



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2011
IN THE MEETING ROOM OF TOWN HALL SOUTH
3 MAIN STREET, NEWTOWN

Chairman Duane Giannini called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Present: Brian Budd, Bruce Walczak, and Chairman Giannini

Absent: Keith Jacobs and James Viadero

Also Present: Police Chief Michael Kehoe, Captain Jose Rios, Officer Steve Ketchum, and one member of the public.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: none

CONSIDERATION AND ACTION OF THE MINUTES FOR: REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 4, 2011 AND SPECIAL MEETINGS FEBRUARY 2, 2011 AND FEBRUARY 7, 2011: Commissioner Walczak made the motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners held Tuesday, January 4, 2011 as corrected.

Commissioner Budd seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Prior to the approval of the minutes Chairman Giannini commented on the progress of the Underhill Road Traffic Study and suggested that someone get in touch with the author. Chief Kehoe indicated it was in the hands of the traffic unit but that the original request came through the Department of Public Works (DPW). He added that he will make sure that someone from DPW is in touch with them.

Regarding the discussion about Key Rock Road, Commissioner Walczak asked that it be clarified the speed of traffic was specifically cut in half between the "speed bumps" on Key Rock Road and not over the entire length of the road.

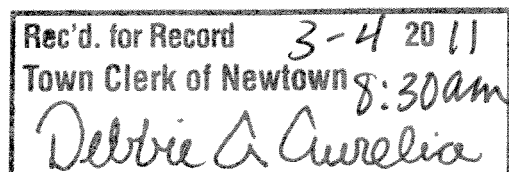
UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Personnel Report and acceptance of same

Commissioner Walczak moved to accept the letter of resignation of Officer Dana Schubert effective February 8, 2011. Chairman Giannini seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Chairman Giannini asked that a copy of Officer Schubert's letter of resignation dated February 8, 2011 be attached to the minutes.

Chairman Giannini moved to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners held Wednesday, February 2, 2011. Commissioner Walczak seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.



Commissioner Budd moved to accept the minutes of the Special Meetings of the Board of Police Commissioners held on Wednesday, February 2, 2011 and Monday, February 7, 2011.
Commissioner Walczak seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

CHIEFS REPORT: Personnel – Chief Kehoe reported that the Police Department (PD) was in the process of hiring. He explained that they had already held the written, oral and physical agility tests. The Chief indicated that the polygraphs were being done “this week.” He added that they had three confirmed seats at the Police Academy in Meriden. In regards to personnel, Commissioner Walczak suggested they have exit surveys from those who recently left. Chief Kehoe indicated that he would speak with Officer Richter but noted that Lt. Mooney had declined to fill one out. Commissioner Walczak indicated that he thought the Board should encourage *everyone* to fill out an exit survey. The Chief noted that the procedure in the exit interview process is to tell everyone they can meet with anybody they want. Chairman Giannini indicated that he would be asking Commissioners Viadero and Jacobs at the next meeting if they have met with the Union to speak about the exit interview process. **Hiring** – Chief Kehoe indicated that the Board needed to establish a special meeting date to interview candidates. The three Commissioners present agreed to hold a Special Meeting on Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at 6:30 pm. **Re-deployment of Canine Baro** – Chief Kehoe reported that Officer Figol completed training and certification as K-9 Officer. He added that she had already worked with Narcotics and helped make an arrest. **Budget** – Chief Kehoe told Commissioners that there have been a lot of conversations about the police budget concerning primarily staffing. Questions such as why 47 officers and what meets public safety goals. The Chief clarified that a reduction in the force makes the PD’s job more difficult. He noted that when the ranks are reduced the cost of overtime (OT) escalates. Chief Kehoe indicated that the OT increased 250% in January and February 2011 when typically those months have the least overtime. He noted that the Board of Selectman will not vote until next week to push the budget forward to the Legislative Council. The Chief reported that he has a meeting with the First Selectman on Friday and has a lot of issues to discuss – one of them being the issue of overtime. He indicated that the PD currently faces reductions in the following areas: \$20,000 in overtime, a small amount for crossing guards and some from education. Chief Kehoe explained to commissioners that an increase in overtime has an effect on morale. He noted that overtime is great in the beginning because they have all the hours, but as time wears on it has a negative effect. He noted that they need to fill all the required duties as well as side jobs and added that the overtime is as much a physical and mental issue as it is fiscal money issue. Chief Kehoe remarked that although you will save some money, you are going to kill the people who are saving you the money. **Fleet** – Chief Kehoe reported that the four new cars the PD ordered arrived last week. He noted that the department has identified two cars that should be replaced in the next month or two and noted that for the time being the department will hold onto the other two. **Accidents** - Chief Kehoe told Commissioners that the first accident involved a vehicle the PD had borrowed from the town to get around in the snow. The accident occurred when the K-9 vehicle was rear ended while it was at a scene with its overhead lights on. The Chief noted that the K-9 vehicle was getting fixed and would be back on the road again. **Training** – Chief Kehoe reported that recertification was large part of the training and that the certification of all the people going will expire this year. **CTI** – The Chief noted that there is CTI training for anyone who wants to go. **Letters of Gratitude** – Chief Kehoe told Commissioners that there were several letters of gratitude in their packets. **Letters of Correspondence** – the Chief noted he had a letter of correspondence regarding the idea of a mid-block crosswalk on Main Street. He noted that if there was a mid-block crosswalk there would be just loss of parking. **Goals and Updates** – the Chief reported that everything was status quo regarding the annual statistical data and annual reports. He noted the reports were eye opening. Chief Kehoe explained that some of the increases in actual areas of offenses – larcenies,

