

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

**1. ROLL CALL**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Melvin Eisenhandler; Kenneth Fellenbaum; Alberta Jagoe; Sharon Marrone; Thomas Zawislinski

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Mello; Deputy Chief Fournier; L. Stock, Secty; P. Vetro, Board of Aldermen

Comm. Jagoe moved to add the following two items to the agenda:  
6f. Accreditation and Assessment Report

12c. Discussion of Chief's Compensation

The motion was seconded by Comm. Zawislinski and carried unanimously.

**2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS**

- a. Appointment as Probationary Officers – David Chila, Sharon Bloom, Antonio Moreno and Erek Robinson, retroactive to February 29, 2008.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum noted that these officers had completed school and FTO. Chief Mello added that they were hired in July and graduated in December and have 120 hours of field training. They are now ready to be sworn in as Probationary Officers.

The four officers were sworn in by Comm. Eisenhandler and congratulated by the Commissioners, the Chief and the Deputy Chief.

In response to Chrmn. Fellenbaum, Chief Mello stated that Officers Chila and Robinson were on duty; Off. Bloom was not on duty, she has a calf muscle injury; and Off. Moreno was off duty.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum commended the Chief regarding the recruitment team, for diversity was represented in the group before them. The Chief replied that they have had good results in their newer employees, both uniform and non-uniform. They have increased their minority hires by 40%. Addressing Chrmn. Fellenbaum's question, Chief Mello stated 162 candidates passed the agility test and 60 the oral, and he will choose from there. He added that the written scores were very high and the quality of applicants is very impressive.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum asked how many candidates the Chief was looking for to which the Chief responded it was difficult to say. He did put in for two additional officers, which was cut down to one. He needs to see where the openings exist. Further in response to Chrmn. Fellenbaum, Chief Mello stated school will begin early to mid-summer.

Comm. Jagoe asked if they were getting a lot of college graduates. Chief Mello responded that they are getting a mix; however, they push to get military vets, as those with prior military service tend to be well suited to be a police officer. They are seasoned and have characteristics not present in new recruits such as dealing with people using tact and diplomacy. The Department recruits at college campuses throughout Connecticut, in churches, etc.; they place ads in the newspapers as well as on the radio. Chrmn. Fellenbaum wondered if they have “picked anyone up” from the police presence at the mall, to which the Chief stated it was difficult to determine as they do not have the numbers yet from the applications that were submitted.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum mentioned that there was a new banner hanging in the conference room. Chief Mello explained it displayed the new logo which will be on their letterhead and all their forms. The banner is for the top of the podium. The funds used were part of a grant that they received several years ago.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated he attended the graduation for the Civilian Police Academy and he noted that two of the graduates are looking to become police officers. The Chairman also mentioned that the Chief gave a very important talk about dispelling myths of officers. He stated it was a very inspiring evening and the Chief’s presentation was very enjoyable. It gave the Department some good press and good public relations. The Chief stated it will happen again next year; several aldermen have already expressed a desire to attend.

### **3. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum asked if there was anyone present wishing to address the Commission.

Attorney Brian LaClaire, of Berchem, Moses and Devlin, 75 Broad Street, was present representing Mr. Monaco, who received a letter that DJ’s Towing on Old Gate Lane, was removed from the Police Rotational Tow List. This removal was based on the fact that they no longer had a facility on Old Gate Lane. They have been on the list since 1995. They have a large lot and yard; however, 16 months ago, there was a fire in the building, after which a trailer was brought on the site to be their temporary office. When the insurance company finally settled, Mr. Monaco submitted plans for another larger building; but the city said he could not expand what was originally there. Mr. Monaco’s builder will be meeting with David Sulkis next week. In the meantime, his temporary permit for the trailer

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

expired and would not be renewed at this time. He is confident that Planning and Zoning will approve his revised plans. The lot is still being used to store towed vehicles and it is secure.

Continuing, Atty. LaClaire stated that when Mr. Monaco received the letter, he spoke with an officer who informed him that there was another issue, i.e., chasing accidents and arriving with a tow truck. The attorney explained that the night of the accident at the shopping center, the gate at the Old Gate Lane facility would not open. The gentleman who came to fix the gate received a phone call that his son had been in a serious accident at the mall and he asked the tow truck driver to take him there. Once the tow truck driver dropped him off, he left the scene; he was not there to tow. They do not chase business because they are on the rotation list.

