

OLD SAYBROOK POLICE COMMISSION

Special Meeting
January 23, 2017
MINUTES

A special meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, January 23, 2017 at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

Present: First Selectman Fortuna, Chairman Stuart, Commissioner Cooper, Commissioner Coppes, Board of Finance Members Barry O'Neill and Breckinridge Smith Lindley and Chief Spera and Lieutenant Roche were present from the Department of Police Services.

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 7:04 PM and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

III. Continued Discussion on the Creation of a Draft RFP/RFQ for a Study of the Department of Police Services' Operations.

Chairman Stuart stated that he would like to know what each subcommittee member would like to see as a result of this study. He inquired as to what questions members would like to ask and what questions they would like to get answered.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he believes this subcommittee has been formed since members of the Police Commission and the Board of Finance want to see if the Police Department is being run effectively and efficiently. His concern with the study is the cost.

Barry O'Neill stated that he would like to see benchmarks for where the Old Saybrook Police Department is at.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that benchmarks are very hard in the State of CT since the state is chopped up into many small towns, municipalities etc. It's very hard to benchmark to a similar sized town.

Commissioner Coppes stated that it would be nice to have a study that says why costs are different between neighboring towns. He feels that if the study will not compare to other towns it is no help to the Commission.

Commissioner Cooper stated he would like to see how to reduce turnover, if staffing levels are correct and if scheduling is done in the most efficient, cost effective way.

Breckinridge Smith Lindley stated she would like to see a focus on the efficiency of operation and fiscal management.

Commissioner Cooper asked he would like to see what the image of the Police Department within the town is.

Chief Spera stated that he heard many different answers regarding what members would like to see but mostly it seems to be questions regarding man power. He has provided national formulas to both the Police Commission and the Board of Finance which state that the Old Saybrook Police Department is currently understaffed. Chief Spera stated that he is not asking for more Officers. He stated that he doesn't feel that the Department is fiscally mismanaged. Each year a budget book is produced spelling out to the town why the Department is requesting the resources they need. Reality comes into play too, staff gets hurt, people retire and other abnormalities come up and the Department has to deal with each on an individual basis. A personnel study might shed some light into that. He would like to see a man power and organizational structure overview to see what the Old Saybrook Police Department should be using for civilian and sworn personnel.

The subcommittee spoke about the Draft Proposal that First Selectman Fortuna drafted.

Chairman Stuart stated that he would like to go into this with what the subcommittee is looking for and let the proposals come back and the Commission can go from there.

Breckinridge Smith Lindley stated she would rather have a broad scope and let the consultant narrow it down.

The subcommittee discussed if the study should focus on what the Old Saybrook Police Department has now and analyze how the Department is run or if they should come in and determine in an ideal world what the Old Saybrook Police Department should have for organizational structure.

Chief Spera would like the consultant to come to Old Saybrook and tell the Commission what the Police Department should have.

Breckinridge Smith Lindley stated she would like them to focus on job descriptions and tell the Commission if the jobs are actually being done.

Chief Spera stated that is requesting an evaluation of the current department.

Commissioner Coppes stated that he would like to see the consultant set up the Department from square 1 to see in a perfect world what the Town of Old Saybrook should have and he would like to see how the Department can be run better.

Barry O'Neil stated he would like to see them evaluate what the Department already has. Is it run efficiently or can there be some improvements.

Chief Spera stated that the standards still have to be based upon something. There needs to be an ideal Police Department to compare the Old Saybrook Police Department to.

Barry O’Nell stated that he is looking to see if there is a more efficient way to do things. He is not looking to re-design the Police Department but just wants to see if what is going on is correct.

Commissioner Coppes stated he would like to know why other towns are able to run things cheaper.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he feels the blank slate study is a waste of money. He meets a lot with Chief Spera and he stated that Chief Spera cares a lot about the amount and how the dollars are spent. There are a lot of things that the Chief could give away to his Police Officers during contract negotiations that has been kept out due to the Chief. He would like to know if the Town provides the appropriate level of service and does the town have the appropriate number of cops.

Barry O’Nell stated he would like to validate everything that the Police Department does.

Commissioner Cooper stated that they need to put out a proposal and get feedback back.

Chief Spera stated that the proposal should ask for itemized pricing.

Chairman Stuart stated that he will put everything down and email it out to the members so they can review and think about everything.

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

The subcommittee picked February 6 and 13 at 7:00PM for future meetings.

V. **Adjournment**

Breckinridge Smith Lindley made a motion to adjourn, Barry O’Nell seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 against.

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Damato
Records Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Commission