

Board of Police Commission
Regular Meeting
Chairman Paul D. Abercrombie Police Commission
And Training Room 2nd Floor
July 26, 2016
7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Joseph F. D’Errico, Commissioners Walt Spader and David Monz, Chief Thomas McLoughlin and Deputy Chief Jonathan Mulhern

Absent: Commissioners Larry Lazaroff and Marc Calafiore

Chairman Joseph D’Errico called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the June 28, 2016 meeting, both regular and executive sessions. Before acting on a motion or vote to accept last month’s minutes, Commissioner Spader stated that he was the only Commissioner present this evening that was at the June 28th meeting. Commissioner Monz stated that the Board could defer the motion to accept the minutes until the next meeting on August 26, 2016.

Chairman D’Errico asked for a motion to approve the monthly reports for June 2016. Commissioner Monz explained that the board should also defer accepting the monthly reports until the next meeting.

Correspondence:

A Thank you card was sent to Detective Michael Harton. A resident expressed her thankfulness to him and the whole department.

A Thank you letter was sent to Officer Anthony Pacileo thanking him for his assistance and professionalism during a recent motor vehicle accident.

A Thank you letter was sent to Officer Lee Capozzo from a local business thanking him for his assistance during an investigation of harassment.

A Thank you letter was sent to Officer Alan Cantele thanking him and his K-9 partner “Koda” for taking the time to visit with her son recently at Police Headquarters.

Chairman’s Report:

Chairman D’Errico expressed a Thank you to everyone that sent him cards and letters while he was hospitalized during the last month and a half.

Chairman D’Errico informed those present that he has been working with State Representative Dave Yaccarino regarding funding for body cameras. Further he stated that nothing has materialized as of yet.

Chairman had nothing further to report and turned the meeting over to Chief McLoughlin.

Chiefs Report:

Chief McLoughlin made a special acknowledgement to Sergeant Cliff Hill who recently travelled to Texas to attend two funerals for fallen officers of the Dallas Police Department. Sergeant Hill went on his own personal time, the Police Union helped with financing the trip.

Chief McLoughlin also expressed a thank you to the many residents, local businesses, and strangers that have reached out and overwhelmed the Department with support, food items, cards and letters. Chief commented that the Department has always appreciated the support received from the residents, but stated that these acts had a special touch in light of the terrible tragedies recently in Dallas, and Baton Rouge.

Chief offered get well wishes to Commissioner Marc Calafiore who was recently injured and underwent knee surgery. Chief extended best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Chief was recently notified by a resident about phone solicitations for the Police Department on behalf of the PBA (Police Benevolent Association) and the Police Union. Chief explained that currently there are calls being made for donations for the PBA Labor Day Car Show coming up in September. Chief wanted to be certain that residents understand that these are paid solicitors and NOT Police Officers. Also, Chief wanted everyone to know that they are in no way obligated to make a donation and urged residents to call police headquarters if they have any concerns or complaints regarding the solicitations.

Budget:

Chief reported that the Police Department recently completed the 2015-2016 fiscal year with a surplus of roughly 3.5%. Chief McLoughlin explained that this is due to the department being fortunate to have no long term injuries, illnesses, or long term criminal investigations during the year.

Chief informed the Board that their Commissioner dues have been paid and they should receive their membership cards in the mail soon.

Bob Thomas Ford was awarded the bid for two new cruisers. Production time will be ten to twelve weeks and the cruisers should be ready at the beginning of October. Chairman D'Errico asked if one will be an unmarked car. Chief explained they will be two Ford Interceptor regular patrol cars

Traffic:

Chief McLoughlin recently received two requests for "deaf child area" signage. One request was from a Monroe Street resident and the second from an Oakwood Drive resident. Chief explained his concerns on safety and recommended that the Board authorize "deaf child" signage on both streets. Commissioner Monz asked if these signs would be placed on both sides of the streets and Chief said yes. Chief said Monroe St. is a cut through from Washington Avenue to Pool Road, and Oakwood has Blakeslee Avenue traffic and both are heavily travelled. Commissioner Monz made the motion to place "deaf child area" signs on both Monroe Street and Oakwood Drive. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Spader. All were in favor.

Chief McLoughlin spoke of another signage request from a resident who presented her concerns at the August 2015 BOPC meeting. The resident requested stop signs be placed on George Street and also asked for radar enforcement. The Board did not vote for stop signs at that time. Chief explained a traffic survey was completed and the results did not indicate any speed issue; however the average daily volume of vehicles travelling on George Street is roughly 600 cars a day. Chief ask the Board to consider the placement of signs indicating children at play or slow children. Chairman D'Errico asked for a motion to approve the placement of "slow children" signage on George Street. Commissioner Monz made the motion, Commissioner Spader seconded. All were in favor.

Chief reported that he received notification from the State Department of Transportation regarding the detour route during the Bassett Road bridge replacement which will occur at an unknown date sometime in 2017.

Chief explained that last month at the Board of Police Commission meeting, the Board voted to review the planning and zoning requests on a monthly basis. Chief had three for this month's meeting; only one of which needs Police comment.

The first request is a business/shopping center looking for a zone change so they can have their signage on the pylon of the shipping center. Chief said there is no need for Police comment.

The second is a site plan for a proposed change of use at Wendy's Restaurant which is leaving Washington Avenue. A wireless communication store will be going in its place. Chief said there is no need for Police comment.

