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POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, APR 17, 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

Chairman Mike Duff opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. The Commission pledged allegiance to the flag. Present also were Town Attorney John Shea, Captain Dave Bruckenthal, Det. George Bryce, Craig Manemeit (counsel for Det. Bryce).

Chief Finch asked that Rt58 construction be added to the agenda as item 6e.

1. General Public Comments
None
2. Review of Past Minutes for 3/20/13
Comm McCollam noted his statement for #1 General Public Comments should read "---Judd Ave from Ann Terr is "way too wide" and the plan is to be narrowed with the installation of new sidewalks".
Motion by Comm McCollam to accept the minutes of 3/20/13 as amended;
seconded by Comm Grosso – unanimous.
3. Grievance – Det Bryce
Craig Manemeit, in-house counsel for C.O.P.S. (Connecticut Organization for Public Safety Division) stated the Police Union's position that the Department is in violation of section 5.01 "Collective Bargaining" by discriminating against Det. Bryce during the recent Department promotion process for the position of Sergeant because of his vigorous pursuit on 14 occasions of member grievances and complaints from 2004 against an employer which "harbored anti-union animus". Also that on 7/20/12 the Commission met expressly to add an interview step to a selection process which previously did not have one, relying primarily on test results. That the final decision not to promote Det Bryce was made by the Commission not upon test results but rather upon his past union activities. The Union request is that Det. Bryce "be made whole" in regards to his application for the position of Sergeant. The Labor Board will recognize the protection afforded by Statute. As required, the Union is presenting its case to

the Commission before going before that Board. Chairman Duff requested that these demands be presented in writing, a request to which Mr. Manemeit agreed. Based upon a request by Chairman Duff, at 6:15, motion by Comm McCollam that a non-meeting status be declared for consideration of the Union's position and Chief Finch, Capt Bruckenthal and Town Attorney Shea be invited to attend; seconded by Comm Grosso – unanimous.

At 6:35 the meeting was reopened.

At 6:35 motion by Comm Greco for a 5 minute recess; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous.

At 6:41 Commission came back into session.

Chairman Duff stated the Commission had “concern and confusion” over the Union's position requesting clarification in that asking that Det Bryce be made whole, is the Union also asking that Sgt Pugner be demoted?. Mr Manemeit replied that the Union's present demand was that the decision in this case be consistent and based upon collective bargaining agreement without reference to Union activity. Chairman Duff stated that the Commission will review Mr. Manemeit's written request and respond as required.

4. Budget Report

Chief Finch reported overtime continues to rise based more and more upon school security needs now that the weather is warmer, more activities outside and more officers taking vacation time.

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

5. Old Business

a) Monthly Reports

Chief Finch reported a large increase in motor vehicle stops and arrests.

Motion by Comm Kolwicz to accept the monthly reports as presented; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

6) New Business

a) No Parking Paint Color

Comm McCollam, pointing out several examples, brought forth this request that “no parking” striping be consistently yellow rather than white which has often been used. Paint quality has been improved to the point where annual restriping is not necessary. According to the commissioner it will be easier for drivers to discern and police officers to enforce yellow no parking lines. Comm McCollam also asked that designated parking areas in front of the Dr Mike's entrance be repositioned in order to give drivers better sight lines. Parking on the Blackman Av side of Parloa Park needs to be marked and no-parking on Main St near the church needs to be enforced. Because Greenwood is a State road, State STC will have to be involved. Chairman Duff asked Comm McCollam to put these requests in writing for submission to the people and departments responsible.

b) Traffic – Intersection of Nashville & Chestnut

Responding to citizen complaints in this request, Comm McCollam stated the intersection of Nashville & Chestnut becomes blocked by cars coming out of Chestnut causing cars turning right from Greenwood to become backed up. The Commissioner recommends a dedicated right turn lane and right turn light at the intersection. Chief Finch stated a “Do Not Block Intersection” sign has been suggested by Lt Dickinson along with section of Chestnut yellow blocked so no cars can block the intersection.

