

## OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

May 23, 2016

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, May 23, 2016 at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

**Present:** Vice Chairman Von Dassel, Secretary Moran and Commissioners Burnham, Cooper, Coppes and Maselli. Chief Spera and Lieutenant Roche were present from the Department of Police Services.

### I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

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

### II. Minutes

#### A. April 25, 2016 Regular Meeting

**Commissioner Maselli made a motion to approve the April 25, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coppes. The motion to approve the April 25, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 6 in favor and 0 against.**

### III. Comments from the Public

Commissioner Cooper asked what the official rules for posting minutes on the Town website are.

Commissioner Burnham stated that minutes should be posted within seven days after the meeting.

Chief Spera asked Commissioner Cooper if the minutes were missing from the website and stated that he will fix the issue.

### IV. Executive Reports

#### A. Financial

##### 1. 15-16 Operating Budget

Chief Spera stated that the Expenses and Supplies budget is running as previously reported. He made a general statement regarding final budget projections stating that he foresees ending the fiscal year a little over or right on budget. He stated that the only thing that would negatively impact the budget would be settlement or personnel changes.

Commissioner Cooper asked Chief Spera about the Misc. Small Equipment line item. He inquired as to why it was over budget. Chief Spera explained as previously reported that ammunition for the four recruits in the academy was the reason. Commission Cooper stated that he felt that ammunition should be categorized under a different line item. Chief Spera asked him to refer to the Misc. Small Equipment description in the budget book for better clarification as to what that line item is used for. Chief Spera

stated that ammunition has always been budgeted and charged to the Misc. Small Equipment but should the Commission want that changed, they could make that adjustment when creating the 2017-2018 budget document.

Commissioner Coppes inquired to where the car lease payment expenditures were.

Chief Spera stated that town hall handles that payment and it comes out of the Police Capital account.

Commissioner Cooper asked if maintenance was included in the lease.

Chief Spera stated that the vehicles still under warranty are covered with certain maintenance but most do not and that vehicle maintenance is paid for out of the vehicle maintenance line item.

Commissioner Cooper inquired about a rumor he heard regarding a police dog being retired.

Chief Spera stated that as reported at the last Commission meeting he said that one of the Police Canine teams was originally scheduled to be retired in the fall and replaced but the dog will not be replaced until funds have been restored.

Commissioner Cooper asked if the retirement is for the dog only.

Chief Spera replied yes the Police Officer will remain an Officer.

Commissioner Cooper asked if it would be more cost effective to retire the younger dog since the canine handler lives farther away than the older canine and handler.

Chief Spera responded where employees live is not a matter of discussion and no.

Commissioner Coppes asked how utilized the dogs are.

Chief Spera stated that numbers indicated that the Department could reduce down to one canine team but there are circumstances when two were needed and utilized.

Commissioner Coppes state that he understood that reducing one K-9 Team would prevent the ability for the Department to Flex Up when the resource is needed.

## **2. 16-17 Budget Process**

Chief Spera stated that the residents of the Town of Old Saybrook passed the budget. Chief Spera advised the Commission that the budget did not include retro pay or any contract settlement raises. When those contracts are signed he recommended that the Commission send a letter to the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectman regarding the new expenses and request that funds be added to next year's budget to cover the new fiscal liabilities.

## **3. Report of Off Budget Accounts**

Chief Spera reviewed the Off Budget Account spreadsheet. Commissioner Cooper asked if the Commission will ever get to see the ins and outs for the off budget accounts. Chief Spera asked what

exactly was Commission Cooper looking for. Commissioner Cooper stated that he is looking for what came in and what came out.

Secretary Moran stated he would like to vote to have the dog handler live in town.

Chief Spera stated that he cannot do that. The Commission can speak to the First Selectman about adding that to the contract but the Commission cannot dictate that.

Secretary Moran requested a list of vehicles that drive outside of town. He would like the mileage of all vehicles.

Chief Spera stated that the numbers were provided during budget season in the slide show presentation.

Secretary Moran requested a list of vehicles and mileage.

Chief Spera stated that he will get that information for him.

Chief Spera also added that he will provide the Commission with a detailed report for each off budget account.

## **B. Administrative**

### **1. Personnel Report**

Chief Spera advised the Commission that a Police Officer has been out sick more than 25 days. Last Commission meeting Chief Spera reported that four employees were ready to have babies. One baby has been born and is healthy and the second one is currently on his way.

Chief Spera advised the Commission that there is the possibility of an Old Saybrook Police Officer leaving to go to another department. The Department has begun the process looking for a Certified Police Officer.

Commission Cooper had a question regarding how sick time was tallied on the payroll spreadsheet. Chief Spera explained how payroll and sick time backfill is calculated to the Commission.

Chief Spera also advised the Commission that the Department has begun the process looking for a per diem assistant animal control officers and a per diem marine boat handlers.

### **2. Facility Warranty Work**

Chief Spera advised the Commission that he was still working though some warranty issues with Downes Construction. Downes gave Chief Spera a final version of their punch list. For most of the items Downes and Chief Spera are on the same page but one of the more significant remaining issue is the video system both its performance and storage. He is still waiting to work through the remaining items on the punch list. There still is no resolution for the parking lot issues. The vinyl baseboard molding that was falling off the walls in the building has been re glued and re applied to the wall.