Atty. LaClaire asked that DJ's not be removed and that they be reinstated. He noted that the permit for the temporary trailer will be reinstated as well.

It was noted that this item would be further discussed as it appears on the agenda.

Phil Vetro, 4<sup>th</sup> District Alderman, stated his constituents are concerned about the raceway that has been established on Howard Court off of Platt Street, since the concrete blocks have been removed from the playground area now that baseball season has arrived. He asked that the Department look into this situation. He added that it is not a school playground, but a public area.

P. Vetro also stated he attended the Citizen's Police Academy; he wished to extend his thanks to the Department and staff for a job well done.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was moved by Comm. Zawislinski and seconded by Comm. Eisenhandler to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2008 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

**5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE**

Chief Mello mentioned an article that was in the paper regarding the Citizen's Police Academy. Chrmn. Fellenbaum read a portion of the article regarding tax dollars, wherein the reporter suggested the Chief work with the Board of Education.

Chief Mello noted the following was received:

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Several letters of appreciation were received from the Special Olympics Committee, thanking the following for volunteering at the Chili Fest on March 1, to raise money for Special Olympics: Sgt. Vitti, Sgt. Staurovsky; Sgt. Wydra; Lt. Compare; Off. Salati; Off. Dumas; Off. DeStefano; Off. Bedeker; Off. Kranyak; James Gruce and Rick Biroscak.

The Chief received a letter from Daniel Dion, thanking and commending Off. Broderick and Sgt. Sharoh, who were extremely helpful and comforting at an accident that occurred on April 3, 2008. They showed compassion and empathy to those involved. Their actions reflect positively on the entire department.

A series of letters were received, thanking Det. Frawley for explaining his computer forensics program at East Shore Middle School. Chief Mello added that Det. Frawley is being sought after to teach other organizations computer forensics (throughout the country and the world). This program has a 100% solve rate on computer crime investigations. Sylvia Hazard also sent a letter to the newspaper thanking Det. Frawley.

A letter was received from Susan St. Pierre, commending Off. Huggins who was working an overtime job. He assisted her when she explained she left her cell phone at home and needed to reach her son. He allowed her use of his personal cell phone.

911 Dispatcher Robinson was thanked by Father Stephen Bzdyra, Pastor of St. Augustine's Rectory in Seymour, for the courteous and warm manner he handled a call.

Orange Police Chief Robert Gagne sent a letter commending Off. Dumas and Off. S. Staurovsky for their assistance on March 7. Both officers were at lunch when they received a dispatch regarding attempted burglary. They went to the area in question and observed a vehicle matching the description. A burglary was in progress and their quick response and action resulted in the capture and subsequent arrest of the suspect.

Peggy McGowan, SAD, Laurelton Hall, sent a letter to Off. Dumas, thanking him for his help in setting up a mock crash site. Chief Mello noted that they do this at a number of schools.

**6. CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF CHIEF ON MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION**

a. Disposal/Donation of Antique Firearms

Noting that this item involved City property, Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated it needs to go before the Board of Aldermen. He called for a motion to table the item. The

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

motion was so made by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Comm. Jagoe and unanimously carried.

b. DJ's Tow Service – Removal off Tow List

Comm. Zawislinski moved to adopt the Chief's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Comm. Eisenhandler.

**DISCUSSION**

The following was explained by Chief Mello: On April 2, 2006, there was a fire at the facility on Old Gate Lane. In August, 2007, two officers went to DJ's regarding improper business practices, which was not the issue that the attorney brought up. There was no one there so they called looking for someone. Building Official Tom Raucci had condemned the building and two wreckers were removed. A trailer was placed on the property which was necessary for them to remain on the tow list. The trailer permit expired and was not renewed. Therefore, the area is not compliant and does not meet the regulations; they must maintain a permanent place of business.

Anthony Monaco sent a letter to Lt. Pietrafesa explaining the fire and the fact that Anthony's Hi Tech rented office space to DJ's and that a trailer would be on site August 28, 2007.

If they do open up (with a building on the site), they will be reinstated. There must be someone available Monday through Saturday, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

The incident mentioned by the attorney is not part of this situation.

Chief Mello asked exactly where the office is located to which Atty. LaClaire responded, directly across the street at 541 New Haven Avenue. He noted that someone could walk across the street to the office. He continued that zoning has requested that they procure plans to erect the same size building as the one that burned. Chief Mello interjected that currently, they do not have a facility that is functional and operational which is required by the regulations, and that is why he has recommended suspension.

