
MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

**Thursday, September 12, 2019
6:00pm at the Board of Education Room
70 Prospect Street**

Commissioners Present: George Kain, Chairman
Marianne Coffin, Secretary
Joseph Savino
Nicholas Perna
Thomas Reynolds

Also Present: Chief Jeff Kreitz
Major Stephen Brown

These minutes are an overview of the meeting; not a verbatim text.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chairman Kain.

AGENDA REVIEW

Chairman Kain requested a motion to move Agenda Item #7A to 1. Commissioner Savino made the motion and Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. All in favor.

Chairman Kain requested a motion to move 6A to 2 and add 6C Fundraising to the agenda. Commissioner Savino made the motion. Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. All in favor.

Chairman Kain stated that there would be an Executive Session for personnel matters following the Public Session.

AGENDA ITEM #1 OLD BUSINESS

A. Curve Signage Presentation State Project 0174-0417

Ryan J. Pothering, P.E., Project Engineer and Alejandro Brito, E.I.T. Transportation Engineer from Connecticut Dept. of Transportation made a presentation about the states safety improvement project which will replace/install warning and chevron signs on state roads in Ridgefield that they have selected for improvement to reduce the number of accidents because of the curves. They used literature, a film and maps showing where the most accidents have occurred on state roads in Ridgefield over the last three years. The project would consist of replacing some signs if warranted or taking some signs out if not warranted. Approximately 126 signs would be taken out or replaced

and 128 signs would be put in. This is in an effort to reduce the number of accidents on state roads because of the curves. Distracted driving, weather and human error are just a few other reasons for accidents.

National studies have concluded installing enhanced signing resulted in a 12 to 38% reduction in fatal and injury crashes. There are approximately 40,000 curves on state and town roads in CT. Approximately 23,000 or 58% of crashes occur on curves. The state has broken down this project into 4 districts. Ridgefield is considered part of District 4. There are 1,025 curves across 53 towns in District 4 that have been selected for improvement under this project.

Part of the presentation consisted of maps of the state roads in Ridgefield showing where most accidents on curves occur. There are 53 curves on state roads in Ridgefield which are part of this project. These state roads consisted of Route 7, 35, 102, 116, 822 and 835. Commissioner Kain asked which roads would be getting more than 5 signs. The most accidents have occurred on Route 102 and 116. Route 102 is slated for getting 18 signs and Route 116 would be getting 6. Commissioner Savino suggested that this would be too many signs on Route 102.

Through engineering one study was used to run tests for appropriate signage. The "ball bank" indicator was used to show what the appropriate advisory speed limit should be for approaching roadway curves and which signs would be needed per the federal MUTCD.

The estimated time table for this project is that the final design plans would be presented November 2019. Advertising construction is scheduled for January 2020 and the construction would begin the beginning of spring 2020.

The estimated construction cost for the entire project (53 towns in District 4) is \$4.18 million. This would be funded 100% by Federal Funds.

AGENDA NEW BUSINESS

A. Uniform Division Commander Report

Capt. Bryan Terzian, Uniform Division Commander, stated this was his 8th report to the Police Commission. His division covers 32 officers which includes 5 lieutenants, 5 sergeants, 3 SRO officers and 19 patrol officers. There are 8 patrol cars, 2 supervisor SUV's, 1 pickup truck, 1 K-9 and 3 SRO cars. Eventually all patrol cars will be SUV's due to the fact that Ford stopped making the sedan. The

K-9 SUV and supervisor vehicle will be replaced this year. The SRO cars assigned to schools will get upgraded through the years. The pickup truck was acquired through private donations. Two patrol cars have license plate readers (LPR). Capt. Terzian stated this is amazing equipment which makes the officers more efficient. Commissioner Reynolds asked if 2 LPR's are enough. Capt. Terzian stated that 2 is plenty. All cruisers are equipped with radar. The department also has three hand held laser units.

Commissioner Savino asked which reports cannot be released. Capt. Terzian stated juvenile and uncorroborated allegations are examples of reports that cannot be released.

Capt. Terzian stated that there were 29 DUI arrests in 2018 and so far there are 28 for this year. Most of these occur during the evening shift. He said the officers have had specialized training and they are doing a great job.

There were 513 motor vehicle accidents last year and 338 so far this year. There were 4 burglaries last year and 3 so far this year. There were 271 medical assists last year and 190 so far this year.