Commissioner Maselli asked if re paving the parking lot would pose an issue for department personnel.

Chief Spera stated that he is hopeful that re paving will happen once St. John's school is on summer break and Department members would be able to park over there.

### **3. Activity Report**

The Activity Report was provided to the Commission.

### **4. Legal Traffic Authority Briefing**

Chief Spera advised the Commission that the paving on Rt. 1 should be complete soon and that the pressure sensor settings will be replaced.

He updated the Commission on the Ingham Hill resident request and the Pathway Lighting request stated they both remain with the First Selectman and there has been no movement on either since the last report.

### **5. Dispatch Contract – Possible Settlement**

Chief Spera advised the Commission that there is a tentative formal agreement between the Town and the union. The terms of the contract will not be public until both sides sign the contract. The Town has signed the contract but the union must sign now. When the contract is made public the Dispatchers will receive retroactive money which could come out of this year's budget or next year's.

## **V. Reports of Sub Committees / Liaisons**

### **1. Law Enforcement Personnel Hiring Subcommittee**

Commissioner Burnham stated that the subcommittee has not had opportunity to meet since last meeting.

### **2. Law Enforcement Fund**

Commissioner Burnham stated that as discussed at the previous month's Police Commission meeting the group will meet once they have funds to disperse. They have not received any notice of funds being deposited so they have not met.

### **3. Police Contract Negotiation**

The Town and the Police Union will have their third and final exchange of proposals at a meeting schedule for Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> at 10am.

## **VI. Discussion and Possible Action Concerning the Development of a RFQ/RFP for a Professional Study/Review of Police Operations**

Vice Chairman Von Dassel stated that Chairman Stuart wanted this item on the agenda but he had no knowledge of where the request came from or why the request was brought up.

Commissioner Maselli stated that he watched the last Board of Finance meeting and that it was brought up there. He stated that he was not sure if the Police Commission is being targeted but the Board of Finance discussed drafting a RFP and coming to the Police Commission with it. Commissioner Maselli was confused as to the purpose of the study. He stated that nobody on the Board of Finance seemed to have any clarity as to why this study was brought up.

Commissioner Burnham suggested to table the discussion until the next meeting when Chairman Stuart could advise to why he put it on the agenda.

Commissioner Coppes stated that whoever initiated the conversation should come to the Police Commission and present their recommendation.

**Commissioner Burnham made a motion to table any discussion until a Board of Finance or Board of Selectman member is able to come in and present as to why this discussion was brought up. Commissioner Maselli seconded the motion. The motion to table the discussion passed with a vote of 6 in favor and 0 against.**

VII. Discussion and Possible Action concerning an "Audience of Citizens" By-Law Amendment

**Commissioner Burnham made a motion to adopt the "Audience of Citizens" policy and add it to the Police Commission By-Laws. Commissioner Maselli seconded the motion. The motion to accept the "Audience of Citizens" By-Law Amendment passed with a vote of 6 in favor and 0 against.**

VIII. Comments from the Public

Renee Shippee stated that she attended the Board of Finance meeting and doesn't feel that it is a witch hunt. She questioned why the money that was cut from the canine program couldn't have come from the Traffic Safety Fund since it was all donated money.

Chief Spera stated that the Traffic Safety Fund is not made up of donated money.

Renee stated that she doesn't understand the sick pay payroll accounting process the Department uses.

Chief Spera explained that when someone is sick they still earn their salary but they are not at work. Backfilling comes out of a different category, usually the sick employee line item.

Renee asked if it was possible to get academy training money back from the Police Officer who is possibly leaving.

Chief Spera stated that the law was deemed unconstitutional so no.

IX. Comments from the Chief of Police

Chief Spera advised the Police Commission that the DARE Graduation is tomorrow evening May 24, 2016 and all are invited.

He stated that the St Johns students graduated last week at a ceremony that took place in the Police Department's training room.

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

Vice Chairman Von Dassel brought up a crosswalk issue on Main Street that was brought to him by a concerned citizen. The citizen is concerned that the parking spaces are too close to the crosswalks and it is dangerous for pedestrians.

Chief Spera stated that he spoke to the same concerned citizen about the issue and then spoke with a State Department of Transportation Engineer about the matter. While regulations for road design have changed Main Street is still in compliance due to the fact that when Main Street was designed and built it was in compliance with all the rules and regulations for that time. If Main Street was to get redesigned the number of parking spaces, which are currently prime real estate, would be drastically reduced. In order for anything to happen Chief Spera stated that first the First Selectman would have to speak with the business owners on Main Street regarding having less parking. The State Department of Transportation passed it on to the Town to decide what to do and Chief Spera is not ready to offer a change of parking space design.

XI. **Adjournment**

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

**The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.**

*The next regular Police Commission meeting is scheduled for June 27, 2016 at 7:00 PM in the first floor conference room at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.*

Respectfully submitted by:

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Jennifer Damato  
Records Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Commission