Comm. Jagoe asked if the fact that they have an office across the street was sufficient for them to operate to which the Chief responded the premises must be staffed for retrieval of vehicles Monday through Saturday. Atty. LaClaire interjected that someone is always at the office across the street.

Addressing Atty. LaClaire, Chief Mello asked when he thought the trailer permit would be renewed. Atty. LaClaire responded, they have a meeting tomorrow with David Sulkis.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum questioned if the facility could be suspended until they can verify that someone is on site to which Chief Mello responded they must have a building on the premises.

A brief discussion ensued as to the wording (removed vs. suspended). The Chief believes the Department must make sure this facility and all other wrecker services are in compliance with the regulations no matter what wording is used and he has based his report on the language in the regulations. His recommendation is that they be removed or suspended as long as they are not operating. It will be the Commission's choice as to the wording. He does not want to give the impression that they bend the rules.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum noted that if they are taken off the list, they will have to apply to get back on and questioned if they would have to do the same if they were suspended. Comm. Zawislinski stated that it has happened in the past that a facility has been removed from the list. Chief Mello stated that if they are removed from the list, the Department will have to do a background check and they will have to go through reinstatement, which cannot be done in a matter of days.

In response to Chrmn. Fellenbaum, the Chief's wording is as follows: Remove DJ's from the Milford Police Department's Wrecker Rotation List.

Comm. Jagoe stated that although she sympathizes with Mr. Monaco, she has to support the Chief who is abiding by the regulations. Comm. Zawislinski is concerned a precedent could be set if they deviate from the Chief's recommendation. Comm. Eisenhandler stated he will also support the Chief's recommendation.

Chief Mello further stated that in August, 2007, DJ's told them that blue prints would be ready in two weeks; they did not have them. He reiterated he has to follow the regulations.

Atty. LaClaire stated the prints were done to make the building larger, which was not approved by building due to setback issues. The plans were ready but were turned down by the town.

Comm. Eisenhandler asked when the fire occurred to which A. Monaco responded in April of 2006. A. Monaco continued, stating that a private adjuster has been arguing with the insurance company and they could not reach a happy medium. In addition, he wanted to clean up the site but was not allowed to because it was suggested that perhaps the roof was asbestos, which it wasn't. The insurance company finally came back with a check which was unacceptable and a new check was cut for the work. A. Monaco continued that he followed

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

everything that was asked of him. He did not want to make the building out of steel, but his plan was unacceptable and he was still arguing with the insurance company. His prints were ready but he was denied. He reiterated that DJ's has a separate office at Anthony's Hi Tech; all the trucks are on the outside as well as their phone number. An employee could run across the street to assist anyone as far as removing things from their vehicles or filling out paperwork.

Reviewing, A. Monaco stated that the trailer had a 6 month permit; he received the letter from the Police Department; he immediately came to the station to find out what had happened; and he went to City Hall to try to renew the trailer permit. One of his employees faxed a letter to the city asking for another 6 months before the first 6 months expired and it was approved. However, when he went in for the renewal, he had to go to Planning and Zoning, which required a current A-2 survey (his was over 10 years old) and then they would continue with the process.

Atty. LaClaire interjected that there may be an easier solution for DJ's. Perhaps the Commission could leave the item on the table until their next meeting because they are going to Planning and Zoning tomorrow.

It was noted that DJ's had been suspended from the list. Although Comm. Zawislinski empathized with Mr. Monaco, he asked that the question be moved.

Chief Mello concluded that the credibility of the city has to come first. DJ's has been suspended by him, which is why they appeared before the Commission. There was a time and place to provide information to the Police Department for verification which was not done. Further, it was admitted that DJ's does not have an office on the premises.

There being no further discussion, the motion to adopt the Chief's recommendation to remove DJ's from the Milford Police Department's Wrecker Rotation List carried unanimously.

Items c and d will be acted on together.

- c. Off Duty Weapon Authorization – Lt. Victor Daniels
- d. Off Duty Weapon Authorization – Sgt. Joseph DellaMonica

The Chief stated that both weapons have been checked and both officers are qualified with their weapon. He explained to Comm. Marrone that the weapons officers carry while off duty have to be checked and the officers must be qualified to handle them.

