

**DEPUTATION TO THE HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES  
BOARD AT HAMILTON CITY HALL  
THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2019  
LYLA MIKLOS**

My name is Lyla Miklos. My pronouns are she and her. I have been an out member of Hamilton's Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Plus Community for over two decades.

I moved to Hamilton, Ontario from Frobisher Bay, North West Territories in 1982.

I grew up on the Hamilton Mountain and attended Linden Park Elementary School. I remember Officer Buckle hosting an assembly on "Stranger Danger". His final message: if we are ever in trouble we could always trust a police officer to come and help us.

For many years I lived with the belief that I could trust the police.

And then life happened and that trust was breached over and over again. When I was at my most vulnerable and I reached out to the police in my hours of most desperate need I was met with heart crushing disappointment. When I was celebrating my sexual identity in a safe queer space at a Women's Bathhouse event in Toronto the police raided it. During these times when my trust was broken my identity

as a queer woman was targeted by police or my lived experience of hate and violence were invalidated by police.

I have been an out queer activist for nearly 25 years. I am a Past Chair of Hamilton Pride and of the LGBTQ Advisory Committee for the City of Hamilton. I witnessed many positive steps forward by our civic institutions while in these leadership roles.

For example, the GLBT Police Task Force was formed in the late 90's in response to Project Rosebud, a sting operation by Hamilton Police targeting men having sex with men on the grounds of the Royal Botanical Gardens. Similar to the 1981 Toronto bathhouse raids, many of the men arrested were not out of the closet. Their identities were revealed to the public and their lives were destroyed. The GLBT Police Task Force was made up of community members who regularly met with the Police Chief. This group was dissolved shortly after Glenn De Caire became Chief.

In 2006 I was a Board Member of Hamilton Pride when the Pride Parade was attacked by Portuguese Soccer Fans. We didn't even know there was a problem until we started walking north along James Street and saw an angry sea of red, green and gold shirts up ahead. The Police immediately mobilized themselves and created a human barrier between those marching in the parade and the angry mob of soccer fans. So I am puzzled as to why the Police

were unable to mobilize themselves in the same way at Gage Park for Hamilton Pride in 2019, especially since they knew in advance that there was a threat.

Hamilton has borne the stain of having the highest rate of police-reported hate crimes in Canada. Last year I watched a presentation by a member of the Hamilton Police Services on Hate Crimes. There was a slide for each group most affected: Jewish, Black, Muslim and 2SLGBTQIA+. Then there was a slide for hate crimes against the Police. I questioned why the Police were presented as a group affected by hate crimes when the Police are not an identifiable group under Canadian hate crime law.

On June 19<sup>th</sup> Police Chief Eric Girt responded to a question on CHML about charges being laid in relation to the violence at Hamilton Pride by saying: “We need witnesses. We need complainants. In certain cases we may have complainants who are victims who are also aggressors and may be under conditions not to be in places or do certain things so what happens quite often is people don’t want to come forward as complainants. It doesn’t mean we won’t make arrests and we won’t do charges, but you need witnesses and testimony because of course the test in the courts is beyond a reasonable doubt and we need people to tell us what happened.”

Chief Girt labeled those who were violently assaulted by hate filled homophobes at Hamilton Pride as potential criminals. This was NOT building trust.

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> Hamilton Police announced their first arrest in connection to the violence at Hamilton Pride – Cedar Hopperton. The charge. Parole violations. On June 18<sup>th</sup> Hopperton, a trans anarchist, said at a community meeting in this room that they didn't trust the police to protect the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Hopperton's arrest sent a chill of fear not to the hate groups that attacked Hamilton Pride, but to the community that were attacked.

For these reasons I echo Councillors Nann and Wilson's formal request for an independent review.

Hamilton Police Services you have to do better. And I know you can do better. Because I have seen you do better.

Thank you.