

MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2011  
IN THE MEETING ROOM OF TOWN HALL SOUTH  
3 MAIN STREET, NEWTOWN

*These minutes are not finalized until approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting.*

Chairman Duane Giannini called the meeting to order at 7:35pm

**PRESENT:** Duane Giannini, Brian Budd, James Viadero, Bruce Walczak, Neil Randle

**ALSO PRESENT:** Police Chief Michael Kehoe, Captain Joe Rios, Director of Communications Maureen Will, Director of Public Works Fred Hurley, fourteen members of the public and one member of the press.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**James Walsh**, 3 North Branch Road welcomed Dr. Randle to the board and asked how we move forward following the completion of the traffic study. Commissioner Giannini said the data will be analyzed, looking at both pre and post data. His guess is that the speeds will be what they were prior to traffic calming device. A decision will then be made if a permanent traffic study device will be put in and a study of the location will be done. Mr. Walsh made mention of a letter from Mrs. Larsen asking if the behavior of a particular person is breaking the law. Chief Kehoe confirmed that a person disturbing the peace is breaking the law. Captain Rios noted that where a car is garaged for six months or longer determines where it has to be registered and taxed. Chief Kehoe encouraged Mr. Walsh to speak to the Board of Education Transportation Department saying that the bus goes down Key Rock Road in a southerly direction and comes back in a northerly direction; the bus will pick up the children while going in the southerly direction to avoid having the children crossing the street. Mr. Walsh said he will continue in his attempt to slow speeders down.

**Priscilla Jones**, 5 Meadow spoke on behalf of the neighborhood to talk about the removal of the cross walk signs, the lack of the replacement of the stanchions and the lack of repainting of the lines after the speed table was removed on Glover Avenue. Just having the signs made a difference, people were aware of the pedestrians. It is much more difficult to cross without the stanchion. There will be many children crossing Glover in future years; neighbors participated in meetings regarding the traffic study and hope something happens sooner rather than later.

**Chris Buccieri**, 3 Mt. Nebo Road & **Chris Salvaggi**, 6 Mt. Nebo Road stated that there is a traffic study taking place now; there was also a study completed in 2009-2010. The vehicles drive up and down the hill at a high rate of speed making it difficult to slow down if necessary, such in the case of coming upon a school bus. Mr. Buccieri has offered the police his driveway in an effort to catch speeders. Chief Kehoe said that data will be collected from the speed signs and tubes and the traffic unit will be sent out to enforce the speed limit. Commissioner Giannini referred residents to the website for a traffic calming guideline.

**Lisa Floros**, 32 Queen Street emphatically asked the commission to maintain the crosswalks and to put the crosswalk back on Glover Avenue saying many adults and children us it. She said speed tables were approved for Queen Street years ago and nothing was ever done about it. Commissioner Giannini said there is money in this budget for a study of the Queen Street area explaining that an actual traffic engineering study was never done. If the money is approved an RFP will be sent to traffic engineering firms to do a study. The Volmer study supplied recommendations but no engineering. Commissioner Walczak stated that there was no traffic calming ordinance when Volmer did the study. Commissioner

Giannini stressed that there is a process to follow, progress will be made but he couldn't give a definitive time frame.

**Margaret O'Neill Murphy**, 8 Meadow Road said that people were not happy with the speed bump; it was very loud for neighbors nearby but were pleased that the stanchions and signs were left behind after the speed bump was removed. We need to be adding more crosswalks in town, not taking them away. Please put the crosswalk back at Meadow to keep the town safer.

**ADD TO AGENDA:** Commissioner Walczak moved to move up item 6b under Unfinished Business, discussion and consideration of the crosswalk at Glover & Meadow. Commissioner Viadero seconded. All in favor.

Commissioner Giannini submitted a letter to the Commissioners dated April 25, 2011 (Att. A) stating that in April 2007 the board in approved a crosswalk at intersection of Meadow with the appropriate markings. Mr. Hurley confirmed there are no issues with repainting the crosswalk, putting the signs back up and putting the state approved stanchions in the center. Commissioner Giannini encouraged parents to tell their children not to step foot into the crosswalk until they understand the vehicle is going to stop.

Commissioner Giannini moved the crosswalk at Glover and Meadow be reinstated and striped along with the appropriate signage and the stanchion placed in the middle of that road as soon as possible. Commissioner Randle seconded. Commissioner Budd would like to see it done as a raised hump again, temporary or permanent, for the safety of pedestrians. Commissioner Walczak said if the table is a traffic calming issue it would fall under the traffic calming ordinance; if it is part of the crosswalk then it is not part of the ordinance. He said to protect the crosswalk tables should be put 75 yards ahead of the crosswalk on either side. Mr. Hurley said another option is to add stamped concrete which raises the crosswalk an inch or two, making the material permanent and clearly different from the rest of the roadway. Commissioner Walczak moved to amend the motion to immediately repaint Meadow and Glover, put the signs up on either side and the stanchion in the middle of the road and concurrent to that begin a study that looks at the option of some raised traffic calming, long term, permanent device in that area. Commissioner Giannini seconded. Mr. Hurley said the existing striping can remain in addition to the new striping. He would like further engineering research for options. Commissioner Budd is not comfortable voting yes for this because there is no guarantee this will be stamped concrete, there is the engineering, the cost involved and looking at how other municipalities are doing it; it seems a year from now is the soonest this will happened based on the amended version. The motion passed 4-1 (YES: Giannini, Viadero, Walczak, Randle), (NO: Budd).

