

**STONINGTON BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 11, 2011
5:00 PM AT THE STONINGTON POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chair Susette Tibus
Commissioners Dr. Stephen Coan, Mel Olsson and Frank Pucci
Chief Darren Stewart and Captain Jerry Desmond

1) Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Tibus called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

2) Remarks of Visitors

Traffic Item a. Re: River Glow, Downtown Westerly RI/Pawcatuck

Michelle, from the Greater Westerly-Pawcatuck Area Chamber of Commerce was in attendance regarding the request to hold their River Glow event on August 13, 2011. The Chamber is also requesting No Parking in Donahue Park on Friday night, August 12, 2011 and barricades be placed.

A motion was made by Chair Tibus to approve the request of the Greater Westerly-Pawcatuck Area Chamber of Commerce to hold River Glow on August 13, 2011. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsson and approved.

Doug Stambridge, Bridges Corporation

Requesting approval to install a convex mirror on a utility pole directly across from McGrath Court in the Borough in order for trucks working on the railroad bridge project in the Borough to be able to see around the corner of McGrath Court and North Water Street (Route 1A) as they enter traffic. Approval is still needed from the utility company that owns the pole. The installation of the mirror will be temporary until the end of the project in mid winter.

Commissioner Coan made a motion to approve the temporary installation of the convex mirror pending approval from the utility company. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsson and approved.

Bonnie Castleman, Pawcatuck, CT

Jason and Danielle Hughes, Pawcatuck, CT

Residents were in attendance to express concerns and ask for the Police Department's assistance with possible illegal activity in their neighborhood.

2) **Remarks of Visitors (cont'd)**

Chief Stewart expressed that addressing these issues through the Police Department is the proper venue as the Department relies on people in neighborhoods to alert them of issues with possible illegal activity and encourages citizens to call. Chief Stewart said that "communication is the backbone of what we need to know." The Police Department will be reaching out to these citizens to discuss the issues further.

Chair Tibus expressed that there is a great line of communication between the Commission, Chief and Captain. She said she was glad they came in.

3) **Traffic**

- a. Letters Re: River Glow *VOTE NEEDED* - See Remarks of Visitors
- b. E-Mail Re: Mystic Bridge – Early Completion
- c. E-Mail Re: Quiambaug Family Fun Day *FYI*
- d. E-Mail Re: Parking Lot – 6 Cogswell St. – This is a Town issue. An agreement made with the Town for use of the lot is fine. If they want to put up signs they must come before the Commission for approval.
- e. E-Mail & Letter Re: Signage on Lathrop Avenue – Signs have already been put up.
- f. E-Mail Re: Westerly Sun Article – Crosswalks for Seat Bus Riders – Chief Stewart said there is already a crosswalk at the intersection of Route 1 and Spellman Drive which has the pedestrian crossing buttons. He does not believe the State will put in another crosswalk 100' to 150' without the crossing buttons.
- g. Detour on Deans Mill Road for Town Paving *VOTE NEEDED* - Joe Bragaw, Director of Public Works addressed this item. There will be paving done on Deans Mill Road up to Montauk Avenue and Pellegrino Road starting Wednesday of next week. It should take two or three days and the Commission is being asked to grant permission to detour traffic with the exception of local residents. A letter has been sent to all residents on the streets affected and notification has been placed in the newspapers. Paving now will not affect the school bus routes. Traffic controllers will be placed on each end of the road and following the equipment. The Highway Department is also coordinating with the Aquarion Water Company project and will pave over that section of Jerry Brown Road once the project is completed so the road will look uniform. He will also be coordinating with Bill King from the Stonington School Department.

Motion to approve detouring traffic during the Town paving made by Commissioner Coan. Motion seconded by Commissioner Olsson and approved.

3) Traffic (cont'd)

- h. Route 184 @ Deans Mill Road DOT Study/Recommendation – The State will be sending a letter off due to the number of motor vehicle accidents on Route 184 at Taugwonk Road. Chief Stewart is recommending a traffic light be put at that intersection, but that the State Traffic Commission disagrees. He will be attending a meeting before the State Traffic Commission on September 20, 2011 in Newington. He will keep the Commission informed.

4) Approval of Minutes for July 14, 2011 Regular Meeting *VOTE NEEDED*

A motion was made by Commissioner Olsson to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2011 Regular Meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Pucci and approved.

5) New Business

None

6) Old Business

- a. Social Networking Policy – Chief Stewart said this is a different, toned down policy from the one originally presented to the Commission. He spoke with the Chief in Putnam and this is almost word for word their policy. The only change that will be made is on page 2. Under section IV. Department Use, the words “without authorization” will be changed to “without supervisory approval”. The intention of this policy is to give guidance to members of the department in regard to social networking.

Motion to approve the Social Networking Policy made by Commissioner Coan. Motion seconded by Commissioner Pucci and approved.

7) Report of the Chief of Police

- a. Monthly Report – Chief Stewart noted that Medical Calls are up 200 more from last year. Also, Animal Control calls are quite high due to the number of calls about rabid animals.
- b. Alarms – Sgt. Morrison is the new sergeant handling alarms
- c. New Police Vehicles – Recent bids for new vehicles went out with Groton Town’s bids. There is a need to move quickly on this as Ford is no longer making the Crown Victoria Police Interceptor model and is going with a Taurus version. A couple of companies stock piled 2011 Crown Victoria’s. Chief Stewart is asking the Commission for permission to send a request to the Board of Finance to utilize existing CIP funding to purchase one unmarked Administrative 4-wheel drive, SUV style vehicle.

