising fiscal restraint has been and will continue to be a priority," Chief Kalinski said.

This most recent budget was of particular interest to the local community considering the controversy surrounding policing in Orangeville over the past 12 months. Back in June, Town Council voted 4-3 in favour of sticking with the municipality's local service, rather than contracting with the Ontario Provincial Police.

In total, OPS is expecting to spend just north of \$10 million in 2018, with increased revenues of roughly \$1.8 million expected to bring that net total down to \$8.2 million – the same amount the force spent in 2017. In presenting the proposal for the 2018 operating budget to the Orangeville Police Services Board on Oct. 31, Sgt. Dave McLagan detailed exactly where the force would be saving money next year.

A provincial grant of just under \$940,000 will completely pay for court security in town next year, saving the Town money on a subsidy it had typically provided to help cover the cost of that service. Also, Sgt. McLagan noted that the force had been able to significantly decrease its legal costs over the past four years, which has helped to stabilize the budget.

Orangeville Police Services Board Chair Ken Krakar was pleased to see the budget pass, noting it was important that the service toe the line and maintain a zero percent increase once again for 2018.

"Working with Chief Kalinski, the Board is focused on being fiscally responsible for the taxpayers of Orangeville, without affecting the quality of service and commitment to our residents in being community focused," Mr. Krakar said.