

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
HELD MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 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, Alberta Jagoe, Sharon Marrone, David Rubenstein, Richard Smith, Jerold Wanosky

COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT: Carol Faruolo

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION ONLY: Officer Lee Robbins, Officer Dennis Broderick (Milford Police Union President), Attny. Esposito

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

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS - none

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- E. Mead – 67 Peak Ave. – directed comments to Daytona/Naugatuck Ave. intersection noting a constituent brought to his attention large delivery truck traffic is traveling on Daytona entering from Naugatuck Ave and the trucks are often bringing down the cable wires.

Chief Mello explained the requirements for prohibiting truck traffic and felt this incident which relates to trucks making deliveries/picking up products would not meet those requirements. He suggested the residents addressing the matter with Cablevision, specifically to have the wires raised.

- Ald. Robert Nunno – 9 Elm St. – as a resident of the Fort Trumbull area for 19 years he noted there is very limited parking on Trumbull Avenue and if the one hour parking is eliminated, the many people who come to enjoy the view will be forced to park on the side streets causing more parking and congestion issues.
- S. Wing – 26 Crown St. – encouraged the Police Commission to not eliminate the one hour parking requirement on Trumbull Avenue noting the street not only includes the roadway area but 10 ft. of private property on the north side as well as 10 ft on the opposite (water) side. He shared drawings which reflected what is public and what is private area on the street. Further, he added visitors enjoy the view and that privilege will not continue if the one hour parking is eliminated.
- C. Griebell – 31 Trumbull Ave – noted last month he posed the suggestion of signs posted on the decks (platforms) regarding restrictive parking times as is the case in other park/parkette areas of the city.

Chief Mello explained he looked into that possibility with the Park & Rec Dept. and learned those areas are not considered a parkette and therefore signage would not be appropriate.

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Mr. Griebell referred to ordinance regarding parking in the beach areas and restricted times and he felt that would encompass those areas as well.

Chief Mello explained that would be a Park & Rec issue and beyond the purview of this commission.

- W. O'Brien – 7 Trumbull Ave – stated he was not against the one hour parking on Trumbull Avenue if it could be enforced. Stated that in the past numerous calls had been made to the Police Dept regarding the problem but when the officer arrived to the location, there was no cars parked there in violation. He further stated the majority of the people do not just sit in their cars to enjoy the view, noting the posted signs allow for one hour parking with a driver occupied car. He felt it is the abuse of the parking privilege that is the problem.

Other residents present agreed with the comments but did not go on record to do so.

Chief Mello explained the department tracks every call which comes in and as the record of calls were looked at from that area, few calls were found. He encouraged residents to continue to call in regarding the problem and if the problem still cannot be addressed, he stated he would assign officers on bicycles to that area. He reminded residents that activity on a typical busy weekend in the city may delay the dispatch of an officer to the Trumbull Avenue area but if a call is made an officer will be dispatched.

- M. Vargas – 65 Trumbull Ave – noted that not all traffic on Trumbull Ave is vehicular and there is pedestrian and bike traffic as well. He suggested a bike lane along the shoreline area might be helpful.
- S. Lapine – 87 Trumbull Ave.- agreed with neighbors and felt non-enforcement is the issue; liked the idea of officers on bicycles and hoped the neighbors could participate and assist the department with enforcing this matter. Also referred to people exceeding the one hour time limit, leaving their cars running and the added liability of them going down to the water on the rocks at the end of street by Rogers Avenue. Noted there is a good deal of foot traffic on the shoreline curb.

Chief Mello explained when considering bike lanes, traffic flow and road variations are looked at from the approaching roads. He noted to have a bike lane on Trumbull Ave would not have safe approaching road (E. Broadway/Seaside). Further he stated when Trumbull Ave was made one-way, it became easier to accommodate bikers and walkers.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2013 meeting as presented.

Chief Mello referred to page 2, paragraph 6 and suggested the following revision:

“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 **immediately** dispatched especially on Friday or Saturday nights.”

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Motion carried unanimously to accept the minutes as corrected.

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Vice Chrmn. Bergami to reorder the agenda to bring the following items forward at this point:

9. Unfinished Business

- a. Wheelers Farms/Trumbull Ave – Bicycle Lanes

10. New Business

- d. Elimination of 1 hour parking – Trumbull Avenue

Motion carried unanimously.

