

Board of Police Commission
Regular Meeting
Chairman Paul D. Abercrombie Police Commission
And Training Room 2nd Floor
September 23, 2014
7:30 p.m.

Chairman D'Errico called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Joseph F. D'Errico, Commissioners David Monz, Larry Lazaroff, Marc Calafiore and Walt Spader. Also present was Chief of Police Thomas McLoughlin and Deputy Chief of Police Jonathan Mulhern.

Absent: All present

Others Present: Various residents from the Blue Hills Road neighborhood

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the August 26, 2014 meeting, both Regular and Executive Sessions. Commissioner Spader made the motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Monz seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Discussion:

Chairman D'Errico stated that on page six of the minutes from the August 26, 2014 meeting, specifically regarding a comment that was made by Ms. Buemi, it is written that she said "the comment from the board, without much discussion, accepted that the fairgrounds were to small, to say we (meaning the board) does not want it to return to this location was pretty harsh."

Chairman D'Errico stated that neither he, nor any board member made that statement. Chief McLoughlin acknowledged that he in fact was the one who made that comment. Chairman D'Errico asked to have Ms. Buemis' statement removed. Chief McLoughlin said that this statement could not be removed, as Ms Buemi did in fact make that comment. Chief McLoughlin said he would check the tape recording of that meeting to confirm the statement.

Commissioner Spader stated to satisfy the Chairman, the minutes can be amended to read the statement was made from Chief McLoughlin and not from the Board of Police Commissioners.

Chairman D'Errico asked for a motion to accept the minutes as amended. The motion to accept the amended minutes was made by Commissioner Calafiore. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lazaroff. All were in favor.

Chairman D'Errico asked for a motion to approve the monthly reports for August 2014. The motion to approve the monthly reports was made by Commissioner Spader. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lazaroff. All were in favor.

Correspondence

No correspondence this month.

Chairman's Report:

Chairman D'Errico asked Chief McLoughlin if he had heard anything new on the concept of supernumerary police officers. Chief said he has not heard anything new on this, but that he would look into it further. The Chairman also asked the Chief if anyone had checked with the town attorney regarding the Supernumerary position. The Chief said as of now, no one has spoken with the Town Attorney, but he would be sure to get in touch with him.

Chairman D'Errico asked for an approval by the board for Chief McLoughlin to send a memo to the Finance Director and Selectman Freda asking to remove the line-painting item from the Police budget and put it back to the Public Works Department. The Chairman stated that we are police personnel and we should not bear the responsibility of the line painting. Chairman D'Errico asked for motion to have the Chief send a letter to Selectman Freda and the Finance director on behalf of the Board of Police Commissioners to have the line-painting item removed from the Police Budget. Commissioner Spader moved the motion. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Monz. All were in favor.

New Business:

The Chairman reported there was no new business.

Old Business:

Chairman D'Errico spoke about the request for a third stop sign at the intersection of Moulthrop Street and Clark Avenue. Commissioner Spader said that this should be considered old business because this request was tabled from last month's meeting. Chairman D'Errico reported that he had reviewed the incident history at this intersection and it did not show any accidents in the last three years. Chairman stated the history mainly consisted of traffic offenses and miscellaneous incidents but nothing related to accidents.

Chairman D'Errico stated that in review of the recommendation from Captain Genovese regarding this location, he asked the board to accept the request for a third stop sign. This would now make this a three-way intersection. Chairman D'Errico stated that two "on coming traffic does not stop" signs would have to be removed. Chairman D'Errico asked for a motion to approve placement of a third stop sign at this location. The motion was moved by Commissioner Calafiore. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Monz. All were in favor.

Chairman D'Errico reminded the viewing public that the Board of Police Commissioners are the sole traffic authority for the town of North Haven and asked that all traffic requests be submitted to the Chief of Police. The Chairman stated that too many requests are going to the First Selectman's office, which only slows down the process. He added that the Chief would make the proper assessment and forward the information to the Board of Police Commissioner for final approval.

Chiefs Report :

The Chief reminded all residents that they can, and should, register their telephones for the CTALERT system. This program is an Emergency Notification System (ENS system). This registration is voluntary and the system will relay any important local emergency information to the town's registered residents and businesses. The Chief reminded everyone that receives an emergency alert to listen to the complete message and follow the prompt at the end of message. If messages are not properly acknowledged, the system will cycle over to cell phones, send a text message or perhaps send an e-mail message, depending on how the resident chooses to register and manage their communication devices. If residents are interested, they can log on to www.ct.gov/ctalert/ to register their communication devices. This service is provided by use of the E- 911 database and all hard line telephones are automatically registered. Registration is only needed for text message alerts, e-mails or cell phone alerts.

Regarding the budget, the Chief reported that the department is holding its own. The Chief mentioned that a few incidents have transpired lately that may affect the budget for the remainder of this year. The Chief said he will provide some details at tonight's meeting.

