



# POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, JAN 21, 2015  
MUNICIPAL CENTER, 1 SCHOOL ST MEETING ROOM "A"

RECEIVED

2015 JAN 23 P 12:52

TOWN OF BETHEL  
TOWN CLERK

ATTENDING:

CHAIRMAN MIKE DUFF  
COMMISSIONER ANTHONY RUBINO  
COMMISSIONER RICHARD KOLWICZ  
COMMISSIONER CHRIS MCCOLLAM -  
COMMISSIONER RICHARD BARTON  
CHIEF JEFFREY FINCH

Chairman Duff opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. The Commission pledged allegiance to the flag.

A moment of silence was observed for those who protect and serve

A) Public Input

Confusion over regular vs special meeting due to change over of meeting location caused Public Input to be added at the last minute according to Chairman Duff. Cynthia McCorkindale of 19 Elgin Av spoke concerning the current police department structure if it is to be enlarged.

1. Review of Past Minutes

The minutes of Special Meeting 12/17/14 shows letter from Mrs Pegeen Newman (#5 Correspondence). This should be removed as it was unavailable at the time and is handled in this meeting minutes (#8a).

Motion by Comm McCollam to accept the amended minutes of 12/17/14: seconded by Comm Barton – unanimous.

2. Election of Officers for 2015

Motion by Comm McCollam to nominate Mike Duff to continue in the position of Chairman for 2015; seconded by Comm Kolwicz. A unanimous voice vote confirmed Mr Duff in this position.

Motion by Comm Kolwicz to nominate Chris McCollam for the position of Vice Chairman; seconded by Comm Rubino. A unanimous voice vote confirmed Mr McCollam for this position.

3. New Police Building – flyer

Mr Infurchia of Honey Hollow Rd explained his opposition to the new police department building as expressed initially in a flyer mailed to residents previous to the December referendum using statistics he gathered upon which his

argument is based. Copies were passed out to Commission members. Compared to other departments used in his study, the small size of Bethel's population and its land area does not justify the proposed square footage. Also Mr. Infurchia believes a "beautiful meadow" in his neighborhood would be "spoiled" by the structure. Also that no effort was made to investigate alternative sites.

Chief Finch responded to Mr Infurchia's claims. One important point is that the size of the building was the result of an architectural study and based on long standing standards of how many square feet an office, interview room, locker room, dispatch center etc should be, all of which added up to 25,900 square feet. The several other departments Mr. Infurchia compared it to, by ratios, were in Chief Finch's opinion an invalid and misleading comparison, as all (except Danbury) are old and outdated buildings which are small and in need of expansion.

The claim that the site is considered part of the public school campus is not true and the location is supported by past and present school superintendents and the present Chairman of the Board of Education. The claim that the present police building site was not seriously considered and/or ignored is also not true. The presence of the Police Department on Judd Av will not result in 40+ officers coming to work at 8 am, more like 10 would be accurate. That location would enhance security and discourage speeders which residents now complain about. Mr Infurchia made reference to UCR (Uniform Crime Report) data. While UCR crime has decreased it is more-so the trend of incidents per 1000 population which has decreased. As an example murder in CT went up in 2010, down in 2011, up in 2012 and down again in 2013. Rape was down in 2010, up in 2011, up in 2012 and down in 2013, and so it is with many other major crime indices. But major crime may only be about 30% of what a police department does, there is much more. In addition to this the man-hours it took in 1990 to investigate a crime or complete a simple accident report has doubled or tripled with numerous new mandates of law. A simple two page accident which could be done by hand in the car is now a 5 to 10 page report that must be done on a computer. Mr Infurchia's claim that Bethel employs more officers per population (39 to 40) than other departments is not true and Chief Finch again referred to CT UCR data that reports on those averages. Bethel employs 37 officers

Chairman Duff stated the Commission will revisit the building specs within the next 30 days and present the findings at the next commission meeting.

4. *Executive Session – School Resource Officers Security*  
Motion by Comm McCollam to go into executive session and invite Chief Finch, Capt Bruckenthal, Lt Dickinson and Sgt Bryce to attend; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous.  
At 7:56 the Commission came out of executive session.

