Your Vote.
Your Future.

Vote of No Confidence
Dear Members,

The Toronto Police Association Board of Directors has worked tirelessly to address our members’ concerns regarding so-called modernization recommendations that jeopardize your wellness and working conditions and put the community at risk.

Despite numerous attempts by the Association to address relief measures for our members, the Chief has continuously failed to put forward any meaningful solutions to relieve the stress on you. We have been in dialogue with the Chief for over a year, dealing with these serious and troubling issues. His unsatisfactory progress on resolving these issues makes it clear that he does not consider our members' concerns legitimate. The Association has lost confidence in the Chief's ability to address these issues with any urgency.

This member information package outlines the clear and compelling evidence of:
- The Chief’s ineffective leadership,
- The Chief’s lack of communication skills,
- The Chief’s failure to take responsibility,
- The Chief’s continued pattern of blaming others, and
- The Chief’s disregard for the health, wellness and safety of our members.

We believe the Chief’s lack of leadership continues to jeopardize member and public safety. The Chief’s inaction in resolving these issues has brought morale to an all-time low. Our members are forced to work under conditions that jeopardize their safety and service to the public has deteriorated. Experienced officers continue to leave the TPS for job opportunities in other police services. In exit interviews conducted by the Association, 58% of officers surveyed who joined other police services cite dissatisfaction with the direction of the TPS as their primary reason for leaving. Sixty-one percent rank the effectiveness of TPS management as below average to poor.

The No Confidence Vote sends a message to the Chief, our elected City leaders, and the community that our members have lost confidence in the Chief's ability to act in the best interests of the membership and the community. The goal of this information package is to ensure that all of our members are aware of the facts so they can cast an informed vote. Please review this important information and vote for your future.

Toronto Police Association
Board of Directors
No Confidence Vote

Members NOT a Priority

The Chief said:
"I am aware that some of you are concerned about this and I understand that moving from the old policing model to a new model is not easy. I want you to know that you - the members - are my priority every day".

Chief Saunders

Email to TPS Members

January 3, 2018

The Facts

The Chief failed to make our members a priority when he:

- Refused to stand up for his members when the Modernization Plan recommended cancelling recruit classes and imposing a three-year moratorium on hiring and promotions.
- Was complicit in the Transformational Task Force’s arbitrary cuts to police staffing, based solely on a budget-cutting target strength of 4,750 officers by 2020, and not on a demand-driven business case.
- Failed to heed the Association's warning of a deepening morale issue and allowed member morale to hit catastrophic levels.
- Failed to acknowledge and address honestly, the deterioration in service levels to the public despite overwhelming evidence of high priority calls pending for hours, patrol cars not filled, and 911 callers placed on hold.
- Denied there was a retention issue and stood idly by as members continue to leave the Service for job opportunities in other police services.
- Misled the public into thinking the 120 new hires will fix the staffing shortage when the Service is on track to lose well over 100 more officers this year. As of February 12, 2018, 102 uniform officers have departed or have given notice they will depart the Service in 2018.

Chief Saunders’ failure to speak up and oppose the Modernization Plan’s target of 4,750 officers by 2020 highlights his lack of support for officers who expect that the Chief would provide the proper staffing to ensure the safety and well-being of our members. Not only has the Chief failed our members, but he has also failed the community. High priority emergency calls are outstanding for hours across the city, calls are cancelled with no one to attend, and divisions struggle to put out half a dozen patrol cars a shift.

The cancellation of the recruit classes, freeze on hiring and promotions and high attrition rate are the key drivers in the staffing and morale crisis we are now facing. On numerous occasions over the past year, the Association brought our members’ concerns forward to the Chief. We even offered the Chief suggestions on how to mitigate many of these issues. Our concerns were dismissed, ignored or met with empty promises. His repeated denials and failure to adequately respond to our members’ concerns make it abundantly clear that his members are NOT a priority.
No Confidence Vote
Playing the Blame Game

The Chief said:
"......it is important to note that his Staff Sergeant - like all Staff Sergeants - have the responsibility to utilize the resources that are available to them at any time" .... In the specific case at 55 Division, that ability to move resources from the front desk or the Community Response Unit or to escalate the matter to achieve a remedy did not take place".

Chief Saunders
Email to All TPS Members
January 3, 2018

The Facts

In December 2017, the Staff Sergeant in charge of the evening shift at 55 Division recognized that platoon strength would be below minimum staffing requirements from December 7 to 13. He immediately took steps to address the shortage by completing a Critical Staffing Checklist for each shift, canvassed 55 Division sub-units, and contacted TPOC and neighbouring divisions to request assistance.