9a. It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve a bicycle lane be installed on Wheelers Farms Road from Wolf Harbor to Daniel Wasson Connector Bridge. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to deny a bicycle lane Seaside Avenue to Trumbull Avenue. Motion carried unanimously.

10d. It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Vice Chrmn. Bergami to approve Traffic Division recommendation regarding the elimination of 1 our parking – Trumbull Avenue. Motion carried unanimously.

5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Mello shared the following correspondence:

- J. Henley – Chief Warrant Officer, USCG – in the events surrounding family member and military personnel's passing, he watched the way officers treated family members with honor and dignity. He commended the department's professionalism and devotion to duty is in good keeping with the highest tradition and honor of a law enforcement community.
- Resident - Commended Officers Mauro and Haas and the other officers who helped locate a missing family member.
- Giustino Family – extended thanks to the department for police escort at recent funeral of a family member.
- P. Ridenhour, Chief, Stratford Police Dept. – extended appreciation for allowing Stratford officers to participate in SWAT exercise last month. Further, thanked Det. Dancy for his work in the development, planning and implementation of the exercise.
- Doyle Funeral Home – extended thanks to Sgt. Vitti and other attending officers for their traffic control at the recent wake service and funeral of Rev. Shaw.
- K. Florio – 40 Christopher Dr – new resident and parent of a child who was pleased with is meeting of a police officer in the parking lot of the Parsons Complex. She noted that Officer Frey's interaction with the young boy made him feel safe and welcome in his new town. She thanked Chief Mello for creating a work atmosphere which allows officers to take a few minutes out of their busy work time to spend with a child.

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6. CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF CHIEF ON MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

a. Consideration of the appeal of conditional job offer rejection – Charles Letezeio – Mr. Letezeio directed comments to his previous disqualification for consideration as a police officer in Milford which he stated was a life-long dream of his. He explained he has been involved in many civic events, was a former business owner and an alumni of the Citizens Police Academy. He stated he has spent a good deal of time trying to rectify situations which did not truly exist. He explained that termination from previous employment was not true and he submitted retraction letters from co-workers regarding the matter and a 9 page document addressing the situation. He went on to explain in 2010 he was given a polygraph test which he failed due to a question he answered regarding 1986 drug use. Mr. Letezeio stated he has since taken 3 polygraphs and passed them all. He explained that when first asked how many times he had taken drugs he was not sure of the exact number and regretfully agreed to a suggested number higher than the actual. He presented letters of recommendations from officers in local municipalities, references from neighbors and letters of support from employer.

Mr. Letezeio referred to the issue over a land dispute with neighbors and stated that matter was part of his background check. He explained another police department to which he has applied to have disqualified that matter and has now put him on their waiting list for appointment.

With regard to loss of business he formerly owned, he stated he had documents, facts and much criteria regarding the sale of that business and added that was not a personal bankruptcy but a business bankruptcy.

He felt other candidates were disqualified because of something they actually did and he has documents addressing the fact that he has never had any problem with the law. He explained he has applied to over 60 departments and all go back to the previous problems which he felt he now has proof that they did not occur.

Chrmn. Jagoe referred to two jobs he was allegedly fired from and asked what those jobs were and she was told they were in the IT field. Mr. Letezeio explained the miscommunication between an Officer Brown and the administrator of that department.

Chrmn. Jagoe referred to Mr. Letezeio's comments regarding other applicants who have applied to the department and rejected noting that the minutes reflect what was discussed in public however issues from the background investigation may not have been brought forth in the public meeting.

Chief Mello added one applicant is not compared to another but is personally judged based on the standards of the department they are applying to. He added that he felt it was unlikely that all of these situations have been refuted.

He noted that Mr. Letezeio has been turned down by 60 departments and is now on the waiting list for one of them. With regard to the polygraph tests, Chief Mello asked how the examiner justifies the difference in his opinion from one test to another. He asked Mr. Letezeio how many polygraphs he had taken and he was told 6 but not all from the same examiner.

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Chief Mello noted having written documentation from the polygraph examiner who claims there was a difference would be advantageous for Mr. Letezeio to have. Further, he emphasized the fact that reactions on a polygraph indicates one is not being truthful. Chief Mello referred to other issues that came forth in the background investigation.

He asked about the sick time abuse reported from a previous employer; use of business lap top to surf on inappropriate sites; a reaction to polygraph question regarding the number of times he used drugs.

