



POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, AUG 19, 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 6:30 p.m.

1. General Public Comments:

Gary and Peg Lewis of 30 Hawleyville Rd attended as a follow-up on their two letters requesting no-thru-truck signs for their road. They and neighbors are concerned about heavy truck traffic, especially 18 wheelers. The hill and blind corner near McNeil road is a particular hazard, especially to those unfamiliar with the road. Chairman Ellis pointed out that the Commission can only post no-thru-truck signs with State approval. This has been successful in the past.

A Mr. Brisco of 29 Hawleyville Rd expressed the same concern as Mr and Mrs Lewis, adding the dangerous combination of a repaved road leading to increased speed and the start of school. Four times last year speeding cars passed the stopped school bus at the base of the hill when his child was getting off. Mr Brisco was asking for Police involvement for safety reasons.

Matthew Siliano of 24 Bethpage Dr asked for speed humps and/or stop signs on his road to slow traffic in what has become a rush hour high speed cut-through to avoid the traffic lights on Route 53.

Ann Cleary of 2 Eagle Rock Hill asked that the promised meeting with the Chairman and the Chief be set up to discuss report discrepancies.

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

2. Review of Past Minutes July 15, 2009
Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept the minutes of 7/15/09; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

3. Budget Report:
Chief Finch reported last fiscal year ended up with a \$4008.55 surplus which was turned back to the Town. July 2009 expenses were considered by the Commission, the highest category, dispatch overtime due to vacation hiring. Motion by Comm McCollam to accept the budget report as presented; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.

4. Old Business:
 - a) Monthly Reports
The Major Crime Index number is still fairly low according to Chief Finch. The overall accuracy of major crime accounting is still being reviewed. The Commission considered the reports. A Nature/Activity report is included which provided a count of the number of calls for a given activity. The number, according to the Chief does not reflect the amount of time consumed by a single call. As a for-instance, alarm responses which typically take 15 to 20 minutes by two officers times the 1001 last year 99% of which were false alarms. Motion by Comm McCollam to accept the Monthly Reports as read; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

Motion by Chairman Ellis to add COLEA accreditation refund reimbursement to New Business as item 5b; seconded by Comm Ochs - unanimous

5. New Business:
 - a) Federal Grant
Chairman Ellis reported that a \$30,000 Federal grant has been approved by the Board of Selectmen. Chief Finch reported having met with the First Selectman to agree on the expenditure details:
\$6K for refurbishing the inside of the command post vehicle
\$3.5K for a generator for the backup tower
\$7.5K for computer server upgrade
\$4K for a second car video system
\$5.1K for a detective bureau crime scene blue light
\$2.2K for a second internal video and voice recording system

In response to Comm Maturro's question concerning computers in cars, Chief Finch stated that until the State finalizes its software and links to the DMV, this Department's software vendor cannot finalize such features as the swipe card system. The report system in the cars is working well according to the Chief. Motion by Comm

Matturro to take the Chief's recommendation for spending the money from the Federal Grant on the items as outlined; seconded by Comm McCollam - unanimous.

b) COLEA Accreditation Refund Reimbursement

This advance payment, (\$5,066) reimbursed by COLEA because the Department is no longer part of national accreditation, should according to Comm McCollam be returned to the Police Department for needed equipment rather than being absorbed into the general fund. Motion by Comm McCollam to direct Chairman Ellis to send a letter on behalf of the Commission requesting the funds returned by COLEA to be returned to the Police Department to be used for needed equipment such as computers; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous. The money was refunded because of the decision to cut COLEA out of last year's operating budget.

Motion by Chairman Ellis to add Bethpage Dr to Correspondence as item 6b and Grassy Plain Terr to Correspondence as item 6c; seconded by Comm Ochs - unanimous.

6. Correspondence:

a) No Thru Trucks on Hawleyville Rd

Lt Dickinson sees the condition of Hawleyville Rd as "deplorable" with broken up "skim coats" and failed drainage. Repaving is scheduled for September which when done will probably result in increased speeds. The counter shows 2000 vehicles on an average day with 282 per hour at peak which according to the lieutenant is fairly low for Bethel roads. The multi axle truck count shows as 89 per day. To get no-thru-truck approval there has to be safety issues which the low accident rate does not support. An accident review shows a low rate of 4 in 2006, none in 2007, 2 in 2008 and zero year-to-date. No-thru-trucks as defined by case law in CT was explained by Lt Dickinson as prohibiting those trucks having no stops in Bethel, passing through to other towns. Since road width and sight lines will be upgraded with the road repaving, Comm McCollam asked that the counter be put out again afterwards and the matter left under Old Business.

b) Bethpage Dr

In response to a letter received, Chief Finch took a look at Bethpage Dr. The Chief is receptive to the idea of speed humps for slowing traffic on major shortcuts such as this. Lt Dickinson was assigned to find a contractor and obtain a quote for such an installation. Motion by Chairman Ellis to have Lt Dickinson look at traffic issues on Bethpage Dr; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous. Comm Matturro asked if a report could be available by next month.

c) Grassy Plain Terr
In his letter Kevin Morton expressed concerns over Grassy Plain Terr and Grassy Plain St. Motion by Comm Greco to have Lt Dickinson address these concerns and report back to the Commission; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

7. Chief's Report

- a) The training report, not part of the original packet was handed out to the Commissioners.
- b) In response to a request for a good news article from the News Times Chief Finch listed the paramedic program, a Federal grant, the web site and State accreditation.
- c) A letter from Capt Cedergren concerned an EMT accident reporting faulty brakes. A mechanical inspection was performed determining the brakes to be in working condition.

8. Commissioner Comments:

Comm Maturro asked if Commission Comments can be kept before the Executive Session in order for them to appear in the minutes.

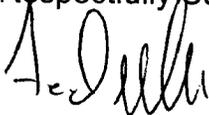
Comm Ochs asked that the meeting start time be included on the September minutes. The commissioner is in favor of 5:30 start. Comm Ochs also questioned if the rules concerning Department driving responsibility applies to paramedics. The rules do apply according to the Chief and the request is that the time and location of any apparent violation be noted for tracking the responsible party.

Comm McCollam asked about EMT vehicles stating the two fully equipped and one backup be available. Capt Cedergren is in the process of coordinating this according to Chief Finch.

In response to Chairman Ellis's question concerning missing striping on Main St, Commission members discussed town wide street striping.

At 8:04 motion by Comm McCollam to adjourn; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous

Respectfully Submitted



Ferdinand Miller Jr.

Secretary