

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 2013  
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, David Rubenstein, Richard Smith, Jerold Wanosky

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Mello, Deputy Chief Butler, Ald. Vetro, Mr. Mead (P & Z Vice Chair) and D. Candido, Secty.

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

**2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS - none**

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS** – Chairman Jagoe read a prepared statement regarding guidelines for addressing the Board of Commissioners during the citizen comment portion of the meeting noting each speaker should provide their name and address for the record and that the opportunity for addressing the board is not to engage in discussion but hear the comments of those present.

- S. Wing – 26 Crown St – directed comment to the agenda item regarding Bicycle Lane Requests and questioned if the public will be able to participate in the discussion regarding that matter.

Chief Mello explained this would be the opportunity for the public to share their comments; he added those present were welcome to say for the entire meeting and hear the commission's discussion regarding the matter.

Mr. Wing stated there is a good deal of interest in this topic and on behalf of those present he suggested a public hearing forum regarding this item. He requested the item be tabled until such time that the public can voice their feelings.

Chief Mello explained that when a matter such as this come to this level of decision it follows a definite pattern that being after the request comes in, information is gathered through a traffic study and that information is what is presented to the commission. He offered to provide those present with a copy of the report given to the commission and he would agree to postponing action on this matter until next month at which time those present tonight can make further comments to the commission which they can't take into consideration before making a final decision.

Comm. Smith asked how input from the commission can ultimately change the recommendation.

Chief Mello explained there would be no additional information to come forth after the report is sent to the public.

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Chrmn. Jagoe offered tabling this matter until next month and it was the consensus of those residents in attendance to accept the opportunity to review the report and come back next month with their comments.

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to bring agenda item 10 d to this point in the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to table item 10 d (*Bicycle Lane Request – Wheelers Farms Rd/Seaside Ave/Trumbull Ave.*) until the next Board of Police Commissioners Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

- Charles Griebell – 31 Trumbull Ave. – directed comments to the 6 mini-parks on Trumbull Ave which are currently being refurbished since last year's tropical storm. He noted at this time there are *No Parking* signs along the street prohibiting parking 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. and the intent of those signs is to minimize night time noise after 9 p.m. He explained visiting cars park on the side streets and then use the mini-park areas for socializing. He noted there are no restrictions on the areas and neighbors have contacted the police in the past because of the noise, drinking and socializing late in the evening/early morning hours. He added the parks are open and welcome to the public during the day. He referred to other mini-parks in the town that have postings of restrictions on parking, noise, alcohol, etc.) but there are no postings like that on Trumbull Ave. He expressed his concern regarding the behavior witnessed and the number of cars pulling up late at night.

Chief Mello explained many years ago the aldermen passed an ordinance stating any city park/parkette close at the same time and alcohol is prohibited at all times.

Mr. Griebell questioned how to request posting of signs at this location and Chief Mello stated he can request signs be erected and he will check on the classification of the area but in terms of enforcement, he stated there are so many areas in our city which need the department's attention but there are a limited number of officers. He suggested the residents call the department when the problem is occurring and officers will be dispatched for purposes of enforcement. He added the reality is there will never be enough police officers to handle the popular times and popular areas and there may be times when a call is made and a police officer may not be available to be dispatched especially on Friday or Saturday nights.

- E. Mead – 67 Peak Ave. – directed comments to traffic and traffic flow issues in Milford Center (New Haven Ave., River St and Factory Lane). He also noted that when additional Subway facilities were approved, P & Z included crosswalks as part of their recommendation but to date that has not occurred.

Chief Mello stated since the recommendation was not based on a traffic study, then the matter should be referred to the department's Traffic Division for a study to be done.

- Ald. Vetro shared concerns brought to his attention regarding the crosswalk manual control on New Haven Avenue (at intersection of New Haven Ave and Prospect St.) He stated he has been told at times the crosswalk button is not working properly or has intermittent operation and sometimes it sticks in the walk mode.

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Chief explained that is a state road however based on the fact the public is concerned, he would be able to move the matter forward via an email to the appropriate state office.

As well, Ald. Vetro shared concerns from people who attend the summer concert series at Fowler Field and have been ticketed for parking in “permit” or special areas.

- J. Carissimi – 64 Kirkland Ave – on behalf of the Wildemere Beach Association, he thanked the department for the COPS Unit presence for 3 consecutive weekends.

