

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M.

**1. ROLL CALL**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Melvin Eisenhandler; Carol Faruolo; Kenneth Fellenbaum; Carleton Giles; Sharon Marrone; Thomas Zawislinski

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

**2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS**

- a. Officer Kenneth Rahn promoted to Sergeant effective retroactive to 2/7/08

Chief Mello noted that Off. Rahn was previously a Canine officer; in the Detective bureau and then transferred to patrol, although he is still working on a case that he recently broke. Chrmn. Fellenbaum noted that Off. Rahn has been in the newspapers for his positive police work.

Vice Chrmn. Giles swore in the Officer as a Sergeant after which he was congratulated by the remainder of the Commissioners, Deputy Chief Fournier, Chief Mello and Capt. Mooney.

Chief Mello stated the Department is lucky to have good police officers such as Sgt. Rahn.

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum asked that those present and wishing to speak state their name and address for the record.

KathyLynn Patterson, Planning and Zoning Board Liaison, was present to answer any questions the Commission might have.

Dave Folloni, 12 Fairwood Avenue, was present due to his concern about the safety of a crosswalk on Broadway and Fairwood, which he suggested be upgraded to a stop sign. Chrmn. Fellenbaum noted they would be discussing that item under new business.

Chief Mello stated Mr. Folloni had previously appeared requesting a crosswalk, which was supported and has since been installed. He is now requesting that a stop sign been installed. Mr. Folloni explained that he trying to become more educated in the process, including who makes the laws and why. He feels the crosswalk is not

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

sufficient, as you can't see the person in the crosswalk until you are at the crosswalk, at which point it may be too late. He is willing to do whatever he can to assist, even contribute monetarily. He stated that people do speed in that area as well, and a stop sign could slow them down. He appreciated this item being placed on the agenda.

Referring to a letter that Mr. Folloni had written to the Chief, Chief Mello explained that there are guidelines that are strictly adhered to, although they are not steadfast laws.

Mr. Folloni thanked the Commission for the opportunity to present his opinion. Chief Mello added that Mr. Folloni is very concerned about traffic in the area.

Phil Vetro, 10 Carmen Road, Alderman, stated he had just come from the Council on Aging Committee meeting. They have a complaint regarding pick up trucks, motorcycles, etc., parking on the sidewalks on High Street and they would like something done about it. Mr. Vetro mentioned that he would be attending the Police Commission meeting and that he would bring it to their attention.

Mr. Vetro noted that he was a member of the first class of Citizen's Police Academy. He is very proud to have been part of the class and believes the department has done a fantastic job. He felt the class opened his eyes as to what the police department has to go through on a daily basis. Chrmn. Fellenbaum interjected that the department has done an "A-1" job.

Chief Mello extended an invitation to all Commission members to visit and/or participate in any of the classes.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated the Chief would be giving a talk on March 27<sup>th</sup> regarding "Common Police Myths."

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

It was moved by Comm. Eisenhandler and seconded by Comm. Faruolo to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2008 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

**5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE**

Chief Mello noted the following was received:

A letter was received from Peter Spalthoff, to which the Chief responded in kind. Due to the fact that no one had received Mr. Spalthoff's letter, the Chief held his response in abeyance for the time being.

A letter of apology was received from a Sunnyside Court resident who was arrested. The court asked that the letter be written.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

A thank you letter was received from Colleen Doyle Brit, for the traffic assistance during Sean Foley's funeral.

Town of Trumbull Police Chief Kiley's daughter's cell phone was missing after a visit to Milford. Off. Lima found the cell phone in a stolen vehicle. Attempting to find the owner of the cell phone, Off. Lima called the number of "Mom" listed in the directory. Chief Kiley answered the phone and Off. Lima explained what had happened. Chief Kiley sent a letter applauding Off. Lima's demeanor.

Silver Sands homeowners sent a letter of thanks to the department for their prompt response time and overall demeanor. Items had been stolen from their homes and the officers who responded recovered the stolen goods.

The Town of Greenwich sent a letter of appreciation for Sgt. Alexopoulos' assistance in evaluating candidates for the position of police officer.

The Chief received an e-mail regarding Off. Gillian Gallagher, Off. Dale DeMerjian and Off. Robert Morin. These officers responded to an automobile accident and were professional, efficient, compassionate and caring. They went above and beyond regarding the victims' feelings. Off. Gallagher was the first respondent and was very comforting. Upon their arrival, Offs. DeMerjian and Morin were very understanding and caring during their search for several items that were in the vehicles when the accident occurred.

