
MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

**Thursday, October 17, 2019
7:00pm at Town Hall Annex
66 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 7:01pm by Chairman Kain.

AGENDA REVIEW

Chairman Kain requested a motion to add #6C Mulberry St to Agenda #1A. Commissioner Savino made the motion and Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. Chairman Kain requested a motion to move #6A to #1B. Commissioner Savino made the motion and Commissioner Reynolds seconded the motion. **All in favor.**

Chairman Kain stated that there would not be an Executive Session for personnel matters following the Public Session.

AGENDA ITEM #1 NEW BUSINESS

A. Mulberry Street

Kerry King from 3 Mulberry Street and Carey Ogden from North Salem Road expressed their concern for the traffic and speed on Mulberry Street and North Salem Road. Between the speeding cars, young kids and older residents living in the area it is very dangerous. At the corner of North Salem Road and Saw Mill Hill Road there have been 6-7 accidents. They suggested a right turn only sign be implemented. They feel a right turn only sign would also be beneficial to Mulberry Street. Commissioner Perna praised the residents by not only stating their concern but by also coming up with a solution. The speed trailer will be put out on Mulberry St. These residents asked if the roads could be designated as No Thru Truck roads. PO Caswell will be assigned to review this. CT DOT is reviewing the intersection as well. Commissioner Reynolds made a

motion to make Mulberry Street and Ramapoo Road a three way stop. Seconded by Commissioner Coffin. **All in favor.**

B. Detective Division Commander Report

**Detective Division Annual Report to the Police Commission
Captain Thomas Comstock - October 2019**

I, Captain Thomas Comstock, took over the duties of the Detective Division Commander in January, 2014.

Assigned Detectives:

- Detective Steven Papstein is the Senior Detective with twenty-four years as a Detective and thirty-one years with the department.
- Detective/Youth Officer Thomas Dardis has been in his current position for 5 ½ years.
- Detective David DuBord has been in his position for 5 years.
- Detective Victoria Ryan started May 2019 and replaced Detective Jorge Romero who returned to patrol in January 2019.
- Detective Brian Shimko started his temporary position in July 2019 and will be with us until December 2019. He replaced Detective Seibert, who was assigned January 2019 to June 2019.

Areas of Detective Responsibility:

Det. Papstein: Senior Detective with 31 years of experience (24 as a Detective).

Det. Papstein is a great asset to the Division and handles the following assignments:

- Assist with Evidence Room / records, management and training of his replacement, Detective DuBord.
- Arson Investigations.
- POST-Certified Firearms Instructor
- General Investigations
- Child Death Investigations

Det/YO Dardis handles:

- Juvenile Investigations.
- General Investigations.
- Child Death Investigations.
- Currently working with Town Hall to implement a Juvenile Review Board

- 10-33 Military Program.
- Attends various meetings involving the youth issues

Det. DuBord handles:

- Narcotic Investigations
- General Investigations
- Taking over responsibilities of the departments evidence room
- Computer Investigations

Det. Ryan handles:

- Assault Investigations
- Computer Investigations.
- Narcotics/General Investigations

Det. Shimko & Det. Seibert

- Temporary assigned individuals to gain experience in investigative work
- Attend various schools to include Detective training held by Fairfield County Trainers
- Attend Basic Crime Scene and other available schools at the times available

Capt. Comstock very proud of the work performed by the Detectives and their dedication to the job. They all have a good rapport with area departments which aids in getting the job done. The addition of having a temporary assigned patrol officer is beneficial to the department in achieving a well-rounded officer and a better understanding of everyone's roll within the department.

Division's Areas of Responsibility

- Lengthy or in depth investigations
- Youth Division Investigations and follow-up on issued patrol summons
- Weapons Division
- Assist Fatal/Serious Accident Investigations
- Court Liaison
- Sex Offender Registry
- Office Supplies
- Drug Tip Hotline / Grievance – Whistle Blower

Drug Take Back Program- Burn run performed on August 7, 2019 with 373 lbs. of material. Last burn run performed on February 20, 2019 (360 lbs.)

