

OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
September 28, 2015
MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, September 28, 2105 at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

Present: Chairman Finch, Vice Chairman Sparaco, Secretary Stuart and Commissioners Burnham, Dunlap, Maselli and Coppes. Chief Spera and Lieutenant Roche were present from the Department of Police Services.

I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Finch called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Minutes

Commissioner Maselli made a motion to approve the August 24, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Sparaco. The motion to approve the August 24, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 against.

III. Comments from the Public

Renee Shippee asked if the Police Commission could clarify agenda item number five "Discussion and Possible Action of Proposed "Police Commission Initiatives."

Chairman Finch responded that agenda item number five is a list of items and potential future items the Police Commission want to work on. When the meeting arrives at item number five the Commission will go over it and everyone will hear the list. Some topics are items that Chairman Finch came up with and some items Chief Spera requested and the rest are topics the Commission should consider at some future meetings.

Renee Shippee thanked Chairman Finch.

IV. Executive Reports

A. Financial

Chief Spera stated that the each Commission packet included an Expenses and Supplies update. He asked if the Commission had any questions.

Commissioner Coppes asked Chief Spera if there is a separate budget that includes a personnel update.

Chief Spera responded that yes there is a separate budget for personnel that is brought in quarterly. He also reminded Commissioner Coppes that he has a packet for him regarding the Police Commission and Police Department and to please give him a call to pick all that up.

Commissioner Coppes stated that yes he would call Chief Spera to pick up those documents.

Commissioner Dunlap asked what drove the overage of the legal line item.

Chief Spera responded that the use of attorneys during the complaint drove the legal line item over budget.

Commissioner Dunlap asked if the Commission hired attorneys.

Chairman Finch stated that yes the Commission hired attorneys.

Secretary Stuart asked when the Commission decided to hire attorneys.

Chairman Finch stated that while the Commission didn't take a vote, the majority felt very strongly that an attorney needed to be present to handle the situation properly and correctly.

1. 14-15 Operating Budget
2. Asset Forfeiture
Balance: \$24,014.56
3. Police Administrative Fund
Balance: \$15,112.39
4. Traffic Safety Fund
Balance: \$38,520.64
5. Law Enforcement Fund
Balance: \$17,207.53
6. Old Saybrook Police Fund
Balance: \$320.00
7. Police Explorer Fund
Balance: \$5,392.60
8. Police K-9 Fund
Balance: \$1,812.93

B. Administrative

1. Personnel Report

Chief Spera stated that this weekend the Police Department hosted a retirement party for Detective Sergeant Gene Heiney. He thanked the Chairman for coming to the party and stated that it was a great time had by all.

Chief Spera went on to give a brief overview of Detective Sergeant Heiney's decorated career. He joined the Police Department August 6, 1977. He graduated the municipal police academy training December 8, 1977. He was promoted from Patrolman, to Detective to Detective Sergeant. He was marine commander and a critical incident instructor. He earned two medal of valor's and a purple heart for getting shot in the head in 2005. He was named Police Officer of the year in 1986, 1996 and 2006. He received three longevity awards, one at 25 years, one at 30 years and one at 35 years. He retired with 38 years served. He received the 9/11 award for his assistance in New York City. He has received accommodations from the Governor, Senator Blumenthal and the FBI. Chief Spera stated that he wishes Detective Sergeant Heiney and his family all the best on his well-deserved retirement. He will be very much missed within the Police Department.

Chief Spera went on to state that now is the time for the Commission to put their thanks in the official minutes.

Secretary Stuart stated God Speed, he wishes Detective Sergeant Heiney well and thanked him for all his years of service.

Commissioner Dunlap seconded Secretary Stuart's statement.

The entire Police Commission was in agreeance with Secretary Stuart's statement.

a. Appointment Updates

Chief Spera stated that the Old Saybrook Police Department was given the second seat to October's Police Academy. Stephanie Milardo and Solomon Hardy will be starting academy this week. They will graduate at the end of March. After graduation they will move on to FTO training and once they complete Department training they will become an asset to the Department.

b. Hiring Process Update and Procedure Change

Chief Spera stated that the hiring process is currently underway. He told the Commission that Lieutenant Roche would advise them of the progression and then the Chief would like to discuss a recent legal change with them.

