

POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, August 23, 2010
6:30 P.M. – Meeting Room 1

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner's Glen Morron, John Jones, Rob Parlee, Don Phillips

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectman Gregg Schuster; Board of Selectman Liaison Stan Soby; Gregg Cordova and Rosemary Coyle members of the Board of Selectment; John Ringo, Board of Finance Liaison; Officer Tim Edwards; Ryan Blessing; & 3 Police Commission Candidates

1. **Call to Order** – Commissioner Morron called the August 23, 2010 meeting to order at 6:30pm
2. **Additions to Agenda** – None
3. **Citizen's Comments** – None
4. **Officers Comments** – None
5. **Review Correspondence** – None
6. **Approve minutes of June 28, 2010 Meeting**– Commissioner Jones **MOTIONED** to accept as presented. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Parlee. All members present voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**
7. **Appropriation and Transfer** - None
8. **Awards presentation: Officer First Class Tim Edwards** -Commissioner Morron explained that Officer First Class Tim Edwards was receiving the "Meritorious Service Award" for an incident in 2006 involving the pursuit and apprehension of 3 armed criminals involved in drug dealings. He also said that this type of delay would not occur in the future because the revamped "Recognition and Awards" policy calls for "Police Officer Recognition" Day yearly. Commissioner Morron then presented the award to Officer First Class Tim Edwards and thanked him for his courageous act.
9. **Swearing in Ceremony for new officers: Jonathan Goss and Craig Scheel** -Officers Jonathan Goss and Craig Scheel were sworn in by First Selectman Gregg Schuster. Commissioner Morron explained the process used to hire these two officers out of 40 original candidates and Commission welcomed them to the Town of Colchester Police Department.
10. **Commissioner Applicant Interviews** – Three applicants were present and interviewed with the Board of Commission. At the conclusion of the interviews the Commission reviewed the three candidates' applications of those interviewed this evening and the three candidates interviewed at the June 28, 2010 meeting. After discussion, the Commission decided to send the following three names to the Board of Selection for the Commission interview and appointment process: Edward Fusco, Patrick Mickens and John Carroll. Commissioner Jones **MOTIONED** to send the three (3) names to the Board of Selectmen for further review. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Phillips. **MOTION CARRIED.**
11. **Old Business**
 - a. **Update Regarding Status of Cruisers and Equipment** – Commissioner Morron told the Commission that he spoke with the Sergeant before he left on vacation and there are no problems or concerns. He said the new cruiser is on hold for now and this item would be discussed later in the meeting.
 - b. **Updated on Promotional Testing for Anticipated Sergeant's Position** – Commissioner Morron stated that Officer Green, Officer Edwards and Officer Suchecki intend to take the Sergeant's test in September.
 - c. **Update on Hiring Process to Fill Officer Vacancies** – Commissioner Morron explained the process that was used to hire the two (2) officers that were sworn in this evening, who were the top two (2) candidates. He

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thanked Officer Edwards for his help during this process. He continued on to say that the July ad for a Certified officer had five (5) candidates respond, but one (1) was found not to be certified. The physical agility test was conducted on August 13 and two (2) of the three (3) candidates who participated passed and went on to pass the written test. The next step will be the interview process which will take place when the Sergeant returns from vacation.

12. New Business

- a. **Discussion of Strategic Plan** – Commissioner Morron said that he and Commissioner Phillips have worked on the Strategic Plan the Commission was tasked to create and hope to have it by the end of September. This is a 3-year projection of about the goals of the Commission for the Department, how these goals will be reached and how to address concerns such as the vacancies in the Department and the continuation of the SRO Program.
- b. **Discussion on Staffing and SRO** – Commissioner Morron distributed a copy of a memo dated August 23, 2010 to the Boards of Police Commissioners, Selectmen, Finance and Education which outlined in a time line fashion the steps taken to address the staffing needs of the Police Department. The Commission discussed the challenges in bring the Department up to the budgeted ten (10) officers, maintaining the successful SRO program in the coming school year and how to accomplish these goals. Follow up to the items listed in this memo will include a meeting with Master Sergeant Paul Gately of Troop K and Commissioner Morron regarding the temporary services of a third trooper; budget discussion with Maggie Cosgrove, CFO, and meetings with the Board of Education regarding the SRO program during the budget process for the next fiscal year.

