

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Thursday, May 11, 2017

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

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 7:00pm by Chairman Savino.

Agenda Review

Chairman Savino requested a change to the agenda to move Agenda Item 5e Planning & Zoning to the top of the agenda. Commissioner Reynolds motioned to change the agenda; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

All in Favor.

Chairman Savino stated that there would be an Executive Session after the Public Session tonight.

Agenda Item #2

Commissioner Coffin motioned to accept the minutes of the Special Police Commission meeting on April 17, 2017; Commissioner Kain seconded the motion.

Minutes of April 17, 2017 accepted as written.

Agenda Item #3a Commission Voice Mail

Chief Roche stated that as requested at the April meeting, he checked the Police Commission voice mail messages and forwarded one message for Sgt. Durling to his mailbox and called the News Times regarding their inquiry about Bailey Avenue parking.

Commissioner Knoche stated that there were two messages left on voice mail. One was from a resident on Remington Road (Gioffre?) expressing concerns over an increase in speed by motorists due to the improvement made to Remington Road. He is requesting speed signs. Chief Roche stated that he believes there are speed signs installed but he will check and be sure they are sufficient.

The other message was from a resident of the Mimosa development requesting speed bumps by the pool area to deter speed for the safety of children in the area. They also requested using the speed trailer in this area. Chief Roche stated that speed bumps will not be installed; the speed trailer will be placed in this area to remind drivers of their speed.

Agenda Item #3b Commission Written Correspondence

Chairman Savino stated there was no new correspondence since the April meeting.

Agenda Item #5e Planning & Zoning

Rebecca Mucchetti of the Planning and Zoning Commission thanked the Commission and stated that she thought other members of her Commission would be present but she could relay the reason for their request to speak with the Police Commission.

Ms. Mucchetti stated that there has been an increase in the submission of development applications and they are all being submitted with traffic reports which state that the proposed development will have no impact on traffic. As the planners live in town and see the increase/congestion of traffic, they find this hard to swallow and wanted to seek out guidance on dealing with the traffic impact studies submitted with new proposals.

Commissioner Savino stated that the Commission has been receiving plans and traffic studies from Planning and Zoning for new developments and have provided feedback, when requested.

Chief Roche stated that the data for the traffic impact studies received by the Planning & Zoning Commission comes from Ridgefield Police Department accident information for a given location. Chief Roche continued to state that even though an area may seem congested and not an opportune place for development, if the data shows there is minimal accident activity, one cannot state it is a problem area.

Ms. Mucchetti was pleased to hear this information as she did not realize that the Ridgefield Police Department supplied the actual data to complete the traffic studies.

Commissioner Coffin stated that the Police Commission, acting as the Legal Traffic Authority, has safety as their priority – safety of pedestrians, safety of other vehicles on the road and emergency access to roads.

The Commissioners also stated that the Commission looks at ways to better a proposal such as the introduction of a right turn lane and they also voice negative feedback when they feel a proposal would create hazardous conditions.

Ms. Mucchetti was very thankful for the Commission's time and input and looks forward to future corroboration with them. She stated she learned something by understanding how the traffic data is gathered and will pass that information on to her fellow members.

Commissioner Savino reminded Ms. Mucchetti that when her Commission undertakes their next Master Plan for the Town, be sure to include a section on traffic!

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

Traffic Sign Officer Caswell reported:

- Installation of two *Richard Ligi Memorial Highway* signs on Ligi's Way.
- Installation of a new *Stop* sign at Shadow Lake Road and Ridgebury Road.
- Replacement of a *Stop* sign at Mopus Bridge Road and Spring Valley Road.
- Installation of three *25mph* speed limit signs on Farmingville Road.
- Replacement of six *No Parking* signs on Great Pond Road.
- Replacement of a *Speed Limit* sign on Great Pond Road.
- Straightening of a *No Parking* sign on East Ridge Road.
- Installation of an *E-Commerce Safety Zone* sign at Police Headquarters.

Bridge Project on Danbury Road

Captain Terzian met with the State DOT on 5/2/17 in reference to a Parks & Recreation request to use the field adjacent to the current work zone for overflow parking for large events.

