

**MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING**  
**of**  
**Thursday March 9, 2017**

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

**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 Chairman Savino.

**Agenda Item #1**

Chairman Savino asked if there would be any changes to the agenda. Commissioner Kain motioned to move 5a Chief's Goals to the beginning of the meeting; Commissioner Knoche seconded the motion. **All in Favor**

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

**Agenda Item #5a – Chief's Goals 2017**

Commissioner Kain stated that he and Commissioner Reynolds met with Chief Roche and established the following proposed goals for Chief Roche for 2017. Commissioner Kain stated that both he and Commissioner Reynolds held a long, fruitful discussion with Chief Roche, initiated new ideas, strengthened the verbiage on some goals and stressed the importance of the first goal – that the Commission already 'has a plan and plan to move forward with it'.

1) **Police Headquarters Upgrade and Renovation**

Focused planning and efforts to implement the approved plan for the Renovation and Expansion of Police Headquarters, to include open dialogue with the Board of Selectmen, the architect, the building committee, and citizens of Ridgefield.

2) **Department Training**

The Chief of Police will insure that the department staff participates in current and emerging training programs, schools, and conferences for all Police Department personnel to promote the continuing 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, schools and community groups.

4) **Central Dispatch**

Continue on-going 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. This will include promoting the proper level of training for

police and the fire staff, computer software implementation and helping to facilitate the seamless transition of Central Dispatch at Police Headquarters.

5) **Department Chaplin Program and Officer Wellness Program**

Review current policy on Police Department Chaplin Program. Update policy as needed; review for other program opportunities, possible program expansion and help to facilitate the mental and physical wellness for the police department staff through program development.

Chief Roche stated that after attending a chaplain program, Chaplain Bill Pfohl suggested more involvement and future training for the chaplains which Chief Roche favored also.

In light of the negative climate toward police officers over the past few years, officer wellness will be factored into this goal to look into ways to strengthen assistance to police officers and have the officers use this tool.

6) **Police Department Uniforms**

Examine trends in police uniforms for potential inclusion in current Department uniform.

7) **Professional Development**

Attend a minimum of one professional conference with law enforcement colleagues, approved by the Board of Police Commissioners.

8) **Police Officer Survey**

Continue the annual Officer feed-back survey process.

9) **Fair and Impartial Policing**

All members of the Police Department are to attend training involving fair and impartial policing; explore this opportunity for the members of the Board of Police Commissioners also.

Chief Roche explained that his goal is to have everyone connected with the department take part in this course and implement the ideals to strengthen ties with the public by proactively recognizing and addressing any bias activity.

10) **Physical Fitness**

The Chief of Police shall continue to participate in the Department's Voluntary Fitness program.

Commissioner Knoche thanked both Commissioner Kain and Commissioner Reynolds on behalf of the Commission for doing a good job with the goals.

Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the proposed Chief's goals;

Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

**All in Favor**

**Chief's Goals for 2017 accepted as submitted.**

**Traffic Study**

Chairman Savino asked if something relating to the traffic issue in Town may be a goal for the Chief. Commissioner Kain stated that it is a good idea but that would come under the authority of the Commission, not the Chief.

Chairman Savino stated that he is looking for ways to improve the traffic other than having traffic studies (to include the whole town, not just the town center). He was thinking more in the line of responding to the concerns of the citizens. All agreed that this is a good idea and will think about ways to accomplish this.

### **Agenda Item #2 Commission Minutes**

Chairman Savino requested a motion to accept the minutes of the February 16, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Reynolds motioned to accept the minutes; Commissioner Knoche seconded the motion.

**All in Favor**

**Minutes of the February 16, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting accepted as written.**

**All in Favor**

Chairman Savino requested a motion to accept the minutes of the February 27, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the minutes; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

**All in Favor**

**Minutes of the February 27, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting accepted as written.**

**All in Favor**

The March 6<sup>th</sup> Special Police Commission meeting was scheduled by the Board of Selectmen and they are responsible for any minutes; therefore, the Police Commission did not vote on this item.

### **Agenda Item #3a Commission Voice Mail**

Commissioner Knoche stated that he did not retrieve any messages. He will check again and if any were missed, he will report it at the April meeting.