burglaries and aggravated assaults come in cycles and are not uncommon with down economy. Captain Rios added that there were over 22,000 calls for service and that there will be a direct impact if staffing levels are decreased as it will lead to increased response time. Chief Kehoe reported that the number of false alarms was down and indicated that he thinks it is because of the ordinance and penalties. **Citizen's Police Academy** – The Chief told Commissioners that the next Citizen's Police Academy starts Friday, March 4, 2011 at 6pm at the PD. He added that the first night will be videotaped by Charter. **Regional Communications Study** – Chief Kehoe reported that he did receive a copy of the study for the Board's review. He noted that it doesn't address the costs of going to a Regional Communications Center. Chairman Giannini added that it very specifically talks about 911 calls but doesn't talk about all the other calls that are received. He asked the Chief if any other communications centers have police in them. Chief Kehoe responded that the only town that does is Groton and added that most of the town's are just combining the EMS and Fire.

CAPTAIN'S REPORT: Incident Analysis – Captain Rios reported that for the month of February the calls for service were up over the past several years. **Monthly Motor Vehicle Report** – the Captain reported that the monthly motor vehicle report was up 6% from February 2010 to February 2011. He noted there were a total of 960 stops and indicated there were 3 DUI arrests for the year. **Traffic Division** – Captain Rios explained that the traffic division was very busy because of the increased snow and related issues helping out patrol. **Detective Division** – the Captain reported that the division was busy doing polygraph tests and back ground checks of the new police officer candidates, as well as the continuing the Heath Investigation, and burglary investigations. He added that the School Resource Officers were involved in various school investigations.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (continued):

Personnel Report and acceptance of same – handled at beginning of meeting

Discussion and consideration on subcommittee reports of the Strategic Goals and Objectives of the Police Commission – Crosswalk Safety (Commissioner Walczak and Chairman Giannini) – Commissioner Walczak reported that he had met with the Chairman and said their next step was to get together with the traffic unit. He indicated that they looked at the approach of each crosswalk as well as the safety of them. Commissioner Walczak used the idea of one community's effort to make its crosswalks safer by using flags and a bucket at each end of the crosswalk. Reportedly, a pedestrian wishing to cross would remove flag from bucket and carry it across the street with them – often waving it – and when they reached the other side they would place it in the other bucket for the next pedestrian. Commissioner Walczak indicated that another suggestion was re-painting the crosswalks. Captain Rios regaled commissioners by showing them a picture of a crosswalk in a Rhodes Island community that uses the flags. Chairman Giannini suggested that the Department put something in the Bee monthly and call it the Safety Corner. He suggested that the articles could discuss such things as traffic safety in inclement weather and pedestrian safety. Commissioner Walczak suggested that they could do that or possibly put an article about certain police reports. He used the example that if there were four reports with drivers issued tickets for “following too close” than maybe an article could company them indicting what “following too close” means and how to avoid doing so. Commissioner Walczak also suggested other educational tools such as bumper stickers and people talking in the schools.

