

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Thursday February 11, 2016

Commissioners Present: George Kain, Chairman
Joseph Savino, Secretary
Thomas Reynolds
Charles Knoche
Marianne Coffin

Also Present: Chief John Roche
Major Stephen Brown

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by Chairman Kain.

Agenda Item #1

Chairman Kain stated that there would be changes to the agenda: 5a-Officer of the Year would be moved to Executive Session and 6b-Residency Requirement would be moved to Executive Session. Chairman Kain asked the Commissioners if they had any other changes; there were none. All Commissioners agreed to the changes to the agenda.

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

Agenda Item #2

Chairman Kain requested a motion to accept the minutes of the January 14, 2016 Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the minutes; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

Minutes of the January 14, 2016 Police Commission meeting accepted as written.

Agenda Item #3a Commission Voice Mail

- Commissioner Savino stated that a message was received from a parent of a child attending St. Mary School concerned that there was no school signs installed to alert drivers of children in the area and that he referred the request to Chief Roche.
Chief Roche directed Traffic Sign Officer Caswell to review this request and submit recommendations. Officer Caswell reported that there is school zone signage existing for this location: Northbound is located near the intersection of High Ridge Avenue and Catoonah Street and the Southbound sign is located near the intersection of High Ridge Avenue and Barry Avenue; both signs are located on St Mary property. The Commissioners questioned whether additional signage should be installed on High Ridge Avenue. Chief Roche stated that he will have Officer Caswell take a second look and, if deemed necessary, this request would be forwarded to the State for follow-up.

- Commissioner Savino stated that he received a message from Richard Larson of the Schlumberger Citizens Committee requesting a meeting with the Police Commission to discuss the Schlumberger property and receive the Commissioners' feedback/recommendations for the property. Commissioner Savino stated that he suggested the April 14th meeting for this discussion and the Commissioners agreed that this would be added to their April agenda.

Agenda Item #3b Commission Correspondence

Chairman Kain stated that a copy of an e-mail was received from Erika Lindeberg of the State DOT responding to Wayne Addressi and his concerns with the lights on Main Street and the traffic problems on Main Street.

Ms. Lindeberg responded to Mr. Addressi's query but also reminded him that his type of concern should go through the Local Traffic Authority (LTA) which is the Ridgefield Police Commission. Ms. Lindeberg also notified Mr. Addressi that the LTA representative, Chief John Roche, already requested a study of the traffic signal timing at all traffic signals and he will be informed of the results of their finding and any adjustments that are made.

Chairman Kain stated that a Route 35 Improvement Project meeting has been set up for February 18, 2016 at 10:30am in the small Conference Room at Town Hall. Chief Roche, Rudy Marconi, Charlie Fisher and State representatives will attend this meeting.

Agenda Item #4 Chief's Report

Statistics

Chief Roche stated that the incident total for the month of January was 1,665. During the month, the Department responded to 85 Alarms, 22 Medical Assists, 46 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 29 fingerprint applicants, 584 Motor Vehicle Enforcement violations, 6 DUI arrests, 7 Controlled Substance violations, and 29 Pistol Permit applicants. There were 7 K-9 assists for the month of January.

Annual Statistics

Chief Roche distributed a copy of the Department's annual statistics to the Commissioners for their review.

Correspondence

- A thank you letter was received from a resident for ACO David Coles for going above and beyond in caring for their family's pet (showed his professionalism, compassion and kindness).
- A thank you from Chief Crosby and the Wilton Police to the Ridgefield Police and P.O. Gjodesen, for their assistance during a memorial service for Sgt. Thomas "TJ" Tunney on January 9th.

Community Policing/Public Relations Report

- SRO Giglio delivered a presentation for approximately 40 Cub Scouts on Internet safety and the hazards of drug use.
- Captain Kreitz gave a Senior Scam presentation at Jesse Lee Church.
- A total of four (4) child passenger restraint systems were installed/checked during the month of January.
- Captain Kreitz met with a local child care facility to assist with emergency plans.
- Captain Comstock and Captain Kreitz spoke with a local business to assist with emergency plans.
- Captain Kreitz met with the Ridgefield Bicycle Sport Club regarding an upcoming awareness campaign.

Upcoming Events:

- February 16 Drug Take-Back event at Ridgefield Crossings for residents and their families.
- March 29 Citizen Police Academy begins.
- March 30 Drug Take-Back event planned with a local pharmacy for National Drug Take-Back Day.

