Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Sam Bergami, Bill Bevan, Alberta Jagoe, John Mager, Sharon Marrone, D. Rubenstein, Richard Smith

ALSO PRESENT:Police Chief Mello; Deputy Chief Rojee, Lt. Delmonte, D. Candido, Secty.

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

**2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS** - none

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS** - none

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

It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Bevan to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 22, 2020 and the Special Meeting of July 29, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion carried with Vice Chrmn. Bergami abstaining from voting on the July 29, 2020 meeting as he did not receive meeting notification.

**5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE**

Chief Mello explained he would be reading only some samples of the correspondence received due to the large number of cards, gift cards and messages of appreciation received.

* Numerous thank you cards and notes of appreciation.
* Resident – expressed gratitude and commended performance of Officer Michael Moreno who handled a family situation with a level of passion and concern.
* Numerous emails conveying messages such as: keep up your spirit; thank you for your services, thank you for the sacrifices you make in keeping us safe and we appreciate you more than words can convey.
* Letter from 5 year old student – thank you for reading books to students via YOUTUBE.
* Suzanne Dibiase – Lindy St. – thank you for all you do and so many people respect all of the police officers.
* Resident – thank you for all you do; it is valued and appreciated.
* Resident – thank you for what you do to keep us all safe.
* Resident – thank you for helping make a birthday a special day and participating in birthday parade.
* Resident – letter of appreciation to the Department for the presence around the area of Laurel Avenue.
* Resident – commended and noted he was impressed with Officer Stoddard and his handling of a recent call.

Chief Mello noted based on his recollection, the only time he recalled such an outreach of support from the community was following the tragic death of Officer Wasson.

Comm. Jagoe stated she was pleased so many people are letting the Chief know that the Department is appreciated and she was happy that people realize the excellence we have in our Milford Police Department.

Chrmn. Smith added neighbors have asked him if there was anything they could do to show their support and obviously the letters, messages and emails received are an indication of just that. He expressed his gratitude to Chief Mello, Deputy Chief Rojee and all of the members of our Police Department.

Comm. Rubenstein echoed those sentiments.

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

a. Donation of PPE from Ocean State Job Lot – Chief Mello explained this donation included masks, face shields, hand sanitizers and they accepted those donations but he emphasized the fact that there was never a shortage of PPE in this city. He stated many of his colleagues were searching for this type of equipment and here in Milford we always had more than adequate supply. Chief Mello extended his thanks to the Health Dept. and Deepa Joseph, Director of Health for their support, guidance and assistance.

Motion was made by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to accept the Donation of PPE from Ocean State Job Lot as explained by Chief Mello. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Donation of religious medals from Marge Barbaro – Chief Mello stated this donation has been accepted and recommended they be placed in the lounge area and offered to anyone who is interested.

Motion was made by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Bevan to accept the donation of religious medals from Marge Barbaro as explained by Chief Mello. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Mello explained that normally the Department does not accept donations but they have received so many including cash, gift cards from stores and have used them when various purchases were needed to be made.

c. Gift cards from Hollyday family – Chief Mello explained the 2 $25 gift cards were donated in appreciation for our officers and all they do and he asked that the gift cards be placed in the Officers’ Wellness Fund.

Motion was made by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to accept the 2 $25 gift cards from the Hollyday family as explained and placed in the Officers’ Wellness Fund as recommended by Chief Mello. Motion carried unanimously.

d. Anonymous cash donation – Chief Mello recommended this $100 cash donation be placed in the Officers’ Wellness Fund.

Motion was made by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to accept the anonymous cash donation of $100 and place such donation in the Officers’ Wellness Fund as recommended by Chief Mello. Motion carried unanimously.

e. Note of thanks and gift card to Records Staff – Chief Mello explained a $25 Barnes & Noble Gift Card was accepted and he recommended the gift card be placed in the Officers’ Wellness Fund

Chrmn. Smith asked if the Records Staff were aware of this generous gesture and he was told they were.