At the last Board meeting, Commissioner D'Errico asked Chief McLoughlin to get in touch with someone from the gas company to inquire about the monthly heating costs of the police building. The Chief stated that he has made contact with the Southern Connecticut Gas Company and is waiting for a representative to contact him.

Chairman D'Errico questioned the \$5000.00 spent already this year on the heating and plant maintenance line. Deputy Chief Mulhern stated that expense is not just for gas; part of it is the cost of retrofitting parts and contract costs for when the boiler was converted from oil to gas heat. The Deputy Chief said that the department still has to pay for a loan for the conversion and the last installment payment was due this year.

Chairman D'Errico asked Chief why the motorcycle lease of \$3900.00 is still on the budget. Mr. D'Errico asked was it a mistake? Chief said the line was approved before the police commission voted to surrender the lease. It is best to leave it at that.

Traffic:

The Chief reported that the street line painting is nearly complete. It appears that a few crosswalks were missed in the Whitney Ridge area but they will be repainted soon. Chief said the patrols are making sure all the painting has been done before payment is sent to the vendor. The street painting on Homewood has been completed. The stenciling of the word "Slow" was also added to both the north and south sides at Hartford Turnpike.

The traffic light at Upper State and Hartford Turnpike has been in a flash mode for several weeks, but the Chief said he expects that it will be up and running by the end of this coming Saturday. This light required several new parts, one of which was a cabinet that the department had in the garage, which saved the department about \$2000.00

Chairman D'Errico asked the Chief how many traffic lights does the town own. The Chief replied fourteen, adding that the lights on Universal Drive and Sackett Point Road are relatively new, but the ones in the Skiff street , and the one on Upper State Street are aging.

Training

Training was light in August due to vacations.

Officer Marcus Artaz graduated from the Police Academy on September 17th. He is currently in his first week of field training with nine more weeks to go before he will be patrolling on his own. Chief attended the graduation ceremony, which was held at Central Connecticut State College.

Our recruit Jonathan Dahlstrom is doing well at the academy.

Patrol

Calls for service are still trending upward. Patrol activity has also increased.

Investigative Services has been very busy also. They have had recent success and were able to obtain three arrest warrants through the assistance of CODIS. Three burglaries and one robbery were solved based on the CODIS DNA hits.

There has also been a rash of car break-ins on Universal Drive. These are mostly smash and grabs. The Chief reminded everyone that valuables that are left in vehicles should be kept out of plain view.

The Chief also warned the public about recent telephone scams of individuals pretending to be from a government agency asking for money or payments for fines, liens, etc. The Chief advised the public that if anyone was in default for any reason, any legitimate government agency would notify you via certified mail or by a Marshall. Scams regarding a child or relative being out of state and needing money wired, is also another common scam. If anyone receives these calls, do not give out any personal information. Disconnect the call. If the calls persist, please contact the Police Department.

Miscellaneous:

Officer Val Querioga recently received an award from the Community Service Department for his dedication and commitment to helping those in need in the community. Officer Queiroga is very committed to helping people in need. Chief said this was a well-deserved award.

The North Haven Fair was uneventful as far as police activity.

There were no sick or accidents on the job, and no grievances this month.

Building updates:

The Communications Center project has started. New cabinetry, new carpet flooring and new monitors are being installed. This renovation will allow for a more functional and updated working area. This project is part of a capital expenditure and should be completed within three weeks.

The roof replacement project started about a week and a half ago. Over the past weekend, Sunday morning to be exact, we experienced significant damage inside the building as a result of rainwater that had leaked into the building. There was approximately one quarter of an inch of water on the floor in the locker room. The elevator is now inoperable as well as the key card system. The elevator is repairable, however, the key card system will need a total replacement. As a result of the damaged to the key card system, a new manual key system was installed on the back door of the building for security purposes. This has caused an additional expense that will be passed on to the contractor.

Chairman D'Errico asked how and why did all the water come into the building. The Chief said the roof was removed down to the metal decking. He stated he was not exactly sure, but it appears that the roof was not properly secured for the heavy rain, and somehow the water got in to the second floor and continued down to first floor. The building has suffered significant damage.

Chairman D'Errico asked if the department would be filing and insurance claim against the roofing contractors and the Chief said that a claim has already been filed.

Commissioner Calafiore asked if the evidence room was damaged by the water and the Chief responded that at this time he was not aware of any damage to that area.

Commissioner Spader inquired as to why the E-911 system was out of service last week. Chief McLoughlin said our in-house E-911 system malfunctioned as personnel were moving radio and telephone equipment to accommodate the renovations in the dispatch center. He said that while the technicians were removing dispatch consoles, E-911 went down for about 45 minutes. The Chief said that AT&T immediately rolled over incoming telephone calls to Hamden's communication center. The Chief reminded the board that E-911 does go down from time to time, but there are backup systems and contingencies that come in to play immediately.

