

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 12, 2018 7:00 P.M.
STAFF CONFERENCE ROOM, POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Carol Faruolo, Alberta Jagoe, David Rubenstein, Richard Smith, Jerold Wanosky

COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT: Sam Bergami, Sharon Marrone,

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Mello; Deputy Chief Rahn; Sgt. Kranyak, Lt. Chila, D. Candido, Secty.

A quorum was present to conduct the business of the meeting.

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS – none

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Ald. Karen Fortunati, 165 Gulf Street – stated she was present to share her concerns regarding the Gulf Street project renovations and the speed of the traffic on Gulf Street and how those changes will impact traffic. She referred to a meeting held on 2/8/18 regarding the Gulf Street improvement project and noted it was obvious that the people in attendance were concerned about the high speed traffic flow. She added as a resident of the area, she too is concerned. Ald. Fortunati noted she was aware there possible solutions to the problem and at this time she and those in attendance were asking for a meaningful study by the Department because vehicular speed varies depending where on the street you might be.

She referred to a letter she had from a resident who could not be at this meeting and was asking for additional stop signs on Gulf Street especially on Dock Road. As well concerns were expressed regarding pedestrian/car accidents.

Chief Mello explained the matter on this meeting's agenda is consideration of the road widening on Gulf Street. He explained Traffic Div. has looked at traffic counts, stops and accidents. He stated the traffic counts going back a number of years reflect studies done at different times of the year and the most recent one was done in February and March 2018 and reflected 85% of the vehicles were traveling at 33 mph, 9 were traveling between 35 and 45 mph and 2 over 50 mph. He explained counts are taken at various parts of the street length and on both sides of the road. As well there were 20 motor vehicle accidents over the last 5 years and 16 were weather related, 4 not stopping at stop signs. With regard to enforcement data, Chief Mello stated out of 41 traffic stops, 17 were speed issues. Data reflects there is not a hazard in terms of excessive speed and excessive speed is measured by cars exceeding the speed limit by more than 2 or 3 mph.

Chief Mello stated speed limit signs with digital read out have been purchased and they have proven to be very effective further noting this equipment captures a good deal of data in real time which provides more accurate information. He added the department will be installing that device soon and the focus will be enforcement during those dates and times which are felt to be of concern. Further he noted stop signs are not to be used for speed control and a stop

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sign on Gulf Street would be used to control right of way not speed. With regard to speed bumps, it was noted they were not recommended because this is a major road, major artery for emergency vehicles and this would be a deterrent as well as the possible traffic back up they could cause and the possible causing of diversion of traffic to other roads.

Chief Mello stated the recommendation at this time would be for the flashing speed sign and the Department would address problems through enforcement.

A resident suggested the possible “shading” of the traffic light and Chief Mello stated he would have the Traffic Division look into that possibility.

Discussion ensued regarding the recommended location of the flashing speed sign and what direction the device would be facing. The recommended direction was southbound and Chief Mello stated the Department would take all suggestions into consideration.

Chief Mello emphasized the fact that it is not the Department’s responsibility to improve or recommend developments but to look at the safety impact of the proposal.

Chairman Smith referred to Ald. Fortunati’s request for a traffic study and he assured those present that this Department has done studies and analysis of the problem and will provide the opportunity to make recommendations on this project proposal.

Chief Mello added the Department will be going to recommend this signaling device more often in areas of potential high volume.

Residents expressed appreciation for the opportunity to have this open discussion. Ald. Fortunati raised the issue of crosswalk activated lights and Chief Mello stated that can be considered as a recommendation and possibility as solutions to this issue move forward.

Chairman Smith thanked Ald. Fortunati for her efforts and desire to represent the residents of the Gulf Street area.

- J. Carissimi – 64 Kirkside Ave. – noted with the reports of rash of burglaries in the city, residents have become more interested in neighborhood watch and he thanked and complimented Officer Dempsey who recently met with a group of residents about their concerns noting Officer Dempsey’s calming and respectful attitude to the people who are concerned.
- Ald. Vetro took the opportunity to compliment the Department on their traffic control at the recent St. Patrick’s Day Parade. He added many people have contacted him about the rash of burglaries as well as the increased visibility of officers in specific areas.

He expressed concern regarding the number of signs (directional) at the intersection of Daniel and River Streets and how difficult it is for a driver to direct attention to the signs and making the turn.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2018 meeting as presented. Chairman Smith and Comm. Wanosky abstained from voting as they were not present at the February meeting. Motion carried.

5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE – Chief Mello shared the following:

- Michael Assunto – thanked first responders for their dedication and concern for the safety of the general public.
- Tom Zawislinski – expressed appreciation and compliment to Officer Dempsey and DeVito for presentation on active shooter threats noting their patience, professionalism and concern for residents.
- Lynn Halpern – expressed thanks to MPD staff member who was courteous and helpful in assisting her to obtain appropriate reports.
- Mary – thanked police officers for thankless hours of keeping all residents safe.

6. CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF CHIEF ON MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

- a. Safe Driving award for Det. Mitchell Warwick - Chief Mello recommended Det. Mitchell Warwick be awarded 8 hours compensatory time for 12,000 accident free miles. No action necessary.
- b. Chief's General comments - none

7. REPORT ON PLANNING & ZONING REQUESTS - none

8. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS

It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to approve the following reports:

- a. Special Investigations Unit Report
- b. Detective Bureau Report
- c. Crime Prevention Unit Report
- d. Traffic Division and Licensing Unit Report

Motion carried unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Road widening – Gulf Street at length – Lt. Chila stated the biggest issue to be considered in this proposal is the placement of some of the crosswalks. He explained there are 2 crosswalks proposed on Gulf Street. One in front of St. Mary Church which had been placed in 1992 and at this time the Traffic Div. recommends not reinstating because of the curb and site line distance. Further he noted the 2nd is at Gulf and Evergreen and since

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there are crosswalks at New Haven Avenue intersection and at Bedford, the recommendations are not to have them in such close proximity. Further the crosswalks on Dock Road are not ideal for pedestrians but recommend moving it down to Adam Street.

Discussion ensued regarding current bus stop at New Haven Avenue and Evergreen and Chief Mello stated contact would be made with CT Transit regarding possibly moving that stop.

It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to approve the recommendation to not reinstalling crosswalk in front of St. Mary's Church as well as not recommend 2 new crosswalks at Evergreen and Dock but moving crosswalk to Adam Street. Motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMENDATIONS – Deputy Chief Rahn shared the following with the Commissioners:

- a. Certificate of Commendation for: Det. Dennis Broderick, Det. Kevin Hilliard, Det. Brien McMahon – case #4496-17 – Deputy Chief Rahn explained on 8/31/17 a vehicle was observed leaving a motel on the Post Road. Operator of the vehicle was identified and it was learned the operator had past arrest record. It was observed there was a child in the vehicle, rear seat and upon search of the car a loaded gun was found and a 2nd stolen fire arm was found near where the child was seated. The car was further searched and a peanut butter jar was found which had 90 grams of heroin hidden inside. Additional heroin and steroids were found in the car. Based on this and the previous arrest, a federal arrest warrant was obtained.

Det. Broderick, Det. Hilliard, Det. McMahon are commended for what initially was a car stop turned into a significant seizure of fire arms and drugs.

12. Executive Session - none

Being no further business, it was moved by Comm. Jagoe and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Candido
Submitted to City Clerk March 13, 2018