

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
HELD TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2007
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

Chairman Fellenbaum called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Kenneth Fellenbaum, Melvin Eisenhandler, Alberta Jagoe, Tony Candido, Carol Faruolo, Carlton Giles and Thomas Zawislinski.

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Keith Mello; Captain Butler; Alderman Phil Vetro; L. Streit, Secretary

Comm. Fellenbaum called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS

None.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Comm. Fellenbaum congratulated Alderman Vetro in winning the election and wished him well. Vetro was elected Majority Leader last night and stated that the Board of Aldermen want to keep in touch with all Department Heads on a more regular basis rather than just at budget time. Alderman Ben Blake was elected Chairman and Vetro being the Police Commission liaison was discussed with him and he is open to this. Chief Mello stated that he would like to meet with the Aldermen and welcomed the opportunity and open communication. Vetro stated that the Public Safety Committee will now be meeting regularly verses on an as needed basis. The Chief stated that he invites input. Comm. Fellenbaum suggested a tour of the Police Department. Vetro agreed with this and stated that this would provide valuable input for the Aldermen. A public open house of the Police Department was discussed.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made by Comm. Eisenhandler, seconded by Comm. Zawislinski to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as presented and carried unanimously.

5. READING OF CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Mello noted the following:

- A letter was received from Lisa Diamond-Graham, President of the Good Shepherd Board, thanking Patrolmen Dale Demerjian and William Localzo for their motorcycle

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escort for the Victory Ride. Over 40 riders attended; it was a very successful event and she thanked the Police Department for their support.

- A letter was received from Rodney Jackson, VP of Corporate Security from ERM (the security company for Market Place) thanking the Police Department for the meeting of 10/23/07 and continued communication for traffic control during the holiday season. He thanked Dep. Chief Fournier, Captain Edward Shea and Marcia Krusewski for their assistance with this meeting.
- A letter was received from Mrs. Joan Urban thanking Officer Seely and Sgt. Cable for helping her with an incident.
- A letter was received from the Chief of Police Richard Mulhall with the Town of Newington thanking Officers Localzo and Demerjian for their traffic assistance for the Third Annual Motorcycle Run. Over 700 motorcycles participated.
- A letter was received from Robert Macklin, President and CEO of the Milford Bank thanking Officer Jeff Nielson for assisting with an incident with counterfeit checks on 10/16/07. He investigated and aggressively pursued the incident and is an asset to the Police Department.
- A letter was received from the City of Bridgeport Police Academy thanking Det. John Alexopoulos for training recruits; he was professional and insightful.
- A letter was received from Charles Sherwood, Director of the South Central Criminal Justice Administration thanking Officer Localzo for serving as a panelist for the position of Recruit Police Officer.
- A letter was received from Denise Morris Curt regarding the Meet the Artist and Artisans event. She noted that the Police Officers chatted with the public a lot and that the safety of the pedestrians was imperative and the officers needed to be more visible. Comm. Zawislinski noted that he has seen the public initiate conversation with officers and they can not be rude to the public. Chief Mello stated that this is constructive criticism and that a balance is needed and responsibilities need to be fulfilled.
- A letter was received from Denise Morris Curt regarding the Meet the Artist and Artisans event. She stated that Officer Bethke came early, (at 6am) was thoughtful and understanding. Overall, the officers (Bob Morin, Art Huggins, Chris Dunn, Richard Anderson, William Lugo, Daniel Sharoh and Edward Bethke) were pleasant and helpful, helped visitors and vendors. However, when an incident occurred an officer could not be found and she is looking for a solution. Chief Mello stated that he will address this with her and have a resolution. Comm. Jagoe asked if Ms. Curt pays for the officers for this event. Chief Mello stated that she pays for 3 or 4 officers and others are on patrol in the area.
- A letter was received from Janice Jackson, Director of the Milford Senior Center thanking Officer Lema for his presentation on 10/11/07 regarding searching for individuals with Alzheimer's who wander and become lost.
- A letter was received from Alderman James Patterson addressed to the Chairman regarding traffic on Wheeler's Farm Road. The Chief discussed that the better way to address these issues is to write directly to the Chief and he will copy them to the

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Board. The process is that the Chief would order a study and present this to the board and the board acts on the report to either accept or reject the recommendations.