Douglas Wentz of Jason Roberts, Inc., thanked the department for participating in the first annual "Good Shepherd Ride." Sgt. Sharoh worked with them as did Offs. DeMerjian and Localzo, to make this a professional ride.

Orange Police Chief Robert Gagne thanked the department for arranging a funeral for an Orange police officer; Capt. Mooney and Sgt. Sharoh for assisting in planning the service; Off. Dumas for handling the media; the motorcycle unit and the honor guard for their participation.

The Police Chief from Smithburg, Maryland, acknowledged a sympathy card sent to their department for Off. Nicholson, who was killed in the line of duty on December 19, 2007. Chief Mello noted that there has been a 30%+ increase in police officers killed in the line of duty.

Mr. Joseph Santos and Ms. Robinson sent the department a thank you and apology letter for their actions. They were arrested for criminal drug charges. They believe their lives will be better because of the police department's task force.

A letter was sent from the Town of Greenwich, thanking Capt. Butler for participating in their search for police lieutenant.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

A thank you card was received for the department's assistance at the wake and funeral of an Orange police officer.

A letter was received from a gentleman who resides near Foran High School. He sent a letter regarding kids hanging out in the parking lot at Foran High School. When these letters are received, patrols and enforcement in this area are increased. The problem stops for a time and then resurfaces, whereupon another letter is received.

Nancy Barnick thanked the department for the escort during her husband's funeral.

A thank you card was received from the State police for Milford's participation in the task force for home invasions. Sgt. Matchett was at the press conference when the governor signed the bill into law.

A funeral home sent a thank you to the department for their assistance at a recent funeral.

Two letters were received thanking the department for providing an escort/honor guard through Milford during the "Wreaths Across America" pilgrimage from Maine to Arlington Cemetery.

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

- a. Sgt. Gary Depgen has retired effective 1/31/08.

Chief Mello stated Sgt. Depgen has retired and went to work for Sikorsky.

- b. Detective Nicholas Ricci will retire effective March 21, 2008.

According to the Chief, Det. Ricci will also go to work for Sikorsky.

At this time, Chrmn. Fellenbaum asked the Chief to address the Commission regarding accreditation. Chief Mello stated the department has been preparing for accreditations and they had to rewrite the entire policy and procedural systems. They created new policies and procedures where necessary and put some of the old wording into contemporary language. They are now readily available to each officer in the field, in their lap tops and desk tops. They needed to have the policies in place before they could seek accreditation. There are three tiers and the department is ready for the first and second tiers, and then they will move onto the third, although they are ready for all three at this time. In response to Vice Chrmn. Giles, Chief Mello stated Lt. Pietrafesa, assisted by Sgt. Bothwell, worked very hard to prepare the department.

The Chief went on to explain the benefits of accreditation. There is both state and national accreditation; national would cost about \$15,000 to \$16,000 and state is free. They will adhere to a set of guidelines, which professionalizes the police department,

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

which is ready and prepared for any issues that may arise. Accreditation reduces liability, is looked very favorably upon by risk managers and insurance companies as well as court systems. Chrmn. Fellenbaum commended the Chief and his department for getting this done. Vice Chrmn. Giles noted this was a “daunting task” and also commended the Chief and his staff for doing this work “in house.”

Continuing, Chief Mello stated that their systems and control measures are in place. They encourage and will investigate all complaints as well as compliments. He would like the department to go to the next step after the 3<sup>rd</sup> level as this is an on-going process. Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated there is a “real advantage” for this to be accomplished.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum then asked the Chief to address the new vehicles.

Chief Mello explained that three of the new vehicles are Dodge Chargers (black and white). They wanted a different look for traffic enforcement vehicles. Because it is traffic’s job to make our highways safer, they wanted vehicles that would stand apart from the rest of the fleet. Chrmn. Fellenbaum interjected a thank you to the Board of Aldermen for these vehicles. Continuing, Chief Mello stated these vehicles are faster than the others, however, he stressed they were purchased so they would be known as traffic enforcement vehicles. They know where the “hot spots” are and they will aggressively focus on them before complaints are received.

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

- a. Multi-family development – 180 Melba Street
- b. Millwood Properties Self Storage Center – 141-159 Merwin Avenue
- c. Post Road Commons – 364 Bridgeport Avenue

It was moved and seconded by Comms. Zawislinski and Faruolo to adopt Traffic’s recommendations. 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. Eisenhandler and unanimously carried to accept reports “a” through “e.”

