

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Thursday, January 18, 2018

Commissioners Present: Charles Knoche, Chairman
George Kain, Secretary
Marianne Coffin
Stephen Saloom
Joseph Savino

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 7:03pm by Chairman Knoche.

Agenda Review

Chairman Knoche asked if there would be any changes to the Agenda; there were none.

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

Agenda Item #2

Chairman Knoche requested a motion to accept the minutes of the December 14, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Kain motioned to accept the minutes; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

Minutes of the December 14, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting accepted as written.

Agenda Item #3a Commission Voice Mail

Commissioner Kain stated that there was a repeat call from a resident clarifying that she was requesting a crosswalk, not a sidewalk, from her home on East Ridge Road to the East Ridge Middle School. Commissioner Kain stated that he made a return call and informed the individual that mid-block crosswalks are not approved and that they also are a safety issue as they offer a false sense of security. The issue of speeding was also discussed and it was agreed that Chief Roche will direct radar details to be conducted and will alert Officers that they have the permission of the homeowner to use her driveway.

Agenda Item #3b Commission Correspondence

Grove Street/Prospect Street

Chairman Knoche stated a request for pedestrian crossing signage (or blinking light) at Grove Street and Prospect Street was received due to the fact that cars come from three directions and it is difficult to cross the street.

Chief Roche stated that he will direct our Traffic Sign Officer, Mark Caswell, to review this area and report back to the Commission with his recommendations.

In response to Commissioner Coffin's question as to legible crosswalk markings, Chief Roche responded stated that he has them repainted each year.

No Turn on Red

Resident requests *No Turn on Red* signs be placed at the corners of Prospect Street/Main Street (right onto Main from Prospect) and Danbury Road/Grove Street (right onto Grove from Danbury). Individual has observed and has been part of many close calls in these areas for pedestrians even when the Walk sign is on.

Commissioner Coffin stated that she would also like something done about this issue and agrees with the statements presented.

Commissioner Savino stated that at Danbury Road/Grove Street, there has been an influx of businesses that has created more foot traffic and with the warmer weather ahead, it will increase considerably.

Mr. Patterson, in attendance at the meeting, also voiced his support for a *No Turn on Red* sign at Prospect Street/Main Street. He stated that it is now a danger and with the completion of the new housing at 509 Main Street, introducing additional foot traffic, there is a real safety concern for pedestrians.

The Commissioners agreed that this request would benefit pedestrian safety. Chief Roche stated that the State DOT will be contacted for their review and recommendations for these areas in response to our request for the installation of *No Turn on Red* signage.

While discussing this topic, Commissioner Coffin suggested the introduction of making a right on red exiting Stop and Shop onto Danbury Road. This item will also be addressed to the State DOT.

Danbury Road/Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road

A draft of a traffic investigation report from the State DOT revising lane-use of Danbury Road at the intersections of Copps Hill Road and Farmingville Road was submitted for Town review and concurrence. The traffic signal at this location will be upgraded to include pedestrian features – this project was initiated in December of 2017.

Pedestrian Signing Project

Correspondence was received from the State of Connecticut DOT advising of a project to upgrade/install pedestrian signing and repaint the crosswalks on locally-owned roads in Ridgefield; the upgrades will improve the visibility of the marked crosswalks for pedestrian safety. The State is confirming that the Town is agreeable to this project which is scheduled for the 2019 construction season.

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

- P.O. Gjodesen and P.O. Daly attended COLLECT training in Bridgeport.
- In-house Intox Re-Certification took place with Lt. Raines and Lt. Fowler as Instructors.

Crime Prevention

- P.O. Ryan spoke with a Girl Scout troop about the role of Police in the Community and respecting one another.
- SRO Giglio gave an Internet Safety presentation to a Girl Scout troop at the Keeler Tavern.
- P.O. Ryan and P.O. Tinsley participated in "girls only gym" at the Boys and Girls Club of Ridgefield.
- P.O. Murray and Loki presented a K-9 demonstration at Barlow Mountain Elementary School.
- A total of five child passenger restraint systems were checked/installed during the month.

Statistics

Chief Roche stated that the incident total for the month of December 2017 was 1,445.

During the month, the Department responded to 77 Alarms, 27 Medical Assists, 29 Check Well-beings, 3 DUI arrests, completed 6 radar details, issued 339 Motor Vehicle Enforcement violations, investigated 90 Motor Vehicle Accidents, and initiated 20 Public Relation contacts, 3 Stolen Motor Vehicles (2 recovered). There was 1 K-9 assist for the month of December.

Correspondence

A thank you letter was received from the South Central Criminal Justice Administration thanking Lt. Gates for his participation in their Sergeant Oral Board exam.

Planning and Zoning

Meeting with Planning Director Richard Baldelli:

- Planning and Zoning Town Plan to be reviewed and updated for 2020 completion. Chief Roche requested Richard to contact him and the Board of Police Commissioners for input regarding traffic matters. Commissioner Savino stated that he feels strongly that the Commission be included with any discussion relating to traffic as the Town has grown considerably and, in turn, has created many traffic issues.
- Request was made by Richard to have the Commission meet with Planning Board members to discuss the proposed ice rink complex at the

former Pinchbeck property prior to a formal plan submission, regarding traffic.

The Commissioners discussed whether it was necessary to review anything before a formal submission and agreed that the Commission will wait for Planning & Zoning to forward any submitted traffic plans to them and will discuss them at that time. This will be the same format the Commission has followed with all applications.

