

**MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING**  
**of**  
**Thursday January 14, 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 7:02pm by Chairman Kain.

Commissioner Knoche requested all in attendance to participate in a moment of silence for Mary D'Addario who recently passed away. Commissioner Knoche stated that both Mary and her husband were regular attendees at the Police Commission meetings and Mary always made holidays or special events memorable by reciting a poem or relating a story relevant to the occasion. The Commissioners remarked how she actually would absorb herself in a poem and that nobody conveyed the meaning of the poem quite like Mary.

**Agenda Item #1**

Chairman Kain inquired as to any changes to the agenda. Commissioner Knoche motioned to move Agenda Item 5b – 509 Main Street, to Agenda Item 2a to accommodate Michael Galante who was in attendance.

**All in Favor**

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 December 10, 2015 Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Reynolds motioned to accept the minutes; Commissioner Knoche seconded the motion.

**Minutes of the December 10, 2015 Police Commission meeting accepted as written.**

**Agenda Item #2a 509 Main Street**

Michael Galante of Frederick P. Clark Associates, representing developer, Michael Eppoliti, stated that Mr. Eppoliti is proposing construction of 5 detached homes on the corner of Main Street and Gilbert Street with driveway access proposed on Gilbert Street, approximately 220' off of Main Street. The placement of the driveway in this location was chosen to deter introducing any additional traffic impediments to Main Street. Mr. Galante stated that traffic accident data for the past three years was studied for the Main Street/Gilbert Street/New Street areas with less than fifteen accidents recorded with property damage only. Mr. Galante continued to state that the development will add about four to five vehicle trips

during peak travel times which would not significantly impact the current vehicular traffic flow. Mr. Galante stated that a Stop sign is proposed for the driveway along with a Stop bar and double yellow line at the Gilbert Street entrance/exit.

The Commissioners discussed the proposal and Commissioner Savino asked Chief Roche if the Route 35 Corridor Study had any recommendations for this area; Chief Roche stated that none were specified. In response to the Commissioners' question, Mr. Galante stated that a sidewalk will be installed on Gilbert Street from Main Street to the existing sidewalk in place on Gilbert Street.

The Commissioners agreed to accept the proposal as presented.

**All in Favor**

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

Commissioner Savino stated that he received a voice mail message from a resident who was concerned about the missing speed limit sign as you enter Ridgebury Road from Danbury. She stated that there used to be one but it is no longer there and she feels this is a safety issue as the speed limit in Danbury is 35 and in Ridgefield, it is 25.

Chief Roche stated that there had been a sign there and that a new one will be installed as soon as weather permits. Resident was notified.

Commissioner Savino stated that he saw Wayne Addessi and that he remarked how pleased he was that Chief Roche stopped by to speak with him and that he was content with the outcome of their conversation.

Commissioner Savino stated that he received a voice mail requesting police feedback on the construction of a joint public safety building on the Schlumberger property as one of the suggestions for use of the property.

Commissioner Savino stated that he received an e-mail correspondence from Mr. McQuilken regarding a copy of a report of an incident. A response from Major Brown stated that the incident in question was uncorroborated and, therefore, declined Mr. McQuilken's request. In response to Mr. McQuilken's statement that the incident appeared in the press log of the local paper, Mr. McQuilken was informed that the log entry is not a report – it is a Dispatch entry which stated "Concerned Person" with a location of Partridge Drive. Mr. McQuilken was verbally given an explanation as to the reason for the non-release of the report he requested and that was followed up by a written explanation by Major Brown. Commissioner Savino stated that he thought this was a transparency issue from the initial correspondence from Mr. McQuilken but after discussing the issue with the Chief and Major, he realizes that any citizen can request to look at the press log but there are limits as to what can be released to the public.

Major Brown added that Mr. McQuilken had requested a phone log and was told we do not have one – which we do not. He meant to request the press log for the incident which was provided.

Farmingville Road

As a follow-up to Gregg Hutchings' request to raise the speed limit on Farmingville Road and the Commission's response that Town speed limits are 25mph as set by Town Ordinance (Minutes of December 2015), Mr. Hutchings feels that if one tries to travel on Farmingville Road at the posted 25mph speed limit and does not look at the speedometer, they will probably be over 25mph.

**Agenda Item #3b Commission Correspondence**

Chairman Kain stated that there was written correspondence from a resident of Wilton Rd West (Route 33 near Wilton) requesting a sign on the top of the hill by her home alerting drivers that this road is a school bus route and they need to exercise caution. This is a hilly stretch of roadway and drivers cannot see the stopped school bus until they are cresting the hill. Chief Roche stated that he will have Sign Officer Caswell review this area and report back to the Commission; resident was notified.