Mr. Letezeio explained with regard to the dismissal from a previous job, he stated he was planning to resign from that job and the supervisor felt he had taken off too much time and therefore the timing for submitting resignation was not favorable.

Chief Mello asked Mr. Letezeio if he ever failed to appear in a court of law on a criminal matter and Mr. Letezeio stated yes it was regarding the bankruptcy issue and it was upon legal recommendation that he did not appear.

Chief Mello asked Mr. Letezeio if he had been terminated from a security job and M. Letezeio explained he had a number of letters of retractions regarding that issue; however, Chief Mello stated a written document from someone in a position of authority at that place of employment explaining the faulty termination is what is needed.

Chief Mello further addressed comments from St. Vincent Hospital employees who state Mr. Letezeio was a difficult employee. As well, there were unfavorable neighbor comments. Chief Mello explained there were a good deal of issues raised in the investigation and retractions from a person(s) of authority would be required. He stated there were an over abundance of issues which support the job offer rejection.

Mr. Letezeio stated if he had a list of what documents were needed he would pursue those individuals and come back with the letters.

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to uphold Chief Mello's recommendation regarding the conditional job offer rejection – Charles Letezeio. Motion carried unanimously.

7. REPORT ON PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTS

a. Platt Reserve – 489 North Street – It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to approve the Platt Reserve – 489 North Street request. Motion carried unanimously.

b. 22 Unit 8 – 30g Affordable Housing Project – 86 Pond Point Avenue

Vice Chrmn. Bergami recused himself from discussion and voting on this matter as he is related to the developer of this project. He offered to leave the room if further discussion on the matter was necessary.

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It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve Traffic Division Recommendation regarding 22 Unit 8 – 30g Affordable Housing Project – 86 Pond Point Avenue as stipulated. Motion carried unanimously.

c. 9 Unit, 8-30g Affordable Housing Project – 229 West Main Street

It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Comm. Marrone to approve Traffic Division Recommendation regarding 9 Unit, 8-30g Affordable Housing Project – 229 West Main Street as stipulated. Motion carried unanimously.

8. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS

It was moved by Vice Chair Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein 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

b. Tow List Regulations – Chief Mello noted the Commissioners now have revised Tow List Regulations

It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to approve the Tow List Regulations (revised) as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

Comm. Rubenstein took the opportunity note the excellent job in redeveloping the tow list regs.

Chief Mello acknowledged Attny. Berchem and his staff for their fine work.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. 33 Deerfield Ave. – On Street Handicap space request – It was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Vice Chrmn. Bergami to approve Traffic Division recommendation regarding 33 Deerfield Ave. – On Street Handicap space request. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Crosswalk Study – West Main/West River St – It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Marrone to approve Traffic Division recommendation regarding Crosswalk Study – West Main/West River St. Motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMENDATIONS - none

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:52 p.m. for Consideration of Report of Chief of Police on matters concerning the Appointment, Employment, Performance, Evaluation, Health, or Dismissal of Department Employees.

- a. Final probationary quarterly review for Officer Michael Compare.
- b. 1st quarter probationary review for Officers Steven Carney and Courtney Bothwell.
- c. Consideration of the recommendation of the Chief of Police to terminate the employment of Officer Lee Robbins.
- d. Grievance #4-2013.

Motion carried unanimously.

Present were commissioners, Chief Mello and Deputy Chief Butler, Deputy Chief Mooney, Officer Lee Robbins, Officer Dennis Broderick (Milford Police Union President), Attny. Esposito.

Officer Robbins, Broderick and Attny. Esposito left Executive Session at 8:41 p.m. and returned to the session at 8:52 p.m.

Officer Robbins, Broderick and Attny. Esposito left Executive Session at 10:05 p.m. and returned to the session at 10:20 p.m.

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to reconvene in public session at 10:22 p.m.

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to uphold Chief Mello's recommendation regarding termination of Officer Lee Robbins as discussed in Executive Session.

Comm. Smith noted the commissioners takes decisions such as this very seriously and labored over it, looking at the totality of the record.

Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Wanosky to uphold Chief Mello's recommendation to deny Grievance #4-2013. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Comm. Wanosky and seconded by Vice Chrmn. Bergami to adjourn at 10:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Candido
Submitted to City Clerk September 23, 2013