

Decision Regarding Findings Report INV-24-1, INV-24-2 and INV-24-3 Concerning the Conduct of Toronto Police Service Board Members Amber Morley and Lily Cheng

Decision By:

Joseph Maiorano, Deputy Inspector General of Policing¹

I INTRODUCTION

- [1] This decision relates to three complaints filed with the Inspectorate of Policing (“IoP”) against Toronto Police Service Board (“TPSB”) members Amber Morley and Lily Cheng, alleging that they committed misconduct by making inappropriate public statements following a police interaction with demonstrators at a pro-Palestinian march.
- [2] These allegations were investigated by an inspector with the IoP who prepared three Findings Reports,² which are attached to this Decision as Appendix A.
- [3] Following a review of the Findings Reports and for the reasons that follow, I conclude that Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng have not committed misconduct in contravention of subsection 3(1) of the *Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members* Regulation, O Reg 408/23 (“Code of Conduct”), enacted under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, SO 2019, c 1, Sch 1 (the “Act”).

II BACKGROUND

- [4] Amber Morley and Lily Cheng are members of the TPSB. Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng are also members of Toronto City Council.
- [5] On March 30, 2024, there was a pro-Palestinian march in downtown Toronto where there was a physical interaction between demonstrators and Toronto Police Service (“TPS”) officers. In the days that followed there was significant public commentary about the protest.
- [6] Chris Moise, a member of Toronto City Council, issued an online statement about the march indicating that he did not “condone any illegal or violent behaviour” but does “support the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.” He ultimately advocated for de-escalation while acknowledging the challenges faced by law enforcement.
- [7] There was also a letter campaign which encouraged people to “[w]rite to Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley to demand that they condemn

¹ This decision is made pursuant to a delegation of authority of the Inspector General of Policing issued under subsection 102(7) of the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, SO 2019, c 1, Sch 1 (the “Act”).

² Section 123 of the Act requires an IoP inspector who completes an investigation of a complaint to report their findings to the Inspector General. This report is redacted to comply with the *Publication of Findings Reports and Directions under Sections 123 and 125 of the Act* Regulation, O Reg 317/24.

the police violence, drop the charges [against demonstrators] and respect people's right to peaceful assembly."

[8] On April 4, 2024, at 8:14 p.m., Ms. Morley made a post on her Toronto City Council "X" account stating:

Today, I shared a joint statement with my Council colleagues reaffirming our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians, including freedom of assembly. All people in Toronto must feel safe as participants + bystanders to peaceful + lawful demonstrations.

[9] Attached to this post was an image of a document titled "Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City" which read:

In recent days, hundreds of residents have shared their concerns with our offices regarding their experiences during a march recognizing Land Day in downtown Toronto on March 30. We support and thank our colleague, the local Councillor for Toronto Centre [Chris Moise], for his statement affirming the right to Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Freedom of assembly is a protected right in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In these difficult times of heightened tension in the world and Toronto, these rights must be protected as part of our democratic society. It is deeply concerning to hear residents voicing fears about their freedom to engage in protests, demonstrations, and large gatherings.

We reiterate our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians. Our city must be a place where all people are free to demonstrate and engage in protest as a form of democratic expression.

[emphasis in original]

The image contained digital signatures of six Toronto city councillors, including Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng.

[10] On April 5, 2024, the Chief of Police for the TPS responded to the councillors' statement, reaffirming the TPS's commitment to upholding the right to lawful protest. He also stated criminal behaviour during demonstrations will not be tolerated, highlighting recent incidents of violence against police officers. The Toronto Police Association similarly issued a statement expressing disappointment

with the councillors for not condemning threatening behaviour against TPS officers. The Toronto Police Association requested that Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng “recuse themselves”, or be removed, from the TPSB.

[11] That same day, Ms. Cheng posted a statement on her city councillor website stating that she did not endorse the final version of the document which had been posted. She issued a “revised statement” indicating that she supported the right to peaceful protest and freedom of expression but also acknowledged the need for public safety and lawful conduct.

[12] The IoP subsequently received three complaints about Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng signing the document. Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng were interviewed by an IoP inspector as part of the IoP’s investigation into these complaints.

[13] In her interview, Ms. Morley explained that her and other Toronto city councillors felt strongly that the circumstances required them, as leaders, to issue a statement. Her team at city hall were the initial authors of the statement which originally acknowledged the hard work of TPS officers. Ms. Morley was aware of her obligations as a board member and sought advice from board staff before releasing the statement. The statement went through several iterations, and Ms. Morley was not sure if Ms. Cheng received the “final-final” version that was posted. She believes the word “peaceful” was removed before the word “demonstration” and did not make the final edit.

[14] Ms. Cheng similarly explained that her intention, as city councillor, was to simply affirm the right to engage in peaceful protest. She confirmed that she was not able to review the final version of the statement that was emailed to her before it was posted on social media by her colleagues, as she was at an event. She claims that the final version of the statement was different from the previously approved versions and did not include her edits regarding the right to “peaceful” protest. Additionally, the final draft acknowledged a statement from Chris Moise (the Councillor for Toronto Centre), which she had not seen or approved.

III ISSUE

[15] The sole issue is whether Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng committed misconduct by signing and approving the release of the document titled, “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City”.

IV ANALYSIS

[16] I find, on a balance of probabilities, that Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng did not commit misconduct.

[17] The relevant section of the Code of Conduct includes subsection 3(1), which requires:

3. (1) A member of a police service board shall not conduct themselves in a manner that undermines or is likely to undermine the public's trust in the police service board or the police service maintained by the police service board.

[18] At the outset, board members are not subject to being assessed for misconduct according to their difference of views on matters, but according to whether they are in compliance with the Code of Conduct.

[19] Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng were motivated to sign the document given their role as city councillors. This explanation is an example of the “two hats”³ issue that arises regularly with respect to councillors that also sit as police service board members.

[20] In this case, it is apparent that both Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng attempted to balance their responsibilities to their constituents as city councillors and as police service board members who are required to comply with the Code of Conduct under the Act. It is also important to note that regardless of intent, as serving police service board members, Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng's responsibilities extend beyond the public constituents and includes the police service members.

[21] From their statements to the IoP, Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng's intent was clearly to affirm the right to “peaceful” protest. Regardless that the statement did not include reference to “peaceful” protests or demonstrations, beyond affirming the right to peaceful assembly, it is apparent that the board members were attempting to ensure the Charter rights afforded to people were preserved. The statement itself did not, in any way, support violent actions against TPS members.

³ The metaphor of “two hats” was used by Mayor Bennett from Peterborough, who was also a police service board member, in the Ontario Civilian Police Commission decision in *Bennett (Re)*, 2014 ONCPC 2504. In that case, the mayor claimed that he wore two hats, a police service board member hat and the mayor's hat, and that his role as mayor was “paramount” such that “the mayor's ‘hat sits on to’ of all other hats”. The OCPC held that the mayor's position was patently unsustainable. Mayor Bennett ignored the fact that police service board members have legal duties under the relevant legislation and there is no exception for mayors.

[22] It is also important to note that the board members were not acting on behalf of the TPSB, and that they did not interfere with the day-to-day operations or decisions made by the Chief of Police or the members of the service.

[23] The board members also undertook to have their participation in this public statement reviewed by the TPSB Executive Director. Having said that, each board member is ultimately responsible and accountable for their actions. Nevertheless, the actions of the board members in seeking advice about their obligations shows a level of due diligence.

[24] The investigation also revealed that Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng made efforts to ensure their conduct in preparing and approving the release of the statement complied with the Act, including the Code of Conduct

[25] In the future, I suggest that the board members verify the wording of such releases before publication or consider their own releases to ensure that they can properly balance their obligations under the Act, which differ from the other councillors not on the police service board.

V CONCLUSION

[26] After a consideration of the relevant facts and law, I find that Ms. Morley and Ms. Cheng did not violate subsection 3(1) of the Code of Conduct.

Date: December 17, 2025

Original Signed By

Joseph Maiorano
*Deputy Inspector General of
Policing*

FINDINGS REPORT

Toronto Police Service Board Members:
Lily Cheng and Amber Morley

**Section 106(1) Board Member
Conduct Investigation**
(INV-24-1)

Submitted to:
Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing of
Ontario

September 8, 2025

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ABOUT THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICING AND THE INSPECTORATE OF POLICING

The Inspector General of Policing drives improved performance and accountability in policing and police governance by overseeing the delivery of adequate and effective policing across Ontario. The Inspector General ensures compliance with the province's policing legislation and standards, and has the authority to issue progressive, risk-based and binding directions and measures to protect public safety. Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act embeds protections to ensure the Inspector General's statutory duty is delivered independently from government.

The Inspector General of Policing leads the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP). The IoP provides operational support to inspect, investigate, monitor, and advise Ontario's police services, boards and special constable employers. By leveraging independent research and data intelligence, the IoP promotes leading practices and identifies areas for improvement, ensuring that high-quality policing and police governance is delivered to make everyone in Ontario safer.

In March 2023, Ryan Teschner was appointed as Ontario's first Inspector General of Policing with duties and authorities under the Community Safety and Policing Act. Mr. Teschner is a recognized expert in public administration, policing and police governance.

For more information about the Inspector General of Policing or the IoP, please visit www.iopontario.ca.

INTRODUCTION

This is a report to the Inspector General of Policing by an Inspector appointed by the Inspector General, who has completed an investigation under Part VII of the [Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019](#) (CSPA).

OVERVIEW OF INVESTIGATION

The Complaint

Three written complaints were received by the Inspector General of Policing, alleging that members of the Toronto Police Service Board (TPSB) members contravened [Ontario Regulation 408/23: Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members](#) (Code of Conduct) for police service board members after signing and publicly releasing a document that was critical of Toronto Police Service's (TPS) handling of a pro-Palestinian demonstration. This report relates to one of the complaints. The IoP reports for INV-24-2 and INV-24-3 relate to the others.

The complainant alleged that TPSB members Amber Morley and Lily Cheng, with four other Toronto city councillors, signed and endorsed a document titled "Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City." The document was a response to a pro-Palestinian march that took place on March 30, 2024. The document was posted on the social media platform "X" (formerly known as Twitter) on April 4, 2024.

The complainant felt that the document was unfairly critical of the TPS response to the protest march. The complainant claimed that by signing this inflammatory document, Amber Morley and Lily Cheng, as sitting members of the TPSB, were in violation of multiple sections of the Code of Conduct.

[redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24]

The Subject Police Service Board Members

Subject One:

Name of Police Service Board: Toronto Police Service Board

Subject Board Member: Amber Morley

Length of Service (Term): Appointed August 10, 2023, to December 31, 2024.

Reappointed effective January 1, 2025, to November 14, 2026, and until a successor is appointed.

Specific Roles Held on Police Service Board: Board Member

Previous Substantiated Misconduct: None

Appointing Authority: Toronto City Council

Subject Two:

Name of Police Service Board: Toronto Police Service Board

Subject Board Member: Lily Cheng

Length of Service (Term): Appointed November 23, 2022, reappointed August 10, 2023, to December 31, 2024, and reappointed January 1, 2025, to November 14, 2026, and until a successor is appointed.

Specific Roles Held on Police Service Board: Board Member

Previous Substantiated Misconduct: None

Appointing Authority: Toronto City Council

Applicable Legislative and Regulatory Provisions

[Section 35\(6\)](#) of the CSPA provides that every member of a police service board shall comply with the prescribed code of conduct.

[Ontario Regulation 408/23: Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members](#) was reviewed having regard to the allegations made in the complaint and the following sections were deemed to be relevant:

3. (1) A member of a police service board shall not conduct themselves in a manner that undermines or is likely to undermine the public's trust in the police service board or the police service maintained by the board; and

3. (2) *A member of a police service board shall not be subject to discipline for a contravention of subsection (1) if, on a balance of probabilities, their conduct was in the good faith performance of their duties as a board member.*

SUMMARY OF THE INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED

As part of the investigation process, interviews were conducted with the complainant and the two subject TPSB members, Amber Morley and Lily Cheng. Additionally, open-source material relating to the complaint was gathered and reviewed, along with material provided by the subject TPSB members during their interviews.

The investigation's focus was to identify the document that was the subject of the complaint, confirm the TPSB members signed the document, and ascertain the TPSB members' reasons and rationale for signing and supporting the document and its release.

Open-Source Information: Collection and Review

Multiple online sources were located which provide the context about the protest and public communications related to this complaint.

City News (Toronto)

On March 30, 2024, an article was posted online by City News Toronto titled "Multiple people arrested at pro-Palestinian march in Toronto." The article was updated on March 31 and described the incident as a "pro-Palestine" Land Day march held in downtown Toronto on Saturday. During the march, tensions escalated, and physical altercations ensued between officers and a portion of the protestors. Embedded in the online article were X posts from the TPS and the Toronto Police Association (TPA) dated March 31, 2024. The TPS post stated, "protestors became physically aggressive towards officers when police lawfully executed an arrest and seized a vehicle under the HTA," and the TPA stated that, "when protestors choose to commit criminal acts, they will be arrested either immediately or later" and asserted that officers "deserve the same respect that they extend to the protestors."