Chief Mello stated it is a known fact that the department needs additional training space and in recent years they have been fortunate enough to use the former Simon Lake School as a training facility. He stated there was some funding available to spruce up some of the areas in the building but the interior of the building needed to be painted. He stated the Citizens Police Academy Alumni were approached and asked for assistance and they came through and painted the interior at night when training was not taking place. He extended his appreciation to the alumni members who worked with Mr. & Mrs. Carissimi and 3 officers to complete this task showing a good community partnership.

- Comm. Smith stated he received a call from a resident on Elton Street regarding vehicular traffic using the street as a cut through to avoid the Gulf Street light.

Chief Mello explained it is not possible to stop people from traveling on a particular street and the only enforcement that can be applied is to enforce speeding. He noted in some instances the streets are not long enough for a car to reach maximum speed before stopping at the end of the street. He stated if numerous complaints are received regarding a specific street, an officer is assigned to monitor the area.

Discussion ensued regarding children using a public street to play in noting that has been a problem in the past as well.

#### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubinstein to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2013 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE**

Chief Mello shared the following correspondence:

- Wm. Lynch, M.D., 73 North St. – with the opening of school approaching, he shared his concern regarding bicycle traffic at Naugatuck/E. Broadway. Suggested the department have a program to teach bike safety in the public schools.

Chief Mello stated there is such a program in place at t his time.

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- Toni Dolan, Executive Director, Beth El Center – expressed appreciation for a \$100 memorial donation to the Center from the staff of the Police Dept.
- Thomas Davoren, Chief, Groton Police Dept. – was pleased to have Officer Emily Covelli serve as a panelist on police recruitment interviews adding she is a great asset to the Milford Police Dept. and is a professional and knowledgeable officer.
- Concerned Citizens for People With Disabilities – copy of a letter sent to Officer Frank Tomaselli informing him of the group's intention to recognize him at an upcoming event for his sincere compassion and level of caring as a respected Milford Police Officer or the long-time friend and supporter of so many here in Milford.
- Suzanne Beliveau, 20 Stagecoach – expressed appreciation for the police escort provided for mother's funeral.
- Laurel Beach Association Board of Managers – expressed appreciation to the department for their outstanding support and police presence throughout the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday and further noting their strong support of the department and the advantages it brings to our city.
- Andy Edwards, Give 2 The Troops Foundation – expressed appreciation for the donations made adding the gifts had already been forward to our troops in harm's way.
- Karen Brittar, 185 Edgefield Ave – expressing thanks for making Milford safe.
- Dodson Family, 69 Wayne Rd. – thanking officers who helped family through a stressful and difficult time (house fire).
- Carol Klinge, 160 Broadway – expressed appreciation to Officer Nielsen for securing the vacant home on Bittersweet Ave prior to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday.
- Laura Skarne – expressed appreciation for those runners who took part in the "One Run for Boston" event recently held (PFC Mello and Officer Carney).
- Alliea Group, Boston, MA – expressed appreciation to the officer who assisted her on 5/31 when she experienced car problems while traveling through Milford noting the officer remained with her until road assistance was provided and she was able to safely return to her travels.
- Lucille Grassi, 38 Clover St., Ansonia – on 7/3 she had car problems when exiting the Expect parking lot and on to the street where construction area was. She noted Officer Mello remained with her until road assistance came and in fact was able to get the road assistance out to her sooner than expected. She stated she was grateful for his kindness and professionalism.
- Officer Michael Compare – took the opportunity to thank Chief Mello and the department for their support of his fundraising efforts for the Chase Kowalski Memorial Fund adding the support of the Chief and the department helped raise \$4,030 for this fund.

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- Nicki Wayne, Mathewson School – thanked Officers DelMonte and Taylor for their visit to grade 1 at Mathewson School.
- Resident – thanked Officer Holder for his kindness when responding to a difficult situation and noted that not only is he a credit to the police force but to his parents as well.
- Ray Vitali, Milford Ride For Hope to benefit Rape Crisis Center – expressed appreciation for the department's support in the 2013 Ride for Hope noting the presence of the officers helped make the event a success
- Heather Jeliffe – thanked Officer Davidson for help provided to she and her children.
- Krusewski Family – expressed appreciation for gifts and cards of sympathy.
- James McKinney, Hamden – expressed appreciation for courteous and professional treatment received from Officer Salati.

Chrmn. Jagoe noted all of the correspondence received was positive and a very good reflection of the department.