Lieutenant Roche updated the Commission on the current process stating that one hundred and thirty nine people signed up to take the September 1, 2015 written test. Eighty-nine people actually showed up to take the test. Thirty-three of the eighty-nine failed the written test. Fifty-six were interviewed. Five withdrew before interviews and twelve were eliminated after the preliminary background investigation took place. The department ended up with twenty-three people after interview. The top ten will be coming back from a background investigation interview and second interview. The background investigation is a very lengthy process but the Department is still on track to have a spot for the December class and the Lieutenant is hopeful that it will remain that way.

Chief Spera stated that these numbers might seem smaller than usual but they are normal. Clinton had fourteen people for one spot in their last hiring process.

Commissioner Coppes asked Chief Spera if these numbers were normal everywhere, not just in the neighboring towns.

Chief Spera answered that yes these numbers are normal everywhere. Currently nationwide law enforcement careers have a negative image which is deterring people from entering the field. The hiring process the Old Saybrook Department of Police Services has had up to this point is in order to take the written exam the applicant must have already passed the agility test. They applicant comes to the written test with their CHIP card stating that they have met the physical requirements. After the written exam is passed they move on to the oral interview and background. Should they pass all of that they move on to the polygraph and the psychological exam but in order to have the applicant take the polygraph and the psychological exam they must have been given a conditional offer of employment from the Old Saybrook Department of Police Services. Normally the Department sends five offers, the Chief would do his interview after the tests and then the Commission would choose who to hire.

Chief Spera stated that he recently attended a conference where a new case law regarding the hiring process was brought up to him. Departments cannot make blanket conditional offers anymore. Should a conditional offer be made and that applicant passes the polygraph and the psychological exam the Department is now required by law to hire that person. He gave an example of a class action suit that recently happened. A fire department was doing a hiring process, they had twenty firefighters that were given conditional offers sent out for testing, hired the first ten. Others filed a class action suit and the result was either hire all twenty or get rid of the original ten.

Commissioner Coppes asked Chief Spera since the department can't make blanket conditional offers anymore can you make a priority list and tell the applicants their ranks.

Chief Spera stated that no the department does not tell people what rank they are.

Commissioner Coppes stated that with the new law the department risks the applicant leaving to go to another department should they not be the number one choice.

Chief Spera agreed and stated that an applicant leaving to go to another department is a big risk now.

Commissioner Burnham asked Chief Spera why he would bring an applicant in front of the Police Commission if an employment offer has already been extended.

Chief Spera responded that the Police Commission would still be able to deny the employment of that applicant but the applicant would have a legal right to be hired anyway.

Commissioner Dunlap asked if there was any way around making the conditional offer to the applicant.

Chief Spera stated no, you cannot ask any medical questions without a conditional offer being extended.

Commissioner Coppes asked if the Commission could insert themselves before conditional offers were made.

Chief Spera stated that the Commission can insert themselves at any point but timing is everything.

Chairman Finch asked why the Commission can't interject themselves after the Chief's interview. The Commission interviews them and then ranks them and then a conditional offer would be made after that.

Chief Spera stated it is a waste of time to interview before a psychological and polygraph exam. Those two tests tell everything about an applicant.

Commissioner Coppes asked if fifty percent are usually turned away after the polygraph and psychological tests.

Lieutenant Roche responded that probably more are turned away.

Secretary Stuart stated that he would like to see Chief Spera have his Chief's interview and after that bring to the Commission the number one applicant and so they can review before the actual offer is made.

Chief Spera stated that he is fine with whatever direction the Commission chooses to take. He brought this topic up to get the Commission's guidance.

Chairman Finch stated that he would like to see three viable candidates brought to the Commission to interview.

Secretary Stuart stated that he agreed with Chairman Finch's comment and added that way the Commission is put back in the process.

