

**Old Saybrook Police Commission**  
Regular Meeting  
June 27, 2022  
MINUTES

A regular hybrid meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, June 27, 2022. The meeting was recorded and can be viewed in its entirety at <https://youtu.be/Eji0Z2n6K4M>

**Present:** Chairman Wilcox, Vice Chairman Shippee, Secretary Notar-Francesco, Commissioners Calle, Manning, Maselli and Von Dassel. Chief Spera and Captain DePerry were present from the Department of Police Services.

**I. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance (0:20)**

Chairman Wilcox called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Comments from the Public (0:49)**

Bob Gery commented.

Keith Margotta commented.

Scott Giegerich commented.

Eleanor LaPlace commented.

Paul Carver commented.

John Ellis commented.

Dan Welsh commented.

Michael Bender commented.

Bob Mordes commented.

Ed Eaccarino commented.

Michael Looney commented.

Colin Heffernan commented.

Linda Mahal commented.

**III. Discussion and Possible Action to rescind the “Police Commission Correspondence” By-Law Amendment passed at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting as Recommended by the First Selectman and the Town’s Insurance Carrier. (28:22)**

Chairman Wilcox opened the discussion regarding the Police Commission By-Laws by reading a statement to the public saying that he intends to go along, for the moment, with Mr. Fortuna’s requests/demand and rescind the by-law amendments. However he and his democratic colleagues on the commission remain committed to the objectives they ran on while seeking election. He stated that he intends to enlist Mr. Cronin’s expertise as town counsel in seeking alternative solutions in which all can agree are legal.

**Commissioner Maselli made a motion to rescind the “Police Commission Correspondence” By-Law Amendment passed at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Von Dassel seconded the motion.**

The Commission discussed the “Police Commission Correspondence” By-Law.

**The motion to rescind the “Police Commission Correspondence” By-Law passed with a vote of 5 in favor (Wilcox/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Maselli/Von Dassel), 2 opposed (Shippee/Calle) and 0 abstaining.**

**IV. Discussion and Possible Action to rescind the “Responsibilities of Commissioners as to Inquiries” By-Law Amendment passed at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting as Recommended by the First Selectman and the Town’s Insurance Carrier. (38:23)**

**Commissioner Maselli made a motion to rescind the “Responsibilities of Commissioners as to Inquiries” By-Law Amendment passed at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Von Dassel seconded the motion.**

The Commission discussed the “Responsibilities of Commissioners as to Inquiries” By-Law.

**The motion to rescind the “Responsibilities of Commissioners as to Inquiries” By-Law passed with a vote of 4 in favor (Wilcox/Manning/Maselli/Von Dassel), 3 opposed (Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Calle) and 0 abstaining.**

**V. Discussion and Possible Action to rescind the “Public Comment” By-Law Amendment passed at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting as Recommended by the First Selectman and the Town’s Insurance Carrier. (48:54)**

**Commissioner Von Dassel made a motion to rescind the “Public Comment” By-Law Amendment passed at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Maselli seconded the motion.**

The Commission discussed the “Public Comment” By-Law.

**The motion to rescind the “Public Comment” By-Law passed with a vote of 4 in favor (Wilcox/Notar-Francesco/Maselli/Von Dassel), 3 opposed (Shippee/Manning/Calle) and 0 abstaining.**

**VI. Discussion and Possible Action to Remove the “Complaints Made to Commissioners” By-Law Proposal from the Table and to Remove the Draft Presented at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting for Consideration as Recommended by the First Selectman and the Town’s Insurance Carrier. (52:17)**

Commissioner Maselli made a motion to rescind the “Complaints Made to Commissioners” By-Law Amendment passed at the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting. Vice Chairman Shippee seconded the motion.

The Commission discussed the “Complaints Made to Commissioners” By-Law.

The motion to rescind the “Complaints Made to Commissioners” By-Law did not pass with a vote of 0 in favor, 7 opposed (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Calle/Maselli/Von Dassel) and 0 abstaining.

**VII. Discussion and Possible Action to Confirm that the Current By-Laws for the Old Saybrook Police Commission are dated November 2020.(54:45)**

Chairman Wilcox stated he is opposed to restoring the by-laws back to November 2020.

Chairman Wilcox stated that he recommends to not take action to confirm the current by-laws.

The Commission discussed what would happen (legally) if they don’t confirm the by-laws dated November 2020.