**CONSIDERATION AND ACTION OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 5, 2011:** Commissioner Viadero moved to accept the meeting minutes of April 5, 2011. Commissioner Budd seconded. Chief Kehoe noted that during the discussion of the Queen Street crosswalk and stop sign under Unfinished Business the word "crosswalk" should be substituted for every time the word "sidewalk" is used. Commissioner Walczak asked to remove "removable raised" from line five under Unfinished Business to read "...when they asked to put the crosswalk back in." He also corrected the word "library" to "the Middle School" on page four, fourth line down. Commissioner Walczak asked to strike the first three sentences beginning "Commissioner Walczak told Mr. DeWolfe" under Public Participation. All were in favor of the minutes of April 5, 2011 as amended.

**CHIEF'S REPORT: Personnel Report** – three candidates are at the academy. **Budget** – The Legislative Council recently made a non-binding resolution to reduce the town and education budget. A \$60,000 reduction in the personnel budget including a civilian records position was put forward. The request for four police cars was reduced to three. The reduction totaled over \$100,000 from the police

budget. **Fleet** – The changeover process has begun for several cars purchased with 2010-2011 funds. **Training Report** – A document was provided to the Commissioners in their meeting packet. **Letters of Gratitude** – Chief Kehoe noted letters of gratitude were received for Officer Ketchum, Sgt. Froehlich, Det. Joudy, Det. Frank and Det. MacAnaspie. **Correspondence** – Issues with the Lake Zoar Authority have been worked out; they will fully fund patrols. Sgt. Bahamonde supplied a memo regarding the Silver Bridge Repairs. Chief Kehoe will recommend the traffic unit look into the area on Toddy Hill Road in response to a correspondence received by Mrs. Slinko. The DEP will hold a public hearing on a ski slalom on Lake Lillinonah. **Chief's Goals and Updates** – status quo at this time. **CPA - Graduation** is May 26, 2011. **POSTC-Accreditation Tier 1** – will be on site on May 25. **Fairfield Hills Security** – Security features are being transitioned to the police department; the engineer's office will be a satellite office. The office will not be permanently staffed but officers that have that sector to patrol can use it to do reports, make phone calls, follow up on investigations and park some cruisers there for use. There is a perception of an added police presence. Mr. Hurley shared a map of the area saying fiber optic will be brought into the engineer building.

**Captain's Report: Incident Analysis Report** – Captain Rios shared the overview highlighting motor vehicle calls, burglaries, larcenies, vandalism and narcotics. **Patrol Motor Vehicle Enforcement Report** – data comparing the data of April 2011 back to April 2009 was discussed. There is a 55% increase in motor vehicle contacts in April 2011. Commissioner Walczak requested a report that shows what motor vehicle activity looks like month by month over the last twelve months. **DUI Enforcement Report** - There were four DUI arrests for the month of April 2011. **Monthly Traffic Unit Activity Report** – talks about the duties and responsibilities that were focused on in April. **Monthly Detective Division Report** – reported updates on the bank robbery. A correction was noted that the recruitment hiring was April 8 swearing in and April 15 academy, not January.

**ADD TO AGENDA:** Commissioner Viadero moved to add Under New Business discussion on the realignment of the intersection at Sandy Hook Center. Commissioner Giannini seconded. All were in favor.

**Crosswalk Safety:** Commissioner Giannini stated that he and Commissioner Walczak will meet with Fred Hurley at his office.

**Glover and Queen Street Crosswalk, Stop Sign and Traffic Study Issues:** This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

**Animal Control:** Commissioner Viadero stated this was in a holding pattern. Chief Kehoe said that the police department has responsibility over the enforcement end of animal control. The job descriptions are being redeveloped in conjunction with the new animal control facility that will be built.