- A letter was received from Buddy Prete thanking the Police Department for addressing concerns on Woodruff Road but he has seen a decrease in police presence in the last few months and would appreciate this increasing over the holiday season. Chief Mello stated that there has been considerable enforcement in this area; the speed limit has been reduced but the problem will continue. The efforts have helped and this will be monitored.
- A letter was received from Mrs. Clark thanking Office Doyle for his assistance with an incident at Stop and Shop on 10/12/07. Her pocketbook was stolen and Officer Doyle reviewed the security cameras, researched the receipts from the cash register that Mrs. Clark used and determined who was behind her in line and contacted this person and was able to retrieve her pocketbook. He couldn't of been kinder and she was greatly appreciative.

6. CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF CHIEF ON MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

- a. Officer Jennifer Long has resigned effective 11/04/07** - The Chief noted that there were no concerns with conduct or performance but feels this should be discussed in Executive Session due to its personal nature. A motion was made by Comm. Giles, seconded by Comm. Zawislinski to move this item to executive session. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. Consideration of the 2008 Police Commission meeting dates** – a motion was made by Comm. Giles, seconded by Comm. Jagoe to adopt the 2008 meeting dates proposed. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Comm. Faruolo, seconded by Comm. Giles to add item 6. d. to the agenda – to accept a \$100.00 donation to the sick and relief fund from Donald Brenner. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Comm. Giles, seconded by Comm. Zawislinski to move a request for financial assistance from the sick and benefit fund to executive session. The motion carried unanimously.

- c. Consideration of the 2008/2009 budget proposal for the Milford Police Department** – A motion was made by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Comm. Giles to approve the proposed budget. The Chief reported that the Mayor instructed all Department Heads to have a zero increase in budgets. Goods and services continue to rise as well as wages and the Police Department has one of the largest budgets in the City. The Chief reviewed the following accounts:
Overtime – in 2007 \$414,000.00 was used for 2008 \$440,000.00 is anticipated and the amended budget is for \$365,000.00. This year \$380,000.00 is being

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requested and the Finance Department is being asked to isolate costs - \$23,000.00 was spent on the Oyster Festival last year, which would make the total for this year \$403,000.00 Overtime was requested for the COPS Program (the community sub station). The public requests are significant, more than could be afforded. \$45,000.00 is needed to fund this program for overtime. It would be counterproductive to take officers off of their regular patrol for this and it is valued by the public. The Fairfield Police Department was referenced as it is similar in size and makeup to Milford and their overtime is \$1,200,000.00; West Haven's is \$900,000.00 versus Milford's \$365,000.00. Milford's training overtime is \$75,000.00 versus Fairfield's \$225,000.00. Overtime is needed for funding special projects, filling in for vacancies for training, sick, holiday and continuing investigations.

Fringe Benefits – were reviewed and will remain the same.

Vehicle Upkeep – is \$20,000.00 less.

Property Upkeep – is the same.

It was noted that the Police Departments contract is in effect until 2009. Faruolo asked about when an officer is in a car accident and who is responsible for the cost. Chief Mello stated that if it is the officers' fault, the city covers the expense as they are self insured; this is not in the budget.

Operational Expenses - \$3,000.00 less than last year.

Capital Outlays - \$9,400.00 less than last year.

The Chief reported that he has avoided catching up with upgrades and repairs in order to keep to the budget and the department can not continue to operate this lean much longer.

\$4,000.00 costs per car have been included for painting lettering, transferring equipment, etc. 8 cars and the costs for change over has been included as well as 1 Detective car.

\$3,000.00 for a traffic counter has been included in the budget. Requests are received all of the time.

\$1,000.00 has been requested for document shredding (there is a tremendous amount of documents that need shredding on a regular basis).

\$25,000.00 was allocated for ordnance supplies last year; this year \$38,000.00 is allocated. This has increased significantly. Active shooter training is included this year and this requires a great deal of ordnance supplies as well as tazers. There are only 4 working tazers and 4 more are being requested; the goal is to obtain 20.

Computer Account – last year was \$35,000.00; \$51,000.00 is being requested this year. Server 2 has to be replaced.