13. Chairman/Commission Member Comments –None

14. **Adjourn** – Commissioner Jones **MOTIONED** to adjourn at 8:00p.m. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Phillips. All members present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Attachments

1. Monthly Activity Report dated 07/25/10 (Attachment #1)
2. Memo to Boards of Police Commissioners, Selectmen, Finance and Education (Attachment #2)

Note: This meeting was recorded by a digital audio recording system and is available through the Colchester First Selectman's office in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Therian, Acting Clerk

**INTERDEPARTMENTAL
MESSAGE**

STO-201 REV. 11/96
(Stock No. 6938-01)
wds

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Obtain "STATE EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION" forms from, and send your ideas to: Employee's Suggestion Awards Program. 165 Capital Avenue Hartford, CT 06106.

To	NAME, TITLE Members of the Police Commission	DATE: 7/25/10
	AGENCY, ADDRESS Colchester	
From	NAME, TITLE Thompson, J.T. Sgt.	
	AGENCY, ADDRESS Troop K Residents	PHONE: 537-7500

SUBJECT: Monthly Report

Sirs,

1. Enforcement Statistics: See attached.
2. Matters of Serious Discipline:
N/A
3. Hiring
Ofc Edwards is working with the applicants in accordance with his "Light Duty" status.

The top three uncertified candidates have been to the Polygraph. This was administered by the CSP Polygraph unit in Meriden on Friday.

Applications have been received from certified officers. These applications are on file. See Ms. Santos for the applications.

4. Policy
The "Rules and Regulations" must be brought current to parallel the A&O Manual.
5. Overtime: As you may know, Officer Edwards is on light duty status. With seven officers and one Trooper assigned, this office is already stretched thin.

On several days over the past month, specifically on July 3rd and July 4th (Saturday and Sunday), all officers took the day off and no officer was willing to work overtime. As a result, Resident Trooper Billian was called in to work. This is the result of the officer's contract and a lack of the ability to obtain "minimum staffing" with officers or order any officer in to work unless an emergency situation exists. With only seven officers, I am sure you can see how this is problematic.

Ten shifts of patrol overtime were filled over the past month. On four occasions, an officer had to work the patrol by him/herself, on two occasions the Trooper worked overtime as the shift was completely unfilled. This makes a total on 6 officer shifts that went unfilled in the month of July. There were a total of 17 shifts of "Special Duty"

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overtime filled. A grand total of 33 shifts of overtime (patrol and special duty) was available to officers in the month of July.

12 patrol shifts were filled on overtime. 8 of which OFC Green worked.

6. Vehicles and Equipment: The annual office inventory is ongoing.

PD1 2008 Black and White- 24883- MDT for CAD- Camera is operational-VG

PD2 2003 Ford Exp-31270-MDT for CAD-Camera is operational-Good Condition

PD3 2009 Black and White-1569-MDT (work order submitted)-Working on the camera. New Condition.

PD4 2009 Black and White-1613-MDT (Work order submitted)-camera not used. New Condition.

PD6 2004 White-Vehicle out for repair-MDT operational-camera not op.-Fair Cond.

PD7 2005 White-36935-MDT-Camera operational-Good Cond.

PD8 2006 White-Out for repair-A/C not operational

PD9 2008 Black and White-20726-MDT/Camera Operational-Excellent condition.



Sgt. J. Thompson

Resident Trooper Supervisor, Colchester



Monthly Activity and Duty Report Form

Sergeant J. Thompson
Colchester Police Department, Colchester

Month: June 2010

Date: 6/1/10 – 6/30/10

Personnel	MV Arrests		MV Accidents	Criminal Invest.	DWI Arrests	Alarms	Days Worked	Calls For Serv.	Total Activity
	W	A							
SUCHECKI KC84	0	0	0	10	0	4	18	41	55
EDWARDS KC89	0	0	0	1	0	3	8	12	16
LABONTE KC87	2	0	1	5	1	6	18	34	49
GREEN KC88	5	6	1	11	0	5	19	85	113
BROSNAN KC80	1	1	3	8	0	6	11 ½	40	59
WATROUS KC81	4	1	1	9	0	13	14	51	79
REGNERE KC90	6	4	2	8	0	4	16	74	98
TPR BILLIAN 676	0	1	0	7	0	9	15	36	53
TOTALS:	18	13	8	59	1	50	119 1/2	373	522



