



POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MAR 20, 2013
BETHEL POLICE DEPARTMENT-CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDING: CHAIRMAN MIKE DUFF
VICE CHAIRMAN HUGO GRECO
COMMISSIONER DAN GROSSO
COMMISSIONER CHRIS MCCOLLAM
COMMISSIONER RICHARD KOLWICZ
CHIEF JEFFREY FINCH

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

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

Chairman Duff moved Sergeant Promotion to the beginning of the meeting. See item 4a.

1. General Public Comments

Jonathan Delossantos of 5 Judd Ave requested safety changes to Judd Ave and presented a traffic study he personally made, copies of which were distributed to Commission members. He explained that as a student he felt endangered every time he walked to school on Judd Ave. Now as a college senior he feels that while improvements have been made, other measures are still needed. His proposed changes included changing the 5 second green light time on Judd to the 32 second time the light remains green on Greenwood Ave. This would prevent cars from speeding to make the light thus endangering pedestrians. Supported by written letters from other neighbors Mr. Delossantos' other suggestions included installation of a "speed table" (speed hump) near the crosswalk, elimination of the double line on Judd which causes drivers to think Rt302 continues beyond the traffic signal, larger sidewalks cleared of debris and brush, repainting the faded crosswalk, installation of pedestrian signs, installation of a crosswalk at the bottom of Judd Ave hill and flashing lights with the speed limit signs. He also presented photos showing solutions other towns have made confronted with similar problems. Chairman Duff stated the Commission will consider the request and report and place the same into the hands of the officer who conducts traffic studies.

Elis Volpati of 24 Judd Ave spoke in support of Mr. Delossantos underlining his definition and proposed solution of Judd Ave's problems. Two years ago she made a similar appeal and could not understand why the basic problems remain. Comm McCollam stated that Judd Ave from Ann Terr is "way too wide" and is to be narrowed with the installation of new sidewalks. The entire Rt302/Rt58 intersection is also to be re-engineered. A sign at the intersection indicating the

end of Rt302 as proposed by Mr Delossantos is, according to the commissioner, a good idea. Chairman Duff asked the complainants to keep an eye on Commission agendae for future consideration of this problem.

2. Review of Past Minutes for 2/20/13 and 3/4/13

Comm McCollam noted the adjourn for the 3/4/13 meeting should show him as Comm McCollam rather than Chairman.

Motion by Comm Kolwicz to accept the minutes of 3/4/13 as amended; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

Motion by Comm Greco to accept the minutes of 2/20/13; seconded by Comm Grosso – unanimous.

3. Budget Report

Chief Finch reported expected overtime to be largely due to Dispatch understaffing. Two dispatchers have been hired but are still in training and will not be on their own for another month.

Motion by Comm Greco to accept the budget report as presented; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

4. Old Business

a) Sergeant Promotion

Town Clerk Lisa Berg was present to deliver the oath of office to Off Pugner, sworn in as Sergeant. Chief Finch signed the certificate while former Capt Cedergren and present Capt Bruckenthal each attached a collar pin. Officer Pugner's wife presented and pinned his sergeants badge. Congratulations from family, friends and well wishers were offered all around. Both Chairman Duff and First Selectman Knickerbocker offered their welcome. A 15 minute break from 6:10 to 6:25 allowed attendees to socialize and tour the department.

b) Monthly Reports

Comm Grosso questioned the definition of two report entries.

Motion by Comm Greco to accept the monthly reports; seconded by Comm Grosso – unanimous.

5. New Business

a) Half Marathon – April 7th Sunday

Chief Finch reported this as an event which had been going on for the past four to five years without significant problems or issues. The route starts in Danbury, through Reservoir onto Rt53 to Redding back into Danbury ending at Memorial Park. The Commission must approve these events since procedures need to be in place to be sure they are safe.

Motion by Comm Kolwicz to have the Bethel PD support the Half Marathon of 4/17/13; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

b) Memorial 5K Run – May 18th Saturday

Chief Finch stated that last year this “tightly structured” event, run for the first time, went off well in spite of a carnival going on, the day before the Memorial Day parade.

Motion by Comm Greco to accept the request for the Memorial 5K Run on 5/18/13; seconded by Comm Grosso – unanimous.

c) Bethel Summer Festival – July 12th – 14th

This is a new event. The request, brought forth for the Commission’s attention is for the closure of a section of Greenwood Ave on Saturday only July 13th between the hours of 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. From Railroad St to PT Barnum Sq. Board of Selectmen have already tentatively approved this pending the approval of the Police Commission. State approval will also be needed, has been applied for and is expected to be granted. Impact details concerning the hiring of police officers will be presented at the next meeting by Capt Bruckenthal. The Commission having reviewed the application will await further information.

6) Correspondence

a) Gina Leo 49 Granite Dr

This letter of petition of 12 neighbors expressed concern over speeding cars and requested stop signs to slow traffic down. Lt Dickinson read his report noting the son nearly struck by a passing car in going from Leo’s driveway to the bus stop across the road. The driveway is just past a 90° curve. In addition to the restricted view, the grade and an adjacent rock embankment present conditions which cannot be improved. Posting stop signs improperly can increase the probability of collisions and result in increased speed on either side. State Law prohibits the installation of stop signs for the purpose of reducing speed. The lieutenant noted this family type neighborhood ends at a dead end which can frustrate drivers not familiar with the neighborhood. A “No Outlet” sign just off Reservoir would notify drivers of the fact when turning onto Knollwood in an attempt to get to Rt53. A speed limit request has already been submitted to the State (see minutes 2/20/13 5c) for Knollwood and Granite Drive. Also needed is parents instructing children in the proper way to cross a street. Comm McCollam stated that a speed bump solution makes it appear safe to play in the road. The issue here is pedestrian behavior. The Commissioner also asked about a 90° curve sign posted on both sides. Lt Dickinson stated that new development here could result in a “T” intersection. Comm McCollam requested that 30 day selective enforcement be performed here. Lt Dickinson’s recommendations are to post a “No Outlet” sign on Knollwood Dr at Reservoir St and post speed signs, once approved by the State Department of Transportation.

Motion by Comm Greco to accept Lt Dickinson’s recommendation; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

b) Hollandia

Correspondence from Eugene Relick thanking the Department for security provided at the get-together at his house in reference to Sandy Hook.

7. Chief’s Report

- Training Report – Monthly

Lt Kennedy's February report was in the hands of the Commissioners concerning ongoing training. Bill May is at the Academy. Off. Schretzenmayer is now on his own.

- Dispatcher Openings Have Been Filled

Two dispatcher openings have been filled and it will be four to five weeks before they are on their own.

- Stuffed Penguins

Received from Washington State in reference to Sandy Hook.

8. Commissioner Comments

Comm McCollam stated for the record his displeasure over on-street parking during snow removal. Tickets have been issued but cars continue to park on the street, many in order to prevent Town snow plows from blocking the ends of their driveways with snow. Comm McCollam favors a more aggressive approach than fines including the towing of offending vehicles. There is no policy concerning this according to the Chief. Some people park on the street because there is no other place for them to park and the Department is hesitant to tow them unless absolutely necessary. Another solution according to Comm McCollam could be a graduated level of offense such as Danbury has depending on the intensity of storms. Chairman Duff stated that the Commission should consider the problem and formulate a solution by next September.

At 7:30 motion by Comm McCollam to go into executive session for security briefs and invite Chief Finch to attend; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

At 8:00 pm the Commission came out of executive session.

At 8:01 motion by Comm Kolwicz to adjourn; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ferdinand Miller Jr

Secretary