

OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION
Special Meeting
September 17, 2012
MINUTES

A special meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, September 17, 2012, at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

Present: Chairman Burnham, Vice Chairman Metsack, Commissioners Sparaco and Stuart were also present. Chief Spera and Lieutenant Roche were also present from the Department of Police Services.

I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Burnham called the meeting to order at 7:01PM and led the Police Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Executive Session

1. Interview and Discuss Candidates for the Position of Patrolman

The Police Commission did not enter into Executive Session as there were no candidates to interview for the position of Patrolman.

III. Accept the Resignation of Mr. Joseph Mackin

Chief Spera read a letter from Mr. Joseph Mackin that he will be resigning from his Patrolman position as of September 28, 2012 for personal reasons.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sparaco to accept the resignation of Mr. Joseph Mackin as of September 28, 2012. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Metsack. The motion to approve the Resignation of Mr. Joseph Mackin passed with a vote of 4 in favor and 0 against.

IV. Discussion and Action pertaining to the Position of Patrolman

Chief Spera reported to the Commission that after completing a rigorous selection process there were no suitable candidates to forward to the Commission for the Patrolman vacancy.

Chief Spera reported the number of persons applying for, taking and passing the various stages of the testing process and the cost of the process, which was approximately \$509.00. This cost was drastically reduced due to testing fees charged for taking the written test. Chief Spera explained even though no one was recommended from the process, the cost was justified as we do not want to hire a candidate not meeting our requirements. Chief Spera explained it is a concern of his and other Chiefs that qualified candidates are becoming harder to find and retain.

Chief Spera reported the Department will begin a new selection process by attending job fairs, advertising and potentially by looking at already certified officers. He reported the next Police Academy class begins on January 5, 2013 and we have one seat in the class but are attempting to get a second seat. The second seat would be for Sergeant Mercer's replacement. Upon his retirement the Department will have two vacant positions.

Chairman Burnham suggested several web sites, college campuses and potentially the National Guard or Military as places to recruit from.

Commissioner Stuart also encouraged seeking Military outlets for recruits. He asked about the cost of PoliceApp.com and if it is working?

Chief Spera responded that PoliceApp does not cost the Department any money because a \$12.00 fee is collected by PoliceApp when an applicant signs up. The Department receives a \$38.00 fee, which is used to offset the cost of the selection process.

Commissioner Stuart wanted to know what the Chief's plan was for covering the vacant positions until replacements can be found.

Chief Spera reported that the Department has been short-handed in the past and the men and women of the Department will have to work longer hours, which means paying more overtime hours.

V. Discussion and Possible Action pertaining to a proposed Fleet Capital Management Plan

Chief Spera reviewed and updated the condition of the Department fleet with the Commission. The Department currently has seventeen vehicles and one pickup truck. Of those, 6 are being replaced this year and 1 has a non operational engine. Of the ten remaining vehicles, 6 have over 100,000 miles and none are in warranty.

The Commission was advised of the vehicle with the blown engine and the Commission chose to go to the Board of Finance for approval to replace the vehicle as opposed to just the engine. During the Board of Finance discussion of purchasing a new vehicle Brad Thorpe suggested we lease the new vehicle. The Board of Finance voted to forward the purchase of a vehicle to the Board of Selectman.

Chief Spera tasked Master Sergeant van der Horst with researching a leasing program for police vehicles. Chevrolet and Dodge offer traditional leasing options. Ford offers a Municipal Financing Program. The Chief reported this program would put all of our vehicles on warranty as well as reduce the cost of tires as the vehicles would be part of the Tires for Life program. It would also reduce the number of vehicles we have because currently some are always being repaired. Prices were solicited for the Utility Interceptor, Interceptor and Fusions. The approximate cost is \$241,000 for vehicles, \$83,000 for equipment and \$18,000 for installation. This idea is being explored at this time. Chief Spera also noted that the Department still needs a vehicle right away.

Commissioner Stuart stated that this plan could work if the numbers were accurate.

Chairman Burnham stated that this plan was worth looking into. She also expressed concern that future boards would be bound by the agreement.

Commissioner Stuart and Sparaco inquired if the vehicles were pursuit rated and Chief Spera advised they were except for the Fusions. The Fusions are for administrative and non patrol functions and would not be used as patrol vehicle.

Chief Spera reported the Department was changing the Outside Billing Rate and increasing the vehicle fee to \$10.00 per hour for the vehicle in January 2013.

It was agreed upon by the Commission that the Chief would keep exploring and working on this plan.

VI. Reports from the Chief of Police

Chief Spera reported Sergeant Charles Mercer submitted a letter of intent to retire on December 7, 2012. Sergeant Mercer had originally intended to leave earlier but a plan was not able to be worked out.

Chief Spera discussed the upcoming Juvenile and Criminal Investigations Divisions presentations. He reported they would be lengthy and detailed. He also reported there was some concern among the Officers presenting because the presentations are not always flattering and there is fear that the deficiencies presented would be held against them in future promotional processes.

Chairman Burnham assured the Chief this would not happen and Commissioner Stuart agreed.

VII. Adjournment

Vice Chairman Metsack made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stuart. The motion to adjourn the meeting passed with a vote of 4 in favor and 0 against.

The next regular Police Commission meeting is scheduled for September 24, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room, Old Saybrook Town Hall.

The meeting minutes for September 17, 2012 were prepared and respectfully submitted by:

Lieutenant Roche
Lieutenant of the Old Saybrook Department of Police Services