



# POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, APR 15, 2009  
BETHEL POLICE DEPARTMENT-CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDING: CHAIRMAN NICHOLAS ELLIS  
COMMISSIONER CHRIS McCOLLAM  
COMMISSIONER HUGO GRECO  
COMMISSIONER BILL OCHS  
COMMISSIONER ANDREW MATTURRO  
CHIEF JEFFREY W. FINCH

Chairman Nicholas Ellis opened the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

1. General Public Comments:  
John Kennedy of 16 Turkey Plain Rd, owner of Smitty's Auto Body asked that the Commission not approve requests from out-of-town towing companies to be included on the rotation list (see 5a).
2. Review of Past Minutes Mar 18, 2009  
Motion by Comm Greco to accept the minutes of 3/18/09; seconded by Comm Maturro – unanimous.
3. Budget Report:  
Chief Finch reported that even though overtime expenses were higher this past week, year-to-date they are \$22,000 lower than last year. Comm Greco questioned the wide swings, week to week in overtime. Chief Finch explained that a single big case or the need to cover patrol or dispatch shift absences can cause this. Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept the budget report as presented; seconded by Comm Maturro – unanimous.
4. Old Business:
  - a) Monthly Reports  
The Commission considered the reports. Motion by Comm McCollam to accept the Monthly Reports as read; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.
  - b) Corresponding Secretary  
Chairman Ellis reported that even though not mentioned in the Town Charter, Town Council cannot see any reason why a

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corresponding secretary cannot be appointed by the Commission. Comm McCollam stated that no action is needed until such time that the actual responsibilities are determined and a willing Commission member steps forward.

5. New Business:

Motion by Comm McCollam to move New Business item h to a; seconded by Comm Maturro - unanimous

a) McLoughlin Towing

In a letter, McLoughlin Towing requested that they be added to the towing rotation list. Chief Finch agreed with Capt Cedergren's recommendation that only in-town companies offering towing service be on this list. Only in the past when local companies could not provide adequate service were out-of-town companies allowed. This situation has changed. Comm Greco praised Smitty's Auto Body and Belardinelli Tire for the quality of their service. Chairman Ellis agreed and added the benefit to local residents to deal with local company rather than one several towns away. Motion by Comm McCollam to accept Capt Cedergren's recommendation to utilize local towing companies as long as they provide adequate service; seconded by Comm Greco – The motion passed by three with two abstentions, Chairman Ellis for a personal reason because of his familiarity with the author of the letter and Comm Maturro because he occasionally works part time as a tow truck operator.

b) Trac-View MV Accidents

At no cost to the Department, Trac-View offers as an on-line service, the posting of routine motor vehicle accident reports for a fee charged internet requestors. This widely used product should serve to reduce some of the work load of the Records Department and be of value to insurance companies. The Department will receive the regular 50¢ per page from Trac-View. Accident reports will also still be able to be picked up at 50¢ per page. Motion by Chairman Ellis to try the new Trac-View system to help better serve the people of Bethel; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

c) MS Society Bike Tour

On 5/31/09 the MS Bike Tour will come through Bethel from Redding north on Rt53 to Rt302 and then onto Newtown. This event has been held successfully in the past. Bikers travel in small groups at a traffic pace.

d) Extra Work Vehicle Charge Rate

Chief Finch requested a change in the charge for police vehicles for extra duty jobs. Currently the charge is \$15 per hour. The request is for \$18 per hour which should represent a 20% increase over

2008. Surrounding towns charge from \$15 to \$26. Motion by Comm McCollam that the extra work vehicle charge rate be increased to \$18 effective 5/1/09; seconded by Chariman Ellis – unanimous.

e) Arrest Records Charge Rate

The current charge for arrest records checks is \$5. These checks cover Bethel only and no where else. Though already noted, the report will be changed according to the Chief to make this fact more clear and at the same time a copy of the State form will be handed out. Also requested was a new rate of \$10 for records checks. Motion by Comm McCollam that the Chief be allowed to change the charge for arrest records checks to \$10 effective 5/1/09; seconded by Comm Matturro – unanimous.

