

OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION
Subcommittee to Create a Draft RFP/RFQ Operational Study Document
September 7, 2016
MINUTES

A special subcommittee meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Wednesday, September 7, 2016 at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

Present: Adam Stuart, Breckenridge Lindley, Bryan Coppes, First Selectman Carl Fortuna, Donald Cooper, Chief Spera and Barry O’Nell.

This meeting was video and audio taped by the Town of Old Saybrook.

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

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

II. **Review of the Subcommittee’s Charge**

The Chairman asked if all members received the Committee’s charge which all acknowledged that they did.

III. **Discussion and Possible Action on the Creation of a Draft RFP/RFQ for a Study of The Department of Police Services’ Operations**

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he called around to other towns looking to see if they had ever had a study similar and he couldn’t find one. He stated that he reached out to the state, specifically CCM contact Brian West and he couldn’t find one in CT. First Selectman Fortuna kept looking and the draft RFP/RFQ is pieced together from three studies that were done out of Pennsylvania, Canada and California. He also added that everyone of the charges were due to the Police Department being in crisis or merging with another Department. He stated that it appears to be a little bit of an unusual thing to do and that there usually is are very specific reasons to do this. He wanted the members to know how the draft came about and that it came from three different sources. This wasn’t an original document and he stated that he had the Finance Director review it and he will not be offended if the Committee doesn’t use it for the final draft.

Breckenridge Lindley Smith asked if Clinton ever did a similar study.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he was not familiar with Clinton ever doing a similar study but thought that Hartford and Stonington both did one a long time ago.

Chief Spera added that to his knowledge nothing similar has been done in the past ten years.

Chairman Stuart stated that he would like to start with what the Committee agrees on and move on from there. He stated that the committee can add on to the draft if necessary and compose the final document.

Chief Spera stated that before anything is done he would like to know what concerns do committee members have about the Department and what they feel are the reasons for doing a study.

Chairman Stuart stated that there is a two part answer to that question, one the Police Commission took a vote and two it really doesn't matter. The Committee was tasked with this and each member signed up to do this.

Chief Spera stated that he disagrees and that it does matter since he would like to make sure that everyone's concerns are being met as the RFP is being developed. The questions that residents or Town Committee members have need to be addressed.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that one question that he has been asked over the years and that he himself actually asked when he was on the Board of Finance was why the Town has 25 Police Officers. There has been more and there has been less over the years. Why is the Town at 25 right now? He added that he is reasonably comfortable right now that number as he knows that the Police Officers are also first responders for the Town.

Barry O'Neill stated that there is no way to benchmark the Police Department. The Town has no idea how much things should cost etc. The Department has been restructured a couple of times but what is the best and most efficient way to operate.

Adam Stuart stated that he looks at this as an internal review of the Police Commission and the Police Department. He would like to know how the Police Department is doing as a Department not being compared to other towns. He stated that maybe things can be done better.

Donald Cooper stated that he feels that there is a responsibility that he has a Police Commission member to oversee the Police Department and the Police Chief. He doesn't have the standards to evaluate and doesn't know if there is not enough or too many Police Officers. He feels that the current cost structure doesn't make sense compared to other Towns.

Barry O'Neill stated that he wants to put the RFP out there to see how much it is going to cost.

Breckinridge Lindley stated that she would like to know why the Police Department is overrunning the budget each year. She stated that the Board of Finance is told that they are not fully funding the Police Department budget but she doesn't have the confidence on how the Department is being run. She would feel comfortable having an expert come in and giving their opinion. She doesn't want to continue to see the budget overrun.

Bryan Coppes stated he feels that the comparisons can be done nationally. He would like to know how the Department is doing based upon other Towns.

Chief Spera stated that it's very hard to compare local Departments' as each is met with its own policing challenges that represent the communities they serve.

Bryan Coppes stated that it's important to put it down on paper as that basis is the starting point.

Chief Spera stated that he would like to see a local and national comparison done.

Donald Cooper stated that the group should be careful comparing to national standards.

Chief Spera stated that he feels we should benchmark against national standards and neighborhood communities and would like to see both.

Donald Cooper stated that he would like to compare to towns that have similar characteristics as Old Saybrook. He stated that the Marine Patrol is staffed at overtime and that there has to be a more cost effective way to staff. Sometimes national comparisons are good but it may not be where we want it to be.

