

DRAFT

Unofficial

Unapproved

PUBLIC POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of Friday May 3, 2013

The Hooksett Police Commission held a public meeting on Friday May 3, 2013, at the Safety Center. Present were Chairperson Joanne McHugh, Commissioner Kenneth Scherer and Commissioner Clark Karolian was in attendance by phone and Attorney Lefebvre.

1. Call to Order:

Chairperson McHugh called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

2. Proof of Posting:

Chairperson McHugh provided a copy of the proof of posting.

3. Pledge of Allegiance:

The pledge of allegiance was held.

Public Session

Commissioner McHugh stated the reason for this meeting was to meet with legal counsel in preparation of some correspondence. She stated there are issues, and this is the Commissions last opportunity to set the record straight and present their case to the voters and correct some of the inaccuracies that are out there.

A discussion was held on the letters the Commissioners had prepared with Attorney Lefebvre and how the letters could be combined and formatted so it could be submitted to the Union Leader and the Hooksett Banner.

Attorney Lefebvre stated there are three issues to address one being the Commission was accused of taking 18 months to hire a Chief when it actually took the Commission 3 months, the second issue would be the transparency, and third micromanaging.

Commissioner McHugh stated they had been criticized for some of their decisions. The Commission had conducted their meetings in accordance to the Right to Know Laws.

The Commission stated they had reduced spending in key areas including legal expenditures; overtime wages, vehicle maintenance and vehicle fleet cost.

Commissioner Karolian stated the Town Council feels they want to abolish the Commission as they feel it is unnecessary. They want to move everything over to the Town Manager and they feel that the Commission did things in secrecy, and took too long to hire a Chief of Police. He stated that is the reasons why they want to abolish the Commission.

The Commission discussed the Department almost being at full staff, and if it should be addressed.

Commissioner Karolian asked if the meeting was being recorded and if it was going to be transcribed. Commissioner McHugh stated that it was being recorded, and they were not in non-public session.

Commissioner Scherer reviewed the letter to the Commission and they edited the letter with Attorney Lefebvre's assistance. They addressed the 3 key issues taking too long to hire a Chief, lack of transparency, and micromanaging.

Commissioner Scherer read the prepared letter:

To the citizens of Hooksett the Police Commission feels it is important to set the record straight we would like to correct misleading and inaccurate information in order to assist the voters in making an informed decision regarding the future of the Commission. A permanent Chief of Police was hired in December of 2012 following a 3 month search. It did not take 18 months as has been reported. The Commission has conducted all meetings in accordance with the New Hampshire Right to Know Law. Critics of the Commission failed to recognize the obligations to maintain the confidentiality of non-public information. The Commission also rejects the notion we have micromanaged the department. To the contrary we have provided the necessary oversight as is our statutory responsibility. The Police Commission has reduced spending in several key areas including legal expenditures by 85%, overtime wages by 55%, and the vehicle fleet has been reduced by two thirds resulting in a significant saving to the taxpayer, while increasing the overall level of service to the community. The Commission along with the Police Department has made great strides, organizational changes have been implemented, morale, and productivity is up and the Town of Hooksett has a Police Department we can be proud of. We ask for your support and a vote of no on Article 24.

Attorney Lefebvre left the meeting.

Commissioner Scherer made a motion to approve the submission of the letter to the editor of the Hooksett Banner, and the Union Leader as read to be sent immediately, seconded by Commissioner Karolian motion carried by roll call vote. Chairperson McHugh Aye, Commissioner Karolian Aye, Commissioner Scherer Aye.

Non-Public Session

The Commission entered a non-public session by a motion made by Commissioner McHugh, seconded by Commissioner Karolian, the motion carried in accordance with the provisions of NH RSA 91-A:3,II (a) & (c), roll call vote. Chairperson McHugh Aye, Commissioner Karolian Aye, Commissioner Scherer Aye.

1. NH RSA 91-A:3, II, (a) & (c).

The Commission came out of non-public session.

Commissioner Karolian made a motion to seal the non-public session. Seconded by Commissioner Scherer, motion carried by roll call vote. Chairperson McHugh, Aye, Commissioner Karolian, Aye, Commissioner Scherer, Aye.

Drafted by: Executive Assistant Francine Swafford