



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

**MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING HELD THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2012
IN THE MEETING ROOM OF TOWN HALL SOUTH
3 MAIN STREET, NEWTOWN**

**These minutes are not finalized until approved
At the next regularly scheduled meeting.*

Chairman Paul Mangiafico called the special meeting to order at 7 pm.

PRESENT: James Viadero, Joel Faxon, and Paul Mangiafico.

ABSENT: Brian Budd and Andrew Sachs

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Michael Kehoe, Police Captain Jose Rios, and Police Union President Scott Ruszczyk

Chairman Mangiafico informed Union President Ruszczyk that the budget submission is what the department lives and breathes by. The Chairman told the Union President that the Police Commissioners value his input and suggested that everything he knows about the budget helps the Board and also will help his membership.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON POLICE BUDGET FY 13-14:

Chairman Mangiafico told Chief Kehoe that he thinks the Department will have difficulty with the budget as it is presented in light of the fact that it asks for a 2.3% increase. The Chairman said that there were several factors that will make this proposal difficult: it comes during difficult economic times, the State could very likely cut back on aid to municipalities because of financial difficulties at the State level and also the current tax load on Newtown taxpayers. We, therefore, need to trim our request to the barest of minimums in order for the Board of Selectman to look upon it favorably.

Chief Kehoe noted that some of the numbers were estimates such as the exact costs of medical benefits, pension, FICA and overtime. The Chief explained that he came up with his estimates by looking at the actual budgets for 2011/2012 and 2010/2011 and comparing them against what was budgeted.

Chairman Mangiafico suggested that next year the Chief add to the budget the numbers of whatever the department has accumulated in actuals, fiscal year to date, and plug the numbers in between the adopted and estimated numbers. Chief Kehoe told the Chairman he will give him a read out.

Sworn Personnel - Chairman Mangiafico suggested that they skip over the first line items regarding the Chief and the Captain as he would address them later and focused on sworn personnel. The Chairman asked the Chief and the Captain if these were all of the anticipated

labor costs that were negotiated for all the officers for the next year with the step increases. The chief said yes but noted that the holiday pay was a moving target.

The Chairman indicated that because these were negotiated contractual increases he didn't think there was anything the Board could do with the number. The negotiated labor agreement between the union local and the Town drove these expenses.

The Board questioned exactly how many positions had been eliminated and when. The Chief indicated that they lost one sworn personnel position in 2012/2013, a second sworn personnel position in 2010/2011 and a civilian position in 2011/2012. Doing the math based on rate of pay, the Chairman estimated that the three lost positions saved the town roughly \$220,000.

Chief Kehoe stressed that every time you reduce the force by one it has a detrimental effect across the Board. He noted that what people often don't realize is that the department is operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.

Civilian Personnel - Chairman Mangiafico asked about the loss of the civilian position and Chief Kehoe indicated it was a records person. Without the position, according to the Chief, the department can't handle all the regular records functions and noted that at one point they were almost 6 months behind in data entry.

Commissioner Faxon questioned the fact that the department only had 4 civilian employees and suggested that was small.

Overtime - The Board discussed the matter of police overtime and the chief indicated the \$135,000 estimated was likely not enough.

Commissioner Viadero said he was not sure if they were over thinking the matter and suggested there was nothing to cut, but suggested they should be prepared.

Commissioner Faxon stated that the only way one can do it is if they start cutting people.

The Chief alluded to the fact it was done before and that in 2011/2012 they budgeted \$150,000 for overtime and in 2012/2013 they budgeted \$150,000 for overtime but their request was cut by \$20,000 down to \$130,000.

Commissioner Faxon suggested that that line item was chopped unreasonably the last time and noted that the department now has people at a higher step in pay.

Chairman Mangiafico said he was not at all comfortable that the department could make the \$130,000 this year and noted that next year in the adopted budget there are higher base wages so it will go up.

The Chairman suggested that the expenses for the Traffic Guards and the School Resource Officers (SROs) don't really belong in the department's budget. Commissioner Viadero agreed and suggested that the Board remove the Board of Ed's part of the SRO's out of the budget.

Commissioner Faxon agreed that the net is a loss to the PD which the PD has to absorb and that has to be equalized. He suggested that he wants a realistic number for the police department's out-sourcing that is not reimbursed.

Chairman Mangiafico said the Board wants the Town to understand the department is carrying this load in its budget and it is not in the BoE's budget.