Monthly Activity and Duty Report Form

Sergeant J. Thompson
Colchester Police Department, Colchester

Month: July 2010

Date: 7/1/10 – 7/25/10

Personnel	MV Arrests		MV Accidents	Criminal Invest.	DWI Arrests	Alarms	Days Worked	Calls For Serv.	Total Activity
	W	A							
SUCHECKI KC84	0	1	2	4	0	7	13	37	51
EDWARDS KC89	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	3	3
LABONTE KC87	3	0	1	5	0	2	12	26	37
GREEN KC88	7	12	4	8	0	2	12	74	107
BROSNAN KC80	5	5	3	4	1	3	14	48	69
WATROUS KC81	7	2	1	7	0	8	15	62	87
REGNERE KC90	12	5	1	6	1	9	14	77	111
TPR BILLIAN 676	7	1	0	3	0	3	14	37	51
TOTALS:	41	26	12	37	2	34	105	364	516

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Police Commissioners, Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Board of Education

Cc: Sgt. John Thompson, Resident Trooper Supervisor, and OFC Cyril Green

From: Glenn Morron, Police Commission Chair and Don Phillips, Police Commissioner

Date: August 23, 2010

Re: Police staffing – background, issues and steps taken

Following is background information set forth in a timeline fashion to assist the above town boards and commissions with respect to understanding the background, issues and steps taken by the Colchester Police Commission with respect to recent staffing matters and challenges presented to the commission and the town. Please feel free to address any questions or concerns you might have to the chair or any member of the Police Commission.

- Police Commission learns in early March 2010 that Officer Pasacatando received a letter of conditional hire from the Middletown Police Department and would be leaving the force shortly thereafter.
- Police Commission learns in early March 2010 that Officer Kelo is in the last stages of the hiring process with the Connecticut State Police and would also be offered a position in the very near future.
- Police Commission is unable to replace the officers until they leave, however, and it begins the hiring process immediately.
- Police Commission contacts the Law Enforcement Council in April to seek candidates from its availability pool/database.
- During the 2010-2011 budget process, the Police Commission advised the Boards of Finance, Selectman and Education of the possibility of two officers leaving the department in the near future. The commission further advised that if the officers did in fact leave, it would cause a manpower issue and could jeopardize the School Resource Officer position. Due to town-wide budgetary considerations, however, the commission withdrew its initial request for an 11th police officer position in the 2010-2011 budget.
- Academy training takes six months to complete, followed by a 14 week field training officer program; candidates entering the academy in August 2010 should be available to begin working shifts in mid-May, 2011.

- Police Commission makes inquiry to Police Academy (Police Officers Standard and Training) to determine available openings for police academy trainees, seeks two openings for August 2010 class.
- Police Commission learns it is able to obtain one opening in August class and one opening in October 2010 class.
- May 7, 2010, Officer Kelo leaves police department to begin state trooper training.
- May 8, 2010, the required agility test for police officer candidates is conducted; several members of the Police Commission attend. 27 of 40 candidates participating in test pass.
- May 11, 2010, the 2010-2011 town budget passes; ten police officers and one resident state trooper (sergeant) are included in the Police Commission budget; second resident state trooper position eliminated/not funded.
- Officer Owens submits resignation from the Colchester Police force on June 2; he is the third officer to leave the force in less than three months time.
- Upon learning of Officer Owens resignation, discussion concerning future of SRO in upcoming fiscal year is renewed by commission members. The Resident Trooper Sergeant advises commission and First Selectman that he can temporarily police the town and continue the SRO with eight police officers.
- By letter dated June 4, Chair of Colchester Board of Education asks Police Commission for opportunity to discuss SRO program before any decision is made relative to discontinuing the program due to staffing level issues. The Chair of the commission acknowledges the request.
- Between June 15 and 22, a panel of Colchester police officers and the Resident State Trooper conduct a formal interview of all police officer candidates who passed the agility test.
- The panel selected eleven police officer candidates for interviews with the Police Commission.
- Police Commission conducts six interviews with police officer candidates on June 23.
- On or about June 24, First Selectman contacts State Police and requests the temporary services of a second resident trooper until the town's staffing returns to a level where it can sustain its current operations, a period estimated at three months or more.
- Police Commission conducts five more interviews with police candidates on June 25. The commission recommends its top five choices in rank order; offers are extended to the top three candidates.