7) Report of the Chief of Police (cont'd)

Motion to approve the request to the Board of Finance for the purchase of one unmarked Administrative vehicle made by Commissioner Coan. Motion seconded by Commissioner Pucci and approved.

Commissioner Coan needed to clarify that the only difference is the vehicle being purchased for Administrative use. The Department already has SUV's and is trying out a new Ford Explorer that will potentially become one of the fleet. The Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptor models are 4-wheel drive.

- d. Henry C. Lee Forensic Science Institute – Chief Stewart was invited, along with 10 – 12 other Chief's from Connecticut, to meet with Dr. Lee. There are grants for Departments to utilize equipment and training free of charge. This will be a good training opportunity for the Detective Division. Individual officers from around the area can receive specialized training and can be called upon if the need arises.

- e. Special Events

- f. Weight Room – A few union members expressed an interest in bringing the existing weight room up to standards. There is a company that will be willing to donate some items and assist in setting up. The cost will be \$12,000. The Department will be able to assist with \$4,900 which can be taken from various areas of the budget that have residual funds. The union will be working on raising funds to match what the Department will be able to contribute.

Motion to approve the upgrade of the Weight Room as long as the cost is within the Budget made by Commissioner Olsson. Seconded by Commissioner Pucci and approved.

- g. Records Destruction Per State Statute *VOTE NEEDED* - Motion to start the process of records destruction made by Commissioner Olsson. Motion seconded by Commissioner Pucci and approved.

- i. Set Date for ACO Facility Ribbon Cutting – The Facility is close to completion. Tentative date for ribbon cutting ceremony is Saturday, October 1, 2011 at 10am.

- h. Radar Sign – Chief Stewart presented the new Radar Sign to the Commission. This solar powered sign can be placed on high impact roads, can be moved from location to location and can collect data such as traffic counts and speed.

- j. Route 27 @ I95 Pedestrian Issue – There are concerns about a group of people who are soliciting money at this intersection. Chief Stewart has been in contact with the Mystic Chamber of Commerce on what, by law, can and can't be done about this situation. The Department of Transportation will be putting up signs prohibiting people from walking up the ramp onto I95.

7) Report of the Chief of Police (cont'd)

Commissioner Olsson made a motion to approve the Report of the Chief of Police. Motion seconded by Commissioner Coan and approved.

8) Correspondence

- a. Letter Re: Stonington High School 10th Anniversary Commemoration of 9/11 – The Police Department will participate in this ceremony.

9) Consent Agenda

- a. Letter Re: Thank You – National EMS
- b. Letter Re: Thank You – Women’s Center of SE CT
- c. Memo Re: Sgt. Diamanti – 25 Years of Service – Chair Tibus congratulated Sgt. Diamanti on this milestone.
- d. Letters Re: St. Michael’s Maria Assunta Procession
- e. Highway Use Permit: Maria Assunta Procession
- f. E-Mail Re: Hurdle 2011
- g. Memo Re: Good Job – Officer Saunders
- h. Memo Re: Good Job – Officers Rebello & Discordia
- i. Letter Re: Thank You – Retired Lt. Raymond Curioso
- j. Memo Re: Thank You – Captain Desmond & Reserve Officer Cassata
- k. Article Re: “Anatomy of a Standoff: Seeking Better Ways To Defuse Tension”
- l. Memo Re: LEC Supervisor & Recert Training
- m. Memo Re: Good Job – Sgt. Knowles
- n. Memo Re: Good Job – Officer Howard
- o. Memo Re: Good Job – Officer Discordia
- p. Memo Re: Officer Ritacco – 10 Year Anniversary
- q. Memo Re: Good Job – Officer Hersh – Chair Tibus commended Officer Hersh on a good job.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda made by Commissioner Pucci. Seconded by Commissioner Coan and approved.

Brief Discussions

There were brief discussions on the following:

Burglaries in Pawcatuck – Commissioner Olsson noted that the number of burglaries on the monthly report has not increased. Chief Stewart said that you will occasionally see a spike in the numbers, but there has been no significant increase. Chief Stewart also noted there is a strong police presence in Pawcatuck and also a Community Service Officer in Downtown Pawcatuck.

Brief Discussions (cont'd)

Social Networking Policy – Commissioner Olsson wondered what type of training and education will be provided for the Department with regards to this policy. Captain Desmond explained that this policy will make it in with the annual policies that are signed off on by the officers. No training has been discussed yet. Chief Stewart explained that policies are given to the officers by the supervisors. Officers are given the opportunity to read the policy and ask any questions before signing off that they have read it, understand it and have had all questions answered. The policy is not just placed in their mailbox.

Chief Stewart mentioned that the Board of Selectman approved propertyroom.com and the Aquarium signage.

Chief Stewart showed the Commission one of the four new assault rifles that was purchased as part of the weapon upgrade. These rifles will be placed on patrol beats with certain officers. Chair Tibus inquired as to how the certain officers would be picked. Chief Stewart explained that officers will be chosen based on military training. Also, some officers have qualified and are certified with this type of weapon and have made requests. The weapons will not be in every vehicle. Chief Stewart invited the members of the Commission to the training for this type of weapon.

10) Adjourn

A motion was made by Commissioner Olsson to adjourn. Motion seconded by Commissioner Coan and approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Frank Pucci
Secretary