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Referring back to item 6, Chief Mello stated that the DMBA asked that there be more police presence in Milford center. Although they appreciate the bicycles, due to their quick response time, they feel there should also be a walking officer. They will speak to the Mayor and the Aldermen to aggressively pursue the additional police presence. The Chief explained to them the demands on the police department and also that there are cruisers patrolling the center of town as well.

Secondly, the Chief spoke about the facility, which was occupied in 1979. The department has since outgrown the facility. For instance, the detective division has one room for interviews; evidence processing, storage room; conference room, etc. Since the new law has been passed, they will need space for a juvenile processing area as well. Chrmn. Fellenbaum interjected that he has reminded legislators that some towns will have to spend serious amounts of money because of the new juvenile law.

The Chief continued, stating the hallways are very narrow, which must be traveled single file; the roof leaks; the heaters don't work; and in the winter they have to put police tape around the front and back doors because sheets of ice slide off the roof which could seriously injure someone. Although, public works does remove the ice once it begins to melt. A study of the facility and its needs was completed in 1999 and presented in 2000. The plan was for a 19,000 square foot addition. Now they are conducting a needs assessment to see what their current needs are as the city has changed in the last several years. They spoke with an architectural firm that specializes in police departments to see what can be done with the existing footprint. The plan for the 19,000 sq. ft. addition is still on the capital improvement plan.

Further, Chief Mello does not feel the police department needs to be on the Boston Post Road as this is prime real estate, which would be worth more on the tax rolls. He suggested that if the property were on the tax rolls, those taxes could help defray the cost of a new facility. However, the question is: do they find a new location for a new facility or do they add on to the existing facility? This is what they need to assess. It is suggested that a police department facility must be upgraded every 20 years. There have been several new police facilities in surrounding towns constructed recently. For instance, Hamden now has a 56,000 sq. ft. facility where Milford's consists of 35-38,000 sq. ft.

Vice Chrmn. Giles mentioned that he works in a new \$24 million facility which will serve them into the future. Chief Mello believed it to be 80,000+ sq. ft. Vice Chrmn. Giles noted it was an entire city block.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum noted that the city looks to keep the schools up graded and they should do the same with the police facility.

Chief Mello suggested that both the Police and Fire dispatch areas could be kept together and upgraded as the technology changes.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. Police Sick and Relief Fund 2007 year end balance

Due to a slight discrepancy last month, this item remained on the agenda until it was resolved. The Chief noted the discrepancy had been resolved and therefore, Comm. Eisenhandler moved to accept the report as presented. The motion was seconded by Comm. Faruolo and carried unanimously.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Discussion of commuter parking lot stickers – parking violations/amount of fine

It was noted that Peter Spalthoff and several others have been criticizing the Commission for changing the fine from \$5.00 to \$20.00, which was incorrect. The fine was changed from \$5.00 to \$10.00. Mr. Spalthoff was extremely critical in his letter, which several Commissioners read in the newspaper. Copies of the Chief's letter to Mr. Spalthoff were distributed after which the Chief read his response. The Chief explained to him that the Board of Aldermen voted on the fine and supported the increase to \$10.00; the fine is less than what one would have to pay for parking in other towns; i.e., Stratford is \$25.00. This does not generate funds for the City. Further, Chief Mello stated there is a lack of parking in Milford Center north of the railroad. He believes they did their due diligence regarding this issue; they spoke with elected officials, including the Mayor's office and Henry Jadach of the Transit Authority. Chrmn. Fellenbaum interjected that he also spoke with other business owners who informed him that some business owners park their own vehicles in front of their business, taking up patrons' spaces.

Chief Mello stated that whatever this Commission and/or the Board of Aldermen deem fair in the way of fines, times limits, etc., the police department will enforce.

Regarding a letter that Peter Spalthoff wrote to the newspaper, Comm. Zawislinski stated that was not the first time he has sent this type of letter usurping the police department and the Commission. He mentioned a fireworks incident, wherein Mr. Spalthoff was turned down. Comm. Zawislinski believes that Mr. Spalthoff will directly challenge the Milford Police Department. Chief Mello noted that anyone who has a problem with parking can attend a Commission meeting to express his or her concerns.

Comm. Faruolo asked if the Chief was happy with the \$10.00 or if he felt it should be higher. The Chief responded that the fine is okay for now, but when new tickets are printed, they should revisit this amount. At that time, they should probably go up to \$15.00.