Chief Spera stated that there is always a race for seats with all departments. The class starts December 31st. The academy calls weekly and no seat is guaranteed unless a name is attached to that seat. The Department calls and reserves blocks of times with the psychological and polygraph examiners. The Commission can insert themselves at any time.

Secretary Stuart asked if there is no failure that one applicant has to be hired without testing any of the other ones.

Chief Spera responded that Secretary Stuart's statement was correct. The Department has currently two appointments made for the polygraph and psychological exam and no conditional offers have been made yet. The new law has made the process extremely difficult since prior the candidates were brought to the Commission and would speak regarding the polygraph and psychological test. This can no longer happen. The old hiring process weeded people out. The two exams are extremely important in revealing a true person. He also stated that the Commission could possibly interview a candidate they might never see again. It's very hard to give a recommendation until after polygraph and psychological tests have been done.

Commissioner Coppes asked Chief Spera why it is hard to give a recommendation until after the test and if the polygraph and psychological test leave shade of gray or definitive answers.

Chief Spera stated that usually definitive answers. He likes facts he said and those tests give you the facts. By having the applicant come in front of the Commission before the tests a name is being put on public minutes, hiring only on a conditional offer and should that person fail they are on public record doing so.

Commissioner Burnham stated that there are a lot of reasons why people drop out not just due to failure.

Secretary Stuart asked if Chief Spera can ask similar questions that are used during a polygraph test can during his Chief's interview.

Chief Spera stated no he cannot ask any medical questions.

Secretary Stuart questioned how they can during a polygraph test.

Chief Spera stated after a conditional offer is made the medical questions become legal.

Commissioner Coppes asked what other towns are doing about this new law.

Chief Spera responded that a lot of town are delegating authority to Chief of Police. Waterford has the Commission interview the candidates after the written and agility tests and ranks them 1, 2, 3 and so on down the list. This process takes a lot of time and they are missing a lot of academy dates. Any lateral transfers also have to go through screenings.

Secretary Stuart stated that the town charter says that Police Commission is the one responsible for hiring of police officers. If the Police Commission does not handle hiring this then the Commission hasn't done their job.

Chief Spera stated let's try inserting the Commission into the process and see how it goes.

Chairman Finch stated this won't be an every month issue, if the Commission has to have a special meeting to move this forward that can be done in a timely fashion.

Chief Spera said the Commission would have to rank the applicants. He would need direction to who the Department would be sending to test first. What types of questions should the Commission be asking to determine someone for a law enforcement career, since the questions now are superficial, generic questions. He wants to make sure the Police Commission has an iron clad process to make sure there is no lawsuit again the town of Old Saybrook.

Secretary Stuart stated the Commission has a process.

Chief Spera responded that the Commission has one spot to give an offer of conditional employment. The Commission is blind about an applicant until the results come back for the polygraph and psychological tests.

Commissioner Burnham stated that the Commission has been buffaloed before, should the applicant who was offered conditional employment fail the exams the applicant does not get hired.

Chief Spera stated that he is all for trying this process but stressed that it's important to discuss what types of questions should be asked. Previously Chief Spera was able to speak to the Commission and give insight and guidance, he won't be able to do that this time. All that is coming before the Commission now is someone who passed written, agility and simple background.

Chairman Finch stated they are not fulfilling the town's charter if the Police Commission is taken out of the process.

Commissioner Maselli stated if the Commission wants to insert themselves in the process it has to be done in an organized and timely manner.

Chief Spera stated that after the background and his interviews are done he will schedule interviews with the Commission.

Chief Spera asked the commission if they would like to interview the top three or five candidates.

Lieutenant stated that out of the twenty-three total ten are currently in the in background stage. Eight will most likely be left.

Chief Spera stated that if eight go to Chief's Interview, he would pass them all to the Commission.

Commissioner Dunlap stated that it is up to the Chief and the Department to determine if the applicant is culturally suitable. He asked if any have failed that in the past.