It was moved by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Comm. Jagoe and unanimously carried to adopt the Chief's recommendation.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Comm. Jagoe moved to add item 6g - *Off Duty Weapon Authorization – Off Bethke*, to the agenda. The motion carried unanimously after a second by Comm. Zawislinski.

g. Off Duty Weapon Authorization – Off. E. Bethke

A motion to approve this request was made by Comm. Jagoe, seconded by Comm. Zawislinski and carried unanimously.

e. Consideration of accident free mileage awards for Officer C. Cacchillo, Sgt. J. DellaMonica, Officer G. Todice and Office M. Warwick

The Chief explained that these officers are entitled to 8 hours of accumulated time for accumulating 25,000 accident free miles.

A motion to approve these awards carried unanimously after being made and seconded by Comms. Jagoe and Eisenhandler, respectively.

f. Accreditation and Assessment Report

Chief Mello noted that an explanation of the process is included in the report. He explained that four years ago, they began re-writing policies and procedures in contemporary language; they got rid of obsolete items and added new policies. Once that was accomplished, they had to demonstrate that they were adhering to those policies. On March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, three members came to observe and ultimately gave a favorable report, which will be taken to the council on May 1<sup>st</sup>. The only negative noted was that the Department's systems are antiquated and the facility is in need of updating.

Comm. Zawislinski asked for clarification of an article in the newspaper, where the Board of Aldermen turned down a request by the Department. Chief Mello explained that the item of bonding was tabled as the Board needed additional information. P. Vetro interjected that he believes it will definitely be approved. He noted that the Mayor puts several items into one block, for instance, the bonding for the Police Department was included with curbs and sidewalks. The Board had issues with the other items. He assured the Commission that the request would be approved.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum encouraged all members to read the report.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

**7. REPORT ON PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTS**

- a. Chesterfield Court – Single Family Home
- b. 6 Monroe Street – Single Family Home

It was moved and seconded by Comms. Zawislinski and Eisenhandler to adopt traffic's recommendations for items a and b.

**DISCUSSION**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum asked to review the plans for 6 Monroe Street. There being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

**8. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS**

- a. Uniform Crime Report
- b. Youth Bureau Report
- c. Crime Prevention Services Report
- d. Detective Bureau Cases Report
- e. General Highway Safety Summary

It was moved by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Comm. Jagoe and unanimously carried to accept reports "a" through "e."

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**11. COMMENDATIONS – 3**

The following was noted by Deputy Chief Fournier:

Off. Mark Thornberg will get a letter in his file for a job well done. On March 11, 2008 he responded to the Residence Inn and his quick action resulted in two arrests and the seizure of a number of GPS units from car larcenies.

Off. Dumas and Det. S. Staurovsky will receive Certificates of Commendation. On March 7, 2008, they were eating lunch when they heard a broadcast of a burglary in progress in Orange. They responded to the vicinity of West River Street (in Orange) where they located the suspect's vehicle in question. A man

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

was exiting the dwelling with a bag whereupon they approached and apprehended the suspect, who was tied to multiple burglaries in Orange and one in Milford.

On March 27, 2008 an armed robbery occurred at the Sunoco gas station on Old Gate Lane. A witness got into his vehicle and followed the suspect while calling 911. The police gave chase. The suspect crashed his vehicle on I-95, left his vehicle and fled into the swamp. An employee of Hyatt Place witnessed a soaking wet male in the lobby and when the male asked him to call a cab, the employee called 911 instead. The male was apprehended. The following Milford Police personnel will receive a Unit Citation: Sgt. Sharoh, Sgt. Darby, Offs. Thornberg, Lima, Canine Judge, Offs. Mazzara, Broderick, Dunn, Bethke, Todice, Doyle and Dispatcher Hylma. Walter Sierer and Jerry Antonino will receive Civilian Commendations. State Trooper Kaufmann and West Haven Police Officer Masek will receive Letters of Recognition and Off. Bloom and his K9 Onox from West Haven will receive a Commendation.

In response to Comm. Zawislinski, Chief Mello noted that they only put out information that can be made public when there is an on-going case.

Comm. Jagoe suggested the Chief write a letter to let these officers know how grateful and appreciative they are for the good work.

At 8:10 P.M., it was moved by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Comm. Jagoe and carried by roll call vote to enter into Executive Session to discuss items 12a, 12b and 12c. Chief Mello and Deputy Chief Fournier remained.

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

- a. Probationary Reviews - None
- b. Consideration of the performance of 2 employees
- c. Discussion of Chief's Compensation

The Commission left Executive Session at 9:00 P.M., at which time Comm. Jagoe moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Comm. Marrone and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda Stock, Secretary

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**