- On June 28, Police Commission announces first-ever Sergeant's exam for police officers.
- On or about June 29, the Police Commission learned that a police officer went out on a work related injury.
- On June 30, a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Finance, Police Commission and the Police Retirement Board convenes to discuss police staffing and retention issues.
 - Former Colchester Police Officer Owens attends and comments with respect to the departure of three officers since March 2010 that "The main thing any of us were looking for was job security. There are a lot of reasons to stay in a town like this. But they are outweighed by wanting to stay working." [Source: Colchester Bulletin, July 8, 2010.]
- In early July, the Commission advertises specifically for certified police officers.
- In July, the top three police officer candidates underwent a polygraph examination, a psychological examination, and background check.
- By late July, five certified officers had applied to the Police Commission; required agility test was subsequently scheduled for the applicants on August 13.
- On or about August 6, the Police Commission hired its top police officer candidate choice for the Police Academy class which begins August 27. At that time, the commission learned that another opening in the Academy's August class became available.
- On August 9, the First Selectman, Chair of Police Commission, member of the police commission, and former first selectman met to discuss short term police staffing needs. At this meeting:
 - The commissioners updated the First Selectman on current plans to hire police officers, including the status of hiring a certified police officer.
 - The First Selectman presented several plans which were discussed in terms of staffing levels, the budget, and the SRO program.
 - One plan was ultimately agreed upon which would provide full shift coverage and allow the town to continue the SRO program with a potential deficit in the 2010-2011 Police Commission budget estimated by the First Selectman at \$54,000.
 - The First Selectman stated that such a deficit, while undesired, could be handled under the exigent circumstances and that continuing the SRO program was a priority for the town; this was also agreed to by the others at the meeting.

- The plan included hiring a third resident state trooper on a temporary basis and the second and third resident troopers would be phased out as soon as staffing levels within the police department would allow it.
- On August 10, the Chair and one member of the Police Commission attended the Board of Education meeting to hear and discuss concerns about the future of the SRO program. The First Selectman was also in attendance. The Board of Education was informed that a short term staffing plan had been agreed upon at the August 9 meeting mentioned above which would allow the SRO program to commence with the upcoming school year and continue unabated provided no further losses in police staffing occurred during the 2010-2011 fiscal year.
- On August 11, the Commission hired the second police officer candidate, who will enter the Police Academy on August 27.
- On August 12, the First Selectman notified the Police Commission Chair and one of its members that he had requested the temporary services of a third resident state trooper.
 - He stated that he believed that the only way to staff all shifts, maintain the SRO, and come in reasonably near budget is to put two candidates in the academy and hire another resident trooper for the entire fiscal year.
 - He further stated that he was leaving the staffing decisions entirely up to Police Commission, and that since the commission has appointed its chair as the liaison to the state police, he would leave it to the chair to make any arrangements for another trooper once he received a response to the request for a temporary third resident state trooper and that he would step out of the process and was holding the entire commission fully accountable for the budget.
- On August 13, the certified police officer candidates participated in the required agility test; two candidates passed the agility test.
- On August 19, the Police Commission Chair and one of its members met to review the commission's budget and, in particular, the short term staffing plan that had been agreed to by and between the commission and the first selectman.
- The Chair and the commission member believe they have refined the short term staffing plan in a manner that would provide full shift coverage and the continuation of the SRO program within the commission's current budget.
- Also on August 19, the Police Commission was advised that the two certified police applicants passed the required written examination conducted by LEC. Interviews with the two certified police applicants are being arranged presently.

- On August 19, the Police Commission Chair left a message for the Commander of Troop K.
- On August 20, the Chair spoke with Master Sergeant Paul Gately regarding the First Selectman's request for the temporary services of a third trooper. The Master Sergeant agreed to follow up with the Chair the week of August 23.