Motion by Comm McCollam to follow Lt Dickinson’s suggestion concerning the Nashville/Chestnut intersection utilizing signs and yellow blocking; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous.

c) Site Plan – 26 Grassy Plain St

This 12 unit condominium plan utilizes a wide drive for in and out. Lt Dickinson sees traffic impact as insignificant. The lieutenant wants to be sure the handicap sign does not interfere with sight lines and that the stop sign is 4 feet before the sidewalk.

Motion by Comm Kolwicz to accept Lt Dickinson’s approval of the site plan for 26 Grassy Plain St and pass it onto Planning and Zoning; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

d) Memorial 5K Run – May 18th Saturday

Capt Bruckenthal has already applied to the State for the permit for this run pending Commission approval. The Captain described the route with Behel Cycle as the starting and Front St as the ending point.

Motion by Comm Greco to accept Capt Bruckenthal’s recommendation for the Memorial 5K Run on 5/18/13; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

e) Rt58 Construction

Two options were offered by Waters Construction for the replacement of a culvert on Rt58 at Sara’s Way one is to close half of Rt58 and utilize temporary traffic signals and when complete close the other half. This could take a month or more. The other option proposed by the State and endorsed Lt Dickinson is to close Rt58 entirely and complete the project in 3 days on a Friday through Sunday using Wolfpits Rd as a detour. The Commission decided this latter option was better than a month of chaos. Comm McCollam noted that a public safety action plan for EMS and Fire needs to be in place since Bethel and surrounding towns are impacted.

Motion by Comm Greco to agree with the State’s plan to close Rt58, the entire road, for 3 days of construction, Friday through Sunday; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous.

7. Correspondence

a) Police Unity Tour – Sgt MacKenzie

A letter from Sgt MacKenzie described his acceptance and planned participation in the upcoming National Police Officers Week proceedings as a group bicycle ride by police officers to Washington D.C. to pay respects with others officers and

families at the Police Officers monument. The Sergeant is repeating a ride he made last year. This year he represents a deceased Kansas police officer as well as Bethel past officer Sease who died on duty after leaving the Department. The Commission applauds Sgt MacKenzie's efforts and notes donations to the cause are being accepted.

7) Chief's Report

- Training Report – Monthly

Lt Kennedy's March report was in the hands of the Commissioners concerning ongoing training.

- Dispatcher Opening

Maria Wallenta is leaving Dispatch so another opening needs to be filled

- Police Officer Opening

Chief Finch announced Off Kaufman as going to Redding so a Police Officer vacancy needs to be filled. Applications are being accepted. The Chief also announced a possible second new opening after the budget is approved.

- Bethel Summer Festival July 12th – 14th

Capt Bruckenthal will have detailed information at the next commission meeting.

Chief Finch noted Det Morris and Off Whaley have attended RAD instructors school and will be performing training in the near future.

Off Heather Burnes has requested and been selected as a school resource officer

8. Commissioner Comments

Comm Kolwicz commended Sgt MacKenzie for his active participation in National Police Officers Week.

Comm McCollam stated that EUV (6 wheel off- road vehicle) training is once again available and recommends that police officers become involved since the purchase of the vehicle was meant to be of multi-departmental use. Its worth, according to the commissioner, had already been proved. At the request of the Chief, Comm McCollam will obtain course cost and curriculum information.

Comm McCollam also asked that an additional person be assigned to work with and learn the traffic facet of operations to both aid Lieutenant Dickinson and be in place for when he retires someday.

In reply to commissioner questions Chief Finch noted Memorial Day at the Department as assembly at 11:30, inspection at 11:45 and picnic at 12:00 Chairman Duff questioned overly dark tinted windows as it pertains to being unable at times to make eye contact with other drivers and as it affects officer safety when approaching cars. Capt Bruckenthal will put this item out for enforcement. It will also be on the next meeting's agenda.

At 7:32 motion by Comm Kolwicz to adjourn; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. J. Miller Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Ferdinand Miller Jr

Secretary