### **Agenda Item #3b Commission Correspondence**

Chairman Savino stated that an invitation was received from the Police Commissioners Association of Connecticut for the Meritorious Awards Dinner on March 29, 2017 at 6:00pm.

### **Agenda Item #4 Chief's Report**

#### **Statistics**

Chief Roche stated that the incident total for the month of February was 1,831 with four (4) K-9 assists.

During the month, the Department responded to 71 Alarms, 17 Medical Assists, investigated 38 Motor Vehicle Accidents, assisted with 26 Disabled Vehicles, fingerprinted 13 applicants, issued 607 Motor Vehicle Enforcement violations, performed 3 traffic details/13 radar details, issued 6 Controlled Substance violations and 2 Narcotic arrests, conducted 20 Public Relations events (visiting

businesses, etc.), investigated 20 Larceny incidents and processed 8 Pistol Permit applicants.

Community Policing/Public Relations Report:

- Det. Dardis was a participant on a panel at the Ridgefield Library regarding substance abuse.
- P.O Van Wattum participated in 'The Future Leaders' conference at the Boys and Girls Club.
- SRO Luis attended the TIPP Program meeting and interacted with parents. Chief Roche explained that TIPP was a transitional program for parents of youths going from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade or 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- SRO Giglio, SRO Luis and SRO Daly participated in Kids and Cops in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club.
- P.O. Gjodesen presented two separate safety talks and showed the cruiser at a local preschool.
- P.O. Caswell presented a safety talk and showed the cruiser at a local preschool.
- A total of four car seats were installed/checked this past month.

Upcoming Events:

- RVNA Fair – April 1, 2017
- Prescription Drug Take-Back Event – April 29, 2017

Training Report:

- Captain Terzian, Captain Kreitz, Lt. Raines, Sgt. Knoche, Det. Dardis, SRO Giglio, P.O. Samoskevich and P.O. Hawaux attended Re-Certification at WCSU.
- Chief Roche and P.O. Mulvihill attended annual Firearms Qualifications at Wooster Mountain Range.
- Throughout the month, almost the entire department attended the VIPER 911 training for the new 911 system. The remaining Officers will be attending soon.

Dodgeball

Chief Roche reported to the Commissioners that SRO Luis and SRO Giglio have invited the department's officers to the Ridgefield High School Marketing Class' first Dodgeball tournament on March 15<sup>th</sup> from 2:30 to 5:30 in the Ridgefield High School gym and the theme is 'Dodge-A-Cop'; prizes will be awarded. All proceeds from this event will be donated to the Special Olympics; this is a PBA-sponsored event.

Correspondence

A thank you letter to P.O. Ryan for presenting a "Personal Safety" talk to Scotts Ridge Middle School 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girl Scouts.

A thank you letter to P.O. Gjodesen from a resident for his 'quick and effective assistance'.

Budget Meeting

Chief Roche stated that he has reduced the telephone request on the proposed budget from \$51,000 to \$46,000 which will give him a bottom-line increase of 1.02%. This reduction was in response to the First Selectman's request to find further cuts.

Marijuana Legalization and Weapons Bill

Chief Roche reported to the Commissioners that he, along with other Connecticut Chiefs of Police, attended a press conference in Hartford in opposition to the proposed legalization of Marijuana.

Chief Roche stated that at the same time, the Chiefs encouraged passage of a bill involving people carrying pistols. Chief Roche explained that at this time, if an Officer stops someone and asks if they have a pistol on them, they can say 'yes' and just move on – the Officer cannot legally request to see their permit. The proposed bill would allow an Officer to request to see the permit for the pistol an individual may be carrying.

Chief Roche stated that if you have a dog, are fishing on public property, are hunting – all require a permit that an Officer can request to see, but a pistol-carrying individual can just move on. Chief Roche feels that this is a bill that is necessary.

Solana

Chief Roche stated that he has the plans for the proposed development – Solana at Ridgefield, 55 Old Quarry Road (Western lot) – at Headquarters for their review. This will be an assisted living facility.

Dual Purpose Building

Chief Roche stated that he has the plans for the proposed development – Self-Storage/Apartment Building, 55 Old Quarry Road (Eastern lot) – at Headquarters for their review. This will be two-story building with storage units on the lower level and apartments (8) on the upper level.