Training Report

- Sgt. Gogola, P.O. Caba, P.O. Murray, P.O. Ekstrom, P.O. Daly, P.O. DuBord and P.O. McMahon attended Officer Recertification at W.C.S.U.
- P.O. Romero attended Practical Skills Day on the topic of motor vehicle stops at POSTC.
- Sgt. Clarke attended Practical Skills Day on the topic of domestic violence at POSTC.
- P.O. Ryan attended Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving at POSTC.
- Lt. Fowler attended Tactical Operations Liability – Legal Policy and Operations at POSTC.
- Officers are in the process of completing in-house Intoxilyzer Recertification training instructed by Lt. Fowler.
- P.O. Geller and P.O. Boulware continue their training at the Police Academy.

Sign RequestsGreat Hill Road and Buck Hill Road:

A resident requested a *Stop* sign be installed at the intersection of Great Hill Road and Buck Hill Road due to the existing blind hill and difficulty to see approaching vehicles.

Traffic Sign Officer Caswell surveyed this area in 2015 and again on January 21, 2016. Officer Caswell reported that after the 2015 survey, "T" intersection signs were installed to warn traffic of the upcoming intersection. Due to the topography in the area and the limited sight line, it would be unsafe to install a

Stop sign at this location. Radar enforcement is recommended to help enforce the speed limit.

Wilton Road West

A resident of Wilton Rd West (Route 33 near Wilton) requested *School Bus Stop Ahead* signs be installed on Wilton Road West by her home due to the safety conditions occurring with speeding drivers and children using the school bus. She explained that drivers travel fast and with the existing curves and hills on the road there is not adequate time for a driver to see a stopped school bus and children crossing the road to get to the bus.

Traffic Sign Officer Caswell reviewed this area and recommended that the CT State DOT be contacted and requested to install *School Bus Stop Ahead* signs in both directions prior to this residence on Wilton Road West. Officer Caswell also recommends the use of the Smart Trailer and radar enforcement during school bus drop-off and pick-up times.

This request was submitted to the State DOT on January 20th for their follow-up.

Bicycle Signs

Chief Roche read a letter from Captain Jeff Kreitz regarding a bicycle safety and awareness campaign that the Ridgefield Police Department, in collaboration with the Ridgefield Bicycle Sport Club, has started.

The purpose of this campaign is to make both cyclists and motorists aware of the Connecticut laws pertaining to roadway use and sharing of same. Due to the increase in bicycle traffic on the roads and the Ridgefield Bicycle Club's programmed rides every week, Captain Kreitz is requesting bicycle warning signs be posted at several locations throughout Ridgefield to alert drivers to be cautious. The locations suggested would include: North Salem Road near Route 35, West Lane at the entrance to Ridgefield, Danbury Road near the Recreation Center.

Commissioner Reynolds stated that he agrees that the bicycle traffic in Ridgefield has increased and that the Town roads are not built for this increased growth. How do we co-exist?

Chief Roche stated that by educating both the drivers and bikers will be a starting point for safer travel. In this program, Captain Kreitz will be placing informational handouts in various locations throughout Town and public service announcements will be posted on social media outlets. These measures, coupled with the bicycle warning signs for drivers unfamiliar with Ridgefield and the amount of bicycle traffic on the roads, will be an alert to motorists.

Commissioner Reynolds motioned to accept the installation of the bicycle signs; Commissioner Savino seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Bicycle signage to be installed for safer bicycle/motor travel.

Safest Cities

Chief Roche stated that he had sent the Commissioners an article in RealtorMag listing Ridgefield as one of the top (and only Connecticut) safest cities according to NeighborhoodScout.

Second Chance Reform

Chief Roche stated that in November of 2015, Governor Malloy introduced his idea of Second Chance Society reform. He proposed raising the age of juveniles to age 20 instead of the current age of 17 as well as allowing young adults, 21 through 25, to have their records sealed and the opportunity to have their records expunged. In this speech, he also discussed exploring bail bond reform. The Commissioners were not in agreement that changing the age of JV's was a good one.

Budget Meeting

Chief Roche stated that on February 4th the budget meeting was held and asked if any Commissioners had any feedback. Commissioner Reynolds stated that he found it very encouraging that they seem to be seriously discussing the renovation of HQ. Chief Roche agreed and stated that he is working on getting updated figures for the building plans, material and labor.

Chamber of Commerce

Chief Roche stated that he and his Administrative Staff met with the Chamber of Commerce and provided an overview of their job and offered any assistance needed to the members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Accreditation

Chief Roche stated that today was the first day of our Accreditation review for re-certification by the State. Chief Roche stated that the day went very well; the auditors had nothing but praise for the Accreditation Officer Lawrence Clarke and the thoroughness of his work. The auditors will make another on-site visit next week. If we pass, the actual presentation will take place at POST on May 12th.