Commission Responses from December Meeting

1. North Street/Maple Shade

A resident expressed concerns about the sight line at North Street/Maple Shade Road.

Chief Roche reported that a letter has been sent to the resident stating that the Traffic Sign Officer, Mark Caswell, will review the area and report back to the Commission. When the Officer's report is received, the resident will be updated.

2. Rockwell Road

The Commission had received a letter from a resident of Rockwell Road citing the safety concerns of the residents of the area and requesting potential strategies to increase safety for those who live on Rockwell Road and the surrounding neighborhood.

Chief Roche reported that a letter has been sent to the resident stating that the Traffic Sign Officer, Mark Caswell, will review the area and report back to the Commission. When the Officer's report is received, the resident will be updated.

Chief Roche and Commissioner Savino also stated that they traveled this road and agreed that some improvements are needed.

3. West Mountain Road

A request was received from a resident for a *Hidden Drive* sign by 81 West Mountain Road for safety reasons.

Chief Roche reported that a letter has been sent to the resident stating that the Traffic Sign Officer, Mark Caswell, will review the area and report back to the Commission. When the Officer's report is received, the resident will be updated.

Danbury Road/Ethan Allen Highway

Chief Roche reported that he received a call from the State DOT stating that a resident complained of a safety issue existing at the intersection of Danbury Road and Ethan Allen Highway.

The Commissioners agreed that this area could be better by making the driver aware of the right lane turning right only when you get to the intersection. If the driver is unfamiliar with the road and realizes too late that he/she is in a turning lane, it is difficult to get over as this is a very busy intersection. The

Commissioners agreed that the signage could be improved.
Chief Roche stated that the DOT will review this area and report back to him.

Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act

Chief Roche stated that he has been requested to add his name and the Ridgefield Police Department to the coalition of law enforcement agencies across the United States opposing the H.R. 38/S.446 (Concealed Carry Reciprocity) proposal currently before Congress. This bill would override a State's law limiting who can carry a loaded hidden gun in a State and would force States to allow individuals to carry guns who they may consider not qualified. Chief Roche feels this presents a safety issue to individuals and law enforcement.

Commissioner Saloom stated that he is familiar with this bill and is glad to hear that Chief Roche opposes it and supports his decision.

The Commissioners agreed that Chief Roche has their approval to sign his name and the department to this petition.

Agenda Item #5a Chief's Goals 2018 Sub-Committee

Chairman Knoche stated that a sub-committee would be needed to set goals for Chief Roche for 2018. Commissioner Savino volunteered to be on the committee and when new Commissioner, Stephen Saloom, was informed of what this committee's task was, he volunteered to be part of the sub-committee.

Chief Roche will be in touch with Commissioners Savino and Saloom with some suggestions and past goals for their review and feedback.

Agenda Item #6a Officer Survey Discussion

Chief Roche stated that since the Commissioners have had a chance to review the Officer Annual Survey responses, they can review some items:

- Facial Hair - Chief Roche stated that this received a No response.
- Uniforms - Chief Roche stated that as of January 1, 2018, all Officers are wearing blue uniforms. Chief Roche stated that the Officers are pleased with the change and that he has had positive feedback from the public.
- Antennas - Chief Roche stated that radios were given to Officers to use in the field prior to purchase. With no negatives, the radios were purchased and then there was a problem with the antennas being too long. Chief Roche stated this is open and will involve funding. In the meantime, Chief Roche will have different models tested.
- DUI Details - Chief Roche stated that these were not pursued due to lack of interest.
- Pick-up Truck - Chief Roche stated he is waiting for additional funding to complete the purchase of a truck.

- License Plate Reader – This has been included in the 2019 Capital Budget.
- Spike Strips – Chief Roche explained to Commissioner Saloom that these are strips used in a pursuit to damage the tires of a vehicle. The Department will not be purchasing these.
- FLIR - Thermal camera – the Department has purchased two.
- Water Filters – Chief Roche reported that the plumbers have changed the filters on all water systems in Headquarters and will do so annually.
- Computers – Chief Roche reported that he has a rotating replacement program set up for computers.

Agenda Item #6b St. Mary Crosswalk

Chief Roche reported to the Commission that the plan presented has to be revised. He suggested that the Commissioners wait for the weather to break and then walk the site with Mark Ferrandino who is overseeing this project for St. Mary. Chief Roche stated that he feels the plans need to be changed to place the proposed crosswalk before the existing telephone pole and hydrant for pedestrian safety. Commissioners Kain, Knoche and Saloom agreed with an on-sight visit with the Chief.

Agenda Item #6c Budget Discussion

Chief Roche stated that he was requested by Finance Director Redmond to submit a Plan B to his budget – without two new Officers; Chief Roche has completed that and submitted it to the Town.

Chief Roche stated that he was requested by Finance Director Redmond to provide a break-down of the requested vehicle costs and the trade-in values, mileage guestimate, etc. of the older vehicles. Chief Roche will prepare this to the best of his ability and submit same to the finance department.

Commissioner Kain motioned to adjourn Public Session to Executive Session with Chief Roche and Major Brown; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Public Session of the Police Commission Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

George Kain
Secretary

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

Commissioners Present: Charles Knoche, Chairman
George Kain, Secretary
Marianne Coffin
Stephen Saloom
Joseph Savino

Also Present: Chief John Roche
Major Stephen Brown

Executive Session called to order at 8:05pm.

Executive Session adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

George Kain
Secretary