

Cost for policing will drop in 2015

By Bill Rea

A revised billing method for OPP service in Caledon is expected to cut costs by about \$112,000 in the coming year.

That point was made recently in the proposals for Caledon OPP's 2015 budget, which was recently presented to Caledon council. The staff report that went to council stated there will be a reduction in costs, but not service levels.

Town CAO Doug Barnes reminded councillors policing services are provided by Peel Region, and the provisions in Caledon are based on an agreement to have OPP in town. The Town can endorse the police budget, but it has to go to the Region for approval. He added the cost to the taxpayers is reflected in the portion of their taxes that go to the Region, not the Town.

The staff report stated the Province has put a new OPP billing model into effect, starting in January. It consists of base services, and calls for service.

Town Treasurer Peggy Tollett told councillors under the new formula that 60.1 per cent will be for base service. She said that means all costs associated with the core operations, which are calculated at a rate of \$200.15 per property (residential and commercial) throughout the province. The remaining 39.9 per cent addresses costs that are usually reactive, such criminal code offences. She said each service call is weighted according to how much of the officer's time is needed to deal with it. They also use a rolling four-year average to come up with a number of callers for the municipality.

There are plans for 27 enhancement positions at the detachment (23 in uniform and four civilian) to focus on the Community Response, Street Crime and Traffic Units.

Tollett also said they are budgetting for some \$320,000 in grants from the Province, although she said those grants are under review.