

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
HELD MONDAY, MAY 12, 2008
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

1. ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Melvin Eisenhandler; Carol Faruolo; Kenneth Fellenbaum; Alberta Jagoe; Sharon Marrone; Thomas Zawislinski; Carlton Giles (7:17 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Mello; Deputy Chief Fournier; L. Stock, Secty; P. Vetro, Board of Aldermen; K. Patterson, Planning & Zoning Board Liaison

Comm. Jagoe moved to amend the agenda as follows:

Add: 6d. Donation of \$500.00 from Westfield Corporation for Citizens Police Academy

Add: 10a. Traffic Study re: speed and parking signage on East Broadway – Rep. Amann and Silver Sands Task Force

Change: 12b. ...performance of 3 employees (to) **4** employees

Add: 12d. Request for Sick Time Extension

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

Chrmn. Fellenbaum explained that the agendas of the regular meetings (such as this evening) can be amended with 2/3 vote of members present.

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS

None

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Phil Vetro, Alderman, 10 Carmen Road, stated that at the last Board of Aldermen meeting, there was a lengthy discussion regarding the public access at Caswell Cove. P. Vetro believed this to be a public safety issue and asked if a public safety person from the Police Department could attend the next meeting. This person would be able to offer city minded suggestions. The Chief thanked him for the invitation.

Continuing, P. Vetro asked what determines how many police officers are on duty at the Oyster Festival. Chief Mello responded that historically, throughout the years, their needs have been assessed. Several items have to be factored

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in; however, currently, they have reduced the number of officers. The officers are positioned at the command center, the beer area, traffic posts and roving posts. When the Chief became a member of the department in 1981, every police officer in the department worked the festival; today they have cut that number by approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$. These past two years, there has been a slight increase due to the extra hour of the festival. Some officers have to leave for their 4 o'clock shifts and therefore, other officers have to replace them. P. Vetro asked if the weather was a factor in how many officers were required, for instance if the weather is bad, do they need less officers. The Chief responded in the negative, but, they can send officers home early. However, the festival has not been cancelled completely due to weather. The areas mentioned still have to be manned.

P. Vetro stated that he has been suggesting an idea for some time regarding the beer area. The city has been trying to cut down on their expenses and that's where the Oyster Festival came in to play. The largest issue with the non-profit groups is the wrist bands; each booth is responsible for checking ID's and then selling the wrist bands. It is possible that someone who was not of age would be sold beer. His suggestion is that a turnstile be installed and controlled by another group, where they would charge a nominal fee, for instance \$1.00, where each person who enters the area can have their ID checked and then they can purchase their wrist band. If this was done at the beginning of the festival, everyone inside would be covered. P. Vetro wondered if the Police Department had any such ideas.

P. Vetro stated now that the weather is becoming nice, he is receiving many calls regarding motorcycles. Is there anything that can be done?

Regarding the motorcycles, Chief Mello stated that Milford does not have a noise ordinance; a noise meter would have to be utilized to measure sound. There is existing motor vehicle legislation whereby officers can issue tickets if a motorcycle does not have a baffling device. Milford does attract motorcyclists due to its coastline and the department will have officers in the most popular areas. It will be good, solid enforcement.

As an aside, Chief Mello explained that they are looking to increase their traffic unit. The extra officer requested, which is currently in the Mayor's recommended budget, will be put in traffic at the 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. shift, to handle motor vehicle accidents, because they take so long and it keeps an officer from responding to other calls. This additional officer will also do traffic enforcement in the "hot spots." This will free up patrol to improve response time.

Responding to the beer and wrist band situation at the Oyster Festival, the Chief thought that was a good idea; the only issue is that the Police Department would not want to have the liability of checking ID's and selling the wrist bands. By law,

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the permittee is liable and they do not want to transfer that responsibility to the police. P. Vetro apologized explaining that he did not mean for the Police Department to handle it, he meant an outside party, such as the Oyster Festival group, rather than the individual booths.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum interjected that he agreed this was a real concern; however, it would take someone who has the skills and knowledge to check these numerous amounts of ID's because there are so many fake ones in existence.

Chief Mello felt that if there was a controlled access point where people are charged, it would require additional police officers, perhaps one or two, inside that area.

At this point, Vice Chrmn. Giles arrived and apologized for his tardiness.