Detective Division handles:

- Death Investigations (Homicide, Suicide, Accidental, Suspicious)
- Sex Crimes
- Robbery / Assaults
- Identity Thefts
- Burglaries
- Felony Larcenies
- Drug and Liquor Violations
- Arson Cases
- Warrant Applications
- Applicant Background Checks (employment, vendors, etc)
- Bomb Threats
- Missing Person(s)
- Pistol Permits
- Internet / E-mail Incidents
- Narcotic Investigations

Associations / Memberships

- Fairfield County Detective Association
- Westchester County Detective Association

The squad works very well with surrounding agencies and the speed of information shared assist in the solving of various crimes in a timely manner.

Detective Training: The Detectives have specialized training and keep their skills current. During the past year, the Detectives have attended the following classes, with more to be attended as they become available to get the new Detectives up-to-date:

Det. Papstein:

- February Police Recertification Training at WCSU
- Financial Investigation Triage

Det. / Y.O. Dardis:

- Financial Investigation Triage
- Sex Offenders Understanding and Responding to Sexual Crimes
- IED awareness presentation

Det. DuBord:

- Spotlight on Fraud VII
- Financial Investigation Triage
- January Police Recertification at WCSU
- Sex Offenders Understanding and Responding to Sexual Crimes

Det. Ryan:

- Spotlight on Fraud VII
- January Recertification at WCSU
- Intermediate Crime Scene
- Sex Offenders Understanding and Responding to Sexual Crimes

Det. Shimko:

- Fairfield County Detective School
- Basic Crime Scene

Det. Seibert:

- Fairfield County Detective School

The Detective Bureau cases come to the Detective Division directly from the Chief, Major, or myself and distributed thru out to the various Detectives. The assignment of cases is based on complexity (specialized training, duration of the investigation, etc.). Detectives work the cases as far as possible applying for a multitude of warrants to gain access to cases like fraud and computer crimes.

Detective Division Statistics

01/01/18 to 12/31/18	Description	01/01/19 to 10/17/19
3	Alcohol Sale to Minor	0
6	Bad Check Investigations	0
4	Burglary	4
13	Death Investigations	13
3	Debit/Credit Card Incidents	15
224	Detective Division incidents, including JV	142
4	Forgery	1
21	Fraud	38
56	Identity Theft	49
21	Internet/Email/Text Incidents	4
31	JV Incidents	46
24	Larceny from a Motor Vehicle	16
6	Missing Person/Runaway	3
7	Narcotic Investigations	3
79	Pistol Permits	51
11	Stolen Motor Vehicle	6

Juvenile Division:

Detective Dardis has been the Departments Youth Officer for the past 5 years. He stays current in the ever changing world of youth law. Detective Dardis stays informed of arrests made by patrol and will follow-up with the parent(s) or if further assistance is needed by the family. Det. Dardis meets with a variety of services to include Department of Children and Families (DCF), Juvenile Courts, Schools and Administrators, lawyers and other police agencies. He serves as a representative on the Youth Commission and attends their meeting. Det. Dardis is assisting with the formation of a Juvenile Review Board (JRB) and will be participating with that committee.

The Detectives continue to work hard on their assigned cases and an increase in fraud cases has led to a lot of warrants being written to obtain bank and computer records. We attempt to stay up to date on training for current and anticipated problems. There has been an increase of check larcenies and mail removed from homeowners out-going mail. This crime is being investigated by surrounding towns and by the Post Office investigators.

Detective Shimko is the last Patrol Officer to request the six month bid for the Detective Division. Capt. Comstock feels this was an outstanding program and will assist in the overall growth of our Officers. He also feels that the current Detectives have found a good fit for themselves and this shows in their work and knowledge of the job.

Capt. Comstock has been in charge of the Detective Division for the past 5 years now and is very proud of the dedication and professionalism displayed by them. He wishes to thank the Police Commission for their time and support in what they do.