The Chief reported that some grant funds are obtained to help offset some of the costs. It was discussed that more training funds are needed. Gas prices were discussed. Comm. Fellenbaum stated that a lot of work went into creating the budget and the next step is to meet with the Mayor. Comm. Zawislinski commended the Chief on the budget but stated that he is troubled with one item. Last year 4 new hires were requested and 1 was received; 2 new hires are recommended for this budget. He stated that the department is down 7 officers

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and questioned why only 2 are being asked for; the safety of the citizens of Milford should not be jeopardized for financial expediency. Comm. Jagoe stated that she respects Comm. Zawislinski's opinion but does not think that the Chief would jeopardize public safety. The Chief stated that the 7 officers are based on a formula used in his presentation. Last year 4 was requested and 1 was received. He considered asking for 4 again but after budget deliberations last year he was advised that there would be strong consideration for 1 per year for 5 years. Comm. Zawislinski stated that he would like the budget modified. The Chief stated that his impression was that there would be strong consideration for 1 per year; he requested 2 and felt that 4 would never be approved. He respected and appreciates Comm. Zawislinski's input but does not want to reduce funding elsewhere in order to keep the budget in line and thinks that the budget proposed is reasonable. The department now has 110 officers and 112 are requested. Comm. Fellenbaum stated that considering everything, the Chief prepared the whole budget and we have to respect his wisdom. Comm. Jagoe agreed. Comm. Faruolo stated that there is a brand new Board of Aldermen this year and she hopes that the 1 per year is honored. Comm. Zawislinski stated that he respects the Chief's position but feels there is a need for an increase. The motion to approve the budget as presented carried unanimously.

- d. Donation from Donald Brenner for the Sick and Relief Fund** – The Chief reported that Officer Frawley helped a family with an internet fraud case and they would like to donate \$100.00 to the Sick and Relief Fund. Comm. Zawislinski stated this board has the sole authority to accept or reject donations and that at last months meeting it was discussed that there was interference with the Finance Department and the Board of Aldermen with donations and he asked if this has been resolved. The Chief reported that the Finance Director informed him that donations have to go before the Board of Aldermen and only the Board of Aldermen have the authority to set up a resolution for setting up an account for ongoing donations. The Sick and Relief Fund is already set up. Comm. Zawislinski stated that he finds this problematic and that the former Chief never had this problem; the Commission has the authority and he asked why now the Finance Director is involved. Comm. Giles asked if the City Attorney should get involved to resolve this. Alderman Vetro stated that the issue is accountability and designation of donations; other departments (Library, Canine, etc.) also receive donations. Comm. Zawislinski stated that there is a specific donation for a specific designation and it is the Commission's sole authority; the Board of Aldermen could designate the donation elsewhere or deny it. Comm. Candido stated that the concern is that someone else will deem the funds elsewhere or may end up in the general fund and people donate in good faith for a specific purpose and this process could stop donations. Comm. Giles suggested a Police Foundation being set up. The Chief and Comm. Fellenbaum will meet with the Mayor to discuss these concerns. The motion to accept the donation carried unanimously.

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7. REPORT ON PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTS

- a. Scion Dealership Modifications – 475 Boston Post Road**
- b. 329 Old Gate Lane – Conversion of service station to business park**

A motion was made by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Comm. Jagoe to adopt Traffic's recommendations for items a. and b. Comm. Fellenbaum stated that for item a. the offices are across the street from the dealership and people run across the road regularly, there is no crosswalk and this is a concern. The motion to adopt the recommendations 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**

A motion to accept reports a-e was made by Comm. Zawislinski seconded by Comm. Giles. The motion carried unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Wheelers Farm Road/Lavery Lane – speeding issues – Ald. James Patterson.**
A motion was made by Comm. Zawislinski, seconded by Comm. Giles to adopt Traffic's recommendations. Comm. Giles stated that he would like to know the rule about stop sign installation. The motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMENDATIONS – 2

Captain Butler reviewed the commendations. Sgt. John Burton – on 9/6/07 a female without clothes on was in traffic and under the influence of hallucinogenic drugs. Sgt. Burton handled the situation well and possibly saved a life. Officer Todice – on 10/15/07 he was dispatched to 336 Boston Post Road and saw a male run from the area. Officer Todice confronted the male and detained him and he was found to have committed burglary at 336 Boston Post Road.

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