Mr. Bob Conover, 181 Hillside Avenue, was present at the meeting because he was a member of the 1st Citizens Academy and they were all invited to attend a Commission meeting.

Chief Mello noted that the Department received their Tier 1 and Tier 2 Accreditation and he distributed commemorative pins to those present. Comm. Jagoe asked if the officers wore the pins on their uniforms to which the Chief responded in the negative, noting all officers received a pin.

At this time, Chrmn. Fellenbaum noted that Kathy Patterson, Liaison from the Planning and Zoning Board was present.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Comm. Jagoe and seconded by Comm. Zawislinski to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2008 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Mello noted the following was received:

A letter was received from Absolute Software commending the detectives. This company installs lo-jacks in computers and once a stolen computer is turned on, it can be located. Due to this procedure, the detectives located a stolen lap top computer.

Comm. Zawislinski told the Commission of a news story of the same scenario, wherein a woman activated an on line camera and took a picture of the person who had stolen her computer and was using it.

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A letter was received from Foran High School's principal, thanking Off. Lugo, Sgt. Vitti and Det. Young, who assisted in resolving some problems between the students and parents on May 3. After their assistance, there were two days of peace. The Chief explained that they mediate problems between parents and students from time to time with a focus on Foran High School.

The Milford Hospital Auxiliary sent a letter thanking Off. Dumas for his presentation on safety and crime prevention to 87 of their members.

Lynn Connors thanked the department (and the East Haven department) for the help and assistance given her while she was out at Laurel Woods. She especially thanked the Chief.

Lynn Martin sent a letter of appreciation for the assistance given to her and her sister.

The New Haven Division of the FBI sent a letter praising Sgt. Chacon for his commendable service, professionalism and dedication. Sgt. Chacon was commended for his efforts on the New Haven Safe Streets Task Force. The FBI is grateful for his service and support and he will be missed.

Felix Lizasuain, a Citizens Police Academy graduate sent a letter of thanks to the Chief and his staff. He stated he is now aware of the many divisions of the department. He felt the classes were exciting, entertaining and impressive. He gave special thanks to Off. Dumas for bringing them together for this opportunity. He noted that much was taught in a short amount of time.

The Wilton Police Department sent a letter thanking the department for providing Sgt. Ken Rahn to serve on their oral board examination in selecting new detectives.

A letter was received from Mr. Santiago, regarding a drug dealer that was apprehended and arrested. Mr. Santiago commended the department for the arrest but he was disappointed that the person was out of jail with only a promise to appear. He does not feel this sets the proper example, as where there are drugs, there are guns and violence. Chief Mello explained to the Commission that this is a matter for the criminal justice system and he will forward the letter to them. Bonds are set for appearances in court and are not an administrative matter for the police department. He will respond to Mr. Santiago explaining same.

6. CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF CHIEF ON MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

- a. Police Sick & Relief Fund CD Maturity Notice

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Comm. Jagoe moved to renew the CD with the Milford Bank for 18 months at the current rate, although rates change on a daily basis. The current amount of the CD is \$76,254.34. The motion was seconded by Comm. Faruolo and carried unanimously.

b. Off Duty Weapon Authorization for Officer Scot Knablin

The Chief stated that the weapon has been checked and Off. Knablin is qualified with the weapon. He explained that an officer can carry 3 off duty weapons which have been approved by the police department.

It was moved by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Vice Chrmn. Giles to adopt the Chief's recommendation.

DISCUSSION

Vice Chrmn. Giles asked if, because of HR218, retirees also continue to carry their off duty weapons. The Chief responded that presently they are doing nothing as the federal government allows them to carry their weapons if they were an officer in good standing. He explained that HR218 allows a retired police officer in good standing to carry a firearm anywhere in the country and the department provides them with a card, so stating.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

c. Accident free mileage awards for Officers Richard Anderson, Tyrone Dancy and Christopher Dunn

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

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

d. Donation of \$500 from Westfield Corporation for Citizens Police Academy

Comm. Jagoe moved to gratefully accept this \$500 donation from Westfield Corporation. The motion carried unanimously after a second by Comm. Faruolo.

Vice Chrmn. Giles asked if another Citizens Police Academy was planned, to which the Chief responded it will be scheduled after the next police academy class in December.

