

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Thursday July 14, 2016

Commissioners Present: Joseph Savino, Acting Chairman
Charles Knoche
Marianne Coffin
Absent: George Kain, Chairman
Thomas Reynolds
Also Present: Chief John Roche

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Acting Chairman Savino.

Agenda Item #1 – Agenda Review

Acting Chairman Savino asked the Commissioners if anyone had any adjustments to the agenda; there were none.

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

Agenda Item #2 Minutes

Acting Chairman Savino requested a motion to accept the minutes of the June 9, 2016 Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

All in favor

Minutes of June 9, 2016 accepted as written.

Agenda Item #3a Commission Voice Mail

Commissioner Savino stated that he had no new voice mail messages.

Agenda Item #3b Commission Written Correspondence

Acting Chairman Savino signed off on an Application for Highway Use for the Annual Halloween Walk. This will now be forwarded to the State for review and approval.

Agenda Item #4 Chief's Report

Increase in Fees from POST

Chief Roche stated that he received notice from the Police Academy Administrator, Thomas Flaherty, of an increase in fees for both the Basic Training Program and in-service training/education programs. As of September 1, 2016, the Basic Training Recruit program will be increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per recruit and in-service training courses will be billed based on the number of days for the course from one day at \$75 per attendee to six-ten days at \$300 per attendee.

Reimbursement Notice from POST

Chief Roche stated that he received notice from the Police Academy Administrator, Thomas Flaherty, stating that effective July 1, 2016, if an officer leaves a department (within two years of certification) to join another department, the hiring department will reimburse the initial agency fifty percent of the cost of certification.

Training:

- Lt. Platt attended Recruit Skills Day at POSTC on Search and Seizure.
- Sgt. Durling and Det. Dardis attended a conference on 'Child Maltreatment' at the Leir Retreat Center.
- Det. Dardis attended 'Active Aggressor' training in Bridgeport.
- Chief Roche, Major Brown, Captain Terzian, Captain Comstock and Captain Kreitz attended the Connecticut Chiefs meeting and training in New Haven.
- Sgt. Durling attended Recruit Skills Day at POSTC on Domestic Violence.
- Sgt. Clarke attended 'LGBT Issues in Law Enforcement' at POSTC.

Public Relations:

- The following officers participated in the Special Olympics Torch Run in both Ridgefield and Wilton: Major Brown, Captain Terzian, Captain Kreitz, Lt. Gates, Sgt. Clarke, SRO Luis.
- A total of six child restraint car seat systems were checked/installed.

Upcoming Events:

2016 Safety Day: 9/18/2016

Schlumberger Parcel

Chief Roche made note of the fact that former Director of Planning, Betty Brosius, submitted a letter to the Board of Selectmen upon their acceptance of the Schlumberger Citizens Committee Final Report. Ms. Brosius reinforced adherence to the Ridgefield Zoning Regulations and the potential need for permits for recommended uses for this parcel.

Ms. Brosius also stressed the Police Commission's condition (in a letter to Planning and Zoning on June 24, 2015) relating to the adjacent Coach Homes project off of Sunset Lane that the access easement to this parcel (Coach Homes) be restricted for exclusive use by the development with the exception that emergency vehicles should be allowed to access the parcel.

Department Statistics:

Chief Roche highlighted the statistics for June 2016, a total of 2,084 incidents, to include: 88 Alarms, 29 Medical Assists, 24 Check Wellbeing calls, 17 Radar details, 5 Traffic details, 4 DUI arrests, 677 motor vehicle enforcement violations, 18 Smart Trailer deployments and 53 Motor Vehicle Accidents. There were three K-9 assists for the month of June.

Main Street

Chief Roche stated that an email was sent to First Selectman Marconi by a resident at 55 Main Street who expressed concern about the speed limit of 35mph at the crosswalk South of the fountain before the curve in the road (on Rt 33). Since the speed limit is 25mph North of the fountain, the request is to continue that speed limit to the South and then change it after the curve in the roadway to 35mph. Chief Roche, with the approval of Chairman Kain, reported that he submitted an application to the State DOT for a reduction in the speed limit from Main Street/Route 33 to Route 33/Wilton Road East (approximately two-tenths of a mile) from 35mph to 25mph, both North and South.

Farmingville Road – Cains Hill Road

Chief Roche stated that a meeting was held on June 28th to discuss preliminary plans for signal improvements at Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road and Cains Hill Road/Topstone Road. Chief Roche stated that future plans for 2018 include the installation of four poles at Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road with recessed signalization. The crosswalks will be pushed back in order to reduce crosswalk times. Pressure sensors will be replaced by in-road cameras that will activate the light, flashing lights will be phased out. For the present, the DOT will examine the timing of the light sequence at Danbury Road/Copps Hill Road in an effort to improve traffic flow. The DOT will also examine left turn lanes at Ethan Allen Highway/Topstone Road and Ethan Allen Highway/Cains Hill Road.