Chief Spera stated the he normally uses the polygraph and psychosocial review in the Chief's interview. Not being armed with that report leaves everyone at a disadvantage.

Secretary Stuart stated that should the Police Commission be removed from the process Chief Spera would be making a decision after his interview to give the person who he feels fits best a conditional offer. By bringing five candidates to the Police Commission Chief is saying he would pick these five.

Chief Spera asked the Commission how many candidates they want to interview.

The Police Commission decided they would like to see the top three to five if possible. After the Commission interviews a conditional offer will be made to the top applicant.

Chief Spera stated that the Commission should look at the interview process add more depth and breadth to it. The questions that have been asked in the past during the Commission interview are generic and superficial.

Commissioner Dunlap asked if the Commission can write their own questions to ask in future interviews.

Chief Spera stated that the legal counsel has approved the old questions. Due to labor laws the Commission has to be very careful about what they ask.

Secretary Stuart suggested that each Commissioner can come up with three questions that they submit to legal counsel for review.

Chairman Finch stated each person can do that or the Commission can form a three person subcommittee.

Chief Spera stated there is no time, the academy starts December 31st.

Commissioner Dunlap stated that the subcommittee can discuss and deal with legal counsel.

Chief Spera stated that a subcommittee would be faster if there was more time. A subcommittee still requires notice, public meeting and the entire group has to vote on subcommittee findings. He suggested the Police Commission call a special meeting in the next week or so and develop a workshop.

Commissioner Burnham stated that since there is a time constraint the Commission could use the old questions that have been used in the past and have the subcommittee working on new questions.

The Police Commission agreed to use the old questions for the next interview and form a subcommittee to develop new ones.

Commissioner Coppes asked Chief Spera if he spoke with an attorney on the level of risk with the conditional offers.

Chief Spera stated that action is taken when someone realizes they have a right to take an action.

c. Dispatcher Contract Negotiations

Chief Spera stated that the negotiations are progressing, there is another meeting on October 1st.

2. New Facility Transition – Warranty Work

Chief Spera stated the warranty work continues. They are working on the paving issues, HVAC issues, etc. There are tentative plans to fix the speed bumps in the floor on the raised access starting the end of Oct through Dec. Areas will be displaced for 30-40 days. Executive area, kitchen, hallway, dispatcher kitchen etc. will be closed while work is being done. The department kitchen will be closed first. The same furniture company has been requested to move furniture. Any damage it's on the moving company and Downes Construction agreed to do that. Sod has been installed. It needs to be watered five hours a day. No irrigation system was put in. Chief expects a bit higher water bill moving forward. He is currently trying to see if we can get help to water the grass. We have maintenance worker five days a week but currently nobody on the weekend. The epoxy floor testing has been done but they are still trying to figure out where the problem started. Was it Sherman Williams, Barrier 1, or combination of both that led to the bubbling? When the floor is replaced the department will have to leave that area for about 1 month and the construction company will come in and remove and replace. Chief's concern is if the failure is with additive what about rest of concrete slabs where the flooring is? Since there is no epoxy, that would not bubble. If all have the same moisture issue there is a big concern there. Chief Spera stated that he has all the faith in the world that the tax payers will get the building that the tax payers paid for. There have been more 3rd party consultants coming in lately and they seem to be finding the problems and fixing them. Chief Spera is very hopeful to be done with construction soon.

Commissioner Maselli asked if the Building committee has met recently.

Chief Spera stated that yes the Building committee has met and were briefed regarding everything.

Chairman Finch stated that the construction company has a list of all the issues and while he doesn't know the building trade, he's pleased to see that some issues are being taken care of. For a while it didn't seem like there was a lot of movement but due to the Chief's continued insistence they seem to be moving along. He's very interested in getting these issues moved along and hosting an open house. The tax payers paid for this building and they deserve to see the facility. But there cannot be an open house with construction workers, pavers and more.

Commissioner Maselli asked if the town has a bond to insure this will be taken care of.