Statement Issued by Chris Moise

On April 2, 2024, Toronto city councillor Chris Moise issued an online statement regarding the march that occurred on March 30, 2024, which he characterized as a

“protest.” In his statement, titled “Protest at Parliament Street and Gerrard Street East,” Councillor Moise indicated he does not “condone any illegal or violent behaviour” but does “support the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.” He stated that he found the videos of the events “upsetting, with reports of multiple people sustaining injuries” and members of the community “feeling intimidated and unsettled.” In his statement, he reports he has been in communications with his local police division to gather more information about what took place to ensure that it is not repeated in the future. He “advocates for using de-escalation tactics” and acknowledges the “complexities and challenges” faced by law enforcement in managing large scale events.

The Document: “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City.”

Amber Morley’s online post of the subject document on her Toronto city council X (formerly known as Twitter) account, @CllrAmberMorley, was reviewed.

It was posted on April 4, 2024, at 8:14 p.m. In the post, Ms. Morley stated, *“Today, I shared a joint statement with my Council colleagues reaffirming our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians, including freedom of assembly. All people in Toronto must feel safe as participants + bystanders to peaceful + lawful demonstrations.”*

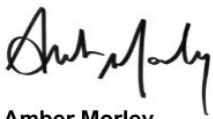
Attached to the post was an image of a document entitled, “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City”. The document bore the digital signatures of six Toronto city councillors – Amber Morley, Gord Perks, Alejandra Bravo, Ausma Malik, Paula Fletcher, and Lily Cheng.

Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City

In recent days, hundreds of residents have shared their concerns with our offices regarding their experiences during a march recognizing Land Day in downtown Toronto on March 30. We support and thank our colleague, the local Councillor for Toronto Centre, for his statement affirming the right to Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Freedom of assembly is a protected right in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In these difficult times of heightened tension in the world and Toronto, these rights must be protected as part of our democratic society. It is deeply concerning to hear residents voicing fears about their freedom to engage in protests, demonstrations, and large gatherings.

We reiterate our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians. Our city must be a place where all people are free to demonstrate and engage in protest as a form of democratic expression.



Amber Morley
City Councillor
Ward 3, Etobicoke-Lakeshore



Gord Perks
City Councillor
Ward 4, Parkdale-High Park



Alejandra Bravo
City Councillor
Ward 9, Davenport



Ausma Malik
City Councillor
Ward 10, Spadina-Fort York



Paula Fletcher
City Councillor
Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth



Lily Cheng
City Councillor
Ward 18, Willowdale

The document was posted on the X accounts of the signatories except for Lily Cheng.

Statement from the Toronto Police Chief

On April 5, 2024, the Chief of the TPS released a statement in response to the postings by the city councillors. The Chief reaffirmed the service's commitment to upholding the right to lawful protest while emphasizing that criminal behaviour during demonstrations would not be tolerated. He observed that over 500 protests had occurred in Toronto since October 7, 2023. The Chief highlighted recent incidents of violence against officers and stressed that such actions are illegal and would be addressed accordingly.

He called for peaceful, respectful demonstrations and expressed gratitude to police officers for their professionalism and dedication during challenging times.

Statement from the Toronto Police Association (TPA)

The TPA posted a statement on X on April 5, 2024, defending the members of TPS who “have worked tirelessly to maintain public safety” and “valued, respected, and upheld everyone’s Charter rights.” The statement asserted that the Mayor of Toronto and the six Toronto city councillors had been “silent” and “refused to condemn” the verbal and threatening attacks against its members at the gatherings. The statement asked councillors Morley and Cheng to “recuse themselves” from the TPSB or alternatively for the mayor to remove them.

Subsequent Post by Lily Cheng

On April 5, 2024, Lily Cheng posted a statement on her city councillor website entitled “My Revised Statement on Protests in Our City”. In the statement, Lily Cheng asserted that her office was busy helping constituents with the Toronto vacant home tax when she and her team were asked to take a position on the March 30 protest. She explained that “the letter was edited multiple times” and “we did not have the opportunity to review the final version. We did NOT endorse the final version.” The statement continued, “upon further reflection and dialogue with community members, I would like to issue a statement that differs from my colleagues.”

Her revised message affirmed her support for the right to peaceful protest and freedom of expression, while also acknowledging the need for public safety and lawful conduct. It expressed concern that some peaceful protestors felt unsafe exercising their rights and acknowledged the challenges faced by police managing large crowds in an emotionally charged environment.

Complainant Interview

An in-person interview was conducted with the complainant regarding the complaint.

The complainant stated that multiple pro-Palestinian marches have occurred since October 7, 2023, with protestors issuing death threats, behaving in an unlawful manner, and backing up traffic. Members of [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24] had “finally had enough” after seeing the interaction between the “Toronto Police and the pro-Hamas” demonstrators at Parliament and Gerrard on March 30, 2024.

Approximately seven to ten members of [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24] decided to send out a media statement and file a complaint with the Inspector General of Policing when they found out that two city councillors who sit on the TPSB had signed “the statement” that was posted online.

The complainant acknowledged while the statement highlighted “freedom of assembly as a protected right in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms”, that did not give protestors the right to obstruct and interfere with police while they were performing their duties. In the complainant’s view, the statement implied that this type of behavior was acceptable.

The complainant asserted that the statement was politically fueled by a New Democratic Party (NDP) agenda, and the line that reads “in affirming the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly” is NDP “pedaling” of an ideology – that is, it’s okay to protest even though yelling out hate speech on the streets of Toronto is a violation of the Criminal Code of Canada.

The complainant believes that Amber Morley and Lily Cheng are promoting themselves politically and using their position on the TPSB to push the NDP agenda. The complainant believes that city councillors must remain politically independent while on the police service board.

By signing the statement, the complainant said that Amber Morley and Lily Cheng had interfered with police operations, spoke on behalf of the TPSB, used their position as board members to benefit themselves politically, and undermined the public’s trust in the police service board and the police service maintained by the police service board. Consequently, [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24] demanded their resignation from the TPSB.

Subject Police Service Board Member Interviews

Interview of TPSB Member Amber Morley

An interview was conducted with subject TPSB member, Amber Morley.

Amber Morley advised that after the March 30th protest, a petition was generated with approximately 12000 signatures, and she was named in the petition, along with Mayor Chow, around police accountability. It alleged that there was police misconduct at the protest and that several peaceful protestors had their rights violated. She added there

were some demands in the petition to drop charges against protestors, which they would not entertain as it was not in their purview.

Amber Morley reported she had also received correspondence and had conversations with members of the community prior to March 30th, who felt their rights were violated, their voices were being oppressed or not respected, and a “feeling that members of the police service were not conducting themselves in a way that facilitated a civil dialogue and peaceful protest.”

Amber Morley explained, as she was named on this petition calling on her to do something, there was “extensive back and forth” with colleagues behind the scenes at the TPSB to try and navigate people to the appropriate agency to submit their complaints. She added that this was all happening at the “infancy” of the new legislation and there was uncertainty on where public complaints needed to land.

Amber Morley stated that her and her team at Toronto City Hall were the initial authors of the document titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City,” (the “Statement”) and stated she felt that leadership was required. Amber Morley explained that she wanted to provide messaging, affirming the role of the service members who were doing difficult work under high pressure circumstances and affirming the rights of citizens to participate in peaceful and lawful assembly. She stated that she did not support members of the public violating the law or disrespecting police officers doing their work.

Amber Morley claimed that her original draft spoke to the hard work of the officers, however, other councillors expressed a desire to collaborate as they had been in receipt of several concerns from their communities, and consequently the Statement went through several iterations once colleagues were involved and provided input. Amber Morley admits being “frustrated” at one point because they all could not agree about what should be included in the letter. She stated, however, there was a strong feeling that the councillors should put out a statement, as the “tensions and frustrations that were being experienced in the community on all sides would likely continue and grow” in the absence of some kind of leadership. Ultimately, the councillors released a “high level and general statement” affirming the rights for people to peacefully protest which she was happy to sign off on.

Amber Morley stated that she understands that as a member of the police service board, she was bound by the Code of Conduct. Amber Morley indicated that she reached out to board staff to discuss the councillors’ intentions and to check in specific to the Code of Conduct, to ensure that she was not going against any of the rules and responsibilities as a board member. She advised that she relies on the TPSB Executive

Director when it relates to police service board matters and “defers to him for advice and suggestions about what is appropriate and not appropriate” when the lines are blurred. She explained there had already been numerous conversations with the Executive Director, as there was pressure on her as a board member to surface the concerns from the public as part of board discussion.

Amber Morley stated as a city councillor she released a statement about the rights that she affirms and as TPSB member she helped facilitate dialogue with community members to weigh in on the board’s policy related to public gatherings and protests. Amber Morley asserted that she directed her office to reach out to the Office of the Toronto Police Chief to notify them of the intention to put this statement out, and to share any concerns with her office before it went public facing. Amber Morley claimed nothing substantial was flagged by the Chief’s office to change the Statement going public.

Amber Morley explained that her staff sent out the final version to all the undersigned, advising them this was the final version and that it was now going to be posted publicly. She acknowledged there was a concern from councillor Cheng who initially agreed. Amber Morley stated she did not know if councillor Cheng received that “final-final” edited version that was set to go live within the hour. She believes the word “peaceful” was removed before the word “demonstration” and did not make the final edit.

Amber Morley asserted that this letter was about her role as a city councillor and a leader in the community. She felt after six months and 700 plus protests, there was “little messaging or leadership being provided to people” who were in a “difficult space of trying to influence world issues.” She reported that she understands that people are “impacted in different ways on all sides of this issue and that’s not the only perspective.” Amber Morley felt that “leadership was required, reaffirming people’s rights is always important, always appropriate” and stated her goal as a leader is to “ensure that people feel seen, heard, and respected.”

Amber Morley expressed regrets that people perceived the letter as being critical and denouncing the police’s actions, which was not her intention. She noted that people were taking positions based on what was not included in the letter. She indicated that many conclusions being drawn were not based on facts. Amber Morley stated that every day she is required to make difficult decisions or take positions that not everyone will appreciate, understand, or agree with; that’s the nature of her work.

In response to the allegation of misconduct, Amber Morley explained that “public trust is a very delicate active and live thing that we are constantly working towards.” As a

community member from a diverse low-income community, she understands that public trust in policing is an issue, and it didn't stem from her statement. She asserted that she is someone who believes "deeply in the importance of public trust in order for the police to do their work and to achieve the goal of adequate and effective policing for all community members in an equitable way." She emphasized that "reinforcing a sentiment" that police are beyond accountability is the opposite of building trust with the community. She stated she would "never intentionally disrespect or demean members of the service, command, or otherwise" in her role as a leader and citizen. She explained that "building bridges" between communities who have historically not trusted the police is what she aims to facilitate.

In response to being asked about anything she would do differently, Amber Morley said that as a city councillor with the privilege of sitting on the police service board, she has a "front row seat to the important and hard work that happens every day" by the police. She expressed a desire to "stand a little more firmly" on her intention to highlight this through the Statement, along with reinforcing the word "peaceful". She explained that, to her, "it goes without saying" that she does not support people breaking the law, which was not the focus of the Statement. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of maintaining respectful relationships with members of the service and acknowledged the "gravity" of her words and the "impact" of her statements in her dual roles as city councillor and TPSB member.

Interview of TPSB Member Lily Cheng

An interview was conducted with subject board member, Lily Cheng.

During the interview, Lily Cheng stated that Amber Morley's office reached out to her Chief of Staff to inform them about a letter being drafted regarding the freedom to protest, as they had received several complaints from protestors. Lily Cheng mentioned that her office was in disarray, helping constituents who had not paid their vacant home tax, and she was not feeling her best [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24].

Lily Cheng stated that she would support the letter as a city councillor because she believed in the Charter of Rights to legal and peaceful demonstrations and wanted to ensure that the word "peaceful" was included in the messaging. She explained that her simplest intention was, as a city councillor, to affirm people's right to engage in peaceful protest. Lily Cheng explained that this communication was happening through her Chief of Staff, who would relay the latest version of the Statement to her and confirm her approval.

Lily Cheng asserts that she was not able to review the final version of the Statement that was emailed to her before it was posted on social media by her colleagues, as she was at an event. Lily Cheng claims that the final version of the Statement was different from the previously approved versions and did not include her edits regarding the right to “peaceful” protest. Additionally, the final draft acknowledged Chris Moise’s statement, which she had not seen or approved.

Lily Cheng confirmed that she did not post the Statement on her social media and instead sent out her revised statement the following day, on April 5, 2024. It was important to her that people knew it was not her intention to criticize the police. She understood from her role on the TPSB how challenging it was for police in intense situations and being outnumbered at protests.

Lily Cheng advised that when she has questions about her role as a TPSB member or when approached by the media, she consults with the TPSB Executive Director. She stated he always provides advice on what is or isn’t appropriate. Since she did not intend for the Statement to be a criticism of the police, she did not consult the Executive Director regarding her initial support of the Statement.