Chairman Giannini noted that to talk about calming the traffic on Queen Street and Glover without addressing the entire area would be foolish. He added that diverting traffic off of those two roads would push about 1000 additional cars a day onto Main Street. The Chairman

suggested that they don't just study traffic calming methods but that they go over the Bolmer Study. He indicated that he will meet with the First Selectman on Friday to go over where they are with the Town's commitment to look at this in the proper way looking at all the options such as speed tables, bump-outs, etc. Chairman Giannini noted an interesting natural phenomenon occurred up at the flag pole when the snow banks created natural calming devices slowing traffic down and preventing cars traveling south on Main Street from passing on the right. He added that they will come up with a report for the April meeting.

Animal Control (Commissioners Budd and Viadero) – Commissioner Budd indicated that they needed the document on that.

Labor (Commissioners Jacobs and Viadero) - tabled

Discussion and consideration on request for changing Underhill Road to one way traffic-

Chief Kehoe told Commissioners that the matter needs to be tabled noting that there were lots of ownership issues.

According to Chief Kehoe, during Phase I of the Traffic Speed Limit Study was to look at speed limit signs that were improperly posted – some were not posted and others were incorrectly posted. The Chief told Commissioners that he believed Boggs Hill and Castle Hill should be changed as they were probably posted 30 years ago. The Chief noted that Castle Hill Road study has been completed.

Consideration and review of Speed Limit on Castle Hill Road - Commissioner Walczak was pleased to make the motion that the Board recommends Castle Hill Road be posted at 25 mph the entire length in both directions and send the recommendation up to the STC for their approval. Commissioner Budd seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Consideration and review of Speed Limit on Boggs Hill Road - According to Chairman Giannini, the review of the speed limit on Boggs Hill Road is still ongoing.

NEW BUSINESS:

Consideration and review of Rte. 34 and Wasserman Way intersection signage – Chief Kehoe told Police Commissioners that the intent was to post “Do Not Block Intersection” sign at the intersection and enforce the matter issuing tickets for violation of STC 14-298.

Commissioner Budd moved to put up 14-298 sign at the intersection. Commissioner Walczak seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Consideration and review of stop sign request Sturges Road and Wilderness Road – Commissioner Walczak moved to put stop sign up on the eastbound side of Sturges Road at the intersection of Wilderness Road. Commissioner Budd seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Officer Stephen Ketchum's report regarding the stop sign request for the Sturges Road and Wilderness Road intersection offered the following conclusion: “Research conducted through the Town of Newtown Dept of Public Works revealed that this junction of highways has not been posted with any regulatory signs in at least the last 14 years. This junction does appear to meet warrant #2 of the MUTCD criteria for a stop sign, which suggests posting stop signs ‘On street entering through highway’. Due to the configuration of this junction of highways, the posting of a stop sign for traffic travelling East on Sturges Road would seem to be the most appropriate location for the sign.”

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Judy Vetare addressed the Board asking them what she could do as a citizen to help officers reach their fullest potential. She offered to go to Hartford and speak

on the PD's behalf. Chief Kehoe suggested she go to the various Boards to advocate the staffing levels for the PD. Mrs. Vetare stated that she had spoken to Rep. Chris Liddy and indicated they would see if they can get any grants or funds for PD.

