

Old Saybrook Police Commission

Regular Meeting

June 22, 2020

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, June 22, 2020 via Zoom conference call. The meeting was recorded.

Present: Chairman Keeney, Vice Chairman Reid, Secretary Maselli, Commissioners Quish, Von Dassel, Cortese-Costs and Shippee. Chief Spera and Lieutenant DePerry were present from the Department of Police Services.

I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Keeney called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Comment

Chairman Keeney asked the Commission to please observe a moment of silence in honor of Retired State Police Lieutenant Colonel John Mulligan (an Old Saybrook resident) who recently passed away.

The commission observed the moment of silence.

Chairman Keeney asked Secretary Maselli to review the Police Commission Public Comment rules (which are in the bylaws). Secretary Maselli read the Public Comment rules and they were put on the screen for everyone to read.

Alfred Wilcox commented stating that people expect that the Police will not discriminate or use excessive force. He stated that he requested that the Police Commission have Chief Spera report quarterly the statistics regarding car stops data demographics and more.

Matt Pugliese stated that it is important for leaders to take advantage of this time and the discussions it is bringing up and it's an invitation to work with the Commission and the Police Department. He stated that people are asking about the Departments use of force policy and nobody was sure if it could be found online.

III. Discussion and Possible Action Concerning Meeting Minutes

a. Regular Meeting – May 18, 2020

Secretary Maselli made a motion to approve the May 18, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Von Dassel seconded the motion.

Commissioner Shippee asked if Lieutenant DePerry attended the May 18th meeting. She said the minutes stated that he did but she wasn't sure. Chief Spera stated that Lieutenant DePerry did attend the meeting.

The motion to approve the May 18, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed and 1 abstaining (Commissioner Cortese-Costa).

IV. Executive Reports

a. Financial

1. FY 20 Budget Overview

Chief Spera stated that our June meetings never include the full scope of financials due to the end of the fiscal year being June 30th and everything being so fluid and changing everyday right now. He stated that he is confident the Police Department will finish in the black returning around \$80,000 to \$100,000 plus additional money from the medical insurance line items.

He also stated as done in previous years funds will be moved from the Police Vehicle line item from Outside Jobs back to the Operation Budget to offset gas costs. Pistol permit fee money is also transferred back.

Full reports once the budget is closed will come from Town Hall.

2. Administrative

1. Police Operations Briefing

-COVID-19 Response & Recovery

Chief Spera stated that Phase 1 & 2 of the reopening has been very busy. The Department is seeing more traffic in town and crime is on the uptick now. Two cars were stolen and the pursuit was called off once they took off due to the states new policy that there will be no pursuit of personal property.

Chief Spera stated that the Department's stance on COVID-19 response and recovery is to still keep staff safe and still maintain to give the same great service as before.

The Department is starting to scale back on the cleaning of human touch points, there will be more mask to mask contact between the public and the Police but he did state that the Department will be taking advantage of the efficiencies learned during this time.

He stated new cases of COVID 19 are still being seen as states reopen. The Department will still be wearing PPE and masks. He thanked the custodial staff and the staff who handled the laundry every day stating they did an awesome job and that nobody became ill and that's a testament to all the safety steps the Department took.

Chairman Keeney stated that the Department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been a model for other Departments across the state and country. Job well done he said.

Commissioner Quish asked if the Department has had to respond to complaints about stores, restaurants etc.

Chief Spera stated yes of course, the Police Officers who respond have the mindset of education not enforcement for those calls.

3. Executive Report

a. Employee Status Report

Patrolman Harris is about halfway through field training. He's had a different training due to the beginning of his training being mostly COVID responses. He has now been paired with Field Training Officer Schulz and will spend the next 6-7 weeks getting ready for patrol.

One patrolman is currently still out on FMLA.

One dispatcher is still using intermittent FMLA.

A patrol sergeant has been placed on paid administrative leave.

School Resource Officer Rooney has submitted his official letter of intent to retire. He has agreed to stay on until a replacement is chosen and also to train his replacement. The replacement will first have to learn how to be an Old Saybrook Police Officer then learn the school.

Chief Spera stated that he is pleased Officer Rooney agreed to stay on for the process and that he will be greatly missed. He had a great relationship with both the staff and the students.

b. Hiring/Promotional Processes – Update

Chief Spera updated the Commission on the Sergeant Promotional Process. Patrolman Hardy is the sole applicant. He has taken the written exam and the individual assessment is up next. He stated that he will be reaching out to the CT Police Academy to set up a one on one interview with Patrolman Hardy and then after that the Police Commission will interview him and decide to promote him or not.

c. Labor Matters – Update

Chief Spera stated that there has been no word from the Union on different items. They have been non responsive.

Four grievances still remain pending and haven't been heard yet.

Thursday Chief will meet with First Selectman Fortuna and the town's legal counsel and hear the municipal practice complaints.

4. Correspondence

The correspondence was scanned and emailed around to the Commission.

Secretary Maselli stated that it was nice to get the correspondence this way as it really gave them the opportunity to read the notes instead of being rushed to pass it to the next person and he stated that he hopes this practice will continue.

V. Comments from the Chief of Police

Chief Spera stated that the Shorts 4 Saybrook fundraiser is underway. There are multiple ways to donate and that about \$10,000 has already been raised.

He also added that he wanted to thank Lieutenant DePerry. The days have been very busy and complex and he couldn't ask for a better second in command helping him lead.

VI. Comments from Commissioners

Vice Chairman Reid congratulated the Department stating that everyone did a great job with handling COVID19.

Secretary Maselli stated that he was wondering about the unresponsiveness from the Union. Also he stated isn't traffic stop date required to be submitted to the state. Chief Spera stated yes and that it is actually illegal to ask someone's race if you are unsure about it.

Commissioner Corteste-Costa stated that she has been attending the rallies and feels that Towns have missed the boat on certain things. Training is so important and she requested to see more demographic information by the Police Department on a regular basis.

Commissioner Quish stated that was a good briefing and thanked Mr. Wilcox and Mr. Puglieses for attending and being involved.

Chairman Keeney stated that the Commission set an aggressive agenda items to review in the beginning and seem to have gotten off track with COVID. He stated that he would like to get back on track. He stated that he will meet with the Chief to review agenda items and decide which ones to start with. The Commission agreed with that.

The Commission also agreed to move the July meeting to July 20th.

VII. Adjournment

Commissioner Quish made a motion to adjourn. Secretary Maselli seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer D'Amato
Records Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Commission