5. Budget Report
  - a) Comptrollers Report & Overtime Reports  
Chief Finch noted that overtime is still \$20K less than last year-to-date

Motion by Chairman Duff to accept the Budget Report as presented; seconded by Comm Barton - unanimous

6. Old Business

a) Monthly Reports

The UCR (Uniform Crime Report) discussed major crime: murder, rape, manslaughter, robbery, assault, felony assault, felony burglaries, felony larcenies, felony motor vehicle theft, and arson.

7. New Business

a) Soccer Field – Hawleyville Rd

Planning & Zoning asked for Commission input as traffic authority concerning a proposed soccer field on this Town owned property. While Lt Dickinson stated that traffic increase is insignificant, the recommendation is for “no parking” signs on both sides of Hawleyville at the entrance. Widening the road is suggested where a stone wall and mature trees block the site line for cars pulling out. As the letter of request lacked pertinent information Chairman Duff asked that this item be tabled until the next meeting so P&Z can be consulted.

Motion by Chairman Duff to table Soccer Field – Hawleyville Rd so more information can be obtained; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

b) Policy – General Orders

Chapter 2 Section 8 Computers & Copiers

Chapter 4 Section 3 Juveniles

Chapter 5 Section 1 Use of Force and Less Lethal

Motion by Comm McCollam that the following general orders and procedures with revisions be accepted effective 1/21/15: Chapter 2 Section 8 “Computers & Copiers”; Chapter 4 Section 3 “Juveniles”; Chapter 5 Section 1 “Use of Force and Less Lethal”; seconded by Comm Barton – unanimous.

c) Budget 2015-2016

The proposed budget draft presented to the Police Commission represents a 2.94% increase. The draft was reviewed and discussed.

Motion by Comm McCollam to add Grand St site plan to New Business as item d; seconded by Comm Kolwicz - unanimous

d) Site Plan Grand St

This proposal for a 26 unit apartment building with parking in the rear backs up to Dolan Plaza. There are no significant traffic issues. The Grand St and Diamond Av entrance has good site lines. There is no significant impact on traffic according to Lt Dickinson.

Motion by Comm McCollam to accept the proposed Grand St site plan per Lt Dickinson’s recommendation and send it onto the appropriate board; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous.

Motion by Comm McCollam to add Multiple Sclerosis Run to New Business as item 7e; seconded by Comm Kolwicz - unanimous

e) Multiple Sclerosis Run  
Scheduled 6/14/15. No issues in the past ten years. Well organized.  
Motion by Chairman Duff to accept MS Run proposal; seconded by Comm  
McCollam – unanimous.

8. Correspondence  
a) Pegeen Newman – Officer Whaley  
Complimentary letter

b) Bryan Terzian (Capt Ridgefield P.D.) – Officer Diana  
Complimentary letter

Motion by Comm McCollam to add letter from David Mott concerning Greenwood  
Av to Correspondence as item 8c; seconded by Comm Rubino – unanimous

c) Mr Mott Grand St – Parking on Greenwood Av  
Mr Mott does not support the painting of more parking spaces only the need to  
enforce parking where lines are not painted and post “no parking” signs. Chief  
Finch stated the Department will not ticket cars parked there as they always have  
and it was the intent to paint those spaces as parking spaces which D.O.T  
refused to do.

9. Chief’s Report  
None

10. Commissioner Comments  
Comm Barton stated the difficulty of having building spec analysis research done  
in 30 days. Chairman Duff insisted on 30 days in order not to delay the process  
of disseminating needed information. Each commissioner will focus on an  
assigned area.  
Commissioners discussed the wants and needs of a new police department  
building.  
Comm Duff stated the Department should be cognizant of the tragic events in  
New York City and hopefully that disrespect will not “permeate” into surrounding  
communities.

At 9:18 motion by Comm Kolwicz to adjourn; seconded by Comm McCollam –  
unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ferdinand Miller Jr  
Secretary