



POLICE COMMISSION

49 Plumtrees Road, Connecticut 06801 • Phone: (203) 743-5500 • Fax: (203) 748-1333

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JAN 15, 2014
BETHEL POLICE DEPARTMENT-CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDING:

CHAIRMAN MIKE DUFF
VICE CHAIRMAN HUGO GRECO
COMMISSIONER RICHARD KOLWICZ
COMMISSIONER CHRIS MCCOLLAM
COMMISSIONER ANTHONY RUBINO
CHIEF JEFFREY FINCH

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

Chairman Duff asked that New Business 5b Kristy Dr be moved up in the meeting as item 1a and that Charter Revision be added to New Business as 6d. Motion by Comm McCollam to move 5b Kristy Dr up to 1a and add Charter Revision to New Business as item 6d; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous.

1. General Public Comments
None

1. a) Kristy Dr
The Commission discussed Chairman Duff's suggestion concerning possible shaving of the corner at the intersection of Kristy Dr and Old Hawleyville Rd to improve the site line when making a left turn onto Old Hawleyville Rd. Chief Finch asked that the Highway Dept first look at the feasibility of this before making any decision to determine if the integrity of the nearby stone wall would be compromised in any way. Lt Dickinson noted that a lot of the traffic is due to the Walnut Hill bridge construction detour. Once the bridge is completed lower volume on Old Hawleyville will cause larger gaps in approaching traffic. Donna Rooney of 20 Kristy Dr, the original complainant in attendance (see General Public Comments meeting 12/18/13) mentioned that this could easily be offset by the traditional increased Hollandia Nursery traffic in the Spring. Ms Rooney offered a possible solution of installing a mirror to aid drivers attempting the left turn. Chief Finch stated his belief that mirrors help mainly where there is no visibility. The Chief stated that here, though the road is not visible looking left, the tops of approaching cars can be seen if drivers slowly pull forward to the edge of Old Hawleyville after stopping at the stop sign. The Commission generally believed that shaving the embankment would in the least allow more of the approaching cars to be seen.

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Motion by Comm Greco to table Kristy Dr until the Highway Dept can look at the situation; seconded by Comm Rubino – unanimous.

2. Review of Past Minutes for 12/18/13

Chairman Duff noted a few minor errors. #1 General Public Comments Christy Dr should be Kristy Dr; #5c New Business Rt7 should be Rt6. Comm McCollam noted #6 Comments Christman should be Christmas.

Motion by Comm Greco to accept the amended minutes of 12/18/13; seconded by Comm Kolwicz - unanimous

3. Election of Officers for 2014

Motion by Comm McCollam that Mike Duff remain as Chairman of the Police Commission for 2014; seconded by Comm Rubino – unanimous.

Motion by Comm McCollam that Hugo Greco remain as Vice Chairman of the Police Commission for 2014; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous.

4. Budget Report

a) Comptrollers Report

Chief Finch underlined the fact the new cars were purchased last month under the Capital Equipment account. Outfitting expenses will reflect the change from the old to the new Ford model. Several line items were questioned by Commissioners and answered by the Chief.

b) Overtime Report

Now that Dispatch is up to full strength, that particular overtime expense has come down according to the Chief. Overall year-to-date expenditures are less than last year-to-date. \$69,000 from billing road jobs for patrol cars at road jobs in 2013 has been routinely returned to the Town. The Chief expressed his hope that some of that money could be returned to the Police Department 2014 budget for the purchase of a fourth and fifth police vehicle.

5. Old Business

a) Monthly Reports

The Chief discussed various items on the UCR crime reports, totals of which are down from last year. Arrests are slightly down. Detective Bureau reports have been itemized by detective since October of last year. Graphs show drug arrests with type of drug noted.

6. New Business

a) Correspondence Protocol

Chairman Duff stated and the Commission agreed that not all correspondence brought before the Board needs be acted upon and that defamatory or out-of-place written correspondence will not be entered into the minutes but only be noted as "Received". Any investigation will be determined as necessary or not by the Chief. Comm McCollam clarified that questionable correspondence be entered with the name of the correspondent and general subject matter only. Digital copies of the Newtown shooting report were handed out to Commissioners. Chairman Duff asked that Commissioners review them with an eye toward what Bethel as a community can "glean" from it.

b) 2014-2015 Budget Preparation

A copy of the proposed budget was in the hands of Commissioners. Chief Finch went through the line items, each item showing no change, an increase or staying the same as last year. Payroll increases could not be included because contracts are still pending. The Comptroller will make those adjustments when contracts are finalized. Five new vehicles are being requested. The Chief stressed the need for the Department to have in its possession certain necessary items so as either not to appear foolish or the lack of which could incur liability. As a result computer hardware and software are being upgraded and other new equipment added some paid for by grants, others "unfunded mandates", others necessary to strive for good state of the art equipment. Det Bryce presented the Detective Bureau's need for new and upgraded hardware and software, maintenance and licensing fees and certification training for Computer Forensic investigation. In all, the proposed budget is under 3% without payroll increases. Chairman Duff added that it is the responsibility of the Commission to support Department needs then ask the Board of Finance to approve the financing necessary to achieve them.

Motion by Chairman Duff to accept the proposed budget with anticipated adjustments to be completed by next week; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

c) CT Police Commissioners Association

Comm McCollam described the CT Police Commissioners Association as a fraternal organization of police commissioners which has the potential of providing networking with Commissioners of other CT cities and towns. The group has regular meetings and is well worth looking into for many reasons including issues members have faced in the past and a heads up on matters which may be coming Bethel's way. At the request of Chairman Duff Comm McCollam promised to look into obtaining membership information.

d) Charter Revision

Chairman Duff reported that among 16 items recommended for charter revision, one is for Police Commission meetings to be held in the Municipal Center rather than the Police Department. Reasons were various and easily countered by logic and argument. One reason even mentioned the intimidation factor of being in a police department building. Commissioners were unanimous in maintaining the Police Department as being the site of future meetings. Chairman Duff will formulate a letter to the First Selectman, responsible for acting on the recommendations, the letter to be signed by each Commissioner.

7. Correspondence

a) Letter from Nadia Johnson

Off Diana was thanked for his assistance in helping when a child fell on the ice. The letter was written by both the mother and the 9 year old child.

8. Chief's Report

Lt Dickinson's monthly report of current and future training was in the hands of the Commissioners

9. Commissioner Comments
None

10. Executive Session

At 8:15 motion by Chairman Duff to go into executive session and invite Chief Finch to attend; seconded by Comm Kolwicz – unanimous

At 8:30 the Commission came out of executive session

At 8:32 motion by Comm Kolwicz to adjourn; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Ferdinand Miller Jr
Secretary