After reviewing the area, Captain Terzian advised against this request citing safety reasons. Parks and Recreation was notified and they asked if they could pursue this idea and seek alternative possibilities with the State DOT.

In response to this suggestion, Captain Terzian was copied on an e-mail from DOT stating that under no circumstances would the State allow access to this adjacent field while Phase One construction is being completed.

Training

- Captain Terzian and Captain Comstock attended Crowd Control Training in Orange, Ct.
- Det. Romero attended Basic Crime Scene Investigation.
- Captain Kreitz, Lt. Platt, Lt. Raines and Sgt. Knoche attended Training Officers' Liability in Trumbull.
- Det. Dardis and Det. Romero attended Heroin/Opioid Death Investigations Training at POSTC.
- P.O. Gjodesen and P.O. McMahon attended the Fairfield County Detective School in Monroe.
- Det. Romero and Det. DuBord attended the 2017 Cyber Fraud Summit.
- P.O. Murray attended a Street Survival Seminar at WCSU.

Public Relations:

- Captain Kreitz manned a table at the Annual RVNA Fair.
- P.O. Seibert conducted a tour of Headquarters.
- Captain Kreitz and P.O. Gjodesen spoke about theft prevention at a local business.
- SRO Luis attended the Drug Coalition meeting.

- Drug Take-Back event held in partnership with Rite Aid Pharmacy. A total of 30 pounds of unwanted/unused prescription medications were collected.
- A total of four (4) car seats were checked/installed in April.

Department Statistics:

Chief Roche stated that in April 2017, Officers responded to 98 alarms, 17 Medical Assists, performed 18 Check Wellbeing requests, issued 7 Controlled Substance violations and made 1 Narcotic arrest, assisted with 10 Disabled Motor Vehicles, conducted 24 Foot Patrols, initiated 32 Public Relations contacts, performed 10 radar details and 5 motor vehicle details, responded to 28 motor vehicle accidents, issued 739 motor vehicle violations, issued 4 Temporary Pistol Permits, and investigated 2 Stolen Motor Vehicles (recovered). The Department responded to 1,988 incidents with five K-9 assists.

I-84 Danbury Project – State DOT

Chief Roche informed the Commissioners that he would be attending the DOT's introductory meeting on May 15, 2017, along with Pete Hill, Charles Fisher, Jerry Myers and Rudy Marconi, regarding their proposed project to improve safety, increase capacity and improve operations and access between Exits 3 and 8 in Danbury.

Chief Roche will update the Commissioners at the June meeting.

Cedar Lane/West Lane

Chief Roche reported that this intersection has been updated to include signs and roadway markings. The DOT sent a letter to the resident who requested improvement of this area.

Improvements:

1. Existing *25mph* speed sign for the curve west of Cedar Lane changed to *20mph*.
2. Delineator sticks installed on the existing *Chevron* signs.
3. *Stop* bars installed/repainted on Country Club Road and Cedar Lane.
4. *Stop* sign installed on Cedar Lane.

The Town of Ridgefield revised the centerline on Cedar Lane and added *Keep Right* signs.

Flashing Beacon

As a follow-up to the request outlined at the April meeting for a 'flashing beacon' to be installed by 89 Danbury Road, Chief Roche made contact with the DOT's engineering division and was informed that the DOT does not install these lights but will grant permission to a Town to install one provided they meet several conditions, to include: Engineering Study of area and an "Encroachment" request to the DOT. If permission is granted, purchase and

installation would cost \$15,000-\$20,000 and the Town would be responsible for maintenance. The resident who requested this item has been notified of these requirements.

Juvenile Review Board

Chief Roche stated that in conjunction with the Ridgefield Community Coalition Against substance Abuse (RCCASA), a new program is being considered – Juvenile Review Board. This board would be involved with juveniles who have been referred to Juvenile Court for minor violations of the law and the possibility of offering an alternative solution to a Court appearance. This program is in the initial stages and Chief Roche will keep the Commissioners updated.

Officer of the Year

Chief Roche noted that there will be a ceremony on May 18, 2017 at the Aqua Turf, hosted by the Exchange Club, to honor the Officer of the Year recipients for the State of Connecticut and all are invited to attend.