In her interview, Lily Cheng indicated she sent an apology email to the Toronto Police Service Chief of Police, stating that she appreciates the difficult job that police have and that her intention was not to be critical of them. She asserts that the Chief has a difficult job and being a board member is also difficult. She believes in the importance of maintaining a respectful relationship to foster understanding.

In response to the allegations of misconduct, Lily Cheng stated there was no intention of criticism or finger-pointing on her part, which she made clear in her revised statement. Consequently, she believes she did not violate the TPSB Code of Conduct.

When asked about anything she would do differently, Lily Cheng responded that as a first-time councillor, she will ensure that any future statements are not issued with her signature without her approval until she sees the final version. She added that she will not endorse any future statements, as they can be easily misconstrued and may not achieve their intended purpose.

Additional Material Collected and Reviewed

Online ‘Petition’

Through an open-source online search, the petition Amber Morley referenced in her interview was located. Additionally, on October 9, 2024, upon request, Amber Morley forwarded an email containing the link and screenshots of the online petition, and advised she became aware of the petition on April 3, 2024. The link led to the Action Network website, where individuals can create communication campaigns for activism on social issues, including fundraising, petitions, and letter-writing campaigns.

The ‘petition’ Amber Morley referenced was a letter campaign titled “Condemn Police Violence Against Palestinian Protesters,” and was sponsored by Just Peace Advocates and Canadian Foreign Policy Institute. The letter campaign asked people to “write to Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley to demand that they condemn the police violence, drop the charges and respect people’s right to peaceful assembly.” The webpage stated, “on Saturday the Toronto police violently suppressed protesters’ democratic right to protest Israel’s starvation and slaughter in Gaza. Take one minute to email Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley. Morley also represents the city on the Toronto Police Services Board. Let them know you expect them to call on Toronto police to tell them to drop the charges and respect people’s right to peaceful assembly.”

The site provided a “Take Action” section to fill in their personal information and begin writing. The webpage was still active when reviewed and indicated that 13,121 letters had been sent to date. This letter campaign will be referred to as the petition.

Lily Cheng’s Apology to Chief of Police

On October 9, 2024, upon request, Lily Cheng forwarded a copy of the email she sent to TPS Chief Demkiw on April 10, 2024. In the email, Lily Cheng expressed regret for her oversight that led to her signing a letter that was “unsupportive of the remarkable work carried out by the police service” in policing the recent demonstrations throughout the city. Lily Cheng advised the Chief of her revised statement and wrote, “it was never my intention to undermine or discredit the tremendous efforts of law enforcement in protecting our citizens and upholding the values of our community.” She pledged to work collaboratively with the police service should concerns from the community arise in the future.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

I make the following findings, relying on the material and information collected during the investigation, now contained within this report:

1. **On March 30, 2024, there was a pro-Palestinian march to recognize Land Day which occurred in downtown Toronto, Ontario. During this protest tensions flared, and physical altercations ensued between Toronto police and protestors that garnished the attention of the public and media.**
 - a. Between October 7, 2023, and the beginning of April 2024, more than 500 demonstrations had taken place within the City of Toronto according to a statement from the Toronto Chief of Police.
 - b. The events that transpired during the March 30, 2024, Land Day march was documented by several news media outlets. Articles were posted online with pictures and videos of physical interactions between police and members of the public during the march.
 - c. Through an X post on March 31, 2024, TPS issued a statement that protestors became physically aggressive towards officers while in the lawful execution of an arrest. The same day the TPA issued a statement on X indicating that when protestors engage in criminal acts, “they will be arrested” at that time or later. It ended by saying, “our members deserve the same respect that they extend to protestors.”
 - d. There were members of the public who witnessed and participated in the demonstration who felt that police had violated their democratic right to peaceful assembly as was evident in the over 12,000 letters sent through the letter campaign initiated on the Action Network.
 - e. From the interview with the complainant and from complaints received by the IoP, there were citizens who felt that protestors on March 30th had engaged in unlawful behaviour, became assaultive towards police and obstructed police operations.
 - f. The physical encounter between protestors and police on March 30th prompted Toronto City councillor Chris Moise to issue a statement on April 2, 2024.

2. Amber Morley was named in a petition titled “Condemn Police Violence Against Palestinian Protestors.” Amber Morley and her team at City Hall took the lead in preparing a statement about protests in the city, originally authoring the letter and coordinating the collaboration of city councillors who signed the Statement.

- a. During her interview Amber Morley reported that she was named in a petition, calling on her as the Deputy Mayor and a member of the TPSB to speak out against police misconduct at the March 30th protest and to demand TPS to drop charges against protestors and respect people’s right to peaceful assembly.
- b. Amber Morley indicated that she became aware of the petition on April 3, 2024, the day before she released the Statement and at that time approximately 12,000 letters had been sent.
- c. The petition was located online on the Action Network website, was still active at the time it was reviewed and had over 13,000 letters sent.
- d. The petition demanded Amber Morley to condemn the police violence against the protestors at the March 30th protest, call on Toronto Police to drop the charges against the protestors and to respect people’s rights to peaceful assembly.
- e. As a result of the petition, Amber Morley explained that she was prepared to make a statement as a city councillor affirming the rights for people to peacefully protest, and that her office initiated the original draft.
- f. She explained that her staff communicated with other councillor’s staff, that she intended to release a statement and that councillors Malik, Perks, Fletcher, Bravo and Cheng, initially agreed they would like to be part of a statement affirming the right to peaceful protest and to speak to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- g. Amber Morley stated that as colleagues became involved, they wanted to provide their input, and it became a “collaborative” statement.
- h. In Amber Morley’s interview she advised that her staff sent the final version to all the undersigned, advising this was the final version of the Statement and it was to go “live” within the hour.

3. On April 4, 2024, a statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” was posted on X. Two members of the Toronto Police Service Board, councillors Amber Morley, and Lily Cheng signed the letter, along with four other Toronto City councillors, Gord Perks, Alejandra Bravo, Ausma Malik, and Paul Fletcher.
- a. Amber Morley and Lily Cheng at the time the Statement was released to the public on April 4, 2024, were members on the TPSB and bound by the *Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members (O.Reg. 408/23)* under the CSPA.
 - b. Amber Morley’s X post of the above Statement was located online. It was posted on April 4, 2024, at 8:14 p.m., from her Toronto City Councillor X account, Amber Morley (@CllrAmberMorley). At the beginning of her post she wrote, “Today, I shared a joint statement with my Council colleagues reaffirming our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians, including freedom of assembly. All people in Toronto must feel safe as participants + bystanders to peaceful + lawful demonstrations.” Below her post was the Statement.
 - c. During the in-person interview with Amber Morley, she was provided with a paper copy of the Statement in question and confirmed that she posted that Statement on her X account on the above-mentioned date.
 - d. Prior to the interview and upon request, The complainant provided via email the document that was referred to in the complaint. They provided the link to Amber Morley’s post (@CllrAmberMorley) posted at 8:14 p.m. on Thursday April 4, 2024. During the interview, the complainant was provided with a paper copy of Amber Morley’s post of the Statement and confirmed this was the Statement that formed the basis of the complaint.
 - e. The X posts of the Statement by the four city councillors who do not sit on the TPSB were also located online. Each councillor’s post began using their own words and below their post was a copy of the Statement.
 - f. An extensive online search could not find a post from Lily Cheng regarding the Statement.
 - g. Lily Cheng advised during her interview that she did not post or make public the Statement.

- 4. The public release of the Statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” prompted responses from the Toronto Police Chief and the TPA. The TPA criticized the Statement and the involvement of TPSB members as signatories.**
- a. On April 5, 2024, the Chief of the TPS released a statement in response to the Statement issued by the six city councillors. The first line of the statement reads “A statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” was issued by six Toronto City Councillors last evening.”
 - b. The TPA released a statement on X on April 5, 2024. A part of the statement reads that, “Our members deserve support from the Mayor and Council, especially Councillors Amber Morley and Lily Cheng. As members of the TPSB they are briefed regularly on the status of protest activity and the increasing volatility facing our communities and officers.” It asks Mayor Chow to remove the councillors from the TPSB if they do not recuse themselves.
 - c. The IoP received three complaints from members of the public that alleged, Amber Morley and Lily Cheng as members of the TPSB, are in violation of the Code of Conduct for board members by signing the Statement.
- 5. The petition was the catalyst for Amber Morley to draft and publicly issue a statement as a city councillor that affirmed the rights of all Torontonians to engage in peaceful assembly.**
- a. In her interview, Amber Morley explained that she could not entertain several demands in the petition because they were outside her “role or purview.” For instance, she could not advocate for dropping the charges against protestors.
 - b. She also noted that the TPSB does not handle public complaints and wanted to direct citizens to the appropriate entities. However, she admitted that she lacked “clarity” on this process due to the new legislation.
 - c. The *Police Services Act, 1990*, was repealed on March 30, 2024, and the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, came into force on April 1, 2024.
 - d. Amber Morley indicated she was aware of the delicate balance between her dual roles as city councillor and TPSB member. She reported that as a member of the board she wanted to find the best way to facilitate dialogue between the community members and the TPSB.

- e. Amber Morley conveyed that as a community leader, her goal is to ensure that people feel “seen, heard, and respected.” She expressed that after six months and over 600 protests, there was a palpable sense of tension and frustration in the community from all sides. She felt that, in the absence of some form of leadership, this tension would continue to grow and be “exacerbated.”
- f. Amber Morley advised that she had also received correspondence and had conversations with community members prior to the March 30th protest who felt that “members of the service were not conducting themselves in a way that facilitated civil dialogue and peaceful protest.”
- g. In response to the petition, Amber Morley explained she felt compelled to provide messaging as a city councillor affirming people’s rights to peaceful protest.
- h. Amber Morley explained that the Statement went through several iterations and admitted in her interview to being “frustrated at one point” because councillors could not agree on what should be included in the Statement.
- i. Amber Morley stated that she was “happy” to sign off on the final version which she described as a “high level” and “general” statement that affirmed people’s right to peaceful assembly.
- j. There was acknowledgment from Amber Morley that Lily Cheng might not have seen the final edited version of the Statement. Additionally, she stated that the word “peaceful” did not make the final edit. She confirmed that her office sent the final draft that was to go “live” within the hour and Amber Morley posted the Statement on X at 8:14 p.m.

6. Lily Cheng intended to support a statement from Amber Morley’s office that affirmed the rights for members of the public to “peaceful” assembly.

- a. During her interview, Lily Cheng explained that Amber Morley’s office contacted her office regarding their intention to release a statement affirming the rights of citizens to peacefully protest. This decision was in response to public complaints received by their office.
- b. Lily Cheng reported that this communication occurred through office staff and emails. She explained that she believed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and

Freedoms and would sign a statement that emphasized the importance of “peaceful” assembly and the right to legal protest.

- c. Lily Cheng stated that her Chief of Staff would advise her of the latest version and seek her feedback and approval.
- d. She explained that this was all happening while her office was in “disarray,” and she was busy helping the public who had not paid their vacant home tax;
- e. In her interview Lily Cheng claimed she did not consider her role on the TPSB when supporting this statement as she did not intend for it to be perceived as a criticism of the police. She asserts her “simplest” intention was to support people’s right to peaceful protest.
- f. Lily Cheng claimed that she was at an event when the final version was emailed to her, and she did not see it before it was publicly posted on the evening of April 4th with her signature still affixed. She claimed the last version was different from the prior version which she had approved. She explained in her interview that the final statement did not include her requested emphasis and addition of the word “peaceful” to describe protests.
- g. Additionally, Lily Cheng stated that the last version made mention of Chris Moise’s statement, which she claimed was not in the previous version she had approved.
- h. The Statement that was publicly released had a sentence that read, “We support and thank our colleague, the local Councillor for Toronto Centre for his statement affirming the right to Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.” The councillor for Toronto Centre is Chris Moise.
- i. Lily Cheng confirmed in her interview that she did not release the Statement on her X account or any other media platforms, and it could not be located through an open-source search.
- j. On April 5th, Lily Cheng released a revised statement on her city council website. She wrote that her team did not have the opportunity to review the “final version” and subsequently did not endorse the “final version.” The letter also stated that “upon further reflection and dialogue with community members” she would like to issue a statement that differs from her colleagues.

- k. In her interview, Lily Cheng expressed that it was important to her that members of the community and the TPS knew it was not her intention to support a statement that was critical of the police. She understood how difficult it was for officers managing protests while being outnumbered.
- l. On April 10, 2024, Lily Cheng sent an email to the Toronto Police Chief with the subject line "My sincere apologies." In the email she apologizes for her recent oversight that led to the signing of a letter that was unsupportive of the "remarkable" work of the service during the multitude of protests. She explains that she issued a revised statement and at the end of the email writes, "I value the partnership between our office, the board and TPS and am dedicated to strengthening trust and cooperation."