**Glover and Meadow Crosswalk:** This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

**Regional Communications Center:** Ms. Will explained that Mayor Boughton from Danbury contacted First Selectman Llodra interested in contracting with North West CT Public Safety to do their police, fire and EMS dispatching as a PSAP (Public Safety and Answering Point). CEO's of Bethel, Danbury, Brookfield, and Newtown have formed a Regional Transition Committee to see if it is feasible for our communities to join in as a regional communication center. They are looking to visit a regional communication center in NJ that dispatches 8-10 police departments, 14 fire departments and EMS. The state of CT is conducting a state wide survey for regionalization. They are looking to combine the PSAPs because there are too many of them and that is not cost effective. First Selectman Llodra wants studies, she wants to talk to the other CEO and she wants the facts. Commissioner Giannini asked how the

Commission becomes engaged in this. Chief Kehoe said that he is the point of contact and after resolutions and solutions are formed there will be a true picture of how a transition to a regional center will go, how it will look, what it will cost. North West Public Safety is a private entity that the town has been a part of because they are the CMED center, ambulance to hospital communications. Captain Rios expressed concern that North West Public Safety does not have prior police dispatch experience. Ms. Will said staff will be hired to do police, fire and EMS dispatch and will be trained at specialized courses. Hiring is a contractual issue to be worked out with North West. Commissioner Budd said a private company will pay lower and is concerned about turn over. Ms. Will said dispatch is a stepping stone for fire and police; turnover is not a concern. North West will hire what is right; everybody is looking at this. Commissioner Walczak is concerned with the role and responsibility of the Police Commission and wants to make sure this is a collaborative effort between boards. Chief Kehoe said it is at the beginning stages at this point; it's a concept more than it is a plan. Ms. Will encouraged the board to analyze the report and share a bulletized list of major concerns with the Captain to share with the group. Dispatch Union President Jason Chickos spoke on behalf of the union saying the dispatchers are concerned about their jobs. Ms. Will encourages staff to avail themselves to training opportunities. Captain Rios said with the loss of jobs is the loss of local knowledge. He spoke of the dark window and questioned staffing it. Each town has come up with drivers and restrainers and Newtown has to also. Commissioner Walczak said you cannot supplement local knowledge with technology; it is not readily scalable. Commissioner Viadero does not want to sacrifice officer safety for monetary reasons. Ms. Will stressed she has roots in the town and will not do anything to jeopardize the public safety of this town. If North West can't handle it, it won't be done. Commissioner Giannini urged the board to read the study and add to the drivers and restrainers.

**The Boulevard and Church Hill Traffic Light Request:** Chief Kehoe reported an email was sent to the First Selectman. The board has already dealt with this intersection. This is a state road.

**Sandy Hook Intersection:** Mr. Hurley shared a map with the board and said that the utilities have agreed to move the pole that is on the island; we can now get rid of the island entirely. The state has an existing traffic light project out to bid. The intersection will be squared off. The waterline will go in this summer. The State DOT does not require a project review on the intersection because the project does not meet the threshold of either 200 parking spaces or 100,000 square feet of development. They will treat it as an encroachment. The town is doing the engineering in conjunction with CT DOT. **Underhill Road:** Mr. Hurley reported emergency services are not interested in making the road one way. The road is narrow but difficult to widen because of the homes. **Animal Control:** Brian Hume is the architect and had done a number of animal control facilities. Fiber line will be tied into the facility.

**June/July Meeting Dates:** The June meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 8. The July 5 meeting is cancelled; the reschedule date for that meeting will be decided upon at the June meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Having no further business Commissioner Budd moved to adjourn the regular meeting of May 3, 2011. Commissioner Viadero seconded. All in favor.

  
Susan Marcinek, Clerk Pro-Tem

Att. A: D. Giannini letter to Police Commission dated April 25, 2011

April 25, 2011

TO: Commissioner Brian Budd—Vice Chairman  
Commissioner James Viadero  
Commissioner Bruce Walczak

Dear Fellow Commissioners,

I have read the minutes of the April meeting and on separate occasions discussed the proceedings with Brian, Bruce and the Chief. Prior to our meeting in May, I'd like to present some information to you concerning the crosswalk on Glover and Meadow that if made available to you at the April meeting may have changed your thinking...and ultimately the vote concerning the crosswalk.

In April 2007, the Board at that time, made up of Mattegat, Finnegan, Connor, Giannini and Simon approved a crosswalk at the intersection of Meadow Road and Glover Ave. While the minutes specifically mention "striping" I can assure you that at that time it was the Board's intention to authorize the crosswalk. Leading up to the meeting we had heard from several residents in that area, and they crafted a very persuasive argument in favor of the crosswalk.

In the minutes of the October of 2007 meeting, to further clarify the Board's intent, there is another reference to the commission recommending and approving the crosswalk. Then, In January of 2008, there is a reference to some research that Fred Hurley was doing on flashing lights and the "crosswalk" at Glover and Meadow is again referenced. In May of 2008, there is another reference to the crosswalk with a motion being made by Commissioner Connor moving to authorize Public Works Director Fred Hurley to go forward with the crosswalks at Queen Street and at Meadow Road and Glover Avenue. It should be noted that these minutes also reflect the fact that he would be installing the speed tables at that location.

I'm sure that if you had this information at the April meeting the discussion would have taken a different path. I know that this issue will be on the agenda for the May meeting and I wanted everyone to have the benefit of this information.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane H. Giannini—Chairman Board of Police Commissioners