

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
HELD TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2012
STAFF CONFERENCE ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chrmn. Jagoe called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

1. ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Sam Bergami, Carol Faruolo, Alberta Jagoe, Sharon Marrone, Jerold Wanosky

COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT: Anthony Candido, Melvin Eisenhandler

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Mello; Deputy Chief Mooney; Ald. Vetro; D. Candido, Secty.; Mr. Charles Letezeio, Mrs. Letezeio, Attny. James Saraceni and two additional support individuals for Mr. Letezeio.

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

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS – none

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Ald. Vetro stated he attended the 5th Citizens Police Academy Graduation recently held and he commended the Chief for a very nice program.

He referred to comments made at the March 2012 meeting by a few of his constituents regarding barking dog issues and stated he was pleased with the way Officer Nielsen took charge of the issues presented, adding Officer Nielsen did a great job coordinating the efforts of our Animal Control Officer, the Health Dept., the dog owners and the neighbors who were having issues with the continuous barking.

- John Carissimi – 64 Kirkside Ave., - present on behalf of the Wildemere Beach Association and noted that in recent years the association has had the good fortune of working with Chief Mello and the Milford Police Dept. on various matters. He noted that during that time several things have impressed him and he referred to Chief Mello's comments about partnership, community outreach, customer satisfaction and quality of life. Mr. Carissimi referred to a recent incident in the area, the police responded to a call however one of the members of the association expressed her dissatisfaction with what she expected to have happened. The woman contacted Mr. Carissimi as advised and he then contacted Officer Nielsen. However, while at headquarters on another matter, Mr. Carissimi had opportunity to speak with Lt. Dumas who had done a great deal of research on the matter. As well, Officer Mello followed up with the woman, explained the situation exactly as Lt. Dumas explained it. On behalf of the association, he stated they were impressed and happy with the way MPD handled this matter adding the response was complexly appropriate and the group now understands how to achieve such results in the future. Mr. Carissimi stated the partnership was shown in the fact that the mechanics set up with the department works perfectly and the Chief should get an A+ for that. With regard to community outreach, he was pleased with the officer reaching out to the woman and going to her home and relieving her of her fears also rates an A+ along with the definite customer service. He stated the quality of life assurance by the

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department is excellent and he was pleased to speak on the Chief's behalf and happy with his efforts and help.

In another matter, Mr. Carissimi stated the Milford Citizens Policy Academy Alumni Association (MCPAAA) has become a formed group with bylaws and regular meetings.

Chairman Jagoe thanked Mr. Carissimi for his words of support for Chief Mello and the ongoing efforts of cooperation with the department.

Chief Mello added the relationship with the Wildemere Beach Association is a model, adding Mr. Carissimi's commitment is appreciated and he wished the department had a similar relationship in other areas of the city. Chief Mello thanked Mr. Carissimi for his comments and the partnership with the department. He shared with the commission the beneficial volunteer assistance the MCPAAA has provided to the department.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, March 12, 2012 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Mello shared the following correspondence:

- Card from the 2012 Class of the Citizens Police Academy – expressing their gratitude to the entire Milford Police Department in appreciation for their efforts. Presented the department with a check in the amount of \$876 to be set aside for further Citizens Police Academy classes.
- L. Connors – resident of Wildemere Beach – thanked the department for their efforts and partnership with the residents of the Wildemere Beach area.
- M. Hanson, T. Calogine, T. Kaufax – residents of Pond Point Avenue – thanked Officer Nielsen for his assistance in handling the problem with barking dog on Pond Point Avenue.
- F. Brogen – Seaside Avenue – thanked the department and commended Milford officers for their professionalism, courtesy and efficiency.
- S. Sheloss – resident – commended officers, specifically Sgt. Beauvais, for the concern and care they gave when responding to a situation at the Westfield Shopping Center on 3/1/12. In appreciation for this, he made a \$100 donation to the Milford Police Benevolent Association.
Chief Mello explained that Association is a separate entity from the department and donations are handled within that group.
- J. Andronaco, Director of Development, CT Special Olympics – extended thanks to the officers who participated in the Annual Chili Fest held on 3/3/12 at the Milford Yacht Club,

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specifically, Officers Wardowsky, Lema, Mahoney, Kranyak, Covelli, Pecoraro, Sgt. Vitti and Sgt. Sharoh.