Capt. Terzian stated he is now in charge of the SRO's. He stated SRO Daly, SRO Giglio and SRO Luis have done a great job. They instruct the DARE program along with PO Caba and PO Samoskevich. The SRO's are also responsible for security and building relationships with students and staff.

Community policing takes part on all 3 shifts. Capt. Terzian stated the lieutenants and sergeants are doing a great job making sure this gets done. They are identifying problems and addressing them.

Citizens like seeing officers in their neighborhood. During the month of October they will be conducting "All Roads October". Our officers will drive all of the roads in town during the month. Capt. Terzian stated that he will be the liaison if neighborhoods wish to speak with an officer while they are patrolling.

Commissioner Perna asked about theft of cars. Capt. Terzian stated that incidents are down this year. He stated that the majority of involved individuals leaving their cars unlocked and keys inside.

He stated he cannot stress enough that the officers are doing a great job.

Chief Kreitz stated that Capt. Terzian is in charge of the biggest Division in the police department and that he has taken on more responsibility. Chief Kreitz stated that Capt. Terzian is doing a great job.

Chairman Kain asked about the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) replacing the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR). NIBRS is how crimes are reported to the FBI.

AGENDA ITEM #2 MINUTES OF JULY 10, 2019 POLICE COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING, MINUTES OF JULY 11, 2019 POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

Chairman Kain requested a motion to accept the minutes of July 10, 2019 Special Meeting. Commissioner Coffin made the motion. Commissioner Savino seconded the motion. The vote carried 4-0. Commissioner Reynolds abstained from voting as he was not on the Board at that time.

Chairman Kain requested a motion to accept the minutes of July 11, 2019 regular meeting. Commissioner Coffin made the motion. Commissioner Savino seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #3A COMMISSION VOICEMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioner Coffin reported that she has received four voicemails. One was from a resident from Silver Spring Road complained about speeding cars leaving from and traveling to the Silver Spring Country Club. Commissioner Coffin returned her call and told her it would be patrolled.

A resident from North Street called to request a 25mph sign north of Wooster Street to indicate the reduction in the speed limit from 30mph to 25mph. A 25mph sign was installed.

Commissioner Coffin stated a resident called advising her that the minutes haven't been posted since January 2019. Commissioner Coffin tried calling him back; however was not able to get in contact with him. The minutes are posted on the police department website.

A resident from Cains Hill Road would like to discuss possibilities of limiting tractor trailer traffic on Cains Hill Road. Major Brown stated that he has been in contact with her and has been researching this.

AGENDA ITEM #3B COMMISSION WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

There was no written correspondence.

AGENDA ITEM #4 CHIEF'S REPORT**A. Statistics**

Chief Kreitz stated the year to date we have 13,282 incidents. There were 1,461 incidents in July and 1,571 incidents in August. He stated that the arrests have increased and that the amount of time officers are on calls has gone up 9%. Officers are spending more time on cases and are conducting thorough investigations. Chief Kreitz says the officers are doing a great job.

B. Training/PR Report

The following report was submitted by Captain Shawn Platt, Division of Professional Standards:

**RIDGEFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT
TRAINING & COMMUNITY POLICING/PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT
*July 2019***

July 1	Det. Dardis, Lt. Fowler, Lt. Durling and PO Caswell attended an IED Awareness presentation at Easton PD.
July 11-12	Disp. Dennis attended Active Shooter Dispatcher training at Plainville PD.
July 15-19	PO Giglio, PO Luis and PO Daly held the Junior Police Academy summer camp.
July 22	Sgt. Knoche attended Accreditation Manager Training at the CT Police Academy.
July 22-26	Det. Ryan attended Intermediate Crime Scene Investigation training at Newington PD.
July 25	Sgt. Knoche attended Lethality Assessment Trainer training at the CT Police Academy.
July 29-30	Det. Ryan attended Sexual Assault Crime Scene Investigation training at Newington PD.

July 31 Capt. Platt and PO Giglio attended a Security/Safety meeting and conducted a security assessment at the Temple Shearith Israel.

A total of 15 Public Relations incidents were recorded during the month to include:

- Multiple car seat installations
- Multiple stop and talks at houses of worship
- PD tours and Safety Talk Presentations by PO McKnight, PO Gjodesen, PO DiFalco and Po VanWattum.
- Monthly Youth Commission meeting was attended by Det. Dardis
- Various talks with downtown shop owners and community members

This report was submitted by Captain Shawn Platt, Division of Professional Standards.

RIDGEFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT
TRAINING & COMMUNITY POLICING/PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT
August 2019

August 7	PO Luis, Major Brown, Capt. Platt, Chief Kreitz, PO Hartling, PO Giglio and PO Gjodesen played in the Annual Wiffle Ball Game vs RBGC staff members.
August 11	PO Giglio, PO Luis, PO Daly, PO Samoskevich attended Campus Security/Active Shooter Preparedness Workshop at the Ridgefield Library hosted by the Ridgefield BOE.
August 20-22	PO Olivares and PO McKnight attended Telecommunicator Certification Training at the CT Police Academy.
August 27-28	Capt. Terzian and Alison Heibeck attended NIBRS training at the CT Police Academy.

August 29-30 Lt. Durling attended Improving Public Perception of the Police training held at the CT Police Academy.

A total of 16 Public Relations incidents were recorded during the month to include:

- Multiple car seat installations
- Multiple stop and talks at houses of worship
- Multiple Social Media posts of police activities
- PD Tours and Safety Talk Presentations by PO Samoskevich and PO McKnight
- Various talks with downtown shop owners and community members

This report was submitted by Captain Shawn Platt, Division of Professional Standards.

C. **Sign Report**

The following report was submitted to the Police Commission by Traffic Sign Officer Mark Caswell:

Sign Maintenance:

1. Replaced Stop Sign at Mimosa Circle/Mimosa Place
2. Replaced the 25 mph signs Old Sib Road
3. Installed a 20 mph speed limit sign on Old Sib Road
4. Replaced the Stop Sign Fulling Mill Lane
5. Installed a 25 mph sign at North Street/Wooster Street
6. Replaced the Stop Sign at Riverside Drive/Longview Drive
7. Replaced the Stop Sign Silver Spring Lane
8. Repaired 2 Chevron Signs on Old Stagecoach Road
9. Repaired the Stop Sign at Silver Spring Lane/Silver Spring Road

Sign Requests:

1. A sign request was received from Ralph Frickel who lives on Nutmeg Court. He requested that a Stop sign be installed on Mulberry Street at the intersection of Ramapoo Road. I surveyed

- the area and found that due to the limited sight lines at the intersection, as well as the overgrown vegetation, I recommend that a Stop sign be installed at that intersection. This will be tabled to next month.
2. Justin DiGrazia submitted a request that 10-15 mph speed limit signs as well as "Slow, Kids at Play" signs be installed on Taporneck Court. Taporneck Court is a cul-de-sac that is less than 2/10th of a mile long. Installing "Children at Play" signs are not an option.

PO Caswell advised the following:

The Manual stated Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is a federal document that provides guidance on how to use traffic signs and which signs are appropriate. Connecticut law requires the use of this manual for traffic control. The MUTCD does not include "CHILDREN AT PLAY" signs or any variation.

Studies have shown that "CHILDREN AT PLAY" signs do not reduce the speed of traffic or make drivers more observant. These signs do not provide guidance to motorists as to as safe speed. "CHILDREN AT PLAY" signs could give a false sense of security in letting children play in the roads. In fact, no level of signage could ever protect a pedestrian when they are struck by a vehicle.

I recommend that a 25mph speed limit sign be installed at the entrance to the street. Mr. DiGrazia is welcome to place a warning device on his property at his expense but is advised to not allow children to play in the street.

3. Additional requests have come in to add Stop signs at the intersection of Farmingville Road and Lee Road. It continues to be my recommendation to have town highway remove the small island and configure the intersection to eliminate confusion.
4. Mr. Giustino has submitted an additional request to have additional curve warning signs as well as chevron signs installed at the corner prior to his address at 99 Blue Ridge Road.

Research has shown that since 2001, 13 accidents have occurred in that area. Ten of the accidents have been weather/road condition related. Twelve of them have been by town residents who live in the surrounding area, one by the resident who lives on that corner. Town highway has been made aware of the situation and will make the area a priority during winter storms. I spoke with Dave Buccitti at town highway and he will survey the area to see if that installation of guard rails will help the situation. It is my opinion that the addition of "Hill" sign be installed and may remind residents

of the topography in that area. The corner chevron signs should not be installed at this time.

Commissioner Perna made a motion to table the request to add a stop sign at the intersection of Ramapoo Road and Mulberry Street. Seconded by Commissioner Coffin. All in favor.