Chairman Finch stated that he has been told a portion of the bill has not been paid to ensure that the issues will be taken care of. Some of the fixes are significant and there are lot of dollars involved. There are questions of who will accept responsibility but it won't be the town. The builder and sub-contractors will have to absorb the cost.

Chief Spera thanked Chairman Finch and Commissioner Burnham for attending and helping oversee the facility and warranty issues. There shouldn't have been this many issues and it impacts operation when the Department has to move. He is hopeful this batch of fixes will be the final round.

V. Discussion and Possible Action of Proposed "Police Commission Initiatives"

Chief Spera stated that a couple of months ago he handed the Commission a list of proposed Police Commission Initiatives. This list that was included in tonight's Commissioner Packets as well. Chief Spera would love to see the Commission create subcommittees and attend workshops regarding these initiatives and have the Commission add to this list as well.

Chairman Finch stated that this is not the final list and should a Commissioner like to bring something else up to please get in touch with the Chief or himself and they will add it.

Secretary Stuart stated that he would like to form a subcommittee for the hiring process.

Chairman Finch agreed and suggested that they could call it interview process/hiring process.

Chief Spera suggested using police officer hiring qualifications since it is already on the list. He can have his staff come in and present to the Commission slideshows on any initiatives and answer any questions that the Commission has.

Chairman Finch stated that obviously initiatives will require input from Chief and his Police Officers that have more experience with these agenda items.

Chief Spera stated that some of these items, should the Commission want a presentation these would all have to take a bit of time. He requested to present at the October meeting a workshop dealing with domestic violence.

Chairman Finch asked if there were any objections a domestic violence workshop.

Commissioner Burnham stated that October is a good time to discuss domestic violence.

Commissioner Dunlap asked if that is the most important thing the Commission needs to do right now or should a special meetings be scheduled for that?

The Commission decided that at the October meeting Chief Spera would present a workshop on domestic violence.

Commissioner Burnham stated that body cameras are not something that the Commission has any expertise on and she suggested Chief Spera prepare a workshop on that issue. She asked Chief Spera if that would be something he would look to put in next year's budget or the following year.

Chief Spera responded he would look to add that to the budget in the following year.

Commissioner Maselli stated that he would like to see a workshop on less than lethal force also.

Commissioner Finch stated that in regards to the initiative named parking ticket program including fees the Commission would need some lead time should they want to make a change.

Chief Spera responded that regarding that initiative the Commission should bring different ways to discuss parking tickets. The Department currently doesn't issue many parking tickets but it is something the Commission should talk about. Any changes to the current program would be something that legal counsel would have to see and approve. Chief Spera also brought up the right of an individual to contest a parking ticket. The Town of Old Saybrook currently doesn't have a way for individuals to contest parking tickets. Chief Spera suggested that that the Police Commission could start hearing any contested parking tickets in the beginning of their meetings.

Commissioner Burnham stated that a subcommittee should be formed regarding the fees and parking tickets.

Commissioner Maselli stated that this parking ticket and fees initiative would have to be something that moved fast as he recently attended a park and rec meeting and they were talking about how in January they set the beach pass fee for the upcoming year.

Secretary Stuart suggested that two subcommittee's form-one to start working on hiring process and the other examine the parking ticket and records request fees.

Commissioner Burnham added that the other item she would like to see addressed would be the police chief evaluation process.

Chairman Finch stated that one subcommittee should be about hiring and officer qualifications, second would be fees, parking, permits, outside jobs and records, third would be the police chief evaluation. These three would keep the Police Commission busy for a while and he doesn't want the Commission to take on too much right now.

Commissioner Maselli suggested doing something the Commission can button up before the election. Some new faces will possibly be joining the Police Commission come November and he wants to make sure the Commission doesn't take on too much right now.

Secretary Stuart stated that even if there are changes to the Commission the other members can bring the new people up to speed.

Commissioner Dunlap asked if the previous subcommittee regarding the Chief's evaluation had any findings.

Chairman Finch stated there was no record of the previous subcommittee's findings.