Rules & Regulations

Chief Roche stated that he is proposing an update to the Department Regulation 305.23 Suspension. Chief Roche would like to add 'Administrative Leave' to this title to cover someone who may be put on leave but not suspended. The Commissioners did not feel the wording of the section, as submitted by Chief Roche, signaled that the Board of Police Commissioners had the ultimate say in such action, even if it was initiated by the Chief. Some discussion followed and Chairman Kain stated that this will be revisited at the March meeting.

Agenda Item #5a Choice of Officer of the Year

Moved to Executive Session.

Agenda Item #6a Chief's Goals 2016

Chief Roche stated that he met with Commissioner Coffin and Commissioner Savino (sub-committee for the goals) and they drafted the following list of goals for 2016:

- 1) **Police Headquarters Upgrade and Renovation**
Continue ongoing dialogue and meetings with Police Commission Sub-committee, Architect and the Town Building Committee to maintain project activity and preparation for Capital Budget proposal.
- 2) **Department Training**
Continue to participate in current and emerging training programs, schools and conferences for all Police Department personnel to ensure continued high level of professionalism of the Department.
- 3) **Community Partnerships**
Maintain communication and partnerships with Town departments, Boards, Commissions, Committees, the RCCASA Group, local businesses and schools.
- 4) **Central Dispatch**
Continue ongoing dialogue and meetings with Town Officials in order to maintain the goal of a Central Dispatch Center at Police Headquarters for the Town of Ridgefield.
- 5) **Local and State Intersections**
Examine current traffic patterns and traffic controls at "T"-style intersections with safety as a goal for motorists. Coordinate with State Traffic Administration for State roadways.
- 6) **Residential and Business Alarms**
Examine current practices of Police response to alarms with the goal of improving Police services, reducing false alarms and updating the Town of Ridgefield's Alarm Ordinance.
- 7) **Professional Development**
Attend a minimum of one professional conference with law enforcement colleagues.
- 8) **Police Officer Survey**
Continue the annual Officer feed-back survey.
- 9) **Citizen Survey**
The Department shall conduct a survey of citizen satisfaction with the Department and report results to the Police Commission. Investigate the use of "Survey Monkey" as a means to augment the Department's Citizen Survey.
- 10) **Physical Fitness**
The Chief of Police shall participate in the Department's Voluntary Fitness program.

Commissioner Reynolds thanked Commissioners Savino and Coffin who worked on drafting the goals. Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the Chief's Goals for 2016 as presented; Commissioner Reynolds seconded the motion.

Vote: In Favor - All

Chief's Annual Goals for 2016 approved.

Agenda Item #6b Main Street Walk Signal

At the January meeting, a resident requested a possible change to the 'Walk' signal at crosswalks – could they be eliminated unless a pedestrian is actually waiting to cross.

Chief Roche stated that he directed his Officers to check the 'Walk' pattern of the boxes. Lt. Raines reported that the three crosswalks were checked several times and the alarm and crosswalk lights only come on if a pedestrian activates the button.

Agenda Item #6c Residency Requirement

Moved to Executive Session.

Commissioner Savino motioned to adjourn to Executive Session and invite Chief Roche and Major Brown; Commissioner Reynolds seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Public Meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 8:00pm.

Public Meeting opened at 8:17pm by Chairman Kain

Motion by Commissioner Savino to nominate P.O. Caswell for the 2015 Police Officer of the Year; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

All in Favor

P.O. Caswell chosen as the 2015 Officer of the Year.

Motion by Commissioner Knoche to amend 25 mile limit residency clause to:

1. Southern border will be the coast of Connecticut
2. Western border will be the Eastern shore of the Hudson River.

This was seconded by Commissioner Reynolds.

All in Favor

Residency clause amended.

Motion by Commissioner Knoche to award a Unit Citation bar to:

Lt. Shawn Platt, P.O. Caba, P.O. Gjodesen, P.O. Samoskevich,
P.O. Romero and P.O. Shimko

for their exemplary police work on January 3, 2016. This was seconded by Commissioner Savino.

All in Favor

Unit Citation Bar to Officers for their exemplary police work on January 3, 2016.

Commissioner Knoche motioned to adjourn at 8:25pm; Commissioner Savino seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Public Meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Savino
Secretary

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE
POLICE COMMISSION MEETING**

Commissioners Present: George Kain, Chairman
Joseph Savino, Secretary
Thomas Reynolds
Charles Knoche
Marianne Coffin

Also Present: Chief John Roche
Major Stephen Brown

Executive Session commenced at 8:00pm.

Executive Session adjourned at 8:17 pm to Public Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Savino
Secretary