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Joel Faxon
Brian Budd
Scott Cicciari
Neil Chaudhary
Stephen Sedensky

TOWN OF NEWTOWN

POLICE COMMISSION

The Board of Police Commissioners
Regular Meeting, Tuesday, January 3, 2023, 6:30 P.M.
191 South Main Street, Newtown, CT
Conference Room

MINUTES ARE NOT FINALIZED UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

Present: Joel Faxon, Brian Budd, Scott Cicciari, Neil Chaudhary, Stephen Sedensky

Also Present: Chief Kullgren, Capt. Bishop, one members of the public, one member of the press, Ofc. McCarthy and Lt. Smith

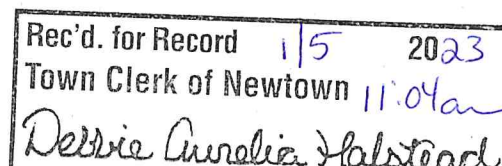
Chairman Faxon called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m. beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance

Public Participation: Karen Martin, Osborne Hill Rd., asked for an update from last month relative to road striping. Chairman Faxon said it is status quo, nothing will be done until spring as there is no vendor. This will be revisited, by the Commission, in April. Chief Kullgren reported enforcement continues on Osborne Hill.

Police Union Participation: none.

Consideration and action on minutes: Commissioner Cicciari moved to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of December 6, 2022. Commissioner Sedensky seconded. All in favor.

Chief's Report: PPO Nina Ongaro has begun her field training. The 12/14, ten-year anniversary, operations went very well. There was a ceremony at the Sandy Hook Memorial; congratulations to staff involved. A letter of appreciation was received by the Superintendent of Schools, Christopher Melillo (att.). Sgt. Chapman brought in comfort dogs from towns within CT and NJ. Ofc. Mullhal transitioned out of the Traffic Unit; Ofc. Penna transitioned in. Sgt. Chapman has received positive feedback on both SRO's. Car seat clinics were well received and well attended. The tree lighting was successful. This all falls under the Community Service Division. Sgt. Chapman participated in an officer wellness podcast for the National Law Enforcement Memorial; he is spending some time on branding the Community Service Division and attended the Sip & Shop as Santa Claus. Work has begun on the 3rd annual Special Olympics hockey fundraiser; as of this date \$5,672.00 has been raised. The hockey game is January 7 at UCONN in Storrs. There is interest in ride a-longs and internships. FBINA (FBI National Academy) will be held Jan. 7 – March 17. A draft budget is complete and will be reviewed with the First Selectman and the Finance Director on Jan. 5. A request has been sent to CTDOT relative to Elm Drive/Rte. 302. There is no place to stand or cross. A stop sign order has been submitted for Mt. Laurel/Osborne Hill Road. Town wide enforcement list is updated regularly and addressed at roll call. Chairman Faxon noted there has been substantial alteration to the corner on Nunnawauk, which significantly improves the site line. Chairman Faxon expressed gratitude to Fred Hurley and the Dept. of Public Works staff. Commissioner Cicciari asked about the do not block the intersection initiative. Commission Chaudhary reported the ordinance committee has a draft; it will go to the Legislative Council soon, followed by a public hearing. This should be ready to go when the weather allows for painting again.



Old Business:

a.) Roadway Marking Procedures: Chief Kullgren said they have to come up with a plan. Chairman Faxon wants to understand more what is required, optional and discretionary. This will be discussed next month with a goal of having a consistent rule in place. Commissioner Budd asked for documentation on the language “may” and “shall”. Commissioner Chaudhary made reference to the DOT site that has the AADT, giving a feel for the major roads. Commissioner Cicciari noted two years ago it was decided there would be no deviation from the state standard; the challenge is some roads don’t have any striping. The gray area of two stripes vs. no stripes needs to be solidified. Capt. Bishop stated there are so many variables, making it hard to have one hard rule. Traffic studies, relative to striping, will be very time consuming

New Business:

a.) Police Staffing Study: Two officers conducted a staffing study under the guidance of Dr. James McCabe. Taking into account the workload, population, crime statistics and the geographic area of Tow the study indicates the number of staff should be increased. This takes into account additional workload and mandates due to the Police Accountability bill. Staffing has to be reevaluated to include staff for an accreditation team, a community service division and social media. Chief Kullgren has communicated with the Finance Director; he will supply the commission with numbers relative to overtime. Chairman Faxon noted that there were 47 sworn positions when he began on the commission, which was reduced to 45 twelve to thirteen years ago. All metrix for calculating the optimal number of officers has us well over 50, sometimes over 60, depending on the metrix used. There is more work to be distributed to less staff. In order to backfill a substantial amount of money is spent on overtime. Bringing staffing to the previously approved 47 officers would not be a significant financial change. Chief Kullgren also noted the officers are spending more time on CIT, de-escalation calls which are always a two person call, leaving only two officers for the rest of town. Mental health issues have increased. Mandates add layers of complexity. The Police Accountability bill encourages police community activity. Commissioner Budd fully supports getting back to 2007 staffing levels as the SRO program is extremely important, the Community Service Division meets the expectation to have officers engaged and the Police Accountability portion is extremely time consuming. Calls for services have increased substantially due to mental health calls. Chairman Faxon supports returning to baseline. Commissioner Cicciari will attend budget meetings to support the police budget requests.

Correspondence: Commissioner Cicciari thanked the men and woman who serve the community that helped the town get through the ten-year anniversary.

Commissioners Participation: none.

Adjournment: Having no further business the regular meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners adjourned at 7:02p.m.

At.: Letter from Superintendent Melillo;

Susan Marcinek, clerk



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Chief David Kullgren
Newtown Police Department
191 South Main Street
Newtown, Connecticut 06470

Dear Chief Kullgren

On behalf of Newtown Public Schools, I want to express my appreciation to you for your assistance during the ten-year anniversary of the Sandy Hook tragedy. As you know, December 14th brings a lot of emotions to our community and I was grateful when you and your organization reached out to our school district.

Everyone I have talked to appreciates the way in which your handlers and their dogs provided relief and support to our staff. We also appreciated the security support during the day. It is very comforting to know that your team is available to us when we require your assistance. I am grateful for the active role Newtown Police took during our time of need.

Your kind help during this difficult time will be long remembered.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Melillo".

Christopher Melillo
Superintendent
Newtown Public Schools