

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Tuesday, October 10, 2017

Commissioners Present: Joseph Savino, Chairman
Charles Knoche, Secretary
Marianne Coffin
Thomas Reynolds
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 6:03pm by Chairman Savino.

Chief Roche requested the Commission observe a moment of silence in memory of Retired Captain Robert Brunelle who served in the Department from 1967 to 1991; Captain Brunelle died on October 6, 2017.

Agenda Item #1 – Agenda Review

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

Chairman Savino requested a motion to move Agenda Item 5a to the beginning of the Agenda to accommodate the Detective Division Commander.

Commissioner Reynolds motioned to change the Agenda line-up; Commissioner Knoche seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Agenda Item #5a4 Annual Detective Division Commander's Report:

Captain Thomas Comstock stated that he took over the duties of the Detective Division Commander in January of 2014 and reported to the Commission:

Detectives:

Detective Steven Papstein is the Senior Detective with 22 years of experience (29 years as a Police Officer).

Detective/Youth Officer Thomas Dardis: started in the DB in January of 2014.

Detective David DuBord: started in the DB in June of 2014.

Detective Jorge Romero: started in the DB in March of 2017.

Detective Mark Caswell (temporary assignment) was in the DB from April 1, 2017 to September 29, 2017.

Captain Comstock stated that Detectives Papstein and Dardis work the Day Shift and Detectives DuBord and Romero work the Evening Shift. Detective Caswell learned how and what the Detective Division does during his temporary assignment.

Detectives' Areas of Responsibility:

Det. Papstein: As Senior Detective, Det. Papstein is a great asset to the Division and handles:

- Evidence Room / records, management and transportation of evidence to the State Lab
- Arson Investigations
- POST-Certified Firearms Instructor
- General Investigations
- Child Death Investigations

Det/YO Dardis handles:

- Juvenile Investigations
- General Investigations
- Child Death Investigations
- 10-33 Military Program
- Involved with "Finding Words for Child Interviews" (assists lawyers in how to address youths who may have to testify in cases)
- Attends various meetings involving the youth in Ridgefield

Det. DuBord handles:

- Narcotic Investigations
- General Investigations
- Death Investigations
- Computer Crimes – becoming a focal point for Det. DuBord due to the increase in this area.

Det. Romero handles:

- Narcotic Investigations
- General Investigations
- Death Investigations
- Beginning to train in Arson Investigations (will be a second to Det. Papstein)

Det. Caswell:

A temporary assignment where he learned the function and paperwork involving the Detective Division:

- Assigned several Pistol Permits, Missing Property Complaints, Bad Checks and assisted the other Detectives in the performance of their duties.
- Attended a variety of classes as an introduction to Detective work

Captain Comstock stated that he is very proud of the Detectives and their dedication to their job -all represent the Department well and have a great rapport with other police departments and agencies. The frequent comment referencing the Detectives is the professionalism they exhibit.

Division's Areas of Responsibility

- Detective Division Investigations
- Youth Division Investigations
- Weapons Division
- Assist Fatal/Serious Accident Investigation Team
- Court Liaison
- Sex Offender Registry
- Office Supplies and Furniture

- Drug Tip Hotline / Grievance – Whistle Blower
- Drug Take-Back Program – January to October 2017 = 450 lbs. collected

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 Persons
- Pistol Permits
- Internet / E-mail Incidents
- Narcotic Investigations

Associations / Memberships

- Fairfield County Detective Association
- Westchester County Detective Association

Captain Comstock stated that his Detectives work very closely with agencies across Connecticut, especially Fairfield County and Westchester County, sharing information and solving cases.

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:

- out at the beginning of the year for a medical procedure
- Attended various weapons classes to keep the Department up-to-date

Det/Y.O. Dardis:

- Investigation Protocols for Heroin/Opioid Deaths
- Attended various weapons classes

Det. DuBord:

- Basic Digital Photography
- Advanced Digital Photography
- I.D. Theft
- Social Media Investigations
- Cyber Fraud Summit

Det. Romero:

- Conducting Homicide Investigations
- Basic Criminal Investigations

- I.D. Theft
- Basic Crime Scene Processing
- Cyber Fraud Summit
- Investigation on Protocols for Heroin/Opioid Deaths

Det. Caswell:

- Basic Crime Scene Investigations
- Clear ID Training (gives the Detectives the ability to view videos from various software programs when investigating a case)
- Basic Digital Photography

