



Regional Board Report

Information

Approved for Board Consideration

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Brian Reardon, CAO

To: Regional Board
From: Todd Cashin, Director of Community Services
Date: January 24, 2022
Subject: Crime Stoppers - Update

Voting Entitlement: *All Directors – Unweighted Corporate Vote – Simple Majority – LGA 208*

Purpose: To update the Regional Board regarding the Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers program.

Executive Summary:

Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers is celebrating its 35th year of assisting the communities of the Central Okanagan with crime prevention through community awareness. Since its inception in 1987, staff have received over 30,000 tips, assisting with the arrest of nearly 3,000 criminals and approved almost \$325,000 in rewards. Fundraising efforts raise money to pay these rewards to people in our communities.

As January is Crime Stoppers awareness month, it is that time of year when we re-commit to keeping our communities safe and take the opportunity to publicly appreciate our partnerships and showcase the program successes.

Recommendation:

THAT the Board receives the report for information from the Director of Community Services, dated January 24, 2022, with respect to the update on the Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers program.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Gazley".

David Gazley
Manager, Protective Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Cashin".

Todd Cashin
Director Community Services

Prepared by: David Gazley, Manager Protective Services

Attachment(s): Board Powerpoint Presentation
RCMP Commissioner Letter of Support – January Crime Stoppers Month
Province of BC Proclamation – January Crime Stoppers Month
Prime Minister Proclamation – January Crime Stoppers Month

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Priorities: Sustainable Communities, Transportation and Mobility

Values: Collaboration, Relationships

Background:

Crime Stoppers is the most successful community-based crime prevention program in the world. This year marks the programs 35th anniversary. Started in 1987 by Councillor Elise Clark and other civic minded citizens, talks began with the RCMP and City of Kelowna staff. Within a year, this morphed into a regional program becoming the Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers in 1988.

The RDCO provides operational funding for the program of approximately \$303,000 annually. This funding provides for two full-time staff and operational programming.

Since this time, Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers has received over 30,000 tips resulting in more than 2900 arrests, the recovery of stolen property valued at almost \$5.2-million and over \$88-million worth of illegal drugs.

Crime Stoppers is composed of both a volunteer based society and Regional District staff. The Crime Stoppers Board of Directors set policies, oversees fundraising, approve rewards and promotes the program through marketing and awareness campaigns. RD staff are the conduit between the tipster and the RCMP while overseeing the P3 Tips program.

In addition, staff also provide operational support for Mugshots, Unsolved Crimes, Missing Persons, Hot Recs, Energy Theft and Project 529 programs.

Mugshots

Mugshots is a partnership between Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers and our local media.

Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest of person(s) wanted on outstanding arrest warrants issued by the Courts.

Unsolved Crimes

Unsolved cases are submitted by the RCMP for consideration and approval into the Crime Stoppers Rewards program. As unsolved cases are received, they are posted to the Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers website.

Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of person(s) responsible for specified unsolved crimes.

Missing Persons

In any given year, between 70,000 and 80,000 people are reported missing to police in Canada. While most are found within seven days, missing persons cases can be extremely stressful for family and loved ones.

Crime Stoppers updates missing persons information upon notification from the RCMP and staff also accept information that could assist in locating missing persons. Further, the Crime Stoppers website highlights missing person cases to keep this important information public.

Hot Recs

The Hot Recs program was initiated to help the RCMP recover the many stolen off road vehicles in our area. This program partners with the local RCMP and the Integrated Municipal Provincial Auto Crime Task Force (IMPACT) by hosting public events to promote anti-theft tips. Photos are regularly posted with Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN) of stolen vehicles to create public awareness. The program has expanded to include stolen Boats, personal watercraft, vehicles, Travel trailers and construction equipment trailers.

Turn in a Tagger

One of the most widespread forms of graffiti in the Central Okanagan is tagging: a simple, quick style of graffiti involving the marking of the tagger's initials, symbol or alias. Graffiti costs the community hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in painting and removal costs and this program offers a \$500 reward for tips that lead to an arrest for graffiti vandalism.

Energy Theft

The theft of electricity poses significant dangers to our communities. It can damage electrical equipment, cause power outages and it costs everyone in B.C. who is paying for the power they use. Many incidents of electricity theft in B.C. are related to cannabis growing operations, also referred to as grow-ops and drug labs. Crimestoppers is a partner with RCMP, fire safety inspectors, and municipalities in the effort to stop illegal grow-ops. Crime Stoppers staff provides investigators at FortisBC and BC Hydro with a list of addresses where potential electricity thefts have been reported.

Project 529

Around 2,000 bicycles are reported stolen in the Central Okanagan every year, but only a few get returned to their owners when recovered by the RCMP and Bylaw. 529 Garage is an app that allows bike registry and theft report and recovery system. In the event a bike goes missing, the RCMP and Bylaw will have everything they need to activate the community to help recover the bike.

Considerations:

Organizational/External:

The Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers program is supported by the non-profit, volunteer supported Central Okanagan Crime Stopper Society in partnership with the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

RDCO staff support the program by actioning tips from the public and liaising with the RCMP, Bylaw, media, community partners and the Crime Stoppers Society to help solve crime.

Financial:

The RDCO provides annual operational funding.

Considerations not applicable:

- Legal/Statutory Authority
 - Alternate Recommendation
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