Main Street

Commissioner Knoche stated that he was approached by a resident who requested a possible change to the 'Walk' signal at crosswalks – can they be eliminated unless a pedestrian is actually waiting to cross? Chief Roche stated that he will contact the State to see if there is a resolution.

In response to Commissioner Coffin's question about improvement to Main Street/Prospect Street, Chief Roche stated that the State has this on their agenda for 2018. Changes are proposed from Prospect Street to Governor Street with realignment of Prospect Street and improved sequence of lights.

**Agenda Item #4 Chief's Report**Correspondence:Depot Road

Chief Roche stated that an email was received notifying of an evaluation of railroad crossing safety at Depot Road/Ethan Allen Highway and Portland Avenue at Ethan Allen Highway. Chief Roche stated that the Commission had previously discussed this item concerning the lack of gates at the railroad crossing at Depot Road/Ethan Allen Highway. Chief Roche stated that the State proposed closing this crossing but the Town needs it open for emergency access. Chief Roche stated that no date has been set at this time to discuss this matter. Both Commissioner Knoche and Commissioner Kain stated that they would like to be included in the meeting when a date is in place.

Chamber of Commerce

Chief Roche reported to the Commissioners that a meeting with Ridgefield's Chamber of Commerce has been set up for February 4<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am in the Town Hall Lower Level Conference Room. The Chief, Major and Captains will attend this meeting to talk about their responsibilities in the department and to discuss

ways of improving interaction between the department, businesses and the Chamber of Commerce.

#### Pedestrian Sign Project

Chief Roche reported to the Commissioners that he received notice from the State of Connecticut DOT that the State will be replacing existing pedestrian signage on State roads with new yellow retro-reflective warning signs. Chief Roche stated that he signed the letter from the State on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, signifying the Town's agreement with this project. This project is slated to begin with the 2016 construction season.

#### Re-Accreditation

Chief Roche stated that a Press Release was distributed on January 13<sup>th</sup> to announce the Ridgefield Police Department's assessment for Tier III Re-Accreditation. This on-site assessment, administered by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, will take place on February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> and will assure that our department is in compliance with State Standards. Chief Roche stated that Accreditation Officer Sgt. Lawrence Clarke has been very busy checking to be sure we are up-to-date on policies/procedures.

#### Training Report

- Sgt. Durling attended Skills Day at POSTC covering Search and Seizure.
- P.O. Mulvihill attended Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving at POSTC.
- Lt. Smith attended Skills Day at POSTC covering Emergency Medical Response.
- Lt. Platt and Disp. Browning attended a "Swatting" awareness class at POSTC.
- The second half of the Department was recertified in COLLECT. Training was held at Police Headquarters.
- Lt. Fowler attended the Breath Alcohol Instructor Recertification class in Meriden.
- Chief Roche, Captain Kreitz, and Sgt. Knoche attended the Connecticut Chiefs of Police Association training/meeting in Cromwell.
- P.O. Ryan attended High Visibility Traffic Enforcement at POSTC.
- Lt. Smith attended a Combat Casualty course in New Haven.

#### Community Policing/Public Relations Report

- Lt. Platt, P.O. Caba, SRO Giglio, SRO Luis and SRO Daly participated in Kids and Cops at the Boys and Girls Club.
- SRO Daly was on the panel for an Internet Safety presentation at Scotts Ridge Middle School.
- SRO Giglio spoke to Farmingville Elementary School students about Internet Safety.
- Captain Kreitz spoke at the Rotary Sunrise Club meeting covering scams, community programs, general safety, and the police department.
- DARE graduation for SRO Daly's class at Scotland Elementary School.
- DARE graduation for SRO Giglio's class at Farmingville Elementary School.

Captain Kreitz and P.O. Romero attended.

- Captain Kreitz spoke at a seniors' meeting at Ridgefield Crossings on Senior Scams.
- P.O. Murray and K-9 Loki presented a K-9 demonstration at the Boys and Girls Club. Captain Kreitz and Sgt. Knoche also attended.
- A total of eleven (11) child passenger restraints were checked/installed during the month of December.

#### Upcoming Events:

- February 4 Meeting with the Chamber of Commerce.
- March 29 Citizen Police Academy begins. Chief Roche stated that he will not allow a ride-along this year as he considers it too risky.
- April 9 RVNA Health Fair.