Despite the steps he took to remedy the situation including moving resources from the Community Response Unit, and escalating the matter to the Unit Commander, the Unit Commander did not respond or did not authorize call-backs. As a result of the Unit Commander's inaction, an officer safety issue was created, and only one officer paraded on the early half of evening shift.

On December 22, 2017, and January 3, 2018, the Chief released false and defamatory information about the S/Sgt's actions and in doing so, sullied and discredited the S/Sgt's reputation. Despite having been provided with the documentation to show that the S/Sgt followed all the proper processes and procedures when he assessed and requested action be taken, the information the Chief published about the S/Sgt was incorrect. The Chief has refused to:

• Issue a personal and public apology to the S/Sgt, or
• Correct the false and defamatory information he published

The Chief holds the S/Sgt. responsible for the incident and continues to demonstrate an unwillingness to offer a public apology. He has failed to hold the Unit Commander of 55 Division accountable for neglecting to carry out his responsibilities. The Chief's pattern of playing the blame game and throwing the rank and file under the bus further diminishes morale and calls into question the Chief's integrity and leadership.
No Confidence Vote

120 Hires. 329 Separations.

Chief Saunders says:
"One of my main goals in 2018 is to continue to further reduce the pressure from the frontline, building on the redeployment in May of 528 officers to the frontline".

Chief Saunders
Email to All TPS Members
January 3, 2018

The Facts

Under-staffing has reached catastrophic levels that compromise the operational safety of our members. During the past two years, the Chief has allowed staffing levels to decline dangerously low. In a 28-day period from November 27 to December 24, 2017, over 51% of Primary Response shifts (days, evenings, nights) fell precariously short of TPS minimum staffing policies.

The Service’s current uniform staffing strength is 5,038, a decrease of 577 officers compared to 2010 levels. This reduction is equivalent to having two entire divisions shut down. Moreover, the Modernization Plan recommends further cuts, reaching a target strength of 4,750 by 2020 - a decrease of 865 officers compared to 2010.

The Service's attrition rate is ahead of the Modernization Plan’s assumptions. In 2017, 381 members left the Service. This number includes 232 uniform members. Sixty-five uniform & civilian members left to join other police services. As of February 12, 2018, 165 members have departed or given notice they will depart the Service in 2018. One hundred and two uniform officers have departed or have given notice they will depart the Service in 2018 as of February 12, 2018.

Chief Saunders believes that the 120 new hires will provide the much-needed relief despite losing 334 uniform members in 2017 and 2018 (as of Feb 12, 2018). However, relief, if any, will not be realized until late 2018/2019 when the new hires are fully trained and deployed to the field. In the interim, the Chief continues to play a shell game, pulling officers out of divisions and community response units across the city, and assigning them to the PSRT and other high-visibility patrols, across the Service. In effect, he is robbing from the frontline to re-deploy to the frontline. A failed shell game at best.

Despite our persistence in trying to remedy our members' concerns, the Chief continues to be non-responsive to the crisis facing our members. We believe his lack of leadership and no plans for immediate relief continues to jeopardize member and public safety.
No Confidence Vote

Chief Paints TPA as Obstructionist

The Chief, in media reports, keeps insisting that the Association needs to partner with the Service in order to move on shift schedules.
This is false.
In fact, the hold up is with the Service.
January 15, 2018

The Facts

The Chief paints the Association as obstructionist by refusing to come to the table to discuss alternatives to the Compressed Workweek (CWW). In fact, the joint committee meetings of the two-officer car and shift schedule committees were postponed at the request of the Service. The CWW Committee met February 9, 2016, and the Two-Officer Car Committee met February 11, 2016, and March 29, 2016. Subsequent meetings failed to occur between TPA Representatives, TPS Management and TPSB representatives City Councillors Shelley Carroll and Chin Lee, after an email to the TPA from the Toronto Police Service which read, in part: "...the parties have agreed that we will pause the meetings of the committee for the time being, pending the release of the interim report of the Transformational Task Force in June 2016". Further meetings were halted.

In 2017, the TPA along with the TPS Senior Officers Organization (SOO) attempted to get discussions back on track. Shift schedule discussions resumed with a CWW Committee meeting on August 9, 2017, followed by several sub-committee meetings with members of the TTF Strategy Implementation team.

