

**OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**December 16, 2013**  
**MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, December 16, 2013, at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

**Present:** Commissioners Burnham, Sparaco, Dunlap, Finch, Stuart, Maselli and Savino were present. Chief Spera and Lieutenant Roche were also present from the Department of Police Services.

**I. Call to Order/Welcome New Commissioners/Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Burnham called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and led the Police Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Burnham officially welcomed the new Police Commissioners and stated that she looked forward to their contribution.

**II. Minutes**

A. October 28, 2013 Regular Meeting

**Commissioner Finch made a motion to approve the October 28, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sparaco. The motion to approve the October 28, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 3 in favor and 0 against. Commissioners Dunlap, Stuart, Maselli and Savino abstained from the vote.**

Commissioner Sparaco commented that on Page 3 of the minutes, a reference to Ted Dawson should be Bill Dawson.

**III. Comments from the Public**

Brad Stevens stated that navigation of the town's website is difficult and that finding the agenda for Police Commission meetings should be easier.

Commissioner Stuart stated that he received a letter from a citizen who could not attend the Police Commission Meeting.

Chairman Burnham asked what the letter concerned.

Commissioner Stuart replied that the letter was a complaint about how she was treated by the Chief of Police.

Chairman Burnham stated that if a citizen has a complaint then they need to follow the proper complaint procedure.

Commissioner Stuart replied that he would make copies and distribute the letter to the Commissioners prior to the end of the meeting.

**IV. Executive Reports**

A. Financial

1. 13-14 Budget Status

Chief Spera stated that the Selectman's office locked in a price for fuel at \$2.99 per gallon and \$3.17 per gallon for oil. The pre-buy for gasoline has created a \$20,000 overrun in the gasoline line item, which the Department will work towards balancing throughout the year.

Commissioner Finch asked about the Miscellaneous Small Equipment account.

Chief Spera stated that the main expenditures from this account were ammunition for firearms recertification.

Committee Member Savino asked if the Police Department participates in any discount programs.

Chief Spera responded that the Department is aggressive in seeking out the best possible deals through various conglomerates, bundles and bid packages. He added that the PCard has made it easier to find discounts for the Department.

2. Asset Forfeiture

**Account Balance: \$20,473.15**

3. Capital Sinking Fund (Police Administrative Fund)

**Account Balance: \$40,278.25**

4. Traffic Safety Fund

**Account Balance: \$35,792.62**

5. Law Enforcement Fund

**Account Balance: \$22,280.53**

6. Old Saybrook Police Fund

**Account Balance: \$320.00**

7. Police Explorer Fund

**Account Balance: \$4,970.27**

8. Police K-9 Fund

**Account Balance: \$4,361.71**

Chief Spera informed the Commission that the Department is in the process of paying for Kendo's dental surgeries. These expenses will deplete the off budget canine account almost entirely.

9. 14-15 Budget Planning

Chief Spera informed the Commission that he is in the process of building his recommendation for the Department and that he will present his budget recommendation to the Commission as soon as possible. Chief Spera added that outside the contractual changes in personnel, the only increase he is seeking is to elevate one Records Clerk and his Executive Secretary to full time status. Everything else in the budget will remain steady. Chief Spera concluded that the budget must be approved by the Commission and forwarded to the Board of Selectmen by January 15, 2014.

The Commission determined that a Special Meeting of the Police Commission will be held on Wednesday, January 8 to discuss the Chief's budget proposal. If a second meeting is needed then it will be scheduled at the January 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Commissioner Finch asked if the Department has received any of the new police vehicles.

Chief Spera replied that the Department has received all of the vehicles except one.

Commissioner Savino asked if the Chief anticipates a decrease in the Vehicle Maintenance line item.

Chief Spera responded that the fleet leasing program will allow for a reduction in the vehicle maintenance line item.