FINDINGS REPORT

Toronto Police Service Board Members:
Lily Cheng and Amber Morley

**Section 106(1) Board Member
Conduct Investigation**
(INV-24-2)

Submitted to:
Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing of
Ontario

June 30, 2025

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ABOUT THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICING AND THE INSPECTORATE OF POLICING

The Inspector General of Policing drives improved performance and accountability in policing and police governance by overseeing the delivery of adequate and effective policing across Ontario. The Inspector General ensures compliance with the province's policing legislation and standards, and has the authority to issue progressive, risk-based and binding directions and measures to protect public safety. Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act embeds protections to ensure the Inspector General's statutory duty is delivered independently from government.

The Inspector General of Policing leads the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP). The IoP provides operational support to inspect, investigate, monitor, and advise Ontario's police services, boards and special constable employers. By leveraging independent research and data intelligence, the IoP promotes leading practices and identifies areas for improvement, ensuring that high-quality policing and police governance is delivered to make everyone in Ontario safer.

In March 2023, Ryan Teschner was appointed as Ontario's first Inspector General of Policing with duties and authorities under the Community Safety and Policing Act. Mr. Teschner is a recognized expert in public administration, policing and police governance.

For more information about the Inspector General of Policing or the IoP, please visit www.iopontario.ca.

INTRODUCTION

This is a report to the Inspector General of Policing by an Inspector appointed by the Inspector General, who has completed an investigation under Part VII of the [Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019](#) (CSPA).

OVERVIEW OF INVESTIGATION

The Complaint

Three written complaints were received by the Inspector General of Policing, alleging that Toronto Police Service Board (TPSB) members Amber Morley and Lily Cheng contravened [Ontario Regulation 408/23: Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members](#) (Code of Conduct) for Police Service Board Members after signing and publicly releasing a document that was critical of Toronto Police Service's (TPS) handling of a pro-Palestinian march. This report relates to an investigation into one of the complaints. The IOP Findings Reports for INV-24-1 and INV-24-3 relate to the others.

The complaint referred to in this report alleged that TPSB members Amber Morley and Lily Cheng, along with four other Toronto City councillors, signed and endorsed a letter titled "Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City," in relation to a pro-Palestinian march on March 30, 2024. The document was signed and posted on April 4, 2024, on the social media platform "X".

The complainant stated that on March 30, 2024, they witnessed a large pro-Palestinian march on Parliament Street that overtook large swaths of the road which blocked access on all sides, while protestors dangerously hung off pickup trucks. The complainant noted what they observed to be a "belligerent hostile mob" with some protestors clad in ski masks and shouting anti-police slogans.

The complainant wrote they found it disgraceful that two sitting members of the TPSB, Amber Morley and Lily Cheng would be signatories to a letter signed by four other Toronto City councillors supporting this inflammatory form of protest.

The complainant claimed the letter read as if they were denouncing police, supporting chaos and disorder on the city streets, and siding with this group. The complainant

stated that letters like these erode the public's trust and questioned how Amber Morley and Lily Cheng can support the police mandate to serve and protect when they actively undermine the service with this letter.

The Subject Police Service Board Members

Subject One:

Name of Police Service Board: Toronto Police Service Board

Subject Board Member: Amber Morley

Length of Service (Term): Appointed August 10, 2023, to December 31, 2024.

Reappointed effective January 1, 2025, to November 14, 2026, and until a successor is appointed.

Specific Roles Held on Police Service Board: Board Member

Previous Substantiated Misconduct: None

Appointing Authority: Toronto City Council

Subject Two:

Name of Police Service Board: Toronto Police Service Board

Subject Board Member: Lily Cheng

Length of Service (Term): Appointed November 23, 2022, reappointed August 10, 2023, to December 31, 2024, and reappointed January 1, 2025, to November 14, 2026, and until a successor is appointed.

Specific Roles Held on Police Service Board: Board Member

Previous Substantiated Misconduct: None

Appointing Authority: Toronto City Council

Applicable Legislative and Regulatory Provisions

[Section 35\(6\)](#) of the CSPA provides that every member of a police service board shall comply with the prescribed code of conduct.

[Ontario Regulation 408/23: Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members](#) was reviewed having regard to the allegations made in the complaint and the following sections were deemed to be relevant:

3. (1) A member of a police service board shall not conduct themselves in a manner that undermines or is likely to undermine the public's trust in the police service board or the police service maintained by the board; and

3. (2) A member of a police service board shall not be subject to discipline for a contravention of subsection (1) if, on a balance of probabilities, their conduct was in the good faith performance of their duties as a board member.

SUMMARY OF THE INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED

As part of the investigation process, interviews were conducted with the complainant and the two subject TPSB members, Amber Morley, and Lily Cheng. Additionally, open-source material forming the basis of the complaint was gathered and reviewed, along with material provided by the subject TPSB members during their interviews.

Open-Source Information: Collection and Review

Multiple online sources were located which provide context about the protest and public communications related to this complaint.

City News (Toronto)

On March 30, 2024, an article was posted online by City News Toronto titled “Multiple people arrested at pro-Palestinian march in Toronto.” The article was updated on March 31 and described the incident as a “pro-Palestine” march held in downtown Toronto on Saturday. During the march, tensions escalated, and physical altercations ensued between officers and a portion of the protestors. Embedded in the online article were X posts from the TPS and the Toronto Police Association (TPA) dated March 31, 2024. The TPS post stated, “protestors became physically aggressive towards officers when police lawfully executed an arrest and seized a vehicle under the HTA,” and the TPA stated that “when protestors choose to commit criminal acts, they will be arrested either immediately or later” and asserted that officers “deserve the same respect that they extend to the protestors.”

Statement Issued by Chris Moise

On April 2, 2024, Toronto city councillor Chris Moise issued an online statement regarding the march that occurred on March 30, 2024, which he characterized as a

“protest.” In his statement, titled “Protest at Parliament Street and Gerrard Street East,” Councillor Moise indicated he does not “condone any illegal or violent behaviour” but does “support the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.” He stated that he found the videos of the events “upsetting, with reports of multiple people sustaining injuries” and members of the community “feeling intimidated and unsettled.” In his statement he reports he has been in communications with his local police division to gather more information about what took place to ensure that it is not repeated in the future. He “advocates for using de-escalation tactics” and acknowledges the “complexities and challenges faced by law enforcement in managing large scale events.

The Document: “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City.”

Amber Morley’s online post of the subject document from her Toronto city councillor X (formerly known as Twitter) account, @CllrAmberMorley, was reviewed.

It was posted on April 4, 2024, at 8:14 p.m. In the post she stated, *“Today, I shared a joint statement with my Council colleagues reaffirming our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians, including freedom of assembly. All people in Toronto must feel safe as participants + bystanders to peaceful + lawful demonstrations.”*

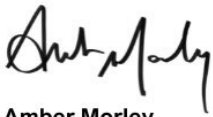
Attached to the post was an image of a statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” which concluded with the digital signatures of six Toronto city councillors – Amber Morley, Gord Perks, Alejandra Bravo, Ausma Malik, Paula Fletcher, and Lily Cheng.

Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City

In recent days, hundreds of residents have shared their concerns with our offices regarding their experiences during a march recognizing Land Day in downtown Toronto on March 30. We support and thank our colleague, the local Councillor for Toronto Centre, for his statement affirming the right to Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Freedom of assembly is a protected right in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In these difficult times of heightened tension in the world and Toronto, these rights must be protected as part of our democratic society. It is deeply concerning to hear residents voicing fears about their freedom to engage in protests, demonstrations, and large gatherings.

We reiterate our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians. Our city must be a place where all people are free to demonstrate and engage in protest as a form of democratic expression.



Amber Morley
City Councillor
Ward 3, Etobicoke-Lakeshore



Gord Perks
City Councillor
Ward 4, Parkdale-High Park



Alejandra Bravo
City Councillor
Ward 9, Davenport



Ausma Malik
City Councillor
Ward 10, Spadina-Fort York



Paula Fletcher
City Councillor
Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth



Lily Cheng
City Councillor
Ward 18, Willowdale

The document was posted on the X accounts of the signatories except for Lily Cheng.

Ausma Malik X post

Prior to the interview and upon request, the complainant provided the link to Ausma Malik's online post on her X account (@ausmalik) which had the letter in question, "Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City" attached. It was posted on April 4, 2024, at 8:30pm with the comments *"Many residents have reached out to me with serious concerns, which I share, about police conduct at the peaceful Land Day march in*

Toronto on March 30. My council colleagues and I reaffirm our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians.”

Statement from the Toronto Police Chief

On April 5, 2024, the Chief of the TPS released a statement in response to “The Statement” issued by the six city councillors. The Chief reaffirmed the service’s commitment to upholding the right to lawful protest while emphasizing that criminal behaviour during demonstrations will not be tolerated. Since October 7, 2023, over 500 protests have occurred in Toronto, with police working to ensure public safety. The Chief highlighted recent incidents of violence against officers and stressed that such actions are illegal and will be addressed accordingly. He called for peaceful, respectful demonstrations and expressed gratitude to police officers for their professionalism and dedication during challenging times.

Statement from the Toronto Police Association (TPA)

The TPA posted a statement on X on April 5, 2024, defending the members of TPS who “have worked tirelessly to maintain public safety” and “valued, respected, and upheld everyone’s Charter rights.” The statement asserted that the Mayor of Toronto and the six Toronto city councillors had been “silent” and “refused to condemn” the verbal and threatening attacks against its members at the gatherings. The statement asked councillors Morley and Cheng to “recuse themselves” from the TPSB or alternatively for the mayor to remove them.

Subsequent Post from Lily Cheng

On April 5, 2024, Lily Cheng posted a statement on her city councillor website entitled “My Revised Statement on Protests in Our City”. In the statement Lily Cheng asserted that her office was busy helping constituents with the Toronto vacant home tax when she and her team were asked to take a position on the March 30th protest. She stated, “the letter was edited multiple times” and “we did not have the opportunity to review the final version. We did NOT endorse the final version.” Lily Cheng wrote, “upon further reflection and dialogue with community members, I would like to issue a statement that differs from my colleagues.” Her revised message affirmed her support for the right to peaceful protest and freedom of expression, while also acknowledging the need for public safety and lawful conduct. Lily Cheng expressed concern that some peaceful protestors felt unsafe exercising their rights and acknowledged the challenges faced by police managing large crowds in an emotionally charged environment.

Complainant Interview

An in-person interview was conducted with the complainant regarding their complaint.

The complainant stated that they witnessed the demonstration on March 30, 2024, and observed the “degree of hostility and aggressiveness that the police had to endure from this protest.”

The complainant advised that when they found out the two city councillors who sit on the TPSB and are bound by a Code of Conduct, signed, and endorsed the document, they were “mortified”. The complainant explained, the document read as though Amber Morley and Lily Cheng support freedom of expression “even when that expression is violent and hostile and exceeds the boundaries of what a rational person would consider reasonable protest.”

The complainant conceded that they understand that Lily Cheng and Amber Morley are in a tough middle spot, as civilian appointees to the TPSB, they have to hold police accountable, yet at the same time they have to work with and support the service. Therefore, the appropriate response would be to refrain from hastily issuing statements that condemn and undermine the police service until all the facts and evidence have been gathered.

The complainant confirmed that the letter forming the basis of the complaint was the document signed by the six Toronto city councillors, which Ausma Malik posted on X on April 4, 2024. The complainant clarified that the commentary prefacing the post was not an issue. The primary concern is the letter itself, as it represents the official statement of Lily Cheng and Amber Morley.

The complainant was asked about the document. They explained that the sentence in the document “residents voicing fears about their freedoms to engage in protests” infers that you have an “inalienable right” to engage in freedom of protest even if you are demonstrating violent, angry, hostile, and aggressive behaviour towards police and others. The complainant further mentioned “you have to sort of read between the lines,” the document reads “everyone has a protected right to engage in protest and demonstration, and large gatherings,” but fails to mention, so long as protestors are “peaceful, not hostile and don’t engage in assaultive behavior.” The complainant felt if that message had been included, it would have been a more balanced document and would have been fine. The complainant continued that by leaving out such a crucial part of what occurred at the protest, the document read that Lily Cheng and Amber Morley support the hostile protestors and condemn the police actions.

The complainant advised that by not acknowledging the “challenges faced by police that day” or the “hostile actions taken by a segment of the protestors,” those omissions make the document read as anti-police and pro-protestors. They claim this is not a message that should be conveyed by sitting members of the TPSB. The complainant further stated that the document, “the way it was written and the tone it took,” not only undermined the public’s trust in the TPS and the TPSB, but also in the ability of Amber Morley and Lily Cheng as police service board members.

The complainant explained that if you are a member of the TPSB and officially releasing a document within days of a demonstration where officers charged protestors, you are creating a bias within society that could affect somebody’s ability to have a fair trial. The complainant felt that Amber Morley and Lily Cheng, as TPSB members, had a responsibility to abstain from commenting on the March 30, 2024, protest until all the facts were gathered to prevent the potential interference of the administration of justice.

The complainant expressed that they found it even more “shocking” that Lily Cheng tried to back track after they got “heat” from the document, claiming she did not have an opportunity to read the final version. The complainant continued that as a city councillor and a sitting member of the TPSB, they are held to a higher standard and need to exercise more due diligence when deciding to support such statements and allowing your signature to be affixed before approving the final version.