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7. REPORT ON PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTS

- a. 471 Naugatuck Ave. – 2 Family Residence

It was moved and seconded by Comms. Zawislinski and Faruolo to adopt traffic's recommendations for this item. 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 Vice Chrmn. Giles and unanimously carried to accept reports "a" through "e."

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Traffic Study re: speed and parking signage on East Broadway – Rep. Amann and Silver Sands Task Force

In response to Comm. Jagoe, Chief Mello explained that this request was originally received by the Mayor's office. A study was previously done in 2000 regarding the speeding on East Broadway, which was noted by residents to be 50 or 60 mph at times. They also requested that some of the "No Parking" signs be replaced and also to erect additional signs. The residents also wanted restricted parking on the street – for residents only – and requested that a gate be installed so that only residents could enter.

Continuing, the Chief stated a speed study was done from 3/27 to 4/4 and the results were similar to those of 2000. The average speed westbound was 28 mph and the average speed eastbound was also 28 mph, in this 25 mph zone. In the 85 percentile, the speed was 31 mph westbound and 33 mph eastbound. The Chief believes that regular enforcement should be sufficient.

As far as closing down the road, they recommend denial; it is a public, state road. Regarding restricted parking, there is no area in Milford where this is allowed with the exception of handicap parking spaces. This would also be detrimental to emergency vehicles.

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Commenting on the signage, nine signs were replaced and 12 were installed.

The department did enforcement for ten days and only three tickets were issued. The street is very narrow and the homes are close to the road with much pedestrian traffic. Under those circumstances, it would appear that vehicles are traveling much faster than they actually are. The State DOT has not rendered an opinion as yet regarding restricted uses and parking.

The Chief distributed copies of Traffic's summary report to the Commissioners.

Comm. Zawislinski noted that this is the second time the Silver Sands group has made these requests to restrict parking and close down the road. He recalled that they were denied for the same reasons the Chief is noting today. Chief Mello added that every year they receive these requests and they will continue to handle them with enforcement.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated that the recommendation is to continue enforcement.

It was moved by Comm. Faruolo, seconded by Comm. Zawislinski and unanimously carried to adopt Traffic's recommendations.

11. COMMENDATIONS – 15 (Unit Citation)

Deputy Chief Fournier recalled an incident at the Pilot Center on April 6, 2008, where there was a disturbance and one individual pulled out a loaded shotgun from his trunk. 13 Officers will receive a unit citation and 2 will receive a Meritorious Service Award, those being Lt. J. Pietrafesa and Off. M. Lima. The following officers will receive the Unit Citation: Sgt. W. Cable, Sgt. J. Burton, Off. E. Mills, Off. J. Anderson, Off. A. Moreno, Off. K. Catino, Off. A. Huggins, Off. R. Anderson, Off. W. Simpson, Off. C. Cacchillo, Off. C. Doyle, Off. J. Simko, and Off. D. Broderick.

Chief Mello stated that disturbances occur at this location on the weekends between 2 and 3 a.m. Groups of hundreds who are passing through are seen in this area and especially at Wendy's. He noted that some of the officers were off duty when the call came in. They have also responded to calls where Wendy's has been destroyed. This particular dispute escalated to dangerous proportions.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated the citation was well deserved, especially for the two officers.

Chief Mello explained that the call went out as a 10-1. When this is heard, every available officer responds as it means there is something serious, i.e., an officer in trouble.

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Comm. Jagoe asked that the Chief let the officers know how proud the Commission is of them and that they appreciate their bravery and professionalism when handling situations such as this.

At 7:49 P.M., it was moved by Vice Chrmn. Giles, seconded by Comm. Jagoe and carried by roll call vote to enter into Executive Session to discuss items 12a-d. Chief Mello and Deputy Chief Fournier remained.

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

- a. Probationary Reviews – 1st Quarter review for Officers David Chila, Sharon Bloom, Antonio Moreno and Ereik Robinson.
- b. Consideration of the performance of 4 employees
- c. Discussion of Police Chief's Contract
- d. Request for Sick Time Extension

The Commission left Executive Session at 9:20 P.M. Vice Chrmn. Giles moved to uphold the Chief's recommendation as it relates to extended sick time. The motion carried unanimously after a second by Comm. Zawislinski.

Comm. Eisenhandler moved to adjourn at 9:21 P.M. The motion was seconded by Comm. Zawislinski and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Stock, Secretary