Chief Spera stated that the Old Saybrook High school is held to a national standards so why wouldn't the Committee want to do the same with the Police Department. It's very important to look at local and national standards he stated.

Donald Cooper stated that Public Safety is different than a high school.

Chief Spera stated that he is aware of how agencies are benchmarked and that with the national standards the Committee should want to know where the Old Saybrook Police Department stands.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that any firm that the Committee choses will look at staffing levels, per capita cost perspective and both national and local standards will come into play.

The Committee continued to read through the document and make changes.

Chief Spera suggested adding more specific qualifications to weed out the non-qualified consulting groups.

Adam Stuart disagreed stated that he would rather everyone send a proposal in and the Committee can weed through them and decide who is qualified or not.

Chief Spera stated that he would like to make sure the firm has experience consulting for Police Departments similar to Old Saybrook's size.

Barry O'Neil stated that it can't be done.

Adam Stuart stated that the Committee is not here to pick the firm and that they cannot make the criteria so difficult.

The subcommittee discussed the time frame for the process.

Chief Spera suggested changing some dates and times and asked why the proposals were not going to mailed to the Police Department, adding that all proposals would have to be kept sealed until opened publically by the Commission.

Donald Cooper stated that for the Department's benefit take the Police Department out of it and be totally as transparent as possible.

The decision was made for the proposals to be mailed to Finance Director Lee Ann Palladino at the Town Hall who will hold them and then give them to the Police Commission.

The Committee discussed how long the RFP/RFQ should be posted for and where it should be posted.

Breckinridge Lindley asked if the Committee can reach out to firms.

First Selectman Fortuna stated yes but that he doesn't suggest doing it.

Adam Stuart stated that the Police Commission will answer all questions from the bidders as the Police Commission will be picking the firm.

Chief Spera suggested making a generic email address for firms to submit questions. The email can have an automatic response set up that says something along the lines of "Thank you for your question, it will be submitted to the Police Commission."

It was decided that Lee Ann Palladino will be in charge of the email and she will forward the questions to the Police Commission Chairman.

The Committee continued to go through the document and make changes.

First Selectman Fortuna asked if the Committee is just for drafting the RFP and that the Police Commission is selecting the actual vendor.

Adam Stuart stated yes.

Breckinridge Lindley asked then what is she doing here.

Chief Spera stated that the Committee is drafting the RFP, the Police Commission is the governing board of the Police Department.

There was discussion about who should pick the firm. Barry O'Neil and Breckenridge Lindley feel that they should be part of picking the firm.

Chief Spera suggested adding union representation to help interview perspective firms.

The Committee disagreed.

Changes were made to the evaluation criteria.

Chief Spera suggested making it more specific.

The Committee wanted to leave it broad.

Breckenridge Lindley wanted to add that Emergency Management would be looked at too.

Chief Spera disagreed stating that Emergency Management falls under the Office of the First Selectman.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that Emergency Management would not be looked at but that Marine Patrol can be added since it falls under the scope of the Police Commission.

Adam Stuart stated that Emergency Management should not be part of this study.

Chief Spera stated that Emergency Communications, Animal Control, and Marine Patrol fall under the scope of the Police Commission.

Chief Spera suggested adding language that the firm must have experience working with labor unions and labor union contracts.

The Committee voted no to adding labor union language.

The Committee skipped the scope of work for now and moved on to the deliverable section.

The Committee discussed having the firm present the findings. First Selectman Fortuna and Chief Spera wanted it mandatory that the firm would present the findings at a public meeting and the rest of the Committee wanted the option of having the firm present or not present.

Chief Spera asked with all the transparency talk why would the Committee not want the findings presented.

The Committee moved on to the Proposal Format Guidelines

Chief Spera suggested adding a conflict of interest section and non-disclosure language. He also requested to add a FBI style/level background check for anyone who will be working inside the Police Department.

The language was added to the draft.

Chief Spera also suggested added detailed pricing to the proposals. Should anything come back with outrageous prices they Committee can pick and choose what they want to focus on.

The Committee agreed.

IV. **Discussion and Possible Action to plan future meeting dates**

V. **Adjournment**

Breckenridge Lindley made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Donald Cooper. The motion to adjourn 7 in favor and 0 against.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Damato
Records Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Commission