Vice Chairman Shippee made a motion to table agenda item number VII. Commissioner Calle seconded the motion. The motion to table agenda item number VII passed with a vote of 7 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Calle/Maselli/ Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

**VIII. Discussion and Possible Action on the Meeting Minutes for:  
a. May 23, 2022 Regular Meeting (1:04:46)**

Secretary Notar-Francesco made a motion to approve the May 23, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Maselli seconded the motion. The motion to accept the May 23, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 7 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Calle/Maselli/ Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

**IX. Executive Reports (1:05:01)  
a. FY 22 Operating Budget (1:05:18)**

Fiscal year ends June 30th, financials will be available July or August.

The Town did not enter into a gasoline pre buy contract.

The Department did purchase new tactical body armor for personnel, current plates are over 13 years old.

Chief will bring the discussion on what to do with the old armor back to the Commission once he finds out legally what they can do.

**b. Off Budget Accounts (1:06:49)**

**i. Driver's Safety – License Plate Readers Purchase (1:06:52)**

The Department is looking to purchase two additional license plate readers. Currently two of the Tahoe's are equipped with them. Those two cars are constantly on the road.

The Department would like the additional units to balance the use of cars between four different cars. The units are \$14,625 each. Chief would like to purchase one from the Off Budget Driver's Safety Account and one from Police Admin Account.

The Commission discussed the license plate reader proposal.

**c. Personnel Matters (1:11:51)**

**i. Request to Reinstate Master Sergeant van der Horst as a Per Diem Police Officer. (1:12:00)**

Master Sergeant van der Horst retired after 35 plus years last November. He is looking to come back and help out with private duty work, etc.

His certification expires on June 30<sup>th</sup> but there will be no additional cost to bring him back.

**ii. Patrolman Nyenhuis' Transfer from Full Time to Per Diem Employment (1:14:30)**

Patrolman Nyenhuis came to Old Saybrook by way of Hartford and her circumstances have changed from when she was hired. She is requesting to go from full time to part time status. She is willing to help with patrol shifts until the Department is back at full staff.

**iii. Resignation – Patrolman Wright (1:15:41)**

Patrolman Wright is resigning as of June 30<sup>th</sup> and transferring to Plainfield. The Department wishes her well and has allowed her to take her soft body armor as all have been allowed to do in the past.

**iv. Patrolman Schulz (1:16:19)**

Patrolman Schulz will be returning July 7<sup>th</sup> in an administrative capacity. His re-entry into the Department will follow everything outlined in the last chance agreement. The first thing that will be done will be the new hire base line psychological assessment.

**v. Employee Discipline (1:17:05)**

A written reprimand was issued to an Officer.

**d. Fleet Update (1:17:28)**

The Department selected the vehicles that will be going out to auction and the ones that the PD will be keeping.

Two of the Detective cars are currently on the auction site now.

The vehicle project was funded at \$540,000.00. Year-to-date expenditures are \$506,654.41.

**e. Professional Development Update (1:21:43)**

Many Officers recertified this year due to a COVID pause.

Patrolman Moreau completed basic instructor development.

Sgt. Hardy completed bike patrol certification and started this past weekend.

Two additional Officers (DeFrance/Tabor) are ARIDE certified.

Final stages of recertification for about 15 Officers with their EMR/EMT certification.

**f. 2022 Summer Initiatives (1:24:18)**

The Department will be partnering with the Estuary Council for the “Shorts 4 Seniors” program to help raise money for programs that the Estuary lost due to COVID.

Department members can wear the summer uniform during the months of July and August for \$5.00 a day or \$100.00 a month.

The Union has not committed to matching the Department’s donation but they will donate something.

The Bike Patrol is back. Five or six Officers are certified for bike patrol and there will be a loose schedule that hopefully will be at least once a week if not more.

The Department will be sponsoring several picnics at the station over the course of the summer. It will allow citizens to stop by and interact with the staff. It’s a good way for people to see the person behind the badge. The picnics will be promoted through normal means (social media/news stations/print media etc.)

Marine Patrol has a designated schedule. They are out Friday evening /Saturday day/Sunday day for patrol and respond to emergencies 24/7.

**g. Traffic Safety (1:29:29)**

**i. Cannabis Dispensary Facility – 233 Boston Post Road (1:29:35)**

There is an application for a cannabis facility at 233 Boston Post Road. Chief Spera is against the facility coming to Old Saybrook. He is concerned with traffic issues and having a daycare close by and will be expressing those concerns.

**ii. Hannford Commons – 101 Lynde Street (1:30:43)**

15 apartments/5 affordable will be built on the corner of Lynde Street and Elm Street.

