

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
of
Thursday, December 14, 2017**

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

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 5:01pm by Chairman Savino.

Agenda Review

Chairman Savino requested a motion to change the order of the Agenda to accommodate Captain Kreitz who was in attendance. Commissioner Knoche motioned to move Agenda Item 5a Division of Professional Standards report to the Police Commission to the beginning of the agenda; Commissioner Kain seconded the move.

All in Favor

Agenda item 5a moved to the beginning of the agenda.

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

Agenda Item #2

Chairman Savino requested a motion to accept the minutes of the October 10, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Kain motioned to accept the minutes; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

Vote: All in Favor

Minutes of the October 10, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting accepted as written.

Chairman Savino requested a motion to accept the minutes of the November 21, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting. Commissioner Knoche motioned to accept the minutes; Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion. Commissioner Savino mentioned that he was not present for the November 21st meeting.

Minutes of the November 21, 2017 Special Police Commission meeting accepted as written.

Agenda Item #5a Division of Professional Standards Annual Report:

Captain Kreitz greeted the Commissioners and thanked them for moving his report to the beginning of the agenda. Captain Kreitz stated that he has

broken down his job description into different categories that he will review with the Commissioners and began by stating that his areas of responsibility cover:

Training, Media Relations, Public Relations/Crime Prevention/Community Policing, the DARE Program, the School Resource Officer Program, the Accreditation Program and the FTO Program.

Training

Captain Kreitz stated that the State mandates that over a three year period, Officers need to accumulate a minimum of 60 hours of training and that all of our Officers exceed that mandate through in-house and in-service training.

Captain Kreitz stated that in-house training consists of Firearms, Narcan, Taser, Emergency Medical Response (EMR), Legal Updates, Alcohol Test. At Squad level, Officers are refreshed in local business maps and tours, Noise Ordinance review, Exposure Control and any policies deemed priority for review.

Outside of HQ, the Department has participated in classes/schools, seminars, and conferences, to include: Detective School, Interview and Interrogation, Crisis Intervention training, Homicide Investigation, High Visibility Traffic Enforcement.

Captain Kreitz stated that the Department has seven Post-Certified Police instructors in the fields of EMR, OC, Handcuffing, Firearms, Decision Shooting, Use of Force, Taser, Arrest and Control, Impaired Driving, Building Search, Personal Protective Equipment, Blood Borne Pathogens, Patrol Rifle and Less than Lethal Force. The Department also utilizes and appreciates the assistance of Post-Certified civilian instructors in the fields of emergency medical response, human behavior/communication and photography.

Media Relations

Captain Kreitz stated that on a daily basis, he reviews the Department's Press logs and speaks with local media outlets (Ridgefield Press, New Times, Hamlet Hub). He also is responsible to research/respond to any reporter's inquiries, oversees the Department's Facebook/Twitter pages and completes releases for any major incidents.

Public Relations / Crime Prevention / Community Policing

Captain Kreitz stated that he is responsible for setting up requested tours of HQ, schedules school safety talks (for both students and staff) in local nursery schools and day care centers, participates in neighborhood walk and talks, and makes himself available for interviews with students who may call for assistance/information when pursuing their careers or completing assignments.

Also included under this topic are Department programs such as: Halloween Party (great success with the addition of a Trunk or Treat section this year which incorporated the participation of community groups –a few were the Boys and Girls Club, Parks & Recreation, The Propector), Yellow Dot Program (a Senior program where a yellow dot is placed on the rear window of a participant's car and acts as an alert to emergency personnel that a Senior resident may be in the vehicle (Captain Kreitz stated that this program is offered in conjunction with Peoples Bank and although it is a good program, some seniors are reluctant to participate because they feel that the yellow dot makes them a target), DARE Program (taught by SRO Luis, SRO Giglio, SRO Daly and P.O. Samoskevich), Junior Police Academy (the SRO's all participate in this program for 8–15 year olds and it is a well-received, fun program giving participants hands-on experience with fingerprinting, tasers, crime scenes), Prescription Drug Take-Back Program (approximately 50 to 80 pounds of drugs are taken in at the RPD each month (RPD has partnered with Bissell's Pharmacy and Rite Aid Pharmacy and participates in the national Drug Take-Back days in the Fall and Spring), GRADD (drug awareness program for high school Seniors which is prepared by SRO Luis and has as its primary message for the senior class to enjoy and have fun but to do it safely), Safety Day (presented by the PBA and PD with the fire department), Memorial Gravesite Ceremony, participation in local fairs (Boehringer Ingelheim, RVNA Health Fair and Chamber of Commerce Health Fair), Kids and Cops (Officers join youths from the Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club for sport participation), Citizen Police Academy (Law Enforcement basics for interested residents taught by the Officers to give participants insight as to what the police do and why we do it), Cops and Cones where Officers mix and mingle with residents, Rides to School.