Detective Division Statistics

10/2/15 to 10/01/16	Description	10/2/16 to 10/01/17
6	Alcohol Sale to Minor	5
4	Bad Check Investigations	4
5	Burglaries	5
8	Death Investigations	16
8	Debit/Credit Card Incidents	8
277	Detective Division incidents, including JV	226
0	Forgery	2
10	Fraud	13
79	Identity Theft	57
20	Internet/Email/Text Incidents	26
23	JV Incidents	41
12	Larceny from a Motor Vehicle	45
17	Missing Person/Runaway	8
15	Narcotic Investigations	5
147	Pistol Permits	83
2	Stolen Motor Vehicle	10

Captain Comstock stated that the statistics have not varied much from last year except in the areas of stolen motor vehicles and larcenies from motor vehicles. Captain Comstock stated that these incidents are related to youths that had come from Waterbury and New Haven to commit crimes of opportunity – unlocked vehicles and vehicles with keys left in the car. Captain Comstock stated that these larcenies were different than others where the stolen items are usually taken to a pawn shop for cash. In the rash of these larcenies from motor vehicles, the items stolen were either kept by the individuals or given to friends, etc.

Juvenile Division:

Captain Comstock stated that Detective Dardis is a seasoned Officer who previously worked in Florida as a Police Officer. Det. Dardis maintains information on all juvenile arrests whether handled by himself or by Patrol.

Fatal /Serious Accident Investigation Team

Captain Comstock stated that this unit is directed by Captain Bryan Terzian and the Detectives participate as needed to assist in interviewing witnesses and all parties involved. The Detectives also assist with photography along with Sgt. Durling.

Captain Comstock stated that the Detectives continue to work hard on the cases they are assigned; they continue to develop through training and on-the-job experience.

He stated that the addition of Det. Caswell was a welcome training opportunity for the Department as many of the current Supervisors were once Detectives. Captain Comstock stated that he believes this type of training is a great asset to becoming a leader in the Department by providing a better understanding of what is achieved within all facets of an Officer's or Detective's duties.

Captain Comstock concluded by stating that he has been the Detective Division Commander for three years now and that all in the Division are comfortable with their jobs. He is very proud of the work the Detectives perform, their professionalism, and dedication to their job and the Town of Ridgefield.

Commissioner Savino asked Captain Comstock how they educate the public on cyber-crimes. Captain Comstock stated that the Department's Facebook page always posts anything that may be of assistance to the public and the SRO's conduct presentations to the schools on cyber-crime. We also try to keep on top of any current scams and bring them to the attention of the public on Facebook.

Captain Comstock thanked the Police Commission for their continued support.

Agenda Item #2 Minutes Approval

Chairman Savino requested a motion to accept the minutes of the September 13, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Reynolds motioned to accept; Commissioner Kain seconded the motion.

All in Favor.

Minutes of the September 13, 2017 Special Police Commission Meeting accepted as written.

Agenda Item #3a Commission Voice Mail

Commissioner Knoche stated that there were messages for the Commission:

- Bruce Stanbury called regarding speed limits in Town. A return call was placed to Mr. Stanbury on September 27th and October 10th with no call-back to date.
- Eileen Segalman has concerns about traffic speed and pedestrians at Rt 116/Scotts Ridge Middle School. Major Brown contacted Ms. Segalman and will continue follow-up with the State regarding improvements/adequacy of the lights on the school zone signs.

Major Brown stated that SRO Daly also monitored this area and SRO Daly feels that it is not a matter of speed as much as a matter of congestion. SRO Daly reported that only a few youths walk to/from school but there is a lot going on at drop-off/pick-up times, creating confusion.

SRO Daly will continue to review this area for safety.

Commissioner Kain stated that in reference to blinking lights as a safety measure, residents in this area have already voiced their displeasure with this tool as they are in intrusion at night.

Commissioner Savino suggested updating the current signage with reflective sleeves on the posts and flashing lights (solar).

Suggestion of placing a sign in the middle of the road as an alert would require someone to put out and take in the sign daily.

Major Brown stated that the State would have to dictate what they are willing to proceed with in this instance as it is a State road.

- Marguerite Reynolds of Beaver Brook Road expressed concerns on the volume and speed of vehicles on this road especially between 4:30 – 6:30 rush hours. She suggested *No Thru Traffic* signs which cannot be installed. She requested something more than ticket enforcement. Chief Roche will follow-up on this item.

Agenda Item #3b Commission Written Correspondence

There was no written correspondence for the Commission.

Agenda Item #4 Chief's Report

Department Statistics

Major Brown stated that the Department responded to 1,850 service calls in September to include 96 alarms, 24 medical assists, 27 fingerprint applicants, 2 Controlled Substance Violations, 19 foot patrols, 48 motor vehicle accidents, 669 motor vehicle enforcements, 10 Pistol Permits, 13 radar details, 39 Public Relations events and 7 traffic details. There were two (2) K-9 assists in September.