Uniform Allowance - Chairman Mangiafico asked why the uniform allowance was going down and Chief Kehoe indicated it was a function of how many bullet proof vests they needed to purchase each year.

Traffic Guards - Captain Rios addressed the line item regarding the crossing guards. He informed Police Commissioners that one of the guards, who had been employed since 2006, has not seen a pay increase since 2009. The Captain said he would like to see this guard get a 3% raise.

Commissioners agreed to increase the Traffic Guards line item by \$300 from \$16,458 to 16,758 to accommodate the Captain's recommendation.

Patrol Cars - Regarding the request for three new patrol cars a year, Chairman Mangiafico asked the Union President for his input and added that the First Selectman last year had said that the Board could and should plan to have only three cars a year.

Union President Ruszczyk told the Board that if they don't have the cars they can't provide the service. He suggested that the fleet was aging and three new cars a year was a minimal requirement.. The Union president noted that if he has an emergency call to go on but can't get there because of the car it is a problem. He added that an average of 60 to 100 miles per shift is put on the cars depending on the sector they are in and the calls. Chairman Mangiafico explained the Department has some cars pushing 80,000 miles a year.

Chief Kehoe told Police Commissioners that the cost of the cars went up 10% last year. He attributed the increase to the shift from the Ford Crown Victorias to the Chevy's, a very different car. He noted that the reason for the shift was because Ford no longer makes the Crown Victoria's. The Chief stated that Department got a car that is functional for the agency and the community but not in any way extravagant.

Capital - Chairman Mangiafico addressed the increase in Capital and asked if the new interrogation room was mandatory.

Chief Kehoe said yes to bring the interrogation room up to date.

The Chief informed the Board that the new interrogation room would be located in a former storage room behind the detective division. He stated that the room meets the requirements and will be 10 feet by 15 feet, with insulated walls, specifically placed table and chairs and recording equipment.

The Captain agreed the new interrogation room was necessary but noted that it was unfortunate because they were losing space for storage which exasperates the overall problem of inadequate space.

Contractual Services - In an effort to trim costs, the Board discussed the idea of slowly eliminating the need for outside security services up on the Fairfield Hills Campus and replacing them with an increased police presence.

Chief Kehoe indicated that there was supposed to be a substation up there but the Department didn't have the money to do that. He suggested that the substation would allow for a continual police presence.

Chairman Mangiafico recommended a proposal be put together by the Chief to see if a method of maintaining security could be laid out at a lesser cost.

Commissioner Faxon suggested the Board propose the \$65,000 for Contractual Services and be prepared to offer alternatives on that number if feasible. He also recommended that Police Commissioners would, between now and the presentation to the Board of Selectman, examine the different ways to utilize both sworn personnel and security services up there.

Chief of Police - Chairman Mangiafico announced that the Police Commission changed the line item for the Chief salary. The Chair said that it originally was that that the line item would remain the same but the Board did not feel in regards to the history of his compensation and in comparisons to Chief's in other areas and comparable Towns that the command structure is compensated adequately. In fact the Chief's compensation is significantly inadequate and has been for a number of years.

According to Chairman Mangiafico, the police commissioners had a number of discussions about this including with the First Selectman and they decided to propose an increase that is two-fold: a merit increase and a salary adjustment which makes up the increase.

Commissioner Faxon moved that the Board propose to the Board of Selectmen a budget of \$5,940,560 for the fiscal year 2013/2014. Commissioner Viadero seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Chief Kehoe discussed the windfall of money that he said was provided to the Town's General Fund for side jobs done by sworn personnel. He noted that the vendors are charged for the work done by the sworn personnel as well as the hourly use of the police cars. The Chief indicated that the department had an exceptional year last year providing traffic control side jobs for all the tree trimming.

However, Chief Kehoe noted that for each patrol car out there it adds to the wear and tear of the vehicle and the cost of maintaining the fleet.

The Board discussed the idea that the Department could offset the costs of maintaining its fleet of patrol cars and its overtime costs for the sworn officers with that revenue.

Chief Kehoe announced that three awards were received: the AAA Southern New England Pedestrian Safety Award which upgraded the Town from Silver last year to Gold; Officer Silver received the AAA Traffic Safety Award; and the Connecticut Chief Law Enforcement Challenge.

ADJOURNMENT: At 8:45 pm, Commissioner Faxon moved to adjourn. Commissioner Viadero seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

Ted Swigart, Clerk