**X. Discussion and Possible Action to Reinstate Master Sergeant van der Horst as a Per Diem Police Officer. (1:31:41)**

Commissioner Calle made a motion to reinstate Master Sergeant van der Horst as a Per Diem Police Officer. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion to reinstate Master Sergeant van der Horst passed with a vote of 7 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Calle/Maselli/Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

**XI. Discussion and Possible Action to Support the Chief of Police's Recommendation to Purchase Additional License Plate Readers from Off Budget Funds. (1:32:05)**

Commissioner Maselli made a motion to support the Chief of Police's recommendation to purchase additional license plate readers from the Off Budget funds identified. Commissioner Calle seconded the motion. The motion to support the purchase of additional license plate readers passed with a vote of 7 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Calle/Maselli/Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

**XII. Correspondence (1:32:39)**

There was no mail correspondence and there was no additional email correspondence from what Chairman Wilcox sent to the Commissioner's and the clerk.

**XIII. Discussion on The Chief's Idea for a Police Commission Retreat in September 2022. (1:32:59)**

Chief Spera wants to get together and plan a retreat with the Commission in hopes of everyone being able to work together and move the agenda forward.

The Commission discussed logistically how the Police Commission can do this.

Secretary Notar-Francesco stated that she wholeheartedly supports this and feels this could be very beneficial.

The Commission will reach out to FOI and see how this is possible.

**XIV. Discussion and Possible Action Concerning Budgeting for Police Commission Consultants. (1:42:00)**

Chairman Wilcox stated that he thinks that it is time to request from the Board of Selectman and the Board of Finance that the Police Commission be given budget approval for consultants. The money would be for both legal opinions and police department expertise.

The Commission discussed how this would work as Commissioner Maselli pointed out that the Commission is not in the budget process right now.

Chairman Wilcox stated that he just wants to get the ball rolling.

Chairman Wilcox stated that he would request up to \$20,000 for counsel selected by the Commission.

Chairman Wilcox stated that he is looking for a motion to request a budget of \$70,000 from the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectman for the Police Commission. (\$20K for legal consultants and \$50K for police consultants)

**Vice Chairman Shippee made a motion to request a budget of \$70,000 from the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectman for the Police Commission. (\$20K for legal consultants and \$50K for police consultants). Commissioner Manning seconded the motion.**

The Commission discussed the request.

Commissioner Manning withdrew her second.

**Secretary Notar-Francesco made a motion to authorize the Chair to approach the Board of Selectman and the Board of Finance to discuss ways and means to establish a Police Commission budget. Vice Chairman Shippee seconded the motion. The motion to authorize the Chair to approach the Board of Selectman and the Board of Finance to discuss ways and means to establish a Police Commission budget passed with a vote of 7 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Calle/Maselli/Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.**

**XV. Comments from the Public (1:58:50)**

Keith Margotta commented.

Eleanor LaPlace commented.

Michael Looney commented.

Michael Bender commented.

**XVI. Comments from the Chief of Police (2:06:17)**

There were no comments from the Chief.

**XVII. Comments from Police Commissioners (2:06:27)**

Secretary Notar-Francesco commented.

Commissioner Von Dassel commented.

**XVIII. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into Executive Session for the Purposes of Interviewing a Candidate for the Position of Patrolman. (2:10:09)**

**Vice Chairman Shippee made a motion to enter into Executive Session inviting Chief Spera and Captain DePerry to join for the purposes of interviewing a candidate for the position of patrolman.**

Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion to enter into Executive Session passed with a vote of 7 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Calle/Maselli/ Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

The Commission entered into Executive Session at 9:12 PM.

Rachel O'Connell entered into Executive Session at 9:30 PM.

Rachel O'Connell exited Executive Session at 9:42 PM.

Chief Spera and Captain DePerry exited Executive Session at 9:46 PM.

Chief Spera re-entered Executive Session at 9:57 PM.

**XIX. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into Executive Session to Discuss the Conduct of an Elected Official.**

**XX. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into Executive Session to Discuss a Personnel Matter.**

**XXI. Discussion and Possible Action to hire a Patrolman to Fill an Existing Vacancy. (2:10:38)**

The Commission exited Executive Session and resumed Public Session at 11:07 PM.

Commissioner Maselli made a motion to hire Rachel O'Connell to the position of patrolman to fill an existing vacancy pending completion of any additional employment requirements and at a time determined by the Chief that supports the department operations. Secretary Notar-Francesco seconded the motion. The motion to hire Rachel O'Connell passed with a vote of 6 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Maselli/ Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

Commissioner Calle had to leave due to a family emergency but supported the hiring of Ms. O'Connell.

**XXII. Adjournment (2:11:22)**

Commissioner Manning made a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Secretary Notar-Francesco. The motion to adjourn passed with a vote of 6 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Maselli/ Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

The meeting adjourned at 11:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

---

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