

**OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION**  
**Special Meeting**  
**January 8, 2012**  
**MINUTES**

A special meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Tuesday, January 8, 2012, at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

**Present:** Chairman Burnham, Vice Chairman Metsack, Commissioners Sparaco, Finch and Stuart were also present. Commissioner Dunlap participated via teleconference. 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 7:00PM.

**II. Comments from the Public**

There were no comments from the public.

**III. Presentation and Discussion pertaining to the Proposed 2013-2014 Capital and Operating Budgets**

For detailed information on the budget please see the attached 2013-2014 Budget Proposal and the accompanying attachments.

The following questions were asked during the presentation:

A member of the public asked what it means if a case is sealed?

Chief Spera responded that cases that are contested and won are either nolle or sealed, which means the record of that case must be removed from the system. This also means that our Records Management statistics are always slightly off from the real number.

Commissioner Stuart asked if the local store rankings are determined by weekly gross or yearly gross?

Chief Spera responded that regional ranks are determined by customer numbers and gross weekly totals.

Vice Chairman Metsack asked if the positions being requested to help the Criminal Investigation unit would be trained before they were hired.

Chief Spera responded that the requested positions would already be certified in their respective areas.

Vice Chairman Metsack asked if the full time Community Service Officer would wear a uniform.

Chief Spera responded that the full time Community Service Officer would wear the standard CSO uniform.

Commissioner Stuart asked if civilians would ever be asked to fingerprint someone who has been arrested.

Chief Spera responded that only officers would fingerprint criminal arrests.

Commissioner Stuart asked if Master Sergeants and Patrol Sergeants also perform patrol duties.

Chief Spera responded that Master Sergeants and Patrol Sergeants do go out on calls but they spend the majority of their time supervising and performing other Sergeant duties.

Commissioner Dunlap asked what kind of manpower would allow the Department to maintain a 4/4/3 schedule in the Department.

Chief Spera responded the current schedule is unique in that it allows flexibility to the employees. Chief Spera added that he gave a software vendor the Department's 4/4/3 requirements and the numbers that were generated from the software were closer to the national staffing formula than what he is asking for in his proposal.

Chairman Burnham asked if the 28 officers the Chief is requesting would allow the Department to achieve its 4/4/3 goal.

Chief Spera responded that he believes the 28 officers he is requesting would allow the Department to maintain 4/4/3 staffing without using the national formula, which suggests 35-37 officers for the town.

Chairman Burnham asked if the Department's Fixed Charges will still be part of the Department's budget.

Chief Spera responded that the public will still be able to see the Department's fixed charges but they would not be part of the Police Budget.

A member of the public asked if the town was going to pay part of Sergeant Gardner's salary.

Chief Spera responded that he is budgeting for the entire amount of the Director of IT position but the town has also budgeted for this position and money will be put back into the Police Budget for the position.

Commissioner Stuart asked if Sergeant Gardner is performing supervisory duties, how can he be backfilled by a Patrolman.

Chief Spera responded that Sergeant Gardner is doing IT work full time and is not performing any supervisory duties at this time.

Chairman Burnham asked if increasing Phil Coco's responsibilities was necessary to maintaining our Dispatcher's current level of certification.

Chief Spera responded that Director Coco's added responsibilities would be to prepare the Dispatchers for using the CAD system during Emergency Police Dispatching. Chief Spera added that he also believes Director Coco can find potential revenue streams for the Department by reaching out to other towns who might be interested in going through Old Saybrook's Dispatching center.

Commissioner Stuart asked if every call that comes through Dispatch is reviewed.

Chief Spera responded that 100% of medical calls are reviewed.

Commissioner Stuart asked if the Dispatching Supervisor will perform discipline, coaching and counseling.

Chief Spera responded that he will always handle discipline within the Department.

A member of the public asked if the Department's health insurance could be explained.

Chief Spera responded that the Department's Fixed Charges are not in the Police Budget this year. Chief Spera added there are three benefit plans: Family, couple and single. Employees make weekly contributions to their respective plans.

A citizen remarked that it appears there are 2.75 supervisors per Patrolman.

Chief Spera responded that a Patrol Sergeant does not just supervise Patrolman but also the Dispatchers and any civilian staff in the building. The Patrol Sergeants run the Department when the Chief and Lieutenant are not present in the building.

A citizen asked if the number of policeman dispatched to an incident affects the number of incidents that are registered in the Records Management System.

Chief Spera responded that no matter how many officers are dispatched to an incident, it only counts as one incident.

Brad Thorpe asked why the Department requested \$77,000 for gasoline budget when it has already spent more than \$80,000 in this year's budget.

Chief Spera responded that he was told by the First Selectman to add 10% to the existing budget number.

Chairman Burnham asked how long new protective vests are good for.

Chief Spera responded that new vests are good for five years and new vests for the entire Department represent \$35,000 of the Capital Budget with the rest being allocated to new vehicles.

Commissioner Finch asked if \$35,000 covers the entire cost of the vests.

Chief Spera responded that \$35,000 covers the entire cost of the vests but it is possible the Department could get up to half of the cost back.

Commissioner Finch asked if the Department gets a better price if they buy all the vests at once.

Chief Spera responded that he purchases all the vests at once because everyone has to have the same vest.

Chief Spera informed the Commission that the Department is still developing a finance program for new vehicles. Chief Spera added that \$100,000 would satisfy the first year payment for 7 to 10 new vehicles. With this new plan the Department can flat fund the Capital Budget for the next 4 to 5 years.

Commissioner Dunlap asked if the increase in the Uniform line item accounts for the requested increase in personnel.

Chief Spera responded that the increase is specific to the requested increase in personnel.

Commissioner Finch asked what the patrol schedule would look like if the proposed budget was approved.

Chief Spera responded that two Patrolmen would be hired to backfill the new School Resource Officers. The third officer that will be hired in January is to account for the expanding service population in Old Saybrook. Chief Spera added that if the budget goes through he will be able to get School Resource Officers back in schools full time by the beginning of the next school year.

Commissioner Finch asked if it would be safer for the Department to switch to a 3/4/3 schedule so there were officers on duty during the midnight shift. Commissioner Finch added that it would be easier to pull resources during the day than to get someone in during the midnight shift.

Chief Spera responded that this is a good idea in theory but the 4/4/3 schedule reflects a patrol schedule that puts the most policemen on duty when the call for service volume is the highest. Additionally, Chief Spera noted that the day shift is the most difficult to backfill.

Commissioner Finch asked if the Department was replacing Sergeant Mercer with another Sergeant or if someone will be promoted.

Chief Spera concluded by saying that if Commissioners had any questions before the next meeting or if a Commissioner wanted the Chief to bring anything to the next meeting, they should feel free to contact him.

Chairman Burnham replied that the Commission would review the Chief's proposal and discuss it in detail and the next meeting.

#### **IV. Comments from the Public**

A citizen remarked that Police Commission meetings are not always readily posted on the town's website.

Chairman Burnham responded that the town office runs the website. She added that the 24-hour notification requirement for a Special Meeting was met.

#### **V. Adjournment**

**Commission Sparaco made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Finch. The motion to adjourn the meeting passed with a vote of 6 in favor and 0 against.**

*The next special Police Commission meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room, Old Saybrook Town Hall.*

The meeting minutes for January 8, 2013 were prepared and respectfully submitted by:

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Trent Gerbers  
Records Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Commission