Chief reported that the third request may require Police comment. A change of use request from 55-59 State Street. The shopping plaza is looking for a change of use to accommodate a restaurant and office space. Chief stated that consideration needs to be paid to parking spaces, as Planning and Zoning requires 51 or 52 parking spaces and there are currently only 50 spaces. This request also has no indication of where the loading zone will be and Chief is also concerned about the potential for vehicles parking on State Street fronting the plaza. Chief said he will draft a letter to Planning and Zoning expressing these concerns.

Patrol

The new Next Generation 911 software that was installed in June had a glitch and was out of service on July 15 for 45 minutes to one hour. There was a telecommunications error that affected multiple towns in Connecticut.

Chief reported that they were fortunate to switch our 911 calls to the North Branford Police and Fire. Chief received an email from the State stating they are looking to resolve the problem.

Chief reported that vehicles are still being entered at night and reminds everyone to lock their car doors, house, garages and sheds. He stated do not leave valuables in plain sight. These crimes could be prevented if residents were more cautious. Chief said if you see something suspicious call the Police Department. He explained that recently a senior citizen was burglarized by individuals representing themselves to be Water Company employees. A nearby landscaper noticed something wasn't right and after alerting the Police, took photos of the suspects and their vehicle. State Police later stopped the vehicle on the highway and one arrest was made.

Walter T. Berniere Scholarship:

Officer Hannon has asked for scholarship consideration for two college classes. Commissioner Spader made the motion to grant the request. Commissioner Monz seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Investigative Services Division:

Detectives have been very busy following up on the overdoses that happened in June. Detectives have made two arrests for the person/s responsible of the sale of the tainted drug.

Misc. Updates

Chief McLoughlin reported that Quinnipiac University will be renting one of the three apartment buildings at 520 Washington Avenue.

Chief McLoughlin advised the Board that New England Radio Consultants have been awarded the bid for the public safety radio consultant in the pursuit of procuring a new radio system. This will be a new Town wide public safety radio for police, fire, and public works.

Chairman D'Errico asked if we are using the company on Sherman Avenue anymore, and Chief explained that yes, they are our current vendor, however New England Radio Consultants will be the sole consultant; the eyes, ears, and voice for the radio project itself. This consultant will be the person that sits down and goes through every detail, every step of the way from start to finish until completion. Chairman D'Errico asked if this company is a paid consultant and if so how much. Chief said that the contract is for \$48,000. Chief commented that on a four million dollar project, it is money well spent. Deputy Chief Mulhern clarified to the Chairman that it is a "not to exceed \$48,000" project. Further Deputy explained that Motorola gave the department an idea of what will be needed for the radio project, however in the original proposal there were several unanswered questions and expenditures that could have taken the project to a much higher dollar amount than proposed.

Deputy said with so many unknowns, and the way it is structured and the technical nature of radio systems he and Chief felt it was in the best interest of the department and the Town, to obtain a consultant. Deputy said it has to be clear and precise on what is needed in order to ask for the proper amount of money; explaining further that "this is a public safety radio system and we owe it to the public, Town, and the Board to bring forward a true and accurate number." Having this consultant will save that contract amount in this project alone.

Chairman D'Errico asked if the Department has signed with the consultant company. Deputy said yes, the project went out to bid. Chairman asked how they can possibly do that as it has to go to a town meeting first and what happens if the project is rejected. Deputy Mulhern explained that the consultant is on a not to exceed contract, and if the town is not going to support the radio project, then the consultant will no longer be needed.

Chief McLoughlin explained that he and Deputy Mulhern will be present at the next Board of Selectman and Board of Finance meeting to explain exactly what this project entails.

Chairman D'Errico asked why the Police Department has to take the brunt of this project if it is supplying the other departments. Chief answered by saying that someone has to take the leadership role in this project; the police department is the custodian of the radio system as it will be housed at the police department.

Chairman D'Errico commented that in the future the Board needs to know in advance when these decisions are made.

Chief stated that this project was discussed in the February budget workshop meeting. Chief explained that with that said; the department will also be hiring a consultant for the upcoming building renovations.

Chairman D'Errico asked if there will be a repeater in the new middle school so officers can have radio communication. Deputy Mulhern explained that currently the middle school and police department time lines don't coincide and sometimes there are problems with radio penetration through the building materials. Chairman stated that the project manager needs to be told to add a repeater to the middle school. Deputy stated that we don't know their frequency coverage maps, design, as well as other specifics for us to tell them to install a repeater right away that may not work with our system.

Deputy explained that they strive to get the school systems connected so that at the flick of a switch they can transmit to us and us to them. This issue was part of the radio project proposal that had questions as explained earlier in the meeting.

Chief explained that Officers are still testing and evaluating the body cameras and have narrowed it down to the Taser product. It is a more reliable product, the officers like them, Taser is a good company with a very good quality picture. Further, Chief explained that this will cost 40 thousand dollars a year for the cloud storage, licensing, and cameras. Chief stated that we don't have the server or IT people to handle this amount of data.

Deputy Mulhern stated that the State of Connecticut has 15 million dollars set aside for the body cameras. And the Department we will proceed soon to get in line for reimbursement.

Chief McLoughlin stated he had nothing to report for Executive Session.

Chairman D'Errico explained that he is part of the Police Retirement Board and at a recent meeting with investors; he reported that the police retirement fund is doing well.

Public Comment

Mr. Maher of Warner Road spoke to the Board regarding a recent phone call he received from a solicitor for the PBA. He wanted to let the public know that after he contacted the solicitor, he learned that 34% of the donation goes to the solicitor, 26% to printing an add book and the rest to the PBA. He felt that the public should be aware of this.

With nothing further, Chairman D'Errico asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Spader and seconded by Commissioner Monz. All were in favor. The time was 7:53p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Monz, Vice Chairman

Minutes by P. Claflin