f) Crosswalk at Blue Jay Orchards, on Plumtrees Rd

In his letter, Lt Dickinson requests official Commission approval for this existing crosswalk and because of the short sight line to the signs from the crest of the hill beyond the intersection with Old Hawleyville Rd, move the crosswalk signs back toward the hill. This should serve to make the signs more effective in reducing speeds. Lt Dickinson noted that the volume of people using the crosswalk is seasonal. The orchard does hire officers on the busiest weekends. The Highway Dept will paint the crosswalk correctly. Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept Lt Dickinson's recommendation for changes to the crosswalk at Blue Jay Orchards; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

g) Crosswalk on South St at Taylor

Because of existing drain grates, moving the crosswalk on the west side of Taylor Av to the east side would make it ADA (American Disability Act) compliant. Motion by Comm Greco to accept Lt Dickinson's recommendation for changes to the crosswalk on South St at Taylor; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.

h) Roadway Speed Limits – New

Chief Finch produced a list of roads from Lt Dickinson for which speed limits should be reviewed by the State and set. Chairman Ellis questioned the 15mph proposal for Whittlesey. Lt Dickinson replied that Connecticut does not have set speed limits, rather "reasonable speeds" or "posted limits". A State inspector will inspect Whittlesey Dr (currently posted at 15 mph) along with other listed roads and advise as to the proper speed limits. The List is as follows:

S.T.C. speed limit reviews for the following roads:

Payne Rd	25 mph	Walnut Hill Rd	25 mph (w. of Old Hawleyville)
Vail Rd	25 mph		
Grand St	25 mph	Walnut Hill Rd	20 mph (e. of Old Hawleyville)
Diamond Av	25 mph		
Whittlesey Dr	15 mph	Rockwell Rd	25 mph
Taylor Rd	25 mph	Maple Av Ext	25 mph
		Judd Av	25 mph

Motion by Chairman Ellis to send Lt Dickinson's recommendations for speed limit changes to the State for their approval; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous

6. Correspondence:

a) Ms Jennings 109 Wooster St

In this letter Ms Jennings thanked Ofs Pugner and O'Farrell for their response in a medical assist case. Unfortunately the victim passed away.

7. Chief's Report

a) Training Report

Chief Finch mentioned receiving a training report from Lt Kennedy

b) Motor Vehicle Enforcement Report

Capt Cedergren's report listed specific assignments and tickets issued.

c) Patrol Staffing for 2008

Chief Finch produced a list of staffing levels achieved for each shift for 2008:

	<u># Officers</u>	<u>Staffing Level</u>
First Shift (Midnights)	3 (required)	100%
	4	43%
	5	6%
Second Shift (Days)	3 (required)	100%
	4	72%
	5	28%
Third Shift (Evenings)	3 (required)	100%
	4	74%
	5	23%

d) Sergeant Staffing – Cost Analysis

An actual patrol sergeant works the shift about 75% of the time. The rest of the time a corporal works as an acting sergeant. Chief Finch's cost analysis determined that hiring a sergeant at time and a half, instead of utilizing a corporal would have cost \$117,000 in 2007 and \$106,000 in 2008. To promote another sergeant would still cost \$70,000 to \$80,000 according to the Chief. Since the Town could ill afford even this the best alternative is to maintain the corporals, a system which has been working and costs only an additional \$6,000 per year. The Chief is currently formulating such a plan with the staff. In this practice, formalized in Sept 2008, corporals are selected off a Sergeants List of those who have taken and passed the Sergeants test. Comm Ochs rephrased this as utilizing what is available in the most efficient manner. Chairman Ellis asked that this be eventually formalized into a written policy. Comm Greco asked that this be tabled to the next meeting. The Chief agreed saying that "more specific answers" would be available by the next meeting. Motion by Comm McCollam to table the discussion on Sergeant/Corporal staffing and scheduling until the next meeting; seconded by Chairman Ellis – unanimous.

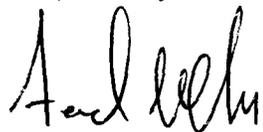
8. Commissioner Comments:  
None

At 7:45 Motion by Chairman Ellis to go into executive session to discuss personnel issues and invite Chief Finch to attend; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

At 9:21 the Commission can out of executive session.

At 9:22 motion by Chairman Ellis to adjourn; seconded by Chairman Greco – unanimous

Respectfully Submitted



Ferdinand Miller Jr.

Secretary