The complainant concluded that they do not feel that Amber Morley and Lily Cheng are “fit” to sit on the TPSB.

Subject Police Service Board Member Interviews

Interview of TPSB Member Amber Morley

An interview was conducted with subject board member, Amber Morley.

Amber Morley advised that after the March 30th protest, a petition was generated with approximately 12000 signatures, and she was named in the petition, along with Mayor Chow, around police accountability. It alleged that there was police misconduct at the protest and that several peaceful protestors had their rights violated. She added there were some demands in the petition to drop charges against protestors, which they would not entertain as it was not in their purview.

Amber Morley reported she had also received correspondence and had conversations with members of the community prior to March 30th, who felt their rights were violated, their voices were being oppressed or not respected, and a “feeling that members of the police service were not conducting themselves in a way that facilitated a civil dialogue and peaceful protest.”

Amber Morley explained, as she was named on this petition calling on her to do something, there was “extensive back and forth” with colleagues behind the scenes at the TPSB to try and navigate people to the appropriate agency to submit their complaints. She added that this was all happening at the “infancy” of the new legislation and there was uncertainty on where public complaints needed to land.

Amber Morley stated that her and her team at Toronto City Hall were the initial authors of the document titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City,” (the “Statement”) and stated she felt that leadership was required. Amber Morley explained that she wanted to provide messaging, affirming the role of the service members who were doing difficult work under high pressure circumstances and affirming the rights of citizens to participate in peaceful and lawful assembly. She stated that she did not support members of the public violating the law or disrespecting police officers doing their work.

Amber Morley claimed that her original draft spoke to the hard work of the officers, however, other councillors expressed a desire to collaborate as they had been in receipt of several concerns from their communities, and consequently the Statement went through several iterations once colleagues were involved and provided input. Amber Morley admits being “frustrated” at one point because they all could not agree about what should be included in the letter. She stated, however, there was a strong feeling that the councillors should put out a statement, as the “tensions and frustrations that were being experienced in the community on all sides would likely continue and grow” in the absence of some kind of leadership. Ultimately, the councillors released a “high level and general statement” affirming the rights for people to peacefully protest which she was happy to sign off on.

Amber Morley stated that she understands that as a member of the police service board, she was bound by the Code of Conduct. Amber Morley indicated that she reached out to board staff to discuss the councillors’ intentions and to check in specific to the Code of Conduct, to ensure that she was not going against any of the rules and responsibilities as a board member. She advised that she relies on the TPSB Executive Director when it relates to police service board matters and “defers to him for advice and suggestions about what is appropriate and not appropriate” when the lines are blurred. She explained there had already been numerous conversations with the

Executive Director, as there was pressure on her as a board member to surface the concerns from the public as part of board discussion.

Amber Morley stated as a city councillor she released a statement about the rights that she affirms and as TPSB member she helped facilitate dialogue with community members to weigh in on the board's policy related to public gatherings and protests. Amber Morley asserted that she directed her office to reach out to the Office of the Toronto Police Chief to notify them of the intention to put this statement out, and to share any concerns with her office before it went public facing. Amber Morley claimed nothing substantial was flagged by the Chief's office to change the Statement going public.

Amber Morley explained that her staff sent out the final version to all the undersigned, advising them this was the final version and that it was now going to be posted publicly. She acknowledged there was a concern from councillor Cheng who initially agreed. Amber Morley stated she did not know if councillor Cheng received that "final-final" edited version that was set to go live within the hour. She believes the word "peaceful" was removed before the word "demonstration" and did not make the final edit.

Amber Morley asserted that this letter was about her role as a city councillor and a leader in the community. She felt after six months and 700 plus protests, there was "little messaging or leadership being provided to people" who were in a "difficult space of trying to influence world issues." She reported that she understands that people are "impacted in different ways on all sides of this issue and that's not the only perspective." Amber Morley felt that "leadership was required, reaffirming people's rights is always important, always appropriate" and stated her goal as a leader is to "ensure that people feel seen, heard, and respected."

Amber Morley expressed regrets that people perceived the letter as being critical and denouncing the police's actions, which was not her intention. She noted that people were taking positions based on what was not included in the letter. She indicated that many conclusions being drawn were not based on facts. Amber Morley stated that every day she is required to make difficult decisions or take positions that not everyone will appreciate, understand, or agree with; that's the nature of her work.

In response to the allegation of misconduct, Amber Morley explained that "public trust is a very delicate active and live thing that we are constantly working towards." As a community member from a diverse low-income community, she understands that public trust in policing is an issue, and it didn't stem from her statement. She asserted that she is someone who believes "deeply in the importance of public trust in order for the police

to do their work and to achieve the goal of adequate and effective policing for all community members in an equitable way.” She emphasized that “reinforcing a sentiment” that police are beyond accountability is the opposite of building trust with the community. She stated she would “never intentionally disrespect or demean members of the service, command, or otherwise” in her role as a leader and citizen. She explained that “building bridges” between communities who have historically not trusted the police is what she aims to facilitate.

In response to being asked about anything she would do differently, Amber Morley said that as a city councillor with the privilege of sitting on the police service board, she has a “front row seat to the important and hard work that happens every day” by the police. She expressed a desire to “stand a little more firmly” on her intention to highlight this through the document, along with reinforcing the word “peaceful”. She explained that, to her, “it goes without saying” that she does not support people breaking the law, which was not the focus of the document. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of maintaining respectful relationships with members of the service and acknowledged the “gravity” of her words and the “impact” of her statements in her dual roles as city councillor and TPSB member.

Interview of TPSB Member Lily Cheng

An interview was conducted with subject board member, Lily Cheng.

During the interview, Lily Cheng stated that Amber Morley’s office reached out to her Chief of Staff to inform them about a letter being drafted regarding the freedom to protest, as they had received several complaints from protestors. Lily Cheng mentioned that her office was in disarray, helping constituents who had not paid their vacant home tax, and she was not feeling her best [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24].

Lily Cheng stated that she would support the letter as a city councillor because she believed in the Charter of Rights to legal and peaceful demonstrations and wanted to ensure that the word “peaceful” was included in the messaging. She explained that her simplest intention was, as a city councillor, to affirm people’s right to engage in peaceful protest. Lily Cheng explained that this communication was happening through her Chief of Staff, who would relay the latest version of the document to her and confirm her approval.

Lily Cheng asserts that she was not able to review the final version of the document that was emailed to her before it was posted on social media by her colleagues, as she was at an event. Lily Cheng claims that the final version of the document was different from

the previously approved versions and did not include her edits regarding the right to “peaceful” protest. Additionally, the final draft acknowledged Chris Moise’s statement, which she had not seen or approved.

Lily Cheng confirmed that she did not post the document on her social media and instead sent out her revised statement the following day, on April 5, 2024. It was important to her that people knew it was not her intention to criticize the police. She understood from her role on the TPSB how challenging it was for police in intense situations and being outnumbered at protests.

Lily Cheng advised that when she has questions about her role as a TPSB member or when approached by the media, she consults with the TPSB Executive Director. She stated he always provides advice on what is or isn’t appropriate. Since she did not intend for the document to be a criticism of the police, she did not consult the Executive Director regarding her initial support of the document.

In her interview, Lily Cheng indicated she sent an apology email to the Toronto Police Service Chief of Police, stating that she appreciates the difficult job that police have and that her intention was not to be critical of them. She asserts that the Chief has a difficult job and being a board member is also difficult. She believes in the importance of maintaining a respectful relationship to foster understanding.

In response to the allegations of misconduct, Lily Cheng stated there was no intention of criticism or finger-pointing on her part, which she made clear in her revised statement. Consequently, she believes she did not violate the TPSB Code of Conduct.

When asked about anything she would do differently, Lily Cheng responded that as a first-time councillor, she will ensure that any future statements are not issued with her signature without her approval until she sees the final version. She added that she will not endorse any future statements, as they can be easily misconstrued and may not achieve their intended purpose.

Additional Material Collected and Reviewed

Online ‘Petition’

Through an open-source online search, the petition Amber Morley referenced in her interview was located. Additionally, on October 9, 2024, upon request, Amber Morley

forwarded an email containing the link and screenshots of the online petition, and advised she became aware of the petition on April 3, 2024. The link led to the Action Network website, where individuals can create communication campaigns for activism on social issues, including fundraising, petitions, and letter-writing campaigns.

The 'petition' Amber Morley referenced was a letter campaign titled "Condemn Police Violence Against Palestinian Protesters," and was sponsored by Just Peace Advocates and Canadian Foreign Policy Institute. The letter campaign asked people to "write to Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley to demand that they condemn the police violence, drop the charges and respect people's right to peaceful assembly." The webpage stated, "on Saturday the Toronto police violently suppressed protesters' democratic right to protest Israel's starvation and slaughter in Gaza. Take one minute to email Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley. Morley also represents the city on the Toronto Police Services Board. Let them know you expect them to call on Toronto police to tell them to drop the charges and respect people's right to peaceful assembly."

The site provided a "Take Action" section to fill in their personal information and begin writing. The webpage was still active when reviewed and indicated that 13,121 letters had been sent to date. This letter campaign will be referred to as the petition.

Lily Cheng's Apology to Chief of Police

On October 9, 2024, upon request, Lily Cheng forwarded a copy of the email she sent to TPS Chief Demkiw on April 10, 2024. In the email, Lily Cheng expressed regret for her oversight that led to her signing a letter that was "unsupportive of the remarkable work carried out by the police service" in policing the recent demonstrations throughout the city. Lily Cheng advised the Chief of her revised statement and wrote, "it was never my intention to undermine or discredit the tremendous efforts of law enforcement in protecting our citizens and upholding the values of our community." She pledged to work collaboratively with the police service should concerns from the community arise in the future.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

I make the following findings, relying on the material and information collected during the investigation, now contained within this report:

1. **On March 30, 2024, there was a pro-Palestinian march which occurred in downtown Toronto, Ontario. During this protest tensions flared, and physical altercations ensued between Toronto police and protestors that garnished the attention of the public and media.**
 - a. Between October 7, 2023, and the beginning of April 2024, more than 500 demonstrations had taken place within the City of Toronto according to a statement from the Toronto Chief of Police.
 - b. The events that transpired during the March 30, 2024, pro-Palestinian march were documented by several news media outlets. Articles were posted online with pictures and videos of physical interactions between police and members of the public during the march.
 - c. Through an X post on March 31, 2024, TPS issued a statement that protestors became physically aggressive towards officers while in the lawful execution of an arrest. The same day the TPA issued a statement on X indicating that when protestors engage in criminal acts, “they will be arrested” at that time or later. It ended by saying, “our members deserve the same respect that they extend to protestors.”
 - d. There were members of the public who witnessed and participated in the demonstration who felt that police had violated their democratic right to peaceful assembly as was evident in the over 12,000 letters sent through the letter campaign initiated on the Action Network.
 - e. From the interview with the complainant and from complaints received by the IoP, there were citizens who felt that protestors on March 30th had engaged in unlawful behaviour, became assaultive towards police and obstructed police operations.
 - f. The physical encounter between protestors and police on March 30th prompted Toronto City councillor Chris Moise to issue a statement on April 2, 2024.

2. Amber Morley was named in a petition titled “Condemn Police Violence Against Palestinian Protestors.” Amber Morley and her team at City Hall took the lead in preparing a statement about protests in the city, originally authoring the letter and coordinating the collaboration of city councillors who signed the document.

- a. During her interview Amber Morley reported that she was named in a petition, calling on her as the Deputy Mayor and a member of the TPSB to speak out against police misconduct at the March 30th protest and to demand TPS to drop charges against protestors and respect people’s right to peaceful assembly.
- b. Amber Morley indicated that she became aware of the petition on April 3, 2024, the day before she released the document and at that time approximately 12,000 letters had been sent.
- c. The petition was located online on the Action Network website, was still active at the time it was reviewed and had over 13,000 letters sent.
- d. The petition demanded Amber Morley to condemn the police violence against the protestors at the March 30th protest, call on Toronto Police to drop the charges against the protestors and to respect people’s rights to peaceful assembly.
- e. As a result of the petition, Amber Morley explained that she was prepared to make a statement as a city councillor affirming the rights for people to peacefully protest, and that her office initiated the original draft.
- f. She explained that her staff communicated with other councillor’s staff, that she intended to release a statement and that councillors Malik, Perks, Fletcher, Bravo and Cheng, initially agreed they would like to be part of a statement affirming the right to peaceful protest and to speak to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- g. Amber Morley stated that as colleagues became involved, they wanted to provide their input, and it became a “collaborative” statement.
- h. In Amber Morley’s interview she advised that her staff sent the final version to all the undersigned, advising this was the final version of the document and it was to go “live” within the hour.