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

a. Consideration of the appeal of conditional job offer rejection for Jeremy Mastroianni – Mr. Mastroianni was present and stated he was happy he had the honor of being considered for conditional term of employment in Milford. He stated he was greatly disappointed when he received his rejection letter as he was very excited about the idea of becoming an officer here in Milford. He shared his educational background with the commissioners and stated that he felt he would be a good candidate. He added that though he is only 22 he has known for a long while he wanted to be a police officer and was looking forward to being a part of this department. He stated if he was given the chance, he would work hard to prove he was an asset to the Milford Police Dept.

Chief Mello confirmed all that Mr. Mastroianni shared was true. He noted that when the process began in Milford, he was also in the process for Orange and our department used the polygraph done there as part of our process. Chief Mello stated Mr. Mastroianni unfortunately admitted to minor theft issues (hat from store and street sign) in 2009 and 2010 and though the items stolen were not in high costs, he personally would be looking to put some distance between the time of theft and his consideration for appointment as an officer. Chief Mello added Mr. Mastroianni is a strong candidate and he hoped to see him apply again.

Comm. Smith asked how much time would the Chief recommend as enough time between the incidents and a future consideration and Chief Mello stated 5 years would be what he would like to see.

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Chief Mello added it is uncommon to see thefts from someone who wants to be a police officer and though they were minor and small items in terms of value, it was still theft.

Chrmn. Jagoe asked if it was 5 years from time of rejection or 5 years from the time of theft and she was told 5 years from the time of theft. Chief Mello added theft is a big concern because of an officer's access to money or valuables. He added he was hopeful to see him reapply and felt he is a good candidate but also advised him that he may be questioned about the incidents while he is pursuing his goals.

Mr. Mastroianni stated he respected Chief Mello's comments and personally felt he has changed so much in recent years and added he intends to reapply for the position of police officer next year.

Mr. Mastroianni was extended best wishes from the Chief and the commissioners.

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubinstein to uphold the recommendation of Chief Mello regarding the conditional job offer rejection for Jeremy Mastroianni.

Comm. Smith stated he respected Mr. Mastroianni's reaction to Chief Mello's comments which he felt reflected maturity.

Motion carried unanimously. (Mr. Mastroianni left the meeting)

b. Consideration of the appeal of conditional job offer rejection for William Barbour IV – 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. William Barbour was present and provided the commissioners with information regarding his former residence, his educational background and that he is currently a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt, U.S. Army and is stationed in Fairfield Ct as a Reserve Officer. Also is an assistant athletic coach at Amity High School. Lt. Barbour noted that he was aware his alcohol use during his college years was something that surfaced during the interview process and by no means is there an excuse for alcohol abuse. He explained the problem became more evident while in the military realizing the situations that he could be faced with if deployed. He stated he now realizes he has lost the opportunity to become an officer because of this problem.

Chief Mello stated Lt. Barbour is another excellent candidate who did well on the test and performed at a high level but it is necessary to be careful with previous alcohol abuse, the most recent issue revealed during a polygraph examination was 5/2013. Also noted was an incident where he purchased alcohol for a minor in 1/2013.

Chief Mello stated this rejection was based on the use of alcohol, his polygraph did not reflect that he lied and he was completely honest and open when the two met. Chief Mello chose to go further and send him for a psychological evaluation which he flunked. The recommendation from that evaluation was based on multiple areas of concern, none of which were fatal. Chief Mello stated he was impressed with Lt. Barbour but felt it was not the time to pursue a career with the department. He suggested that he begin to think as a police officer and show further signs of maturity.

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It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to uphold the recommendation of Chief Mello regarding the conditional job offer rejection for William Barbour IV.

Comm. Rubinstein added he respected how thorough the Chief has been with this candidate and his offering of advice for his personal life and military career.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chrmn. Jagoe thanked Lt. Barbour for his service, wished him safety and hoped to see him apply in the future. (Lt. Barbour left the meeting)

Chief Mello stated that in recent years the percent of candidates who have flunked the background has gone from 53% to 83% and to 90% in recent years. Discussion ensued regarding the high percentage of those that have flunked and Chief Mello stated the number of candidates in the pool is still good. He added Milford Police Dept is one of the lowest paid departments in the area but candidates are still looking to come here.