School Resource Officer Program (SRO)

Captain Kreitz stated that SRO Luis covers Ridgefield High, SRO Giglio covers East Ridge (main school), Branchville, Veterans Park and Farmingville schools. SRO Daly covers Scotts Ridge (main school), Ridgebury, Barlow Mountain and Scotland schools. Captain Kreitz stated that the duties of the SRO include:

- Daily campus security checks.
- Planning, training and drills for lock-downs for both students and staff.
- Advisor to the schools.
- Attend faculty and administration meetings.
- Coordinate Police activities.
- Investigate crimes and incidents at the schools.
- Assist with the school emergency plan.
- Conduct a variety of classes to include DARE, Forensics, Government and Politics classes.
- Part of All Hazards Committee (Safety and Security)

Captain Kreitz commented to the Commissioners that the best outcome of the SRO Program that he sees is the strong bond and relationship established between the Officers and the student body/teachers and he receives positive feedback.

FTO Program

Captain Kreitz stated that the Department has 16 POST-Certified Field Training Instructors (FTO) to assist with this program; new Officers are required by the State to complete 400 hours of training before they can go solo; sample reports and tests must be successfully completed (our tests were updated by Sgt. Knoche).

Captain Kreitz stated that P.O. Hartling successfully completed field training this past year.

Accreditation

Captain Kreitz stated that Sgt. Clarke is the Department's Accreditation Officer and he is responsible to keep the Department's accreditation current. To maintain our standing, the Department must comply with State standards and are audited by the State. Captain Kreitz stated that our last review was in 2016 which we passed with flying colors; our next review will be in 2020. In response to Commissioner Saloom's question, Captain Kreitz stated that the Department uses the State Accreditation program rather than CALEA which is too expensive. The State developed their program which is tailored to municipal department needs at no cost (just work on our end).

Captain Kreitz concluded his report and asked if there were any questions. Commissioner Kain stated that Captain Kreitz provided a very good, comprehensive report – excellent job.

All the Commissioners agreed that the report was very good and thanked Captain Kreitz for his presentation and for a job well done.

Agenda Item #3a Commission Voice Mail

A call was received from a resident on West Mountain Road inquiring about the installation of a Hidden Driveway sign due to the hazardous condition existing by her home. Chief Roche stated that the Federal Highway guidelines prohibit the use of such signage. Chief Roche will make contact to discuss this issue.

A call was received from a resident on East Ridge Road requesting a sidewalk to East Ridge Middle School. Chief Roche will contact the caller.

A call was received from an individual who received a ticket and wanted to speak with someone. Chief Roche will listen to the call and respond to the caller.

A call was received from a resident with concerns about the sight line at North Street/Maple Shade Road. The caller stated that there is a hedge there in front of a fence – he suggested placing the hedge behind the fence to open up the area. He also requested that a *Stop Ahead* sign be placed before the existing *Stop* sign. Chief Roche stated that he does not believe there is ample space at that location to install an *Stop Ahead* sign but suggested putting a visibility strip on the existing *Stop* sign pole as an alert to drivers. Chief Roche will instruct Traffic Sign Officer Caswell to review this area.

Agenda Item #3b Commission Correspondence

Chairman Savino signed the Application for Use of a State Highway for the Ridgefield Academy's 5K Road Race on May 20, 2018. This will now be forwarded to the State DOT for their review and approval.

The Commission received a letter from a resident of Rockwell Road citing the safety concerns of the residents of this area and requesting potential strategies to increase safety for those who live on Rockwell Road and the surrounding neighborhood. Stated in the letter were incidents of property damage, sightline issues at the Perry Road intersection and disregard for an installed school bus stop sign.

Chief Roche stated that this is unfortunately a difficult area. The Town cannot use speed bumps or install No Thru Traffic signs and the use of Stop signs to regulate speed is prohibited.

Commissioner Savino suggested increased use of the speed trailer as he believes this does impact drivers as to their actual speed.

Commissioner Knoche and Commissioner Savino, after listening to the December Sign Report, suggested the installation of *Slow Curve* and *Curve Ahead* signage in this area.

Chief Roche will direct Traffic Sign Officer Caswell look at this area and report back to the Commission.

Chief Roche reported that he researched this area for the past three months and had an incident in September where there was property damage from a motor vehicle accident due to speed.

Agenda Item #4 Chief's Report

Statistics - October

Chief Roche stated that the incident total for the month of October was 1,813.

Included in the month were 97 Alarms, 27 Medical Assists, 15 Check Well-beings, 6 Controlled Substance Violations, 19 Fingerprint applicants, 6 Traffic Details, issued 554 Motor Vehicle Enforcement violations, investigated 57

Motor Vehicle Accidents, issued 6 Pistol Permits, initiated 24 Public Relations contacts – there were 2 K-9 assists for the month of October.