Deputy Mulhern reiterated that E-911 does go down from time to time, but the system has fail-safes that engage so there is no interruption of service. Mulhern explained that during this event, an ENS Alert Message was prompted because all the internal telephone service was interrupted and there was a need to give out the telephone number of the Hamden Police Department for routines calls.

Commissioner Spader said he likes the fact that the department has been utilizing social media such as Facebook and Twitter and also encourages residents to sign up for the CTAlert system. The system is designed to give out quick emergency alerts to the public. Commissioner Spader commended the department on their quick response.

Public comments:

Butch Forte of 128 Blue Hills Road spoke of his concerns regarding speeding and sight line issues fronting his residence. Several other Blue Hills Road residents were present at tonight's meeting with the same concerns. Mr. Forte said that he and his neighbors have a difficult time backing out of their driveways due to limited visibility caused by a hill in the road and the speeding cars. He said that littering on the road was also a major concern.

John Demarsilis of 131 Blue Hills Road suggested that radar be run. He stated that there are several out of state plates heading toward Quinnipiac University. He stated that posting radar details on social media would not be effective, as word travels fast and suddenly the cars would drive the posted speed limit. He also stated that several residents have dogs and children and are very concerned of the speed of vehicles on the road. He said you could stand three or four feet off the road and feel the cars go by.

Pradheep Shankar of 141 Blue Hills Road said that he sees cars zipping by all the time. He said some of the violators are residents and some are Quinnipiac students. Several of these people are texting and talking on cell phones and he is fearful of backing out of his driveway. He stated that he must wait 35 – 45 seconds before backing out of his driveway and it is "very scary".

Jeff Falco of 140 Blue Hills Road said that Blue Hills Road is a country road, adding that when he bought his house 28 years ago, he put in a horseshoe driveway so he would be able to see on coming traffic while exiting his driveway. Mr. Falco said that there is a dip in the hill, and his house is at the top of the hill. There is a blind spot in the dip of the hill and when cars come off Kings Highway and travel up Blue Hills Road, there's nothing to slow them down. Mr. Falco stated that he sometimes gets in the road signaling people to slow down. He said it would be nice to see if the Police Department can do something about the speeding issues.

Mike Pikosky of 130 Blue Hills Road said that his house is on an interior lot and he said sometimes it is dicey to get in and out of his driveway. He felt the problem is that the hill narrows down, and westbound cars tend to drive more towards the centerline. He said 20 years ago he reached out to the Department of Public Works due to poor visibility and they shaved the bank back a little. He stated traffic flow is much heavier now than it was 20 years ago and this is an issue that definitely needs to be addressed.

In reply to a comment from the floor, Chairman D'Errico asked the residents to make a formal written request for a four way stop on Blue Hills Road.

Deputy Mulhern said stop signs do not control speeding, they control traffic flow. He cautioned residents that stop signs will also increase acceleration noise, compounded further with a hill to face, you could expect cars to prepare for the upcoming hill causing more issues.

Commissioner Monz said Deputy Mulhern made a good point and the department has the resources in house to evaluate a range of traffic issues.

Chief McLoughlin reminded those present to make him aware of any issues. He said this complaint was only brought to his attention last week. The Chief said the speed trailer is out of service, but the department has a new speed sign that will provide them with a traffic count, high speeds, low speeds as well as 85% of speeds.

Dave Greco of 8 Mountainbrook Road said that he is concerned about the safety of his family and other residents. This area has many people walking, running and biking. He said his son was nearly hit by a car while getting off the school bus recently. Mr. Greco said perhaps installing rumble strips or speed bumps would help.

Tom Shumaker of 4000 Ridge Road said that he is very concerned about the safety of his family and neighbors. He stated that there is a lot of disregard for traffic, and at least half of the time he sees vehicles going right through the three way stop at Ridge Road and Blue Hills, without hesitation. He said police presence would be appreciated.

Chief McLoughlin said he will get the Departments new speed device posted, evaluate the data and move forward to find solutions to the traffic concerns in the Blue Hills Road area.

With no further questions or comments, Chairman D'Errico asked for a motion to adjourn to move to Executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel. The motion was made By Commissioner Spader. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Calafiore. All were in favor.

The time was 8:39 p.m.

Board of Police Commission
Executive Session
September 23, 2014

Chairman D'Errico called the meeting to order at 8:48 p.m.

Present: Chairman Joseph F. D'Errico, Commissioners David Monz, Larry Lazaroff, Marc Calafiore, and Walt Spader. Also present were Chief Thomas McLoughlin and Deputy Chief Jon Mulhern

Absent: All were present.

Personnel matters were discussed.

Chairman D'Errico asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Commissioner Lazaroff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Spader. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

The time was 9:10 p.m.

Executive Session Minutes by:
Thomas J. McLoughlin
Chief of Police