COMMISSIONERS' PARTICIPATION:

Letter from the Larsens regarding Key Rock Road – Chairman Giannini noted that he had spoken to the Larsens the day the speed tables were going up and they were happy however hanged as per a letter they sent to him on February 9, 2011. The Chairman asked that the letter be posted with the minutes. Chairman Giannini indicted that lot of Towns are putting the speed tables up and then pulling them out. However, he stressed that the speed on the road was in the 40's there are sightline issue and a school bus was hit head-on. Commissioner Walczak noted that originally the Board didn't think they would have an issue with where the speed tables were placed. He added that permanent seed tables weren't as noisy, but indicted that the sound of the breaking and accelerating would continue.

Child Safety Ordinance – Commissioner Walczak told Commissioners that Deputy Land-Use Director Rob Sibley had apparently recommended expanding the ordinance out to all the open spaces and trails in Town. Chief Kehoe stated that he spoke to Scott Sharlow and found out there were 250 areas in question based on Mr. Sibley's recommendation. The Chief indicated that was way too many and noted that Wednesday night they would revisit that with the Ordinance Committee. Commissioner Walczak suggested that this was good starting point at the schools and the town parks and they could always expand it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Chairman Giannini moved to go into executive session to discuss strategy of conditional offers of employment at 9:37 pm, and invited the Chief and Captain. Commissioner Budd seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

The Clerk left the meeting at this time.

Ted Swigart, Clerk

****Minutes are not finalized until approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting.***

February 9, 2011

Board of Police Commissioners

3 Main Street
Town of Newtown
Newtown, CT 06470

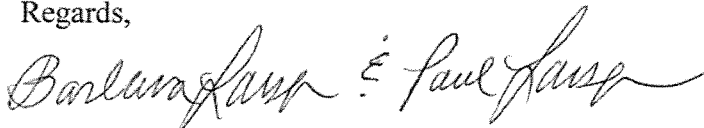
Dear Police Commission Chairman Giannini,

Thank you for removing the temporary speed bumps on Key Rock Road on December 3, 2010. I understand this was a test period and hope they will not be replaced. I have spoken on the phone previously with you about our concerns. Living just south of the bumps, at 25 Key Rock, everything associated with them is loud. Cars braking prior to bumps, cars skidding, accelerating heavy after bumps, clicking when cars cross the bumps and of course, beeping horns of retaliation. There is no speed reduction for cars travelling south after the bumps. In fact, most cars accelerate heavy after the bumps, travelling at a faster speed, than if the bumps were not in place.

When first approached, a 3-Way stop was acceptable to solve the school bus problem and concerns for Jim Walsh and the safety of neighborhood children. However, our concern is the daily hindrance. This Bus Stop is used to pick-up children on North Branch. The most logical solution is for the bus to TURN onto North Branch. The large cul-de-sac at the end of North Branch makes for an easy turn around. Can the children be picked up at a bus stop on North Branch? This would be a completely safe environment. Has the commission ever examined that option?

We appreciate the long hours Caption Rios, yourself and the commission have spent on this matter. However, I need to add two NO VOTES for replacement in the spring. Please consider the alternative for the bus to turn on North Branch. Please call me with any questions or when decisions are to be made.

Regards,



Barbara and Paul Larsen 203-270-1717

25 Key Rock Rd
Newtown, CT 06470

Cc: Chief Michael Kehoe
Captain Joe Rios
Newtown Police Commission Board Members


February 08, 2011

To whom it may concern,

In my fourteen years of service to the Newtown community I have been awarded the opportunity to perform many diverse and rewarding roles such as Youth Officer, DARE instructor, child abuse investigator, high school resource officer, and patrol officer. After 34 years as police officer however, it has come time to respectfully submit my resignation and retire from law enforcement.

I will forever be grateful to all of the citizens who have been so supportive, encouraging, and generous in their kind thanks to me when I have had the opportunity to serve them or their family members. I hope my efforts have helped to make Newtown a better community for all to live in.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana C. Schubert", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Officer Dana C. Schubert

RECEIVED

FEB 08 2011

NEWTOWN POLICE