B. Administrative

1. Contract Negotiations Update – Police Union

Chief Spera informed the Commission that a formal, off the record proposal has been issued to the Police Union by the First Selectman.

Chairman Burnham asked what happens after the Union has considered the proposal.

Chief Spera responded that the process could move into either mediation or directly into arbitration.

Commissioner Stuart asked if the off the record proposal will become part of the bargaining history if the process moves into arbitration.

Chief Spera responded that the off the record proposal cannot be part of the bargaining history.

2. Fleet Lease/Purchase Program Update

Chief Spera informed the Commission that all of the vehicles have arrived but one. Currently, the vehicles are cycling through the various phases, such as being painted and outfitted. Chief Spera anticipates that the vehicles will begin to rollout in late January or early February. The first vehicle to be completed will be the K-9 vehicle because it has the most comprehensive installation process.

3. New Police Facility Update

Chief Spera informed the Commission that there have been several meetings between the Department and the project architect to discuss details of the new building. Currently the project is preparing to go before the towns' various Boards and Commissions for approvals and permits. Several variances are being sought for the project and those will be presented along with the drawings for the building's site plan and floor plan.

Commissioner Finch asked what zone the property is located in.

Chief Spera responded that the building is located in a residential zone.

V. Election of Officers

**Commissioner Savino nominated Commissioner Finch as the Chairman of the Police Commission. Commissioner Dunlap seconded the nomination. Commissioner Finch was elected as the Police Commission Chairman with a vote of 6 in favor and 0 against. Commissioner Maselli abstained.**

**Chairman Finch nominated Commissioner Savino as the Vice Chairman of the Police Commission. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Stuart. Commissioner Savino was elected as the Police Commission Vice Chairman with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 against.**

**Commissioner Dunlap nominated Commissioner Stuart as Secretary of the Police Commission. The nomination was seconded by Vice Chairman Savino. Commissioner Stuart was elected Secretary of the Police Commission with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 against.**

Chairman Finch thanked Commissioner Burnham for her many years of service as the Commission's Chairman. Chairman Finch also thanked the rest of the Commission for their support.

VI. 2014 Police Commission Meeting Schedule

Chairman Finch stated that Police Commission meetings have traditionally been held on the fourth Monday of each month, with the exception of some Holidays. He suggested that the Commission continue with this schedule.

**Commissioner Burnham moved that the Police Commission accept the revised proposal for the Police Commission's Regular Meeting Schedule. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sparaco. The motion passed with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 against.**

2014 Regular Meeting Schedule:

- January 27, 2014
- February 24, 2014
- March 24, 2014
- April 28, 2014
- May 19, 2014
- June 23, 2014
- July 28, 2014
- August 25, 2014
- September 22, 2014
- October 27, 2014
- November 17, 2014
- December 15, 2014

## **VII. Comments from the Public**

Former Commissioner Metsack stated that when he was first elected to the Police Commission, he questioned the direction of the Department. He continued that over time, the Commission was able to work with Chief Spera and get the Police Department on the right track. Mr. Metsack added that he has full faith in Chief Spera to continue to lead the Department and prepare a fiscally responsible budget. Mr. Metsack concluded that he hopes the Commission will continue to support the Chief and the Department as they continue on their current course.

Chief Spera asked Chairman Finch if he was prepared to appoint a Police Commissioner to Law Enforcement Fund subcommittee.

Chairman Finch stated that he wanted to wait until the next regular meeting to make an appointment so that anyone interested in filling the role could approach him.

Commissioners Savino and Burnham both stated that they would be interested in the appointment.

## **VIII. Comments from the Chief of Police**

Chief Spera thanked former Commissioner Metsack for his time and dedication to the Police Commission. He also thanked Chairman Burnham for her leadership as Chairman. Chief Spera then stated that he looked forward to working with the new Commissioners and the new executive committee. Chief Spera then commented on the following items:

The Vest subcommittee has worked out a request proposal. A federal grant has been completed to recuperate some of the money for this expenditure.