Captain Thomas Comstock
Detective Division Commander

AGENDA ITEM #2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Kain requested a motion to accept the minutes of September 12, 2019. Commissioner Perna motioned to accept the minutes. Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. **All in favor.**

Chairman Kain requested a motion to accept the minutes of September 26,

2019. Commissioner Perna motioned to accept the minutes. Commissioner Savino seconded the motion. **All in favor.**

AGENDA ITEM #3A COMMISSION VOICEMAIL CORRESPONDANCE

Commissioner Coffin stated that she received a voicemail from a resident stating that the minutes haven't been posted on the town website. Commissioner Coffin called the resident and stated that they have been posted on both the town and police websites.

A resident requested that the department examine the sight lines at Copper Beech Lane and Lee Road. Officer Caswell surveyed the area and recommended that the Town Hwy cut back a berm and shrubs. He called in this request to Town Hwy.

AGENDA ITEM #3B COMMISSION WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

A written correspondence was received from a resident asking about the closure of Depot Road Bridge. He understood that the bridge needed to be closed for safety reasons. He also appreciated the swift action taken by the Police Commissioners to prevent an accident. His concern is that he feels there is no plan in place to repair or replace the bridge and that traffic congestion is increasing in the area.

The bridge will be reopened at a later date once the problem is rectified. The Police Commission will be sending a letter to the resident stating this. Commissioner Savino stated he spoke with the resident.

AGENDA ITEM #4 CHIEF'S REPORT

- A. **Statistics** Chief Kreitz stated the year to date stats are 14,202 incidents. There were 15,068 incidents last year. He stated that during the past month the number of reported larcenies has increased. The most prominent of these is for check washing.
- 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
*September 2019***

September 4-6

Lt. Fowler, PO Caswell, PO Ladue, PO Seibert,
PO Loria, Det. DuBord attended EMR training held at
Headquarters

September 6	Capt. Terzian, Capt. Platt, Lt. Raines, Sgt. Gogola, Sgt. Clarke, PO Caba, PO McMahon and Det. Shimko Attended Firearms Qualification training at Wooster Mountain Range
September 10	Chief Kreitz, Major Brown, Capt. Terzian, Capt. Comstock and Capt. Platt attended 2019 Conn. New Laws & Legal Updates training at the CT Police Academy in Meriden
September 10-12	Sgt. Murray attended the International K-9 Cop Conference in Nashville, TN
September 10-12	Det. Shimko attended Crime Scene Processing Training (forensiceducation.net) hosted by Glastonbury PD
September 16-27	PO Caswell attended Accident Reconstruction (SRR Training) training hosted by Southington PD
September 24	All officers attended 2019 Conn. New Laws & Legal Updates training at Headquarters presented by Asst. States Atty. Chris Godalis
September 26	Lt. Smith, Lt. Durling, Sgt. Murray, PO Samoskevich, PO Ladue, Det. DuBord, and PO Loria attended Firearms Qualifications training at Wooster Mountain Range
September 27	Capt. Comstock, PO Luis, PO Romero, Det. Ryan, PO Hartling and PO McKnight attended Qualifications training at Wooster Mountain Range

A total of 20 Public Relations incidents were recorded during the month to include:

- Safety Day was held on 9/30 @ East Ridge Middle School
- 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
- Various talks with downtown shop owners and community members

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

Commissioner Perna was very impressed with Safety Day and the fact that officers volunteer their time. It is always a huge success. It is well received by the public.

C. **Sign Report**

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

Regarding: Speed Table Research

I have received an increased number of requests for signage, radar details and speed bumps on Florida Road. The increase in traffic is due to GPS programs rerouting traffic off Route 7 and Interstate 84 on to the side streets during rush hours. The installation of speed tables looked like a viable option for a permanent solution to calming the traffic through the area.

I reached out to Sgt. Jeff Silver of the Newtown Police Department and Steve Schnell of the Redding Police Department as both towns have speed table installed on a few of their roads.

Sgt. Silver stated that he would not recommend the installation of the speed tables. He said that the neighborhood that requests the tables have to have complete buy in. A meeting is held between the neighborhood and the police commission to discuss the pros and cons of the speed tables. A study of the accident history of the road was completed and a petition has to be signed by the entire neighborhood. Once the speed tables were installed the neighborhood found that traffic noise increased, not only from the trucks whose loads make a significant amount of noise when they go over the tables but from car horns sounding from frustrated drivers. Now that the tables have been in place for a few years the neighborhood has found that they would not install them if asked today.