Statistics - November

Chief Roche stated that the incident total for the month of October was 1,553.

Included in the month were 82 Alarms, 23 Medical Assists, 20 Check Well-beings, 4 Controlled Substance Violations, 17 Fingerprint applicants, 9 Radar Details, issued 501 Motor Vehicle Enforcement violations, investigated 63 Motor Vehicle Accidents, issued 8 Pistol Permits (73 to date), initiated 25 Public Relations contacts – there were 2 K-9 assists for the month of November.

Correspondence

- A thank you letter was received for P.O. Gjodesen for his assistance.
- A thank you letter was received for Lt. Raines and Sgt. Clarke for their help and assistance.
- A thank you letter was received for Lt. Smith and P.O. Caba for their professionalism and help.

Training - October

- Department Firearms Training completed.
- Dispatchers Caporale and Falzolgher attended Active Shooter Aggressor Training for Telecommunicators at POSTC.
- COLLECT Re-Certification Training (required every two years) held at The Prospector Theater. Regional class sponsored by the Ridgefield Police Department and Fairfield County Police Training Officers Association. Second class to be held in November.
- Lt. Fowler, Det. Papstein, Det. Dardis and P.O. VanWattum attended Instructor Training for the Development of Lesson Plans for Low-Light Firearms Instruction.
- P.O. Hartling attended 911 Equipment Training in New Haven.
- SRO Luis attended a conference on Safe School Initiatives at the Leir Retreat Center.
- Det. Romero attended Investigation of Fire and Arson-Related Deaths class.
- Det. Dardis and Det. DuBord attended Heroin/Opioid Overdose Death Investigations at POSTC.

Training – November

- Major Brown, Captain Terzian and Captain Kreitz attended a Freedom of Information Workshop in Bethel.
- Detectives Romero and DuBord attended Conducting Proper Background Investigations in Danbury.

- Captain Kreitz attended training on Internal Affairs Investigations in Danbury.
- Regional COLLECT Re-Certification training was conducted at The Prospector Theater.
- Lt. Fowler attended a Glock Armorer's course in Torrington.
- Captain Terzian and Captain Comstock attended the Use of Force Summit at Mohegan Sun.
- The entire department was re-certified in Taser use. The training took place at Headquarters and was instructed by Lt. Raines and Sgt. Knoche.

Community Policing/Public Relations - October

- Child Passenger Restraining Install/Inspection at the Lounsbury House Family Day.
- SRO Luis presented a safety talk and showed the cruiser at a local child care facility.
- Lt. Platt was invited to attend and be a judge at the SPHERE Halloween Party which took place at Jesse Lee Church.
- The Ridgefield Police Department participated in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day in partnership with Rite Aid Pharmacy. Lt. Platt worked/organized the detail.
- Ridgefield Police Department's Annual Halloween Party took place at the Lounsbury House.
- A total of 25 child passenger restraint systems were installed/inspected during the month of October.

Community Policing/Public Relations - November

- P.O. Caswell, P.O. Seibert and Disp. Caporale attended the Veterans Day Ceremony at Veterans Park School.
- P.O. Ryan presented at a Girl Scout Troop meeting on general safety.
- P.O. Murray and K-9 Loki did a demonstration and talk to the fourth grade at Barlow Elementary School.

Sign Report

- Replaced two *Stop* signs on Cain's Hill Road and Lounsbury Road.
- Installed *Stop* sign at Peaceable Road and Remington Road.
- Removed the *Thru Trucks* sign on the West end of Cain's Hill Road.
- Repaired *Slow* sign on Lounsbury Road.
- Installed *Keep Right* sign on Barlow Mountain Road at Route 116, North Salem Road.
- Repaired the *Slow Curve* sign on Farmingville Road.
- Straightened the *Curve* sign on Rockwell Road.
- Replaced the *Stop Ahead* sign on Farmingville Road
- Replaced the *Stop* sign on Kingswood Place.
- Repaired the *Stop* sign on Belvedere Court.

St Mary Crosswalk

Chief Roche reported to the Commissioners that he received plans for the proposed relocation of the crosswalk on High Ridge Avenue connecting St Mary School and St Mary Church on either side of the road. The submitted plans align the crosswalk from the school side of the road with the steps leading up to the church on the opposite of the road. With this plan, the crosswalk would be behind the existing hydrant and pole on the school side of the road. The Commissioners agreed that this is a safety hazard and would prefer to see the proposed crosswalk moved closer to the intersection, away from the existing hydrant and pole. Chief Roche will return the plans for revision and presentation at the January meeting. Chief Roche stated that he will have the current plans at Headquarters if the Commissioners would like to review them.