A new resident on Maynard Road has requested additional signage for her neighborhood. Chief Spera informed the Commission that some of the speed limit signs had been taken down during recent construction but that he would request to Public Works that the signs be put back up.

The Department of Transportation has determined that the building project on North Main Street needs to start the STC process over again.

Dock and Dine is scheduled for demolition before the end of the year. They are hoping to reopen in June.

There has been an influx of sick days in Department. In particular, Sergeant Hull has been out with illness and Patrolman Ziolkovski has been in the hospital for 15 days with an unknown illness.

Recent community events such as the Turkey Drive, Toy Drive and Saybrook Torchlight Parade were a huge success. Chief Spera thanked all the members of the Department for their time and efforts during those events.

Firearms qualification has been completed. The Department utilized the portable range. Members of the Department participated in night firing and live fire shooting scenarios. Sergeants DePerry and DeMarco also became simunition instructors.

The Department is in the final phase of training the new cadre of part time dispatchers. Chief Spera stated that it is his hope to have the training completed by the end of January.

Patrolman Brooks passed Field Training and is now an actual personnel asset. Patrolman Forte is still in the Police Academy. Chief Spera stated that even though the Department has 25 sworn officers, Patrolman Forte is not a usable Department asset until he graduates from the Academy and passes Field Training.

Dispatcher Spinelli may be applying for Family Leave, which can be up to 12 months.

Chief Spera informed the Commission that he recently attended an awards ceremony in which all Department officers involved in recent pursuit of robbery and shooting suspects were given a citation for their efforts.

Commissioner Stuart asked if firearms training included long rifles.

Chief Spera responded that the portable firing range is not long enough for long rifle training. Chief Spera added that half the Department is doing their long rifle certification now and the other half will complete their certification in the spring.

## **IX. Comments and/or Concerns from Commissioners**

Vice Chairman Savino asked if the Commission could somehow publish details about the role of the School Resource Officers.

Chief Spera responded that School Resource Officers submit weekly reports to him, which cannot be fully shared with the Commission because of the involvement of DCF. However, Chief Spera stated that a summary report could probably be prepared for the Commission. Chief Spera also suggested that School Resource Officer Tanner could come and speak to the Commission about her experiences.

Former Commissioner Metsack suggested that the Powerpoint Presentation used during the Police Commission Workshops might be a beneficial source of information for the new Commissioners.

Commissioner Savino replied that he is familiar with the program but wants something that can be easily described and given to members of the public.

Commissioner Maselli stated that there are other programs run by the Department that are also not understood by the general public. For example, the periodic DUI Checkpoints are funded through grant money but not everyone knows that. Additionally, many citizens do not understand how the new police vehicles were paid for.

Chief Spera agreed that it is difficult to disseminate information to the public about the various aspects of the Department. Chief Spera pointed to the list of Officer Salaries in the town's budget book, stating that there is no explanation with regards to any of the Department's personnel line items.

Chairman Finch asked when the Commission can expect the first CAD data reports.

Chief Spera replied that the CAD system has been online about four and a half months and the data that is being captured is huge. He stated that the Department is still learning how to extract and interpret reports, but that eventually the Commission will be able to request exactly what it is looking for and receive a report based on those items.

Chairman Finch asked what Sergeant Gardner's current role is.

Chief Spera replied that Sergeant Gardner is spending almost all of his time on the new CAD System. He said that the new system has added approximately 16 hours of work to his weekly schedule.

## **X. Adjournment**

**Commissioner Stuart made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sparaco. The motion to adjourn the meeting passed with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 against.**

*The next regular Police Commission meeting is scheduled for January 27 at 7:00 p.m.  
in the First Floor Conference Room, Old Saybrook Town Hall.*

The meeting minutes for December 16, 2013 were prepared and respectfully submitted by:

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Trent Gerbers  
Records Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Commission