Chief Spera stated that Old Saybrook's evaluation is more detailed than any other department and that there is a negotiation process that has to happen with respect to that.

Chairman Finch asked if the subcommittee can do the job and get back to the Commission within a month.

Commissioner Maselli stated that if something can get that done in a month that subcommittee would go away and the Commission can move on.

The Police Commission decided that the hiring process is the most important initiative. Secretary Stuart and Commissioner Burnham and Dunlap decided to form a subcommittee regarding that topic.

Chief Spera stated that another item for the subcommittee to look at would be the minimum qualifications at other similarly sized towns.

Chairman Finch stated that currently the Old Saybrook Department of Police Services does not require a college degree

Chief Spera added that the possibility of requiring an EMT degree is a good question too. The only downside of requiring more education is it lessens the eligibility pool. The finances of the hiring process would get affected too, the more people the Department eliminates with qualifications the less money brought in to pay for the process.

Commissioner Dunlap stated that the Commission has set qualifications and a hiring process already but the interview questions need to be enhanced. Should the Commission want to change qualifications that should be phase two.

Commissioner Burnham stated that the subcommittee regarding the hiring process should meet should meet first and they can go from there.

Chief Spera stated that he will reconfirm what the process of the subcommittee meeting is with town hall once Secretary Stuart, Commissioners Dunlap and Burnham get a couple of dates in front of the Commission. Regarding the other initiatives park and rec has been looking for the Police Department to increase fees but that is something that can hold off another year. The broader scope questions would include traffic court. Should that become a responsibility of the police commission?

Chairman Finch added that this is not an exclusive list. He stressed if anyone has anything to add to please let him know.

VI. Comments from the Public

Renee Shippee asked that the problem with the carpet in the executive area is.

Chairman Finch stated that there is a bump in the carpet.

Commissioner Maselli specified that the problem is not the carpet it is the sub flooring that is causing the bump in the floor.

Chairman Finch elaborated that where the building has raised flooring there is an issue with the subflooring which is causing the carpet to have a wave in it.

Chief Spera stated that plywood was put down and every 6 inches there is a heave in the floor.

Renee Shippee asked if this wave in the floor could be a HVAC moisture related issue and if the building inspector had seen this bumps. She also asked if the moisture issue at 36 Lynde Street could be related to the water issues that 225 Main Street had.

Chief Spera responded that it is possible that the flooring bump is related to the HVAC moisture issues. The moisture in the building has nothing to do with ground water. 225 Main Street had ground water issues, 36 Lynde Street does not. The HVAC system is failing to evacuate the moisture in the building and the warranty work is centered at assigning fault and then remediation process. The floor testing has been done by a third party independent contractor and the plywood has been sent out but they have not determined who is at fault yet for the floor failure. The construction company is working on assigning blame and fixing the flooring issue.

Renee Shippee stated she would have attended the last building committee meeting but she cannot make a meeting that happens during the day since she works. She asked if any other buildings have experienced the epoxy floor bubbling like 36 Lynde Street.

Chief Spera responded that two independent testers came in to look at the bubbling epoxy floor and one said he has never see it and the other said he saw it happen one other time at the NASA building in Washington, DC.

Renee Shippee asked why building issues haven't been taken care of faster.

Chief Spera stated that he is extremely frustrated with the process and how long it is taking to fix everything but his goal is to make sure that the tax payers get everything that they have paid for.

Renee Shippee asked what has been held back, financially, to the construction company to make sure everything gets fixed.

Chief Spera stated that any financial questions should be directed to the Board of Selectman. He stated that the town is not paying for these issues to be fixed.

Renee Shippee stated that when she spoke with First Selectman Fortuna regarding the Police Department building issues he said that the construction company was fixing everything.

Chief Spera stated that he has asked for various contractors to be fired and different people brought in but he has received push back with some of these vendors. He has full faith and confidence that the town will get the product that they deserve.

Renee Shippee asked if Downes was the construction company.

Chief Spera stated yes Downes is the construction company who built 36 Lynde Street.