Agenda Item #5a Budget

Chief Roche stated that both the Town and Board of Education budgets passed.

Agenda Item #5b Law Enforcement Foundation

Chief Roche noted that the Law Enforcement Foundation Dinner ceremony was held on May 8, 2017 at the Aqua Turf in memory of Connecticut's fallen officers. Many of the Ridgefield Union/PBA members attended this event.

Agenda Item #5c Memorial Ceremony

Chief Roche stated that the Department's annual Memorial Ceremony, honoring former Ridgefield Police members who have passed away, will be held on May 25, 2017 at the Lounsbury House from 10:00am to 11:00am and invited the Commissioners to the event.

Commissioner Knoche noted that this ceremony is such a nice event and suggested expansion of advertising to enhance participation from the public. Chief Roche agreed and will have a Press Release issued and will also paste an announcement on the Department's Facebook page.

Agenda Item #5d Chief's Goals Update

Chief Roche reported:

#1 HQ Upgrade:

On-going; Chief Roche stated that he keeps putting forward what steps we have already completed for this project. Chief Roche also stated that a few months ago, he sat down with a reporter from the Ridgefield Press for one hour detailing the plans for Headquarters' renovation but the interview never

was published.

#2 Training:

Continue to train and educate all staff as illustrated in the monthly training reports.

#3 Community Partnerships:

Ongoing: RCCASA, Leir Foundation, Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club, Citizen Police Academy, Rotary Club, Men's Club, Chamber of Commerce, SRO's, DARE, Tours of Ridgefield Police Department, GRADD, E-Commerce Zone at Headquarters (safety zone which provides a safe place for citizens to make purchases or exchanges after conducting online transactions. The safe zone allows citizens to make transactions in public, with peace of mind, in a monitored location without fearing for their safety.)

#4 Central Dispatch:

On-going: radio system, Nexgen/Leas, Chief's Confidentiality Agreement with Fire Department staff, in writing, for Federal and State law adherence. This goal goes hand-in-hand with Goal #1.

#5 Department Chaplin Program and Officer Wellness Program:

Admin Staff will be going to an FBI Program in June for Executive Level training.

Major Brown has undertaken a Wellness Program and is continuing with the Fitness Program. Major Brown stated that he just completed his first Wellness Program for the Department with eight members completing a thirty day journal of exercise and healthy eating habits. Those who completed the program were assigned points and were rewarded with a gift card for their efforts. Major Brown stated that he was pleased with the participation – 17 people signed on and eight completed the entire course.

#6 Police Department Uniforms:

Change approved and uniforms to be ordered with a transition date of November 1, 2017.

#7 Professional Development:

Chief Roche stated that he registered for the IACP Conference in October 2017 which will be held in Philadelphia.

#8 Police Officer Survey:

To be completed in October.

#9 Fair and Impartial Policing:

To be completed after July to December 2017.

#10 Physical Fitness:

Pending

Agenda Item #5e Planning and Zoning

Covered at the beginning of the meeting.

Agenda Item #6a Bailey Avenue

Chief Roche stated that he will be meeting with Town Engineer Charles Fisher on Friday, May 12, 2017 to review the area for any potential parking spaces. In response to Commissioner Knoche's question, Chief Roche stated that Mr. Fisher is not in favor of closing off this avenue and is not in favor of two-way traffic on this avenue. Chief Roche stated that parking is the next discussion. Chief Roche will report to the Commissioners after this meeting.

Agenda Item #6b Route 35/Recreation Center

Chief Roche reported to the Commission that he was in contact with a DOT official regarding the 'pothole' across from the Recreation Center entrance on Danbury Road and they will take a look at this area.

Agenda Item #6c Depot Road

Chief Roche stated that with the affirmative budget vote, Depot Road and realignment of Portland Avenue will be part of the Branchville infrastructure improvements.

Agenda Item #6d Police HQ

No update to report.

Commissioner Knoche motioned to adjourn the Public meeting; Commissioner Coffin seconded.

Vote: In Favor – All
Against – None

Public Meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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
Major Stephen Brown

Executive Session commenced at 8:25pm.

Executive Session adjourned at 8:51pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Knoche
Secretary