**MINUTES OF BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS MEETING TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024 7:00 P.M. ZOOM MEETING**

Chrmn. Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Sam Bergami (7:29 p.m.), Alberta Jagoe, John Mager, Sharon Marrone, James Richetelli, David Rubenstein, Richard Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Mello, Deputy Chief Rojee, Capt. DelMonte, Lt. Holder, Sgt, Kranyak, D. Candido, Secretary

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

Chrmn. Smith welcomed former Mayor Richetelli to the Commission stating he has the utmost admiration and respect for him adding there are three former mayors’ sitting on this board at this time.

Comm. Richetelli thanked Chrmn. Smith for his welcome remarks adding he is honored to be on the Commission.

As well, Chrmn. Smith wished Comm. Rubenstein continued improved health.

**REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**

It was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by both Comm. Jagoe and Comm. Marrone to nominate Comm. Smith to another term as Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners. Being no other nominations, motion carried unanimously.

Chrmn. Smith thanked commissioners for their confidence adding members will continue to work together as a commission and in unity.

Chrmn. Smith stated earlier today he spoke with Comm. Bergami who expressed his interest to continue serving as Vice Chair.

It was moved by Chrmn. Smith and seconded by Comm. Jagoe to nominate Sam Bergami as Vice Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners. Being no other nominations, motion carried unanimously.

Chrmn. Smith noted he is pleased to serve along with Vice Chair Bergami who is a dedicated member of the Board as well to the community.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS** – none

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Chief Mello explained he had received a letter from Paul Clarizio of 415 Pond Point Avenue and he was expected to join this meeting but perhaps he was not present as he thought tonight’s meeting would not be held due to weather related cancellations within city offices. Chief Mello read the letter which was originally sent to Mayor Giannattasio. The letter explained Mr. Clarizio had been a resident for 28 years moving in July 1999 to 415 Pond Point Avenue. He explained over the years that street has become very busy and in recent years 4 cars have come onto his property over a 14-year period of time. He shared the history of 3 cars that have come on to his property which prompted him to meet with the Mayor’s Assistant in 2019 and requested installation of a guard rail to protect his property. The letter also explained the subsequent request to the Police Commission for the guard rail and that request was denied by the Commission. Further, he noted in November 2023 the house was struck by a vehicle which rattled its foundation. The family relocated to a hotel for a short time and are presently residing in a rental home. Mr. Clarizio stated he is again requesting the installation of a guard rail to be installed on the perimeter of the property.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve the minutes of the Police Commission Meeting of January 8, 2024 as presented. Mr. Mager stated he appreciates the revision of his November comments with respect to the property on Pond Point Avenue. Motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION OF CHIEF ON MATTERS OF ADMNIISTRATION**

a. Year End report for Police Sick and Relief Fund - informational

b. Chief’s general comments – Chief Mello stated the 9 recruits who recently graduated from the Academy are in training and doing well.

Comm. Mager also noted that this Commission had made a motion to reinvest the funds for the Police Sick and Relief Fund about a year ago and he couldn’t help but notice on this year’s year-end report the interest on those funds had greatly improved based on our recommendation.

**REPORT ON PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTS**

1. Special Permit Review– Funeral Home Parking Lot – 14 Loomis St. -Motion was made by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve Traffic Division recommendation regarding the special permit review, Funeral Home Parking Lot, 14 Loomis Street.

Chrmn. Smith referred to the wording in the recommendation from the Traffic Division and Chief Mello stated the language in the recommendation can be revised to include “*we have no objections”.*

Motion carried unanimously*.*

1. Special Permit with Site Plan Review – 8-30g Development – 551 Naugatuck Ave.- Motion was made by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Marrone to approve Traffic Division recommendation to approve the site plan.

Mr. Mager noted he will be sad to see the loss of the Duck Pin bowling alley located at this site.

Motion carried unanimously.

**ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS –**

Motion made by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Mager to accept reports as presented.

a. Special Investigations Unit Report

 b. Detective Bureau Report

 c. Crime Prevention Unit Report

 d. Traffic Division and Licensing Unit Report

Motion carried unanimously.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a. Discussion regarding Request for Guardrail/Traffic Engineering Study – 415 Pond Point Ave – Chief Mello stated he thought Mr. Clarizio did a good job of explaining the history of vehicular accidents and request for guard rail. He noted this Commission discussed this at a previous meeting including the former accidents and the traffic study requested in 2019. He referred to the request for a traffic engineering study and he felt the prudent way to address this is not installing a guard rail until a traffic engineer recommendation comes back.

Chief Mello explained in June 2019 the traffic study was signed and this Commission approved that study. The recommendation at that time included a work order to Public Works for signage but that did not occur. Following our most recent discussion on this work order request, another work order was put in and those signs are now installed. He added it is unfortunate that they were not put up prior to the most recent accident.

Sgt. Kranyak explained there was not a significant amount of traffic accidents in that area that would have fostered further consideration . He explained the data for guard rails had to do with deflection and it did not look like it was at a good angle. He added guard rails deflect cars back to the roadway or slow a vehicle down. Further he explained DOT does not recommend guard rails to protect property.

Sgt. Kranyak stated the most recent accident was a DUI which is hard to account for and since that last accident he did not see anything that was different in that roadway.

Chrmn. Smith noted looking at speed, we get a sense of what traffic behavior is like in that area but this homeowner has been hit 4 times and this incident actually hit his home because there were no parked cards on the property to block a vehicle from hitting the house. He stated history and speed does not change the fact that this property owner has had cars hit his property 4 different times.

Chief Mello stated he understands the point brought forward and does not disagree but what is important is there was a remedy to put signage up and we do not know if that will be effective. He stated it is necessary to see if the signs have input there.

Chief Mello added we look at guidance to inform us and if we see that signage is not sufficient then we would ask the Mayor’s Office to hire a traffic engineer to see if the recommendation is viable to install guard rails or possible re-engineering of the intersection.

Chrmn. Smith stated if the scope of the engineer study can solve the problem with a guard rail that would deflect cars that can be moved forward.

Comm. Mager noted this Commission lacks the purview to decide as to whether or not a guard rail will make a difference in this situation. He thanked Sgt. Kranyak for a very good job on this study and stated these roads have been in place for years and perhaps there are other alternatives but until we have the data we need to make that determination as the Board of Police Commissioners or perhaps this may be a situation for the city to address and decide. He felt there is a better answer but it is not ours to give.

Chief Mello also noted perhaps next year we need to include in our budget Traffic Engineers and he will talk to the Mayor and the Finance Director regarding possible funding for this.

Comm. Marrone asked why was the guard rail across the street from this property installed and Comm. Mager recalled that guard rail has been there for many years.

Chief Mello noted these roads were put in place many years ago and this is not the first time a resident has requested a guard rail or protection from oncoming vehicles

Sgt. Kranyak added the guard rail across the street was hit twice in the past two years.

Chrmn. Smith also noted the guard rail across the street is in line with the road.

It was recommended that Chief Mello speak to the Mayor regarding the Police Department hiring a traffic engineer to perform the requested study and come back with solutions or recommendations to address the situation.

Comm. Mager added perhaps we need to come up with more information from our City Engineer to see what resources are available or if they have a limited list of providers and then it could be put out to bid. He felt the question that needs to be answered is does the burden fall upon the Police Department or the city and in his opinion that is up to the city to address.

It was noted this will be kept as a line item on the agenda until there is a definite answer on how to address this matter.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. No Parking Signs – North St (in marked bike lanes) – Motion was made by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Marrone to approve Traffic Division recommendation regarding the installation of no parking signs on North Street (in marked bike lanes). Motion carried unanimously.

**COMMENDATIONS** – none

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – none

Chrmn. Smith again thanked the commissioners for placing their faith in he and Vice Chair Bergami for another term and he also again welcomed Comm. Richetelli.

Being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to adjourn at 7:39 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Candido

Submitted to City Clerk: February 14, 2024