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Joel Faxon
Brian Budd
Scott Cicciari
Neil Chaudhary
Stephen Sedensky

TOWN OF NEWTOWN

POLICE COMMISSION

The Board of Police Commissioners
Special Meeting, Tuesday, July 18, 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
Absent: Stephen Sedensky

Also Present: Chief Kullgren, Deputy Chief Bishop, and Officer Penna.

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

Public Participation: none.

Police Union Participation: none.

Consideration and action on minutes: Commissioner Budd moved to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of June 6, 2023. Commissioner Cicciari seconded. All in favor.

Chief's Report: The department authorized strength is at 45, one is out on extended leave; the effective strength at 44 personnel. Chief Kullgren and Deputy Chief Bishop attended the WestCOG Regional Firearms Range meeting as well as the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force meeting and the Board of Police Commissioners meeting. Additional activities include the Fairfield County Chief of Police Association meeting, bi-weekly Radio Enhancement Project meetings, the Work Zone Safety meeting, and FBI Meet & Greet with New Haven SAC Robert Fuller, and assistance with Shelton PD and Berlin Promotional Exams. The Exit 11 project is still behind due to the retaining wall contractor. The majority of the work will be wrapped up before school begins. Chief Kullgren informed the commission he was elected, by his peers, as the Vice President of the Fairfield County Chief of Police Association. The new radios can communicate with surrounding towns as well as 80% of towns in CT by manually switching the radio.

Old Business:

Approval of Chief's Performance Review: Chairman Faxon moved to approve the performance review as written to include the final version of the two documents (att.). Commissioner Chaudhary seconded. All in favor. Commissioner Cicciari asked that next year the word satisfactory be changed to meets (or exceeds) expectations. Chairman Faxon said that the intent behind the review is that Chief Kullgren is doing a good job and has complied with expectations and the expected standards of a Chief of Police in the State of Connecticut. Commissioner Cicciari asked, for next year, to receive written feedback on performance, both internal and external; key personnel that the Chief interacts with. Commissioner Budd suggested working with other department heads be part of the review; letting the First Selectman grade that interaction.

Rec'd. for Record 7-20 20 23
Town Clerk of Newtown 8:20am
Debbie Aurelia Halstead

Police Commissioner Regulations (23.24 Hearing Before the Police Commission): This regulation is relative to the termination process. It is fair to have the union comment on the disciplinary process up to termination to ensure the regulations are consistent with collective bargaining. Chief Kullgren has shared the information with the union who is in the process of following up with the union attorney. This item will be deferred to the next meeting to allow the union time to discuss and supply constructive feedback. Chairman Faxon suggested Lt. Seabrook and Det. McAnaspie attend.

Consideration and Action on Police Commission Handbook: Commissioner Chaudhary will work on edits, to include updated language from the current Town Charter. It was suggested Chief Kullgren add links to key reference under appendices. The commission will vote on this item at the next meeting.

Update on Roadway Centerline Database: Officer Penna compiled a list of every road in Newtown with notations on which had no center line, one center line or two center lines. The vast majority of roads have no line. There are more single lines than double lines. Commissioner Chaudhary suggested reviewing the roads with one line to determine if they should have no line or double lines. Commissioner Cicciari said that roads with one line should be left until repaving and then it can be decided if the newly paved road should have no line or double lines. Deputy Chief Bishop talked about having a consistent standard and talked about collector (or thru) roads. Officer Penna will send the list to Fred Hurley; roads on the road work schedule can be added to the centerline database, with collector roads highlighted.

New Business

Consideration and Action on Policy & Procedures: This is an accreditation policy. Chief Kullgren noted that over the next year many policies will be brought to the commission relative to accreditation requirements to get the department to the state mandated tier 3 POSTS accreditation. Commissioner Budd moved to accept the written directive Policy & Procedure. Commissioner Cicciari seconded. All in favor.

Correspondence: There were two items of correspondence relative to Deputy Chief Bishop and Officer Scott Smith.

Commissioners Participation: There was discussion on the location of an LPR (License Plate Reader), on Rte. 25, near the Police Department. They are waiting on permission to use the pole. The LPR will be purchased through a grant. They are limited to where they can be placed; this will be used to aid in locating stolen vehicles. Commissioner Budd said that they can be used at the location of a private entity and can be connected to that internet. He used the substation on Rte. 343 as an example. Chief Kullgren will put in the request for Block the Box locations. The line on Rte. 25 near Buttonshop Road is on the state list; they are a year behind.

Adjournment: Having no further business the special meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Att: notes on the Police Chief Review

Susan Marcinek, clerk prom tem



The Board of Police Commissioners (PC) Chairman, Vice Chairman and First Selectman met with Chief Kullgren at the First Selectman's office on April 26, 2023, to discuss the Chief's progress since his elevation, supply constructive suggestions as to management and his planning for the future. Recognizing that the Chief was promoted from the position of Lieutenant, all agreed that his progress has been satisfactory and the trajectory as anticipated. He continues to have a good working relationship with the Union, rank-and-file and civilian personnel with minimal grievances or threatened grievances. We stressed that while the Chief was a Union member for several decades that the management position is one where difficult decisions must be made and occasionally orders must be issued that conflict with the desires of the Union but that such orders are issued in the best interest of the Town - which must be paramount.

We recommended that in the future when dealing with staffing issues and seeking additional personnel that the Chief meet and confer with the First Selectman and try to reach a consensus as to what additional personnel or assets may be authorized and accepted within the confines of the municipal budget.

We support the concepts set forth in the Chief's five year plan and expect him to work constructively with the PC and the future First Selectman to achieve those goals and set additional mileposts to achieve or exceed. The Chief's utilization of social media and other outreach methods to communicate with the community are excellent and provide a level of transparency that is required in the present environment.

Recruitment and retention of quality officers is very challenging, however, the Chief and his staff have done well in maintaining maximum authorized staffing while having minimal personnel who are on the roster but unable to perform due to injury or illness. Continuous efforts at staff acquisition are critical since it is unknown when the Agency may lose a sworn officer. Soliciting lateral transfers from other Agencies should be constantly attempted.

The PC as a group met with the Chief in executive session to discuss his progress on June 6, 2023. At that meeting the Commissioners reviewed in executive session the Chief's actions since appointment. The Board of Police Commissioners deems the Chief's performance to be satisfactory and in accordance with expected standards. The Board encourages the Chief to continue to pursue his performance goals outlined in his submission.