Training

- P.O. Seibert and P.O. Geller attended Crisis Intervention training in Danbury.
- Capt. Terzian, Capt. Comstock and Capt. Kreitz attended New Laws/Legal Update Training at POSTC.
- P.O. VanWattum attended Methods of Instruction at POSTC.
- P.O. Caba attended DARE Instructor Training in New Jersey.
- All Officers attended New Laws/Legal Update Training at Headquarters.
- Lt. Smith attended Opioid Overdose Epidemic "The EMS Role" in Farmington.
- Annual Firearms Qualifications began this month.

Public Relations:

- 2017 Safety Day event.
- SRO Luis presented at the Safe Rides meeting.
- A total of 30 child passenger restraint systems were installed.

Upcoming Events:

- National Drug Take-Back Day – October 28th

Commissioner Reynolds asked how all Officers train at one session. Major Brown responded that the Town needs to be covered at all times so when a class is offered, it is video-taped and those Officers who missed the class will then view the tape for their update. They also receive handouts of the class from the instructor.

Correspondence

- A letter was received from Chief Ridenhour of Danbury thanking Sgt. Durling and P.O. Shimko for assisting his department during the wake of Sgt. Drew Carlson.
- A letter was received from a resident thanking P.O. DiFalco for assisting him when his car would not start.
- A letter was received from Chief Purcell of Brookfield thanking K-9 Officer Murray for participating in the interview process for Brookfield's new (2nd) K-9 Officer position.

Agenda Item #5a DDC Report:

Moved to beginning of the Agenda.

Agenda Item #5b Capital Budget Draft

Major Brown stated that Chief Roche requested an extension on this item. He will compose the draft and forward same to the Commissioners for their review so they can vote at the November meeting.

Agenda Item #6a Bailey Avenue

Commissioner Savino stated that Chief Roche has been following up on this item and:

- 1) The current Main Street proposal shows no loss of parking spaces.
- 2) There are enough parking spaces.
- 3) Chamber of Commerce survey of affected businesses shows no majority of business owners in favor of Bailey Avenue change – one was in favor.

Due to the above and the fact that the proposed plan has not been finalized, Commissioner Savino proposed that the Commission table this item.

Commissioner Coffin suggested delaying any decisions until the approved plan is in operation and we observe how everything is flowing.

Commissioner Knoche motioned to delay the Commission's decision on Bailey Avenue parking until the proposed Main Street plan is finalized and put into effect. Commissioner Kain seconded the motion.

All in Favor.

Bailey Avenue parking issue motion to be delayed until the proposed Main Street plan is finalized and put into effect.

Agenda Item #6b Vehicle Bid Awards

Lease

Major Brown stated that the bids received for the leased vehicle were received from Pamby Motors and Municipal Leasing. Major Brown stated that Pamby Motors proposed a Jeep Grand Cherokee Laredo, one pay lease, 36 month – 36,000 mile for \$14,432.00. Municipal Leasing for the same car was \$28,000. Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the bid from Pamby Motors for one (1) Jeep Grand Cherokee Laredo; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

All in Favor.

Pamby Motors' bid for one (1) 2018 Jeep Grand Cherokee (three year lease, one-time payment) was accepted.

Marked Vehicles

Major Brown stated that of the bids received for the leased vehicles were from MHQ, Inc. and Crowley Ford. Major Brown stated that the bids were for two Ford Utility Interceptor vehicles and one Ford Sedan Interceptor vehicle. With a vehicle trade-in, Crowley Ford's bid was \$81,669 and MHQ's bid was for \$83,596.

Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the bid from Crowley Ford for three (3) 2018 Ford Interceptor vehicles; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

All in Favor.

Crowley Ford's bid for three 2018 Ford Interceptor vehicles was accepted.

Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Savino stated to the Commissioners that he received notice from the Town Clerk that the meeting schedule for 2018 is due. The proposed schedule by Chief Roche will be mailed to the Commissioners who will take a vote at the November meeting.

Commissioner Kain motioned to adjourn Public Session and open Executive Session; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

Public Session adjourned at 6:46pm.

Public Session commenced at 6:52pmRetirement Extension of Det. Papstein

Commissioner Reynolds motioned to accept and approve Det. Papstein's request for an extension to his retirement. Motion seconded by Commissioner Knoche.

All in Favor**Extension to retirement granted to Det. Papstein.**

Commissioner Kain motioned to adjourn Public Session; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

All in Favor**Public Special Police Commission Meeting adjourned at 6:53pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Knoche
Secretary

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE
SPECIAL POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Tuesday, October 10, 2017**

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

Also Present: Major Stephen Brown

Executive Session commenced at 6:46pm.

Executive Session adjourned to Public Session at 6:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Knoche
Secretary