- 3. On April 4, 2024, a statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in our City” was posted on X. Two members of the Toronto Police Service Board, councillors Amber Morley, and Lily Cheng signed the letter, along with four other Toronto City councillors, Gord Perks, Alejandra Bravo, Ausma Malik, and Paul Fletcher.**
- a. Amber Morley and Lily Cheng at the time the Statement was released to the public on April 4, 2024, were members on the TPSB and bound by the *Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members (O.Reg. 408/23)* under the CSPA.
 - b. Amber Morley’s X post of the above Statement was located online. It was posted on April 4, 2024, at 8:14 p.m., from her Toronto City Councillor X account, Amber Morley (@CllrAmberMorley). At the beginning of her post she wrote, “Today, I shared a joint statement with my Council colleagues reaffirming our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians, including freedom of assembly. All people in Toronto must feel safe as participants + bystanders to peaceful + lawful demonstrations.” Below her post was the document.
 - c. During the in-person interview with Amber Morley, she was provided with a paper copy of the document in question and confirmed that she posted that Statement on her X account on the above-mentioned date.
 - d. Prior to the interview and upon request, the complainant provided via email the letter that was referred to in the complaint. They provided the link to Ausma Malik’s post (@ausmalik) posted at 8:30 p.m. on Thursday April 4, 2024. During the interview, The complainant was provided with a paper copy of Ausma Malik’s post of the document and confirmed this was the document that formed the basis of the complaint.
 - e. The X posts of the document by the four city councillors who do not sit on the TPSB were also located online. Each councillor’s post began using their own words and below their post was a copy of the document.
 - f. An extensive online search could not find a post from Lily Cheng regarding the document.
 - g. Lily Cheng advised during her interview that she did not post or make public the document.

4. The public release of the document titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” prompted responses from the Toronto Police Chief and the TPA. The TPA criticized the document and the involvement of TPSB members as signatories.

- a. On April 5, 2024, the Chief of the TPS released a statement in response to the document issued by the six city councillors. The first line of the statement reads “A statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” was issued by six Toronto City Councillors last evening.”
- b. The TPA released a statement on X on April 5, 2024. A part of the statement reads that, “Our members deserve support from the Mayor and Council, especially Councillors Amber Morley and Lily Cheng. As members of the TPSB they are briefed regularly on the status of protest activity and the increasing volatility facing our communities and officers.” It asks Mayor Chow to remove the councillors from the TPSB if they do not recuse themselves.
- c. The IoP received three complaints from members of the public that alleged, Amber Morley and Lily Cheng as members of the TPSB, are in violation of the Code of Conduct for board members by signing the document.

5. The petition was the catalyst for Amber Morley to draft and publicly issue a statement as a city councillor that affirmed the rights of all Torontonians to engage in peaceful assembly.

- a. In her interview, Amber Morley explained that she could not entertain several demands in the petition because they were outside her “role or purview.” For instance, she could not advocate for dropping the charges against protestors.
- b. She also noted that the TPSB does not handle public complaints and wanted to direct citizens to the appropriate entities. However, she admitted that she lacked “clarity” on this process due to the new legislation.
- c. The *Police Services Act, 1990*, was repealed on March 30, 2024, and the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, came into force on April 1, 2024.
- d. Amber Morley indicated she was aware of the delicate balance between her dual roles as city councillor and TPSB member. She reported that as a member of the board she wanted to find the best way to facilitate dialogue between the community members and the TPSB.

- e. Amber Morley conveyed that as a community leader, her goal is to ensure that people feel “seen, heard, and respected.” She expressed that after six months and over 600 protests, there was a palpable sense of tension and frustration in the community from all sides. She felt that, in the absence of some form of leadership, this tension would continue to grow and be “exacerbated.”
- f. Amber Morley advised that she had also received correspondence and had conversations with community members prior to the March 30th protest who felt that “members of the service were not conducting themselves in a way that facilitated civil dialogue and peaceful protest.”
- g. In response to the petition, Amber Morley explained she felt compelled to provide messaging as a city councillor affirming people’s rights to peaceful protest.
- h. Amber Morley explained that the document went through several iterations and admitted in her interview to being “frustrated at one point” because councillors could not agree on what should be included in the document.
- i. Amber Morley stated that she was “happy” to sign off on the final version which she described as a “high level” and “general” statement that affirmed people’s right to peaceful assembly.
- j. There was acknowledgment from Amber Morley that Lily Cheng might not have seen the final edited version of the document. Additionally, she stated that the word “peaceful” did not make the final edit. She confirmed that her office sent the final draft that was to go “live” within the hour and Amber Morley posted the document on X at 8:14 p.m.

6. Lily Cheng intended to support a statement from Amber Morley’s office that affirmed the rights for members of the public to “peaceful” assembly.

- a. During her interview, Lily Cheng explained that Amber Morley’s office contacted her office regarding their intention to release a statement affirming the rights of citizens to peacefully protest. This decision was in response to public complaints received by their office.
- b. Lily Cheng reported that this communication occurred through office staff and emails. She explained that she believed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and

Freedoms and would sign a statement that emphasized the importance of “peaceful” assembly and the right to legal protest.

- c. Lily Cheng stated that her Chief of Staff would advise her of the latest version and seek her feedback and approval.
- d. She explained that this was all happening while her office was in “disarray,” and she was busy helping the public who had not paid their vacant home tax.
- e. In her interview Lily Cheng claimed she did not consider her role on the TPSB when supporting this statement as she did not intend for it to be perceived as a criticism of the police. She asserts her “simplest” intention was to support people’s right to peaceful protest.
- f. Lily Cheng claimed that she was at an event when the final version was emailed to her, and she did not see it before it was publicly posted on the evening of April 4th with her signature still affixed. She claimed the last version was different from the prior version which she had approved. She explained in her interview that the final statement did not include her requested emphasis and addition of the word “peaceful” to describe protests.
- g. Additionally, Lily Cheng stated that the last version made mention of Chris Moise’s statement, which she claimed was not in the previous version she had approved.
- h. The Statement that was publicly released had a sentence that read, “We support and thank our colleague, the local Councillor for Toronto Centre for his statement affirming the right to Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.” The councillor for Toronto Centre is Chris Moise.
- i. Lily Cheng confirmed in her interview that she did not release the document on her X account or any other media platforms, and it could not be located through an open-source search.
- j. On April 5th, Lily Cheng released a revised statement on her city council website. She wrote that her team did not have the opportunity to review the “final version” and subsequently did not endorse the “final version.” The letter also stated that “upon further reflection and dialogue with community members” she would like to issue a statement that differs from her colleagues.

- k. In her interview, Lily Cheng expressed that it was important to her that members of the community and the TPS knew it was not her intention to support a statement that was critical of the police. She understood how difficult it was for officers managing protests while being outnumbered.
- l. On April 10, 2024, Lily Cheng sent an email to the Toronto Police Chief with the subject line "My sincere apologies." In the email she apologizes for her recent oversight that led to the signing of a letter that was unsupportive of the "remarkable" work of the service during the multitude of protests. She explains that she issued a revised statement and at the end of the email writes, "I value the partnership between our office, the board and TPS and am dedicated to strengthening trust and cooperation."

FINDINGS REPORT

Toronto Police Service Board Members:
Lily Cheng and Amber Morley

**Section 106(1) Board Member
Conduct Investigation**
(INV-24-3)

Submitted to:
Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing of
Ontario

June 30, 2025

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ABOUT THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICING AND THE INSPECTORATE OF POLICING

The Inspector General of Policing drives improved performance and accountability in policing and police governance by overseeing the delivery of adequate and effective policing across Ontario. The Inspector General ensures compliance with the province's policing legislation and standards, and has the authority to issue progressive, risk-based and binding directions and measures to protect public safety. Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act embeds protections to ensure the Inspector General's legal role is delivered arm's-length of government.

The Inspector General of Policing leads the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP). The IoP provides operational support to inspect, investigate, monitor, and advise Ontario's police services, boards and special constable employers. By leveraging independent research and data intelligence, the IoP promotes leading practices and identifies areas for improvement, ensuring that high-quality policing and police governance is delivered to make everyone in Ontario safer.

In March 2023, Ryan Teschner was appointed as Ontario's first Inspector General of Policing with duties and authorities under the Community Safety and Policing Act. Mr. Teschner is a recognized expert in public administration, policing and police governance.

For more information about the Inspector General of Policing or the IoP, please visit www.iopontario.ca.

INTRODUCTION

This is a report to the Inspector General of Policing by an Inspector appointed by the Inspector General, who has completed an investigation under Part VII of the [Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019](#) (CSPA).

OVERVIEW OF INVESTIGATION

The Complaint

Three written complaints were received by the Inspector General of Policing alleging that Toronto Police Service Board (TPSB) members Amber Morley and Lily Cheng contravened [Ontario Regulation 408/23: Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members](#) (Code of Conduct) for Police Service Board Members after signing and publicly releasing a document that was critical of Toronto Police Service's (TPS) handling of a Pro-Palestinian march. This report relates to an investigation into one of the complaints. The IOP Findings Reports for INV-24-1 and INV-24-2 relate to the others.

The complaint referred to in this report alleged that TPSB members Amber Morley and Lily Cheng, along with four other Toronto City councillors, signed and endorsed a letter titled "Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City," in relation to the pro-Palestinian march on March 30, 2024. The document was signed and posted on April 4, 2024, on the social media platform "X".

The complainant stated that on the last Saturday of March, they were stunned to see a large and very aggressive pro-Palestinian protest at the intersection of Parliament and Dundas, obstructing traffic and creating chaos. The complainant noted that many protestors dangerously hung off the side of pickup trucks and the noise from their loudspeakers was worse than a "heavy metal concert." Even more outrageous was many protestors wore ski masks, chanted inflammatory phrases, and anti-police rhetoric. The complainant stated they were concerned for their family's safety.

The complainant wrote that it was shocking and disappointing that two TPSB members, councillor Amber Morley and Lily Cheng, endorsed a letter criticizing the police's handling of the events and seemingly condoning the protestors disruptive behaviour.

The complainant indicated that this undermined the very principles of law and order. The complainant alleged that an endorsement of such a divisive stance by those tasked with police oversight is troubling and raises serious concerns about their commitment to supporting the police officers who face these challenging situations weekly.

The complainant stated that it is hard to see how Amber Morley and Lily Cheng can support the police's duty to serve and protect while simultaneously backing actions that hinder law enforcement. The complainant concludes that this situation has eroded their trust in the ability of Amber Morley and Lily Cheng to uphold their duties.

The Subject Police Service Board Members

Subject One:

Name of Police Service Board: Toronto Police Service Board

Subject Board Member: Amber Morley

Length of Service (Term): Appointed August 10, 2023, to December 31, 2024.

Reappointed effective January 1, 2025, to November 14, 2026, and until a successor is appointed.

Specific Roles Held on Police Service Board: Board Member

Previous Substantiated Misconduct: None

Appointing Authority: Toronto City Council

Subject Two:

Name of Police Service Board: Toronto Police Service Board

Subject Board Member: Lily Cheng

Length of Service (Term): Appointed November 23, 2022, reappointed August 10, 2023, to December 31, 2024, and reappointed January 1, 2025, to November 14, 2026, and until a successor is appointed.

Specific Roles Held on Police Service Board: Board Member

Previous Substantiated Misconduct: None

Appointing Authority: Toronto City Council

Applicable Legislative and Regulatory Provisions

[Section 35\(6\)](#) of the CSPA provides that every member of a police service board shall comply with the prescribed code of conduct.

[Ontario Regulation 408/23: Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members](#) was reviewed having regard to the allegations made in the complaint and the following sections were deemed to be relevant:

3. (1) A member of a police service board shall not conduct themselves in a manner that undermines or is likely to undermine the public's trust in the police service board or the police service maintained by the board; and

3. (2) A member of a police service board shall not be subject to discipline for a contravention of subsection (1) if, on a balance of probabilities, their conduct was in the good faith performance of their duties as a board member.

SUMMARY OF THE INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED

As part of the investigation process, interviews were conducted with the complainant and the two subject TPSB members, Amber Morley, and Lily Cheng. Additionally, open-source material forming the basis of the complaint was gathered and reviewed, along with material provided by the subject TPSB members during their interviews.

Steps were taken to determine the origin of the alleged document. Both the complainant and the subject TPSB members confirmed that the document posted on the social media platform X was the document in question.

Open-Source Information: Collection and Review

Multiple online sources were located which provide context about the protest and public communications related to this complaint.

City News (Toronto)

On March 30, 2024, an article was posted online by City News Toronto titled “Multiple people arrested at pro-Palestinian march in Toronto.” The article was updated on March 31 and described the incident as a “pro-Palestine” march held in downtown Toronto on Saturday. During the march, tensions escalated, and physical altercations ensued between officers and a portion of the protestors. Embedded in the online article were X posts from the TPS and the Toronto Police Association (TPA) dated March 31, 2024. The TPS post stated, “protestors became physically aggressive towards officers when police lawfully executed an arrest and seized a vehicle under the HTA,” and the TPA stated that “when protestors choose to commit criminal acts, they will be arrested either immediately or later” and asserted that officers “deserve the same respect that they extend to the protestors.”