Despite the Chief’s claim that they now have the analytics, the TPA is unable to engage in meaningful discussions on a CWW shift schedule for the simple reason that the Service is unable to answer the following necessary questions when looking at shifts:

- What type of priority calls will the PRU be answering?
- How will PRU officers be dispatched?
- How will the city be restructured geographically?
- How many divisions will there be, and are they all open 24/7 to the public?
- What are the performance standards, including response time target in the new policing model?
- When will the infrastructure be in place for other agencies to handle low priority calls?
- Will the PRU have a proactive component or will it be strictly a reactive response unit?
- What is the administrative time component for the PRU?

The Association has offered the Service use of our shift scheduling experts at our expense. We are at the table and WAITING for the answers to these simple questions, so we can move forward on shift schedules in a way that protects our members and the public. We will work collaboratively with the Service to find a shift model that meets these objectives using evidence-based research, a review of best practices and proven metrics. We WILL NOT, however, support any discussion or arbitrary change that is based solely on budgetary considerations.
No Confidence Vote

Doing More With Less

We made the Chief aware of the ongoing problems at Communications last summer. For several weeks he repeatedly denied that there was a problem. Finally, after the TPA launched a social media campaign highlighting call pending times and Global News did a news series on 911 wait times, he finally admitted there "may be room for improvement."

The Facts

Due to the hiring freeze, members are being asked to take on more and more responsibilities. Requests for help are going unaddressed. Members are being forced by management to do more with less putting them under unprecedented stress and pressure to maintain acceptable levels of service and support.

By the TPS’s own analytical reports, service has been deteriorating for over two years at the Communication Centre including a decrease in the percentage of calls meeting the NENA standard (90% of 911 calls answered within 10 seconds). Callers phoning the 911 emergency line are being placed on hold up to several minutes due to understaffing.

Members are assigned job duties of higher paying classifications without receiving the proper compensation. Requests for time off are being denied. Members are trying to cover their overwhelming workload by not taking their breaks and lunches. In July 2017, the Association filed a grievance against the TPS and TPSB alleging they had violated the collective agreement through various practices resulting from the hiring freeze and promotion moratorium. The grievance is in relation to:

- Any member who was put into an acting assignment for one shift or more and not paid the rate for the rank/classification they were acting in.
- Any member who was designated an acting “unit commander” and is not receiving pay at the rate for the work they were performing.
- Any member who has acted or is currently acting in a rank/classification for more than 6 consecutive months.
- Any member who has been put on a “career development” regardless if they were paid an acting rate of pay or not for their work.
- Any member who has been performing work of a higher paying rank/classification, likely due to a vacancy in that job, and are not receiving the rate of pay normally associated to that higher rank/classification’s work.
- Any member who is performing work in a 40 hour a week job and being paid for 35 hours per week.
- Any member who has been kept on a “temporary status” for more than one year.
No Confidence Vote

The Four-Year "Blip"

Chief Saunders says:
"It's a blip. We have these blips, we have these weekends," Saunders told reporters on Sunday, referring to the past 48 hours which have seen two double shootings, a fatal drive-by shooting, a police-involved shooting and about half a dozen stabbings.
Speaking to CBC News
December 13, 2015

The Facts

Our communities have become less safe as our members struggle to provide necessary police protection to Toronto neighbourhoods. Without a doubt, the arbitrary cuts to police staffing have depleted the police service, placing both the community and our members at risk. In some divisions, it is not uncommon to put out six to eight officers each shift. Our members are frustrated and embarrassed that the first words out of their mouth when they arrive at a call are “I’m sorry it took so long.”

Understaffing on the frontline makes it difficult for our members to carry out basic policing duties and hinders proactive policing efforts. While overall crime rates have decreased over the past 20 years, reported violent crimes such as gang-related crimes, shootings and homicides have increased. Police cuts are also made worse when they happen in a growing city; Toronto is expected to break the 3 million population mark by 2020. Less police and more residents. This is not the time to be cutting. In our opinion, the Service has reached a breaking point.

Contrary to the Chief’s categorization of shootings two years ago as a “blip” (defined in the MacMillan-Webster dictionary as “a minor problem or delay that does not last very long”) gun violence has been trending upwards over the past four years. There has been a 144% increase in shooting victims compared to 2014 and a 122% increase in shooting incidents. In 2017, Toronto celebrated a record high of 590 shooting victims. As of January 22, 2018, shooting incidents have increased 56% compared to the same time last year, despite the Chief’s recent comments to the media, that shootings are down.

While our members are tied up with gun violence and other emergency calls, other 911 and non-emergency calls stack up in the pending queue. It is not uncommon for citizens to wait hours for an officer to respond to their emergency. In short, the police are unable to meet community expectations which include; having police visible in their neighbourhood, reasonable response times to calls for service and prompt response to 911 calls.