c. Safe Driving Awards for Officers J. Ballard, D. Bedeker, D. Chila, S. Young, W. Haas, S. Owens, R. Pisani, Sgt. T. Richards and Off. S. Noss. - It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to approve safe driving awards for Officers J. Ballard, D. Bedeker, D. Chila, S. Young, W. Haas, S. Owens, R. Pisani, Sgt. T. Richards and Off. S. Noss and award eight hours of comp time for an accumulation of 12,000 safe driving miles with no safety violations to the officers noted. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Mello added the number of accidents has reduced considerably.

d. Donation of \$50.00 for Police Benevolent Association – James McKinney – It was moved Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to remove item 6 d from the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

e. Consideration of Pop's Family Restaurant to provide prisoner meals – Chief Mello reported the Kimberly Diner has recently closed and in the past they provided prisoner meals. He stated they had not solicited for the meals but the owner of Pop's came forward and offered prisoners meals. He stated he would recommend approval of this and if in the future similar requests come in, a lottery system can be developed for providing the meals.

It was moved by Comm. Smith and seconded by Comm. Marrone to approve Pop's Family Restaurant as the provider of prisoner meals at this time. Motion carried unanimously.

f. Discussion of Police Towing Regulations – Chief Mello explained that towing regulations had been worked on for years with no final document; however our city attorney and his staff produced the final document presented in 3 days. He stated the city attorney and his staff has been extremely responsive to the department's needs.

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Chief Mello stated the regulations grandfather any towing companies presently included, provides criteria and guidelines for the towing companies, addresses the requirements of the permit holders regarding their driving record.

Chrmn. Jagoe expressed concern regarding matters that came forth in the past regarding felony arrest record of permit holders.

Comm. Rubinstein felt the document before the commission is an excellent one.

Discussion ensued regarding past problems with permit holders' felony arrests. Chief Mello stated he will follow up on that matter with the city attorney and bring the regulations back to the commission for consideration next month.

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to table the Police Towing Regulations until further information is obtained from City Attorney Berchem regarding language to be included addressing permit holders felony arrests. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. REPORT ON PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTS - none**

**8. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS**

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

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubinstein to approve the following reports:

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Chrmn. Jagoe questioned the issue that came before the board earlier in the summer regarding the Morningside Stop Sign. Chief Mello stated the matter regarding the bushes at that stop sign is in the hands of the city attorney at this time. He added the bushes are not in violation of the site line.

Comm. Wanosky questioned if any further information had been received regarding the golf cart requests and he was told there had been none.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**



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Chief Mello stated items a and b were previously considered and were placed on the agenda in error.

- a. Review of parking lot on Shipyard Lane (near Tennis Courts)
  - b. 2 hour parking limit request – Central Ave – Janet DeEll
  - c. Crosswalk request – Shipyard Lane – commuter lot behind Library – it was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to approve the Traffic Division recommendation regarding the crosswalk request – Shipyard Lane – commuter lot behind Library. Motion carried unanimously.
  - d. Bicycle Lane Request – Wheelers Farms Rd/Seaside Ave/Trumbull Ave – discussed and tabled earlier in the meeting.
  - e. Truck prohibition – High St. from West Main to Housatonic – it was moved by Comm. Faruolo and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to uphold the recommendation of the Traffic Division regarding Truck prohibition – High St. from West Main to Housatonic. Motion carried unanimously.
- Comm. Smith questioned what authority this body has with regard to recommending widening of roads and Chief Mello stated this commission has that authority.
- f. Caswell Cove/Bic Drive – Site inspection request – Mayor Blake - It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubinstein to approve Caswell Cove/Bic Drive – Site inspection – Mayor Blake. Motion carried unanimously.

**11. COMMENDATIONS - none**

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:56 p.m. for the following matters:

Consideration of Report of Chief of Police on matters concerning the Appointment, Employment, Performance, Evaluation, Health, or Dismissal of Department Employees.

- a. Consideration of the performance of 9 employees.
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter probationary review for Officers Austin Groves, Bryan Jock, Joseph Dempsey, Brandon Davidson, and Stephen Napoletano.
- c. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter review for Officer Kyle Magnan.

Motion carried unanimously.

Present were commissioners, Chief Mello and Deputy Chief Butler.

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It was moved by Vice Chair Bergami and seconded by Comm. Smith to reconvene in public session at 9:26 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Vice Chair Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubinstein to uphold Chief Mello's recommendation regarding the performance of 9 employees and 2nd quarter probationary review for Officers Austin Groves, Bryan Jock, Joseph Dempsey, Brandon Davidson, and Stephen Napoletano. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to adjourn at 9:27 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Candido  
Submitted to City Clerk August 14, 2013