Statement Issued by Chris Moise

On April 2, 2024, Toronto city councillor Chris Moise issued an online statement regarding the march that occurred on March 30, 2024, which he characterized as a “protest.” In his statement, titled “Protest at Parliament Street and Gerrard Street East,” Councillor Moise indicated he does not “condone any illegal or violent behaviour” but does “support the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.” He stated that he found the videos of the events “upsetting, with reports of multiple people sustaining injuries” and members of the community “feeling intimidated and unsettled.” In his statement he reports he has been in communications with his local police division to gather more information about what took place to ensure that it is not repeated in the future. He “advocates for using de-escalation tactics” and acknowledges the “complexities and challenges faced by law enforcement in managing large scale events.

The Document titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City.”

Amber Morley’s online post of the subject document from her Toronto city councillor X account (@CllrAmberMorley) was reviewed. It was posted on April 4, 2024, at 8:14 p.m. In the post she stated, *“Today, I shared a joint statement with my Council colleagues reaffirming our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians, including freedom of assembly. All people in Toronto must feel safe as participants + bystanders to peaceful + lawful demonstrations.”* Attached to the post was an image of a statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” which

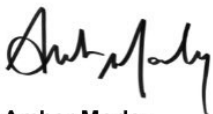
concluded with the digital signatures of six Toronto city councillors – Amber Morley, Gord Perks, Alejandra Bravo, Ausma Malik, Paula Fletcher, and Lily Cheng.

Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City

In recent days, hundreds of residents have shared their concerns with our offices regarding their experiences during a march recognizing Land Day in downtown Toronto on March 30. We support and thank our colleague, the local Councillor for Toronto Centre, for his statement affirming the right to Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Freedom of assembly is a protected right in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In these difficult times of heightened tension in the world and Toronto, these rights must be protected as part of our democratic society. It is deeply concerning to hear residents voicing fears about their freedom to engage in protests, demonstrations, and large gatherings.

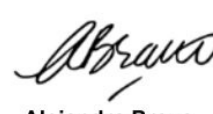
We reiterate our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians. Our city must be a place where all people are free to demonstrate and engage in protest as a form of democratic expression.



Amber Morley
City Councillor
Ward 3, Etobicoke-Lakeshore



Gord Perks
City Councillor
Ward 4, Parkdale-High Park



Alejandra Bravo
City Councillor
Ward 9, Davenport



Ausma Malik
City Councillor
Ward 10, Spadina-Fort York



Paula Fletcher
City Councillor
Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth



Lily Cheng
City Councillor
Ward 18, Willowdale

The document was posted on the X accounts of the signatories except for Lily Cheng.

Statement from the Toronto Police Chief

On April 5, 2024, the Chief of the TPS released a statement in response to “The Statement” issued by the six city councillors. The Chief reaffirmed the service’s commitment to upholding the right to lawful protest while emphasizing that criminal behaviour during demonstrations will not be tolerated. Since October 7, 2023, over 500 protests have occurred in Toronto, with police working to ensure public safety. The Chief highlighted recent incidents of violence against officers and stressed that such actions are illegal and will be addressed accordingly. He called for peaceful, respectful demonstrations and expressed gratitude to police officers for their professionalism and dedication during challenging times.

Statement from the Toronto Police Association (TPA)

The TPA posted a statement on X on April 5, 2024, defending the members of TPS who “have worked tirelessly to maintain public safety” and “valued, respected, and upheld everyone’s Charter rights.” The statement asserted that the Mayor of Toronto and the six Toronto city councillors had been “silent” and “refused to condemn” the verbal and threatening attacks against its members at the gatherings. The statement asked councillors Morley and Cheng to “recuse themselves” from the TPSB or alternatively for the mayor to remove them.

Subsequent Post from Lily Cheng

On April 5, 2024, Lily Cheng posted a statement on her city councillor website entitled “My Revised Statement on Protests in Our City”. In the statement Lily Cheng asserted that her office was busy helping constituents with the Toronto vacant home tax when she and her team were asked to take a position on the March 30th protest. She stated, “the letter was edited multiple times” and “we did not have the opportunity to review the final version. We did NOT endorse the final version.” Lily Cheng wrote, “upon further reflection and dialogue with community members, I would like to issue a statement that differs from my colleagues.” Her revised message affirmed her support for the right to peaceful protest and freedom of expression, while also acknowledging the need for public safety and lawful conduct. Lily Cheng expressed concern that some peaceful protestors felt unsafe exercising their rights and acknowledged the challenges faced by police managing large crowds in an emotionally charged environment.

Complainant Interview

An interview was conducted with the complainant regarding their complaint.

The complainant stated that they were downtown Toronto and saw the protest on March 30, 2024, at Parliament and Dundas. The complainant described the scene as “crazy” with protestors using a massive loudspeaker, while others chanted hate speech, anti-police speech and were spitting on police. The complainant reported that during the protest, a group of protestors displayed aggressive behaviour towards the police, outnumbering them and creating a challenging situation. The complainant claimed that they had never personally witnessed a scene like the one that unfolded during the protest.

The complainant advised they support citizen’s rights to peacefully assemble and protest. However, felt strongly that certain actions by protestors on that day crossed the line into unlawful behaviour. These actions included violence, vandalism, blocking traffic, engaging in hate speech, inciting violence, and failing to disperse.

The complainant stated they were “surprised” that two city councillors who sit on the TPSB would sign the document endorsing protestors rights to peaceful assembly, considering a segment of the protestors were aggressive towards the police and not demonstrating in a peaceful and lawful manner. The complainant continued that Amber Morley and Lily Cheng should have ensured they had all the facts before publicly releasing a statement that failed to accurately reflect what occurred during the protest.

The complainant was asked about the document titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City.” They explained that the “tone” of the letter made it read as being critical of the police actions at the protest. The complainant claimed that verbiage reads that protestors were peacefully demonstrating, and police did something wrong and infringed on their democratic right to assembly and protest.

The complainant further mentioned that participants were allowed to assemble and protest but certain groups went overboard, engaged in unlawful protest, the police responded, people were charged, and the document did not accurately reflect that.

The complainant acknowledged that the document does not actually say that police acted unfairly, however it reads as though peaceful protestors were not allowed to assemble due to police violating their Charter rights. The complainant felt the document could have been worded better as it has a “divisive tone” and reads as anti police. The complainant perceived the document as being critical, suggesting it undermined the

efforts of police officers managing the protest while appearing to support the disruptive behaviour of protestors. The complainant expressed concern that this could embolden citizens to engage in unlawful demonstrations at future gatherings. The complainant asserted this is not a message that should be endorsed by members of the TPSB.

The complainant stated they found it unacceptable that Lily Cheng as a public figure and a member of the TPSB would sign the document without approving the final version. The complainant felt that this was “back pedaling” due to the negative reaction to the document.

The complainant claimed that Amber Morley and Lily Cheng are not fit to sit on the TPSB when they release “blanket statements” without all the facts.

Subject Police Service Board Member Interviews

Interview of TPSB Member Amber Morley

An interview was conducted with subject board member, Amber Morley.

Amber Morley advised that after the March 30th protest, a petition was generated with approximately 12000 signatures, and she was named in the petition, along with Mayor Chow, around police accountability. It alleged that there was police misconduct at the protest and that several peaceful protestors had their rights violated. She added there were some demands in the petition to drop charges against protestors, which they would not entertain as it was not in their purview.

Amber Morley reported she had also received correspondence and had conversations with members of the community prior to March 30th, who felt their rights were violated, their voices were being oppressed or not respected, and a “feeling that members of the police service were not conducting themselves in a way that facilitated a civil dialogue and peaceful protest.”

Amber Morley explained, as she was named on this petition calling on her to do something, there was “extensive back and forth” with colleagues behind the scenes at the TPSB to try and navigate people to the appropriate agency to submit their complaints. She added that this was all happening at the “infancy” of the new legislation and there was uncertainty on where public complaints needed to land.

Amber Morley stated that her and her team at Toronto City Hall were the initial authors of the document titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City,” (the “Statement”) and stated she felt that leadership was required. Amber Morley explained that she wanted to provide messaging, affirming the role of the service members who were doing difficult work under high pressure circumstances and affirming the rights of citizens to participate in peaceful and lawful assembly. She stated that she did not support members of the public violating the law or disrespecting police officers doing their work.

Amber Morley claimed that her original draft spoke to the hard work of the officers, however, other councillors expressed a desire to collaborate as they had been in receipt of several concerns from their communities, and consequently the Statement went through several iterations once colleagues were involved and provided input. Amber Morley admits being “frustrated” at one point because they all could not agree about what should be included in the letter. She stated, however, there was a strong feeling that the councillors should put out a statement, as the “tensions and frustrations that were being experienced in the community on all sides would likely continue and grow” in the absence of some kind of leadership. Ultimately, the councillors released a “high level and general statement” affirming the rights for people to peacefully protest which she was happy to sign off on.

Amber Morley stated that she understands that as a member of the police service board, she was bound by the code of conduct. Amber Morley indicated that she reached out to board staff to discuss the councillors’ intentions and to check in specific to the code of conduct, to ensure that she was not going against any of the rules and responsibilities as a board member. She advised that she relies on the TPSB Executive Director when it relates to police service board matters and “defers to him for advice and suggestions about what is appropriate and not appropriate” when the lines are blurred. She explained there had already been numerous conversations with the Executive Director, as there was pressure on her as a board member to surface the concerns from the public as part of board discussion.

Amber Morley stated as a city councillor she released a statement about the rights that she affirms and as TPSB member she helped facilitate dialogue with community members to weigh in on the board’s policy related to public gatherings and protests. Amber Morley asserted that she directed her office to reach out to the Office of the Toronto Police Chief to notify them of the intention to put this statement out, and to share any concerns with her office before it went public facing. Amber Morley claimed nothing substantial was flagged by the Chief’s office to change the Statement going public.

Amber Morley explained that her staff sent out the final version to all the undersigned, advising them this was the final version and that it was now going to be posted publicly. She acknowledged there was a concern from councillor Cheng who initially agreed. Amber Morley stated she did not know if councillor Cheng received that “final-final” edited version that was set to go live within the hour. She believes the word “peaceful” was removed before the word “demonstration” and did not make the final edit.

Amber Morley asserted that this letter was about her role as a city councillor and a leader in the community. She felt after six months and 700 plus protests, there was “little messaging or leadership being provided to people” who were in a “difficult space of trying to influence world issues.” She reported that she understands that people are “impacted in different ways on all sides of this issue and that’s not the only perspective.” Amber Morley felt that “leadership was required, reaffirming people’s rights is always important, always appropriate” and stated her goal as a leader is to “ensure that people feel seen, heard, and respected.”

Amber Morley expressed regrets that people perceived the letter as being critical and denouncing the police’s actions, which was not her intention. She noted that people were taking positions based on what was not included in the letter. She indicated that many conclusions being drawn were not based on facts. Amber Morley stated that every day she is required to make difficult decisions or take positions that not everyone will appreciate, understand, or agree with; that’s the nature of her work.

In response to the allegation of misconduct, Amber Morley explained that “public trust is a very delicate active and live thing that we are constantly working towards.” As a community member from a diverse low-income community, she understands that public trust in policing is an issue, and it didn’t stem from her statement. She asserted that she is someone who believes “deeply in the importance of public trust in order for the police to do their work and to achieve the goal of adequate and effective policing for all community members in an equitable way.” She emphasized that “reinforcing a sentiment” that police are beyond accountability is the opposite of building trust with the community. She stated she would “never intentionally disrespect or demean members of the service, command, or otherwise” in her role as a leader and citizen. She explained that “building bridges” between communities who have historically not trusted the police is what she aims to facilitate.

In response to being asked about anything she would do differently, Amber Morley said that as a city councillor with the privilege of sitting on the police service board, she has a “front row seat to the important and hard work that happens every day” by the police. She expressed a desire to “stand a little more firmly” on her intention to highlight this

through the document, along with reinforcing the word “peaceful”. She explained that, to her, “it goes without saying” that she does not support people breaking the law, which was not the focus of the document. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of maintaining respectful relationships with members of the service and acknowledged the “gravity” of her words and the “impact” of her statements in her dual roles as city councillor and TPSB member.

Interview of TPSB Member Lily Cheng

An interview was conducted with subject board member, Lily Cheng.

During the interview, Lily Cheng stated that Amber Morley’s office reached out to her Chief of Staff to inform them about a letter being drafted regarding the freedom to protest, as they had received several complaints from protestors. Lily Cheng mentioned that her office was in disarray, helping constituents who had not paid their vacant home tax, and she was not feeling her best [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24].

Lily Cheng stated that she would support the letter as a city councillor because she believed in the Charter of Rights to legal and peaceful demonstrations and wanted to ensure that the word “peaceful” was included in the messaging. She explained that her simplest intention was, as a city councillor, to affirm people’s right to engage in peaceful protest. Lily Cheng explained that this communication was happening through her Chief of Staff, who would relay the latest version of the document to her and confirm her approval.

Lily Cheng asserts that she was not able to review the final version of the document that was emailed to her before it was posted on social media by her colleagues, as she was at an event. Lily Cheng claims that the final version of the document was different from the previously approved versions and did not include her edits regarding the right to “peaceful” protest. Additionally, the final draft acknowledged Chris Moise’s statement, which she had not seen or approved.