Chairman Finch stated that due to the Chief's insistence all warranties will start once everything is up and running property.

Chief Spera stated that there have been a lot of challenges with the new building. The Police Department had to buy their own humidity meter and walk around the building testing humidity at all hours of the day and night. At one point water was dripping from the ceiling and stained many ceiling times. The building is not ready for an open house unfortunately but it will be hopefully soon.

Commissioner Maselli asked when the building committee met and what are they are doing regarding the punch list of issues.

Chief Spera stated that the building committee met recently and that First Selectman Fortuna and Building Committee Chairman Moran recently came and walked the building for the first time allowing Chief Spera to show them firsthand the issues.

Chairman Finch stated that this the town's first time with a design build concept. This is the first building that he can remember where they did didn't have a person overseeing on a daily basis such as a general contractor. Chief doesn't have time to be a contractor he has to run the department.

Renee Shippee agreed that Chief Spera should not be overseeing the building construction and asked if she should be talking to First Selectman Fortuna about these issues.

Chairman Finch stated sure and said the building committee isn't meeting on a regular basis even though they met once recently.

Chief Spera stated the problem is the general contractor, architect and designer all work for Downes Construction. There is no check and balance. The representative from Downes Construction told Chief Spera that never have they seen this many warranty issues with one building before. The Police Department is working around construction as things are being fixed. There are other things that Chief Spera has to attend to. He is hopefully in time this will be all fixed. It is a great facility and the Department cannot wait to show it off but certain items need to be fixed first.

Chris Root stated that he feels body cameras are the smartest thing a police officer can do. He urged the Commission to look into the Police Officers wearing body cameras and he requested that the Police Commission make sure that video is kept for a longer amount of time. He recently called the Police Department requesting video for a particular incident and he was told the video was no available and it is only kept for 8 days. He would like to make sure that nobody else runs into the same problem that he is currently having.

Chief Spera stated that the video system in the building has been an issue. The system was only recently turned over to the Department and normally video is kept longer than 8 days.

Chris Root stated there shouldn't be any issues since he can go to Best Buy and buy a camera.

Chief Spera stated the video system in the building is not that simple.

Renee Shippee asked if the department has any control over video being taken.

Chief Spera responded that yes the Department has control over video being taken, the issue was the hard drive wasn't big enough to store all the video from the numerous cameras within the system. The system was finally turned over to the Department and this again is a sub-contractor of a sub-contractor issue. He has asked for the sub-contractor to be fired time and time again but he has not been fired yet. It's Chief's job to document the issues and try to still achieve greatness with his staff.

Renee Shippee asked about a potential liability issue with the camera system should someone ever claim they were assaulted in the cell.

Chief Spera responded there are other logs other than video to back up any false claims.

VII. **Comments from the Chief of Police**

Chief Spera wanted to thank the Police Commission for a great discussion at tonight's meeting. He reminded the Commission that domestic violence month is October. Domestic violence is a very important issue here in Old Saybrook. The face of domestic violence has changed so much over the years. The Police Officers will be wearing purple ribbons and there will be two ribbons placed on the outside of the PD, there will be a public safety announcement, presentation and more. He is pleased to take a proactive role in a very serious matter.

VIII. **Comments and/or Concerns from Commissioners**

Commissioner Dunlap asked if the Commission should be doing more to escalate the building issues at 36 Lynde Street.

Chief Spera stated that he has had private sessions to discuss this and spoke with First Selectman Fortuna and he doesn't want to escalate anything yet as Downes has been very good at working to fix the issues recently.

Commissioner Dunlap asked the Police Commission if they are doing enough to make sure everyone is kept safe. He is very concerned regarding Mr. Root's missing video footage, he asked Chairman Finch if he was aware of this issue.

Chairman Finch stated that he will have a conversation with the Chief to move this along.

Commissioner Dunlap requested this be put on the agenda for next meeting for follow up.

IX. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Maselli made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Secretary Stuart. 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 October 28, 2015 at 7:00 PM in the first floor conference room at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Damato
Records Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Commission