

OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION
Special Meeting
January 17, 2011
MINUTES

A Special meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, January 17, 2011 at the Old Saybrook Town Hall. PRESENT: Chairman Burnham, Secretary Winkler, Commissioners Gallicchio, Sparaco, Metsack and Zemienieski. Chief Spera was also present.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Burnham called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

II. Comments from the public

No comments at this time.

IV. Discussion and Action pertaining to the Proposed 2011-2012 Capital and Operating Budgets.

Chief Spera presented the proposed 2011-2012 Capital and Operating Budgets in great detail. His presentation included statistical data pertaining to calls for service, increase in arrests, decrease in pro active enforcement due to increased call volume, traffic count studies, as well as historical data pertaining to crime and requests for services. The Chief also presented a comparison of some of the nontraditional, yet important, services provided by the Department and what services are provided by other area Law Enforcement agencies. The comparison showed that many more services are provided by the Department than in surrounding communities. These services include primary pre hospital emergency medical care, the investigation of private property accidents, motor vehicle and house lockouts, and conducting traffic services for community events.

The Chief reported that the operating budget that he is proposing to the Police Commission reflects a \$ 10,891 decrease in comparison to the current budget, or a decrease in funding of $-.31\%$. The proposed capital budget reflects a \$10,000 decrease from current funding or a decrease of $-.15.15\%$. Combined, the overall proposed budget for the Department of Police Services represents a \$20,891 decrease in spending or a decrease of $-.59\%$ from current funding levels.

The proposed budget represents a request for three new police officers and funding for a second police canine handler position.

The Commission had lengthy discussions regarding the proposed budget. Many questions were asked of the Chief and answers were provided. Much discussion was had regarding the immediate need for additional police officers due to the increased call volume. Commissioners were concerned over the length of time it takes to recruit and train a new officer as well as the need to begin planning for future needs, which included backfilling positions left vacant due to retirements.

Discussion was also had regarding the Department's aging fleet. The Commission was informed that that we have not followed the practice of purchasing three new vehicle each year for almost a decade. It was decided that the Commission would support the need for two new police vehicles, although more may be needed in the future.

Questions about the budget were asked by Board of Finance Liaison Grant Westerson and Selectman Manning who were in attendance as members of the public.

There was also discussion on how this budget should be presented to the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance. The Commission asked the Chairman to send a letter to both the First Selectman and the Chairman of the Board of Finance requesting a joint meeting between the Police Commission, the Board of Selectman, and the Board of Finance to discuss the Department's proposed Budget. The Commission feels strongly that they should have open, honest dialog with other boards and commissions about the unique needs of the police department and increased demands as well as future operating concerns.

Motion made by Commissioner Gallicchio to approve and adopt a 2011-2012 operating budget of \$3,450,618 and a capital budget of \$56,000. Motion Seconded by Commissioner Zemienieski. Motion Passed by unanimous vote of Commissioners present.

IV. Executive Division Report

A. Personnel

1. The Chief reported on the Sergeant and Lieutenant Promotional processes as well as the search for candidates to fill vacant Patrolman positions. The Chief stated that the promotional process should conclude in late April and candidates for the Commission to interview for vacant Patrolman positions should be available by the January 24th, 2011 Commission meeting.

V. Comments and/or Concerns from Commissioners

Members of the Commission continued their supportive conversation of the 2011-2012 budget that will be forwarded to the Board of Selectman. Commission members were very passionate about the need for additional personnel to meet the Department's business needs.

VI. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Winkler to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gallicchio. Motion passed by unanimous vote of Commissioners present.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Michael A. Spera
Chief of Police

These Minutes are subject to approval at the next regular Police Commission meeting.