Uniform Change

Chief Roche reported to the Commissioners that the uniform change to blue uniforms will take place on January 1, 2018. Chief Roche stated that a press release would be sent out on December 18th, the announcement change will be posted on Facebook and Twitter and a memo will be sent to area businesses, schools, churches alerting them to the fact that the Ridgefield Police Department has changed from gray uniforms to blue uniforms.

Agenda Item #5a – Covered at beginning of meeting**Agenda Item #5b Election of Commission Officers**

Commissioner Kain motioned to nominate Commissioner Knoche as the next Chairman of the Commission; seconded by Commissioner Saloom.

All in Favor

Commissioner Saloom motioned to nominate Commissioner Kain as the next Secretary of the Commission; seconded by Commissioner Knoche.

All in Favor

**Commissioner Knoche elected as Chairman of the Police Commission.
Commissioner Kain elected as Secretary of the Police Commission.**

Agenda Item #5c 2018 Commission Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Savino stated that he would not be able to make the second Thursday in January 2018 so the Commissioners moved the date to January 18, 2018 (third Thursday). Due to the school calendar, the April meeting would fall during school break, therefore, the April meeting was moved to April 19, 2018 (third Thursday). The remainder of the meetings will be held on the second Thursday of the month.

Commissioner Kain motioned to approve the 2018 Police Commission Meeting Schedule; seconded by Commissioner Kain. This will be forwarded to

Town Clerk, Barbara Serfilippi.

Vote: In Favor - All

2018 Police Commission Meeting Schedule accepted for submission to the Town Clerk.

Agenda Item #5d Operating Budget Drafts

Chairman Savino initiated a discussion on the inclusion of two officers in the proposed budget and if that was the best way to approach the manpower issue. The Commissioners discussed different options for acquiring needed personnel due to frozen positions and officer resignations. It was agreed that the budget will indicate the addition of two officers – one after the passage of the budget in 2018 and one in 2019. Chief Roche stated that he likes to coincide the hires with the Police Academy schedule so the candidate can start school with little down time.

Commissioner Kain motioned for the restoration of two police officers, at the discretion of the Chief of Police, with hiring in July of 2018 and (+/-) March of 2019. Commissioner Knoche seconded the motion.

Vote: In Favor - All

2018-19 Operating Budget for the Ridgefield Police Department, IT, and the Canine Shelter approved.

Agenda Item #5e Officer Survey Discussion

Tabled to January 2018 meeting.

Agenda Item #5f Update of Chief's Goals

Chief Roche reported (**update highlighted**):

#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:

New policy drafted and issued – giving Officers more guidance along with cards detailing contact information for Chaplins and EAP.

- Chaplin Ride-a-Long program is being set up.
- Major Brown is part of a Statewide Employee Wellness program.
- Changed EAP providers - the representative has met with Officers to provide program benefits and access information. **COMPLETE**

#6 Police Department Uniforms:

New uniforms are ready and the changeover will occur January 1, 2018.

COMPLETE

#7 Professional Development:

Chief Roche attended the IACP Conference in October 2017 which was held in Philadelphia. **COMPLETE**

#8 Police Officer Survey:

Survey has been completed and was reviewed by the Admin Staff for responses and action. **COMPLETE**

#9 Fair and Impartial Policing:

Captain Kreitz worked with law group (Daigle) and scheduled training for the week of January 15, 2018. Chief Roche attended a briefing on this class and feels that it will be beneficial to both the Department and the Commissioners; Chief Roche also extended an invitation to First Selectman Marconi and Human Resources Director Laurie Fernandez. **COMPLETE**

#10 Physical Fitness:

Passed, August 8, 2017 @ 0930 hours. **COMPLETE**

Agenda Item #6a Capital Budget Addendum

Chief Roche reported that in response to Commissioner Savino's suggestion that we again include a Traffic Study proposal within our capital budget, he surveyed the Commissioners and when all approved this addition, he added this item to the approved/submitted (by the Commission) Capital Budget proposal and forwarded it to Finance Director Redmond. The addendum proposal will cover a study to provide an evaluation of potential traffic and pedestrian impacts in the areas of the Main Street business district, Main Street/Danbury Road at North Salem Road and the Copps Hill/Farmingville Road intersection at a cost of \$31,000.00.

Moment of Silence

Commissioner Kain requested a moment of silence for two of our retired officers who died since our last meeting – Tom Dyer and Ed DeLisle.

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 to Executive Session at 6:45pm.

Public Session opened at 7:10pm.

Motion by Commissioner Knoche to remove P.O. Hartling from Probationary Status, effective December 14, 2017; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

All in Favor

P.O. Hartling removed from Probationary Status.

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

All in Favor

Public Session adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Knoche
Secretary

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

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

Also Present: Chief John Roche
Major Stephen Brown

Executive Session called to order at 6:45pm.

Executive Session adjourned at 7:10pm

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Knoche
Secretary