#### Addessi Contact

Chief Roche stated that he met with Wayne Addessi to address some of his concerns about Main Street and interaction with the police expressed in a letter he sent to the Commission in December. Chief Roche stated that some ideas expressed – Officer posted at each intersection – are just not feasible. Chief Roche stated that he has directed additional foot patrols with in-store contact. Chief Roche also requested that Mr. Addessi contact him directly if a problem arises so it can be addressed at that time. Mr. Addessi seemed satisfied with the meeting.

#### Main Street parking

Chief Roche stated that he was contacted by the State Traffic Administration about correspondence received regarding parking spot time limits on Main Street. Apparently there are sixteen spots that had their time changed: 8 to one-half hour limit and 8 to a 2 hour limit. Chief Roche was informed that no changes to any parking limits can be made without the State Traffic Administration approval. They would have to review the area and then make a decision. Chief Roche was informed that all sixteen spots need to be put back to the original one hour limit. At this time, the Town Parking Authority will research this matter, put a request in writing to the Town's Legal Traffic Authority (Police Commission) who will review the request and, if approved, forward same to the State Traffic Administration. The State will conduct a study of the area and send their recommendations.

#### Statistics

Chief Roche stated that the incident total for the month of December was 1,316. During December, the Department responded to 84 Alarms, 22 Medical Assists, performed 91 motor vehicle stops, completed 14 foot patrols, investigated 4 ID Theft incidents, issued 368 Motor Vehicle Enforcement violations, investigated 68 Motor Vehicle Accidents, completed 3 Narcotic Arrests and 4 DUI arrests. Chief Roche reported that the Department issued 19 Temporary Pistol Permits (total of 87 issued for 2015). There were 2 K-9 assists for December.

Branchville Road

Chief Roche stated the State had contacted us for feedback on the removal of the No Turn on Red sign on Branchville Road onto Ethan Allen Highway. The Commission had agreed to this removal.

Chief Roche stated that he received an e-mail from the State DOT stating that research into this sign revealed that it was originally installed in 1987 due to residents on Route 7 not being able to exit their driveways.

Chief Roche pointed out the fact that due to the increase in businesses on this stretch since 1987, the driveway exit problem has to have increased and, therefore, is it feasible to remove this sign or should it be kept as is.

After discussion, the Commissioners agreed that they would like the sign to remain as it is.

**All in Favor**Sign Report

- Replaced *Arrow* sign on Bailey Avenue.
- Installed two *No Parking* signs on Sunset Lane.
- Replaced *Stop Sign Ahead* sign on Chestnut Hill Road.
- Replaced *Speed Limit* sign on Gilbert Street.
- Contacted State DOT regarding replacing *Corner Chevrons* on Route 102 Branchville Road.

**Agenda Item #5a Chief's Goals 2016 Sub-Committee**

Chairman Kain stated that a sub-committee would be needed to set goals for Chief Roche for this year. Commissioner Savino volunteered to be on the committee and Commissioner Coffin stated that she would be glad to serve again. Chief Roche will be in touch with Commissioners Savino and Coffin with some suggestions and past goals for their review and feedback.

**Agenda Item #5b 509 Main Street**

Covered above as Agenda Item #2a.

**Agenda Item #6a Operating Budget**

Chief Roche stated that the proposed budget requests restoration of two Police Officers and two Traffic Agents in 2017. The need for uniforms, etc. for the new officers and contractual obligations make up the bulk of the budget's 4.72% increase.

Chief Roche reviewed some of the equipment requests and Captain Kreitz spoke about a requested training software program that would allow him to track time, manage policy review and monitor officers' proficiency, identify training needs, etc. Captain Kreitz feels that this would be a great asset to the Training Division. Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the proposed operating budget as presented; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

Commissioner Savino stated that while he feels the Chief is doing a great job for the Town, he respectfully votes against the budget. He feels it is a good budget

and he is in favor of everything except the request for additional personnel.

Vote: In Favor: Commissioners Knoche, Coffin, Kain and Reynolds

Oppose: Commissioner Savino

**Operating Budget 2016, to include Animal Control, approved.**

**Agenda Item #6b Residency Requirement**

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Commissioner Knoche motioned to adjourn to Executive Session, and invite Chief Roche and Major Brown, Captain Kreitz and Officer Daly for personnel matters; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

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

**Public Session commenced at 9:04pm.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Reynolds to extend the residency requirement from 15 miles to 25 miles; seconded by Commissioner Knoche.

**All in Favor**

Commissioner Savino motioned to adjourn the Public Session; seconded by Commissioner Knoche.

**Public Session adjourned at 9:08pm.**

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  
Captain Jeff Kreitz  
P.O. Christopher Daly

Executive Session commenced at 9:04pm.

**Executive Session adjourned at 9:04pm.**

*Respectfully submitted,*

---

Joseph Savino  
Secretary