**Agenda Item #5a Chief's Goals**

Covered at beginning of meeting

**Agenda Item #5b – Tri-Board Meeting**

Chairman Savino stated that all members attended this meeting on March 6, 2017.

**Agenda Item #6a – Uniform**

Chief Roche is waiting for additional prototypes from the supplier and will present the uniform change samples to the Commission at the April meeting.

**Agenda Item #6b – West Lane**

Chief Roche stated that he has received correspondence from the State DOT and after reviewing their data, speed limit signs and accident statistics, they have proposed the following improvements:

1. Existing *25mph* speed sign for the curve west of Cedar Lane will be changed to *20mph*.
2. Delineator sticks will be installed on the existing *Chevron* signs.
3. A *Stop* bar will be installed on Country Club Road.
4. A *Stop* bar will be installed on Cedar Lane (west side of the island at the intersection with West Lane).
5. *Stop* sign will be installed on the right side of the roadway as a vehicle on Cedar Lane approaches the intersection with West Lane.

These improvements will be completed by the State as scheduling permits.

**Agenda Item #6c – Cedar Lane/Route 35**

Chief Roche stated that he has received correspondence from the State DOT and after reviewing their data, speed limit signs, accident statistics, and traffic volume, they have proposed the following improvements:

1. Review of accident data revealed a pattern of wet pavement crashes. The State will have their pavement unit perform pavement skid resistance testing in this area to see if it is needed. They will supply an update if any further action is to be performed.

**Agenda Item #6d – Main St/Bailey Avenue**

Chief Roche stated there were no conclusions at the last meeting on this project. Everyone wants different things and have legitimate concerns. At the last meeting, the possibility of encouraging speeding with the proposed realignment of the CVS shopping area with Prospect Street was suggested, some people did not see the need for turn lanes – Chief Roche stated that the State has been very accommodating to the Town in trying to respond to all their concerns. Several of the Commissioners expressed their disfavor with the proposal to make Bailey Avenue two-way from Prospect Street to the parking area. Noted was the congestion on that street now, the width of the street to accommodate tractor trailers and the curve in the road creating safety concerns with sight lines.

**Agenda Item #6e – Depot Road**

Nothing further from the State.

**Agenda Item #6f – Headquarters**

Covered in Chief's Goals - #1. Nothing materialized from the Tri-Board meeting held on March 6<sup>th</sup>. The Chief and Commission stand for renovation of the current building due to its location, existing Monipole Tower, renovated Dispatch center, and new Town-wide radio system. There has been money paid for studies of the property, plans exist for the renovation of the building and Chief Roche has expressed his concerns of unnecessarily spending more taxpayers' money to

initiate the process of starting from scratch rather than improve on what already exists and has plans for implementation.

Commissioner Coffin stated that she had been approached about the prevalence of drugs at the high school. Chief Roche stated that SRO Luis addresses any issues brought to his attention and any activity can be anonymously reported to the Detective Bureau at 203 431.2345.

Commissioner Savino also stated that he has heard about the drug presence and activity even at the middle school. He suggested that this topic be placed on a future agenda and have SRO Luis attend the meeting. Chief Roche stated that he will arrange that.

Commissioner Reynolds motioned to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:55pm; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

**All in Favor**

**Public Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.**

**Public Meeting opened at 8:12pm.**

Commissioner Knoche motioned to remove P.O. Eric Boulware from Probationary Status; Commissioner Reynolds seconded the motion.

**All in Favor**

**P.O. Eric Boulware to be removed from Probationary Status, effective March 23, 2017.**

Commissioner Knoche motioned to remove P.O. Louis Geller from Probationary Status; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

**All in Favor**

**P.O. Louis Geller to be removed from Probationary Status, effective March 23, 2017.**

Commissioner Reynolds motioned to adjourn Public Session at 8:20pm; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

**All in Favor**

**Public Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Charles Knoche  
Secretary

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

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

**Also Present:** Chief John Roche

Executive Session commenced at 7:53pm.

**Executive Session adjourned to Public Session at 8:12pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Charles Knoche  
Secretary