D. Chief's Goals Update

- **Building Update**

The Board of Selectmen and the Police Commissioners will meet September 25th at 8:00am at Town Hall to discuss the needs assessment and feasibility study proposals that were submitted.

- **Physical Fitness Test**

Chief Kreitz stated he passed the physical fitness agility test.

- **New Officer and Dispatcher**

Chief Kreitz stated that we can start recruiting for the most recent police officer position. It is not a live in academy anymore. The announcement for full and part time dispatcher has been put out by Human Resources.

- **IT**

Lt. Fowler volunteered to be the departments IT Liaison. The department is looking into electronic scheduling.

- **Community Partnership**

Commissioner Perna reported that Chief Kreitz spoke at the Men's Club and he was well received. He stated that he represented the officers well.

- The Exchange Club has offered to hold one award night a year to honor the officers who have received awards throughout the year and end the evening with the officer of the year presentation.

- Chief Kreitz reported ACO Kris Zulkeski has been proactive about educating the residents of Ridgefield. There will be a wildlife awareness program held in January 2020 that ACO Zulkeski will be participating in.

- Major Brown spoke about how the Wellness Committee is progressing.

- Commissioner Kain asked about the status of the towns Master Plan. Commissioner Savino stated that P&Z is still putting it together.

- Chief Kreitz handed out a revised Rules and Regulations for approval. It was determined that the Board of Commissioners would review the Rules and Regulations

- change and discuss it at October's meeting.
- Chief Kreitz reported he would like the department to participate in "No Shave November" to raise awareness for pediatric cancer.
- Pastor Bill Pfohl participated in the ride-a-long program with an officer. It was well received.
- Commissioner Perna made a motion to change the Police Commission regular meeting October 10, 2019 to a Police Commission Special Meeting October 17, 2019. Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. All in favor.

AGENDA ITEM #5 UNION PARTICIPATION

None.

AGENDA ITEM #6 NEW BUSINESS

B. **Ethan Allen Hwy (Rt. 7)/Ashbee Lane Concerns**

Commissioner Savino made a motion to send a letter to the state to review the site lines at Ethan Allen Hwy and Ashbee Lane.

Commissioner Perna seconded the motion. All in favor.

C. **Fundraising**

Commissioner Reynolds made a motion to accept the annual PBA Fundraising letter. Commissioner Perna seconded the motion. All in favor.

AGENDA ITEM #7 OLD BUSINESS

A. **Curve Signage Presentation State Project 0174-0417**

This was moved to #1

B. **Sergeant and Lieutenant Promotional List**

There was a lot of discussion pertaining to the length of time a promotional list should be kept. Officers present gave their opinion regarding this. It was determined that when a promotional test is announced, the length of time the list is good for should be included. Commissioner Reynolds made a motion not to extend the promotional list for lieutenant or sergeant. Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. Commissioner Savino opposed the vote. The vote carried 4-1.

C. **Neds Mountain Road Signage/Speed Limit Reduction**

Chief Kreitz reported that the State certified the speed limit change from 25mph to 20mph. With this reduction only (2) signs are recommended. We are waiting for the final inspection letter from the State DOT prior to removing the signs that are no longer necessary.

Mr. Troy, a resident from Neds Mountain, praised Chief Kreitz for his persistence in keeping residents informed of the progress of the signage/speed limit reduction on Neds Mountain Road. He also praised PO McMahon for his dedication to solving a littering incident that was occurring on the road.

D. **Citizen Survey**

Chief Kreitz stated that we received over 600 responses to the survey. He stated he met with the administrative staff to review the responses. He stated that the responses were overwhelmingly positive.

E. **Juvenile Review Board**

Chief Kreitz stated that the Youth Services Bureau is in the process of gathering board members. He stated that Detective Dardis will be the department representative. Once the board members are established, the board will go view a Juvenile Review Board to see how they operate.

Commissioner Savino made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:58 pm to discuss Employee Performance. Commissioner Reynolds seconded the motion. All in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coffin and seconded by Commissioner Savino to accept Susanne Dennis' resignation. All in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coffin and seconded by Commissioner Savino to accept the recommendation that Officer Carlos Olivares come off probationary status. All in favor

Commissioner Coffin made a motion to adjourn the Police Commission Meeting at 9:07 pm. Seconded by Commissioner Savino All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Coffin
Police Commission Secretary