Motion was made by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Marrone to accept the $25 Barnes & Noble Gift Card and place that in the DARE account to purchase appropriately related material for children. Motion carried unanimously.

f. Off Duty weapon authorization for Off. William Barbour –Motion was made by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve Off-duty weapon authorization for officer William Barbour. Motion carried unanimously.

g. INFORMATIONAL - Safe Driving awards for Sgt. E. Beauvais, Off. Paige Bodnar, Off. Scot Knablin and Det. M. Warwick

h. Chief’s General comments – Chief Mello reiterated how much he and the members of the Department appreciate the words of support from this Commission who have always been supportive of the Police Department. He added he has always spoke highly of this group. He referred to a move to get away from this type of civil review board noting included in HB 6004 which includes language supporting a police commission board. He added he serves as a member of the Committee on Police Accountability and Transparency and they will make a recommendation for proposal for the January 2021 Legislative Session. He noted one of the proposals is that the civilian review boards have subpoena power. He asked the members to review the Bill and talk to their legislators asking them to vote to change the use of force law noting the use of force law deviates from the Supreme Court standards that have been in place for many years. He added there are some serious infirmities in the law and policy makers have reviewed it and agree it is a bad law. Further, he noted there will be hesitation on the part of an officer regarding use of force.

Chief Mello felt this matter may come up in the special legislative session scheduled for September. He explained there will be changes in that Bill that will impact citizens and municipal budgets and encouraged board members to read the Bill.

Comm. Rubenstein asked if the Chief foresees a challenge of the ongoing SRO Program.

Chief Mello explained there are many municipalities that do not want SRO’s and it is left up to the school and municipal leaders if they are put in place.

Chief Mello felt we will be seeing more lawsuits, higher insurance rates for municipalities but he did not think it will impact officer financially.

Comm. Mager agrees that the proposals will increase municipal costs and as a member of this Board I would not want the subpoena review power. As a civil review board we have the right to negative inference.

Chief Mello added the mandates being offered for civilian review board will require certain training for its members. He once again emphasized his confidences in this Board and previous Boards.

Chief Mello referred to police union actions with regard to candidates who supported HB6004. He stated he has spoken with the leadership of Milford Police Union and they will support candidates that will support law enforcement but will not attack legislators for their voting actions.

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

a. Valley Tool & Manufacturing – 132 Shelland St. – Motion made by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Mager to approve Traffic Division recommendation regarding Valley Tool & Manufacturing – 132 Shelland St. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Multifamily Residence – 158 Cherry St. – Motion made by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve Traffic Division recommendation regarding Multifamily Residence – 158 Cherry St. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS**

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

a. Special Investigations Unit Report

b. Detective Bureau Report

c. Crime Prevention Unit Report

d. Traffic Division and Licensing Unit Report

Comm. Mager noted a substantial increase in juvenile arrests and Chief Mello suggested looking at summer to summer numbers to make a comparison.

Comm. Mager stated it was just an observation and did not want to add to the Chief’s tasks at this time.

Chief Mello stated juveniles are committing assaults, stealing cars, carrying weapons and not getting arrested.

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - none

**10. NEW BUSINESS – none**

**11. COMMENDATIONS**

a. Letter of Recognition – Off. Zachary Milslagle, case #1558-20 – Deputy Chief Rojee noted Officer Milslagle was patrolling on the midnight shift and saw a vehicle with 3 people in it parked on the side of the road and then they pulled off to an obscure area and did flee from the car on foot. Officer Milslagle stayed with the car, which later was deemed a stolen vehicle, and with assistance from other units and K-9 assistance located one individual. The officers on foot subsequently located the other 2 individuals who had left the car. Deputy Chief Rojee commended Officer Milslagle for his excellent work.

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Consideration of Report of Chief of Police on matters concerning the Appointment,**

**Employment, Performance, Evaluation, Health, or Dismissal of Department**

**Employees.**

Motion was made by Vice Chair Bergami and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:50 p.m. regarding the following:

1. Consideration of the performance of two Police Officers.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chef Mello, Deputy Chief Rojee and commissioners present remained for Executive Session.

It was moved by Vice Chrmn. Bergami and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to reconvene in public session at 8:08 p.m.

It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Vice Chrmn. Bergami to uphold and support the disciplinary action of two Police Officers as presented in Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business, it was moved by Comm. Jagoe and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Candido

Submitted to City Clerk September 15, 2020