- Staff of Smith & Sefcik Funeral Directors – Milford – thanked Officer Holder for professionalism and assistance exhibited to the family and firm at the passing of Milford resident.
- W. Clapham, Absolute Software – Milford – extended thanks and appreciation to Det. Frawley for his assistance and investigative skills in recovering stolen equipment with the use of anti-theft device.
- S. Hebert, Bridges – Bridgeport Avenue – extended thanks and appreciation for the assistance of Officer Nielsen with regard to an extremely valuable car seat training program and noting she was hopeful other community agencies will avail themselves of this service.
- D. Dortenzio – Chief of Police, Wallingford, CT – (served as Chair of the Deputy Chief Selection Committee for the city of New London) – thanked Chief Mello for his assistance and participation in the Selection Committee.
- J. F. Birge – President, Franklin Pierce University, Rindge, New Hampshire – took the opportunity to recognize and comment Deputy Chief Mooney for the time and efforts she provided to the university's criminal justice majors, adding she was polished, professional, articulate and inspirational to the young adults. He commended Deputy Chief Mooney and emphasized the fact that she epitomizes integrity, discipline and care for others which the administration of the university would want their students to embrace.

Chairman Jagoe noted that the letters shared are a reflection of the excellence of our Chief, Deputy Chief and the entire department and the commission appreciated that.

6. CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF CHIEF ON MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

a. Donations from Amanda Thompson, Karen O'Neill and Hope Clark – Chief Mello explained on 3/21/12, Officer DelMonte conducted a car seat inspection and donations were made from Amanda Thompson (\$10), Karen O'Neill (\$10) and Hope Clark (\$20). Chief Mello asked that money be placed in the DARE Donation account.

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to uphold Chief Mello's recommendation to place the donations from Amanda Thompson, Karen O'Neill and Hope Clark (total of \$40) in the DARE Donation account. Motion carried unanimously.

7. REPORT ON PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTS

- a. 54 Wilson Street – 2 lot subdivision – It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to accept the recommendation of Traffic Division regarding 54 Wilson Street – 2 lot subdivision. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. Michael Anthony's Restaurant – 475 New Haven Avenue – It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to accept the recommendation of Traffic

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Division regarding Michael Anthony's Restaurant – 475 New Haven Avenue. Motion carried unanimously.

8. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS

- a. Uniform Crime Report
- b. Special Investigations Unit Report
- c. Crime Prevention Services Report
- d. Traffic Division & Licensing Unit Report

Chrmn. Jagoe noted the reports of items a, b, c and d were included in the Commissioners packets.

It was moved by Comm. Faruolo and seconded by Comm. Marrone to accept reports a, b, c and d as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Comm. Wanosky asked if there were any stats kept on violations involving drivers using cell phones.

Chief Mello explained that information can be derived through the new computer system. Further, he explained the department has run out of overtime money for the year so it would not be possible to put officers on that specific charge of duty above their regular schedule but the department is able to transfer money from other areas to handle that charge. He stated April has been designated for our officers to concentrate on distracted driving.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Cascade Blvd Affordable Housing Plan – Resubmission – It was moved by Comm. Faruolo and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to uphold the recommendation of Traffic Division regarding Cascade Blvd Affordable Housing Plan – Resubmission and to reject the application as submitted Motion carried with Vice Chrmn. Bergami recusing himself.
- b. Pop's Restaurant – 2nd Revision – 134 Old Gate Lane – It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to uphold the recommendation of Traffic Division regarding Pop's Restaurant – 2nd Revision – 134 Old Gate Lane and approve the 2nd revision. Motion carried unanimously.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Appeal of Mr. Charles Letezeio for rejection of conditional job offer – prior to discussion or comments, both Chief Mello and Deputy Chief Mooney reminded Attny. James Saraceni and Mr. Letezeio of the fact this was a public meeting and both gentlemen acknowledged they were aware of that.

Deputy Chief Mooney explained the application of Mr. Letezeio was rejected based on unsatisfactory background information adding he had applied to many departments

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within the state, had taken 3 polygraphs with other departments and unfortunately had not fared well. She explained it is important to realize that this department judges future performance based on past performance, noting he had been removed and terminated from employment and in the application process he had been less than forthcoming about previous employment.