Signs

Chief Roche stated that Traffic Sign Officer Caswell will be on sign detail this month to address some concerns from residents. A report will be submitted at the next meeting.

State of Connecticut Updates

Chief Roche stated that he has begun to receive tech briefs from the State with posts about current items. He will forward these briefs to the Commissioners to keep them updated also.

Traffic Study

Chief Roche stated that he has reached out to Mike Galante of Frederick P. Clarke Associates to discuss the possibility/feasibility of conducting a traffic analysis of the Town to assist with current and future traffic flow/congestion/growth. Chief Roche will update the Commissioners after his meeting with Mr. Galante.

Agenda Item #5a – Citizen Survey

Chief Roche distributed to the Commissioners the results of the Citizen Survey mailing that concluded on July 8, 2016. The Commissioners discussed the results of this study which Chief Roche stated presented an overall positive feedback from those who had contact with the Ridgefield Police Department over the past year.

Chief Roche stated that there were some constructive suggestions and constructive criticisms and both will be acted upon. Chief Roche stated that there are those who cannot see the purpose of cell phone details and then you will have someone requesting increased details; those that complain about the radar details and then those who think there is not enough done to curtail speeding.

The residents would like to see more details for red light and Stop sign violations, tailgating and speeding.

Chief Roche felt he received useful feedback from those who participated in the survey and he appreciated their input.

Agenda Item #6a**Cedar Lane**

As a follow-up to Chief Roche's request, the State DOT is reviewing both the West Lane side and Route 35 side of Cedar Lane for safety and improvements. Chief Roche stated that the State is reticent about the installation of a traffic light at Cedar Lane/Route 35 at this time. Chief Roche stated that as an immediate improvement, he requested Town Highway to clear the brush by Cedar Lane/Route 35 which has provided a better sightline.

When an update is received from the State DOT, Chief Roche will brief the Commission.

Agenda Item #6b**West Lane**

The State DOT is in the process of reviewing this area – this is also in the area of Cedar Lane.

Agenda Item #6c**Bike Path / Walkway**

Chief Roche stated that the Town Engineer is working with the State to establish a combination walkway/bike path that, when completed, would allow a person to travel from the area of the Ridgefield Recreation Center toward Pamby's, cross Farmingville Road, walk an elevated boardwalk through the Great Swamp and connect to the existing Rail Trail and Branchville Road. This proposed project is in the conceptual stage and would accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists.

Agenda Item #6d**Depot Road**

Chief Roche stated that this railroad crossing is still being evaluated. Chief Roche stated that a proposal was extended to possibly close off Depot Road and install a lock box which would allow fire trucks to access the road in emergency situations.

Chief Roche stated that closing off the road would create a lack of access for tractor trailers who deliver to neighboring businesses and for emergency vehicles. Fire Chief Tappe suggested that the Norwalk River Bridge at Portland Avenue be moved farther South which would then allow for the installation of a 'T' intersection that would provide easy access for both fire trucks and tractor trailers. The new intersection could coordinate with Route 102/Route 7 to assist with traffic flow.

Ligi's Way

Commissioner Knoche stated that he was speaking with Dale Ligi and they both agreed to suggest the renaming of Ligi's Way to something that would connect directly to Chief Richard Ligi – maybe Chief Ligi Way/Road? Chief Roche will contact First Selectman Marconi and discuss this issue with him.

Commissioner Coffin motioned to adjourn Public Session; seconded by Commissioner Knoche.

Public Session adjourned at 7:55pm.

Acting Chairman Savino re-opened Public Session at 8:01 hours.

Motion by Commissioner Knoche to approve Lt. Nick Fowler be removed from Probationary Status to full Lieutenant, effective August 4, 2016; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

All in Favor

Lt. Nick Fowler to be removed from Probationary Status, effective August 4, 2016.

Motion by Commissioner Coffin to approve Sgt. John Gogola be removed from Probationary Status to full Sergeant, effective August 4, 2016; seconded by Commissioner Knoche.

All in Favor

Sgt. John Gogola to be removed from Probationary Status, effective August 4, 2016.

Motion by Commissioner Coffin to cancel the August Police Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Knoche.

All in Favor

August Police Commission cancelled.

Commissioner Knoche motioned to close the Public Session; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

All in Favor

Public Session adjourned at 8:05pm .

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Savino
Acting Chairman

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE
POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Thursday July 14, 2016**

Commissioners Present: Joseph Savino, Acting Chairman
Charles Knoche
Marianne Coffin

Absent: George Kain, Chairman
Thomas Reynolds

Also Present: Chief John Roche

Executive Session commenced at 7:55pm.

Executive Session adjourned at 8:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Savino
Acting Chairman