Lily Cheng confirmed that she did not post the document on her social media and instead sent out her revised statement the following day, on April 5, 2024. It was important to her that people knew it was not her intention to criticize the police. She understood from her role on the TPSB how challenging it was for police in intense situations and being outnumbered at protests.

Lily Cheng advised that when she has questions about her role as a TPSB member or when approached by the media, she consults with the TPSB Executive Director. She

stated he always provides advice on what is or isn't appropriate. Since she did not intend for the document to be a criticism of the police, she did not consult the Executive Director regarding her initial support of the document.

In her interview, Lily Cheng indicated she sent an apology email to the Toronto Police Service Chief of Police, stating that she appreciates the difficult job that police have and that her intention was not to be critical of them. She asserts that the Chief has a difficult job and being a board member is also difficult. She believes in the importance of maintaining a respectful relationship to foster understanding.

In response to the allegations of misconduct, Lily Cheng stated there was no intention of criticism or finger-pointing on her part, which she made clear in her revised statement. Consequently, she believes she did not violate the TPSB Code of Conduct.

When asked about anything she would do differently, Lily Cheng responded that as a first-time councillor, she will ensure that any future statements are not issued with her signature without her approval until she sees the final version. She added that she will not endorse any future statements, as they can be easily misconstrued and may not achieve their intended purpose.

Additional Material Collected and Reviewed

Online 'Petition'

Through an open-source online search, the petition Amber Morley referenced in her interview was located. Additionally, on October 9, 2024, upon request, Amber Morley forwarded an email containing the link and screenshots of the online petition, and advised she became aware of the petition on April 3, 2024. The link led to the Action Network website, where individuals can create communication campaigns for activism on social issues, including fundraising, petitions, and letter-writing campaigns.

The 'petition' Amber Morley referenced was a letter campaign titled "Condemn Police Violence Against Palestinian Protesters," and was sponsored by Just Peace Advocates and Canadian Foreign Policy Institute. The letter campaign asked people to "write to Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley to demand that they condemn the police violence, drop the charges and respect people's right to peaceful assembly." The webpage stated, "on Saturday the Toronto police violently suppressed protesters' democratic right to protest Israel's starvation and slaughter in Gaza. Take one minute to email Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley."

Morley also represents the city on the Toronto Police Services Board. Let them know you expect them to call on Toronto police to tell them to drop the charges and respect people's right to peaceful assembly."

The site provided a "Take Action" section to fill in their personal information and begin writing. The webpage was still active when reviewed and indicated that 13,121 letters had been sent to date. This letter campaign will be referred to as the petition.

Lily Cheng's Apology to Chief of Police

On October 9, 2024, upon request, Lily Cheng forwarded a copy of the email she sent to TPS Chief Demkiw on April 10, 2024. In the email, Lily Cheng expressed regret for her oversight that led to her signing a letter that was "unsupportive of the remarkable work carried out by the police service" in policing the recent demonstrations throughout the city. Lily Cheng advised the Chief of her revised statement and wrote, "It was never my intention to undermine or discredit the tremendous efforts of law enforcement in protecting our citizens and upholding the values of our community." She pledged to work collaboratively with the police service should concerns from the community arise in the future.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

I make the following findings, relying on the material and information collected during the investigation, now contained within this report:

1. **On March 30, 2024, there was a pro-Palestinian march which occurred in downtown Toronto, Ontario. During this protest tensions flared, and physical altercations ensued between Toronto police and protestors that garnished the attention of the public and media.**
 - a. Between October 7, 2023, and the beginning of April 2024, more than 500 demonstrations had taken place within the City of Toronto according to a statement from the Toronto Chief of Police.
 - b. The events that transpired during the March 30, 2024, pro-Palestinian march were documented by several news media outlets. Articles were posted online with pictures and videos of physical interactions between police and members of the public during the march.

- c. Through an X post on March 31, 2024, TPS issued a statement that protestors became physically aggressive towards officers while in the lawful execution of an arrest. The same day the TPA issued a statement on X indicating that when protestors engage in criminal acts, “they will be arrested” at that time or later. It ended by saying, “our members deserve the same respect that they extend to protestors.”
- d. There were members of the public who witnessed and participated in the demonstration who felt that police had violated their democratic right to peaceful assembly as was evident in the over 12,000 letters sent through the letter campaign initiated on the Action Network.
- e. From the interview with the complainant and from complaints received by the IoP, there were citizens who felt that protestors on March 30th had engaged in unlawful behaviour, became assaultive towards police and obstructed police operations.
- f. The physical encounter between protestors and police on March 30th prompted Toronto City councillor Chris Moise to issue a statement on April 2, 2024.

2. Amber Morley was named in a petition titled “Condemn Police Violence Against Palestinian Protestors.” Amber Morley and her team at City Hall took the lead in preparing a statement about protests in the city, originally authoring the letter and coordinating the collaboration of city councillors who signed the document.

- a. During her interview Amber Morley reported that she was named in a petition, calling on her as the Deputy Mayor and a member of the TPSB to speak out against police misconduct at the March 30th protest and to demand TPS to drop charges against protestors and respect people’s right to peaceful assembly.
- b. Amber Morley indicated that she became aware of the petition on April 3, 2024, the day before she released the document and at that time approximately 12,000 letters had been sent.
- c. The petition was located online on the Action Network website, was still active at the time it was reviewed and had over 13,000 letters sent.

- d. The petition demanded Amber Morley to condemn the police violence against the protestors at the March 30th protest, call on Toronto Police to drop the charges against the protestors and to respect people's rights to peaceful assembly.
- e. As a result of the petition, Amber Morley explained that she was prepared to make a statement as a city councillor affirming the rights for people to peacefully protest, and that her office initiated the original draft.
- f. She explained that her staff communicated with other councillor's staff, that she intended to release a statement and that councillors Malik, Perks, Fletcher, Bravo and Cheng, initially agreed they would like to be part of a statement affirming the right to peaceful protest and to speak to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- g. Amber Morley stated that as colleagues became involved, they wanted to provide their input, and it became a "collaborative" statement.
- h. In Amber Morley's interview she advised that her staff sent the final version to all the undersigned, advising this was the final version of the document and it was to go "live" within the hour.

3. On April 4, 2024, a statement titled "Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City" was posted on X. Two members of the Toronto Police Service Board, councillors Amber Morley, and Lily Cheng signed the letter, along with four other Toronto City councillors, Gord Perks, Alejandra Bravo, Ausma Malik, and Paul Fletcher.

- a. Amber Morley and Lily Cheng at the time the Statement was released to the public on April 4, 2024, were members on the TPSB and bound by the Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members (O.Reg. 408/23) under the CSPA.
- b. Amber Morley's X post of the above Statement was located online. It was posted on April 4, 2024, at 8:14 p.m., from her Toronto City Councillor X account, Amber Morley (@CllrAmberMorley). At the beginning of her post she wrote, "Today, I shared a joint statement with my Council colleagues reaffirming our commitment to upholding the rights and freedoms of all Torontonians, including freedom of assembly. All people in Toronto must feel safe as participants + bystanders to peaceful + lawful demonstrations." Below her post was the document.

- c. During the in-person interview with Amber Morley, she was provided with a paper copy of the document in question and confirmed that she posted that Statement on her X account on the above-mentioned date.
 - d. Prior to the interview and upon request, the complainant provided via email a copy of the letter “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” that was referred to in the complaint. During the interview, the complainant was provided with a paper copy of the document and confirmed this was the document that formed the basis of the complaint.
 - e. The X posts of the document by the four city councillors who do not sit on the TPSB were also located online. Each councillor’s post began using their own words and below their post was a copy of the document.
 - f. An extensive online search could not find a post from Lily Cheng regarding the document.
 - g. Lily Cheng advised during her interview that she did not post or make public the document.
- 4. The public release of the document titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” prompted responses from the Toronto Police Chief and the TPA. The TPA criticized the document and the involvement of TPSB members as signatories.**
- a. On April 5, 2024, the Chief of the TPS released a statement in response to the document issued by the six city councillors. The first line of the statement reads “A statement titled “Protecting the Right to Protest in Our City” was issued by six Toronto City Councillors last evening.”
 - b. The TPA released a statement on X on April 5, 2024. A part of the statement reads that, “Our members deserve support from the Mayor and Council, especially Councillors Amber Morley and Lily Cheng. As members of the TPSB they are briefed regularly on the status of protest activity and the increasing volatility facing our communities and officers.” It asks Mayor Chow to remove the councillors from the TPSB if they do not recuse themselves.
 - c. The IoP received three complaints from members of the public that alleged, Amber Morley and Lily Cheng as members of the TPSB, are in violation of the code of conduct for board members by signing the document.

5. The petition was the catalyst for Amber Morley to draft and publicly issue a statement as a city councillor that affirmed the rights of all Torontonians to engage in peaceful assembly.

- a. In her interview, Amber Morley explained that she could not entertain several demands in the petition because they were outside her “role or purview.” For instance, she could not advocate for dropping the charges against protestors.
- b. She also noted that the TPSB does not handle public complaints and wanted to direct citizens to the appropriate entities. However, she admitted that she lacked “clarity” on this process due to the new legislation.
- c. The *Police Services Act, 1990*, was repealed on March 30, 2024, and the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, came into force on April 1, 2024.
- d. Amber Morley indicated she was aware of the delicate balance between her dual roles as city councillor and TPSB member. She reported that as a member of the board she wanted to find the best way to facilitate dialogue between the community members and the TPSB.
- e. Amber Morley conveyed that as a community leader, her goal is to ensure that people feel “seen, heard, and respected.” She expressed that after six months and over 600 protests, there was a palpable sense of tension and frustration in the community from all sides. She felt that, in the absence of some form of leadership, this tension would continue to grow and be “exacerbated.”
- f. Amber Morley advised that she had also received correspondence and had conversations with community members prior to the March 30th protest who felt that “members of the service were not conducting themselves in a way that facilitated civil dialogue and peaceful protest.”
- g. In response to the petition, Amber Morley explained she felt compelled to provide messaging as a city councillor affirming people’s rights to peaceful protest.
- h. Amber Morley explained that the document went through several iterations and admitted in her interview to being “frustrated at one point” because councillors could not agree on what should be included in the document.

- i. Amber Morley stated that she was “happy” to sign off on the final version which she described as a “high level” and “general” statement that affirmed people’s right to peaceful assembly.
- j. There was acknowledgment from Amber Morley that Lily Cheng might not have seen the final edited version of the document. Additionally, she stated that the word “peaceful” did not make the final edit. She confirmed that her office sent the final draft that was to go “live” within the hour and Amber Morley posted the document on X at 8:14 p.m.

6. Lily Cheng intended to support a statement from Amber Morley’s office that affirmed the rights for members of the public to “peaceful” assembly.

- a. During her interview, Lily Cheng explained that Amber Morley’s office contacted her office regarding their intention to release a statement affirming the rights of citizens to peacefully protest. This decision was in response to public complaints received by their office.
- b. Lily Cheng reported that this communication occurred through office staff and emails. She explained that she believed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and would sign a statement that emphasized the importance of “peaceful” assembly and the right to legal protest.
- c. Lily Cheng stated that her Chief of Staff would advise her of the latest version and seek her feedback and approval.
- d. She explained that this was all happening while her office was in “disarray,” and she was busy helping the public who had not paid their vacant home tax.
- e. In her interview Lily Cheng claimed she did not consider her role on the TPSB when supporting this statement as she did not intend for it to be perceived as a criticism of the police. She asserts her “simplest” intention was to support people’s right to peaceful protest.
- f. Lily Cheng claimed that she was at an event when the final version was emailed to her, and she did not see it before it was publicly posted on the evening of April 4th with her signature still affixed. She claimed the last version was different from the prior version which she had approved. She explained in her interview that the final statement did not include her requested emphasis and addition of the word “peaceful” to describe protests.

- g. Additionally, Lily Cheng stated that the last version made mention of Chris Moise's statement, which she claimed was not in the previous version she had approved.
- h. The Statement that was publicly released had a sentence that read, "We support and thank our colleague, the local Councillor for Toronto Centre for his statement affirming the right to Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly." The councillor for Toronto Centre is Chris Moise.
- i. Lily Cheng confirmed in her interview that she did not release the document on her X account or any other media platforms, and it could not be located through an open-source search.
- j. On April 5th, Lily Cheng released a revised statement on her city council website. She wrote that her team did not have the opportunity to review the "final version" and subsequently did not endorse the "final version." The letter also stated that "upon further reflection and dialogue with community members" she would like to issue a statement that differs from her colleagues.
- k. In her interview, Lily Cheng expressed that it was important to her that members of the community and the TPS knew it was not her intention to support a statement that was critical of the police. She understood how difficult it was for officers managing protests while being outnumbered.
- l. On April 10, 2024, Lily Cheng sent an email to the Toronto Police Chief with the subject line "My sincere apologies." In the email she apologizes for her recent oversight that led to the signing of a letter that was unsupportive of the "remarkable" work of the service during the multitude of protests. She explains that she issued a revised statement and at the end of the email writes, "I value the partnership between our office, the board and TPS and am dedicated to strengthening trust and cooperation."

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