There is also increased liability by the town if vehicles are damaged due to improper installation of the speed tables or if the speed tables become damaged over time. An increase in the painting budget also has to be planned for to maintain the warning markings.

Sgt. Silver also stated that the speed tables also compounds the traffic problems by pushing the traffic volume to other areas of town. The speed tables also cause issues for emergency response of both the police and fire departments. He has found that his officers avoid the roads if emergency response is required in the area and find alternative route to the scene.

Steve Schnell has similar opinions of the speed tables. Both he and Sgt. Silver recommend the use of speed sentry signs. These signs are permanently mounted to utility poles and gather speed information similar to the speed trailer we currently use. They have a number of applications and we can use the information to better target radar enforcement on roads that have a history of increased travel and speed. They are easy to install and use. They can also be moved fairly quickly. Steve has found in his research that most vehicles 85% speeds are within 2-5 miles per hour of the posted speed limits and that information can be relayed back to the concerned citizens residing in the targeted neighborhood. The signs can also be installed in a "stealth" mode to conduct a blind study. This decreases the likelihood of neighbors increasing their speeds to skew the traffic study results.

The cost of the installation of a speed table is approximately \$3,500.00 per table plus yearly maintenance costs. He feels the money could be better spent by installing the speed sentry signs. Steve also told me that he would be happy to come to a commission meeting to demonstrate the signs and answer questions or concerns that the town may have.

After speaking with both departments I would concur with their recommendation of not installing speed tables in town and would look to future funding of the speed sentry signs as money becomes available.

D. Chief's Goals Update

Commissioner Perna stated he talked with Capt. Terzian about the changes to the officers' yearly evaluations. The Board of Police Commissioners will be receiving the new evaluation forms for their review and approval after they are completed.

AGENDA ITEM #5 UNION PARTICIPATION

There was no Union participation.

AGENDA ITEM #6 NEW BUSINESS

A. Detective Division Commander Report

This was moved to #1B

B. Dispatch Hiring Update

Chief Kreitz stated that there were 10 applicants that were

interviewed for the full time and part time dispatcher positions. Next week the hiring process will continue and two applicants will be announced for the new positions.

AGENDA ITEM #7 OLD BUSINESS

A. No Shave November

No Shave November is an annual charity event that raises awareness and money to help fight cancer. The officers will be taking part in this No Shave November. Chief Kreitz requested a permanent change to the department grooming standards listed in the Rules and Regulations 201.12, 201.12a and 201.12b. Commissioner Reynolds made a motion to accept this change. Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. **All in favor.**

B. Juvenile Review Board

Chief Kreitz, Major Brown, Det. Youth Officer Dardis and members of the Youth Services Bureau went to Greenwich to see how their Juvenile Review Board (JRB) operates. Greenwich has had a JRB implemented for approximately 10-12 years and it has been well received. Chief Kreitz, Major Brown and Det. Youth Officer Dardis were very impressed with the program and how it was run. During the process appointments for services to help the juveniles are set. There has to be a willingness to participate in this program as an agreement must be signed. This can be a life altering positive experience for the juvenile. Our officers will be trained in the procedures and the goal is have our Juvenile Review Board accepting referrals by January 1, 2020.

C. Depot Road Closure

As reported in the Police Commission Special Meeting Thursday, September 26, 2019 the Depot Road Bridge is closed due to the "compromised structural integrity of the bridge". The plan is to have the bridge reopened at a later date.

D. Assessment and Feasibility Study

The Commission discussed the Police Headquarters Assessment and Feasibility Study. Commissioner Coffin made a motion to accept the proposal by Kaestle Boos Associates. Commissioner Perna seconded the motion. **All of the Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.**

E. POCD

Chief Kreitz discussed what was in the draft POCD report. He recommended having First Selectman Rudy Marconi attend the November Police Commission Meeting to discuss the history and future of roadway projects. All agreed that this would be a good idea.

Commissioner Perna made a motion to adjourn the Police Commission Meeting at 9:08 pm. Seconded by Commissioner Savino All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Coffin
Police Commission Secretary