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

At this time, Chief Mello asked that Capt. Mooney report to the Commission regarding the train station and commuter parking. Capt. Mooney stated the violation fine at this time is “a mere \$10.00.” These violations are an increasing problem in the area. Currently, the violation is listed in group 2 (\$10.00 fine); if they move it to group 3, the fine will be \$25.00. Capt. Mooney felt this change should be considered. Currently, Greenwich’s fine is \$50.00 and Stamford’s is \$55.00. Milford is the lowest, including New Haven.

Comm. Zawislinski question if the Chief and Capt. Mooney were asking the Commission to increase the fee at this time and if so, he moved to change the violation to group 3 at a fine of \$25.00. Comm. Faruolo seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION**

Comm. Faruolo felt that as more people start using the train system, the department will have to be pro active. Chief Mello believed that a \$10.00 fine would not matter. And in response to Comm. Eisenhandler, the Chief stated the fines on Railroad Avenue have been changed from \$5.00 to \$10.00 because they are time limit spaces, and there are still many violations. Referring back to Mr. Spalthoff, who also noted that the time limit on River Street is only 30 minutes, the Chief explained the limit is for quick turn overs in that area, i.e. Subway.

Comm. Faruolo asked what the fee was for a non-resident to park behind the library to which Capt. Mooney responded, \$10.00.

Chief Mello felt there was plenty of parking in Milford center, i.e., Parsons, the field, etc.

There being no further discussion, the motion to move the group 2 violation to group 3 at a \$25.00 fine carried unanimously.

Comm. Zawislinski asked if the Commission should consider upping the fine behind the library at this time as well to which the Chief responded that they should only consider the railroad station as there are other considerations in the library area.

b. Stop Sign Request – Broadway/Fairwood – David Folloni

Comm. Zawislinski moved to adopt Traffic’s recommendation. The motion was seconded by Comm. Eisenhandler.

**DISCUSSION**

Noting that Mr. Folloni has been in touch with the Chief regarding this matter, Vice Chrmn. Giles wondered if Mr. Folloni understood that the recommendations (guidelines) are such that no stop sign will be placed in the requested location. Chief Mello displayed photos of the area in question, explaining that stop signs cannot be used to



**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

control speed. He continued that cross walks are designed for pedestrians, who must look both ways before they cross and per the study, there is a good view of the area for motorists. Vice Chrmn. Giles determined that Mr. Folloni wants the stop sign to merely increase enforcement.

Vice Chrmn. Giles asked how the decision will be communicated to Mr. Folloni, by informing him that the minutes are ready or verbally. Chief Mello responded that he will get a formal letter but he will also receive a phone call from the department.

Chrmn. Fellenbaum noted that even if a stop sign were installed, people will drive right through it, as they are not used to it being there. It could possibly give the neighborhood a false sense of safety when actually it could make the area more dangerous. Chief Mello reiterated that stop signs are not used to control traffic; people do violate stop signs.

There being no further discussion, the motion to adopt Traffic's recommendation carried unanimously.

c.     Parking Issues – Intervale Parkway at length

It was moved and seconded by Comm. Zawislinski and Vice Chrmn. Giles to adopt Traffic's recommendation.

**DISCUSSION**

Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated there is parking in that vicinity.

Chief Mello said there were some questions about the establishment of one way. It had previously been one way from Bridgeport Avenue down to the circle; now it will all be one way and signage will be erected.

The Chief stated he was contacted by Susan Manning, Board of Aldermen regarding an ordinance restricting parking on the grass area. Chief Mello stated there were similar issues on Melba Street and Pelham as well as other areas in the City with no complaints. Parking on the grass area is not a public safety concern. He did state, however, that the police department is not opposed to such an ordinance and will enforce same.

The motion carried unanimously with no further discussion.

**11.    COMMENDATIONS – 2**

Deputy Chief Fournier explained that on January 2, 2008, a suicidal male was locked in a room threatening suicide. Sgt. Darby and Off. Thornberg de-escalated the situation

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008  
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

and the male walked out to the waiting ambulance. The officers are being recommended for Certificates of Commendation.

Chief Mello stated they are seeking donations for their awards ceremony as they have exhausted their funding. Chrmn. Fellenbaum stated there is a person interested in making such a donation. Chief Mello explained the person would have to go before the Commission for their approval.

At 8:30 P.M., it was moved by Vice Chrmn. Giles, seconded by Comm. Zawislinski 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. Consideration for sick time hardship for 1 employee

The Commission left Executive Session at 8:37 P.M., at which time Vice Chrm. Giles moved to deny the request for sick time hardship of said employee. The motion carried unanimously after a second by Comm. Zawislinski.

At 7:40 P.M., Comm. Eisenhandler moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Comm. Zawislinski and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Linda Stock, Secretary