Mr. Letezeio noted that the information provided regarding previous employment issues was false and Deputy Chief Mooney stated the department can only go on what they have been told.

Chief Mello added this is not a judgment call but when there is any question of voracity, it is important that he err on the side of caution. He further noted there was a matter which would preclude him from applying in Milford adding the department is liable for anyone that is taken on for employment. Chief Mello stated that he realized Mr. Letezeio was a good person; however he advised him that based on his own admission of past experience, he should not have applied.

Mr. Letezeio again stated that information about being walked off his previous job is not true.

Attny. Saraceni stated he can appreciate the difficult decision the department must make when it comes to hiring officers adding he was a police officer for 27 years prior to becoming an attorney and he knew what a difficult task it is to be a good officer. He added he knows how important it is for someone to have it come to fruition when they have such a desire to serve. Attny. Saraceni stated Mr. Letezeio had served in this community in numerous capacities and is a member of the Milford Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association. He further stated the problem Mr. Letezeio has at this time are those numerous applications that come back negative.

Attny. Saraceni stated the genesis seems to be from the polygraph situation when the examiner asked him a question which caused him to question himself and in doing so he admitted to more than what he had done and from that point forward, it was a stumbling block. He added the obvious stress of not faring well on the polygraph has made it difficult for him. Attny. Saraceni asked Chief Mello to let he and his client know the specifics so they can address the specific problems and give them the opportunity to put forth positive information and show you who this person really is. He added his client would be willing to pay for his own polygraph in order to allow him to address the negative things and clear up this matter.

Attny. Saraceni stated Mr. Letezeio is a good man, never had been arrested and has minor issues that many candidates have today.

Chief Mello stated he had not doubt that Mr. Letezeio is a good man but when there are these issues throughout your life it is extra baggage and it would be unfair to the many previous candidates who have been rejected. He added one of the questions he answered, reflected he greatly exceeded the number of allowable incidents to apply for a position. Chief Mello emphasized the fact that voracity issues mandate

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him to err on the side of caution. He also noted employment references have not all been good and those are areas we could work through but when we are considering multi-issues regarding employment and voracity, there is not room to engage in that discussion. He explained police officers are open to public scrutiny and anything that could question one's credibility or the department's credibility is an important consideration.

Mr. Letezeio explained during the polygraph he was confused by a question presented to him and had to rethink his answer. When he later discussed it with his wife, it was clear to both of them that he had given wrong dates and that what has haunted him.

Chief Mello referred to three separate polygraphs regarding the issue of drug use and the polygraphs reflected physiological reaction adding the latest polygraph in 2011 revealed a discrepancy as well. Chief Mello noted 39 police departments did their job with your application process.

Again Chief Mello stated this is not a judgment call and he would ask the commission to support the denial of the original job offer.

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to support and uphold the rejection of conditional job offer to Mr. Charles Letezeio. Motion carried unanimously.

Prior to Attny. Saraceni, Mr. Letezeio, Mrs. Letezeio and others leaving the meeting, Chief Mello wished Mr. Letezeio best of luck in the future.

- b. Traffic Study – Visibility issue at Dayton St/Naugatuck Avenue – It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Vice Chrmn. Bergami to uphold the recommendation of the Traffic Division regarding Visibility issue at Dayton St/Naugatuck Avenue. Motion carried unanimously.
- c. Traffic Study – No Turn on Red Request – Merwin Ave/New Haven Ave. – It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to uphold the recommendation of the Traffic Division regarding the No Turn on Red Request – Merwin Ave/New Haven Ave. Motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMENDATIONS - none

12. Executive Session

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF CHIEF OF POLICE ON MATTERS
CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, PERFORMANCE,
EVALUATION AND HEALTH OR DISMISSAL OF DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES**

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:56 p.m. for the following matter:

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- a. Quarterly probationary review for the following Officers: L. Holder, E. O'Keefe, J. Sikorsky, M. Frey, T. Wardowski, S. Owens, C. Lacey, A. Mauro, E. Covelli, D. Hemperly.

All Commissioners present, Chief Mello and Deputy Chief Mooney remained in Executive Session.

[Note: Ald. Vetro and members of the public left at 7:56 p.m.)

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Vice Chrmn. Bergami to reconvene in public session at 8:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Candido, Secretary