

Old Saybrook Police Commission

Regular Meeting

June 26, 2023

MINUTES

A regular hybrid meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, June 26, 2023.

The meeting was recorded and can be viewed in its entirety at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj2JEPRYQoQ>

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

Absent: Commissioners Calle and Maselli

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

Chairman Wilcox called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM for the Police Commission and led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Wilcox thanked the Chief and the Police Department for their contributions to the wonderful day yesterday at Celebrate Saybrook.

II. Comments from the Public (0:49)

Susan Quish commented.

III. Discussion and Possible Action on the Meeting Minutes for: (1:57)

a. Regular Meeting – May 22, 2023 (2:03)

Secretary Notar-Francesco made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from May 22, 2023. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from May 22, 2023 passed with a vote of 4 in favor (Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning/Von Dassel), 0 opposed and 1 abstention (Wilcox).

b. Special Meeting – June 7, 2023 (2:26)

Chairman Wilcox made a motion to accept the Special Meeting Minutes from June 7, 2023. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 4 in favor (Wilcox/Shippee/Notar-Francesco/Manning), 0 opposed and 1 abstention (Von Dassel).

IV. Executive Reports (2:47)

a. FY 23 Operating Budget (2:55)

Chief Spera stated that traditionally there is a pause on reviewing budgets until Town Hall sends out the official audited version. The finalized numbers will be received sometime in August.

Chief Spera stated that he is hopeful that the Department will end in the black, but it might be close this year.

Chief Spera stated that he will send out an email to the Commission when he has the unofficial numbers.

b. FY 24 Budget Process (3:37)

July 1st starts the new fiscal year. Chief Spera stated that the Department is busy adjusting salary numbers per the contracts and other new fiscal year tasks. The budget is frozen July 1st at midnight.

c. Off Budget Accounts (4:00)

Chief Spera stated that the Off Budget accounts will be seen in August as the full audited version will be available.

Chief Spera stated that only real off budget account that is in flux is the Driver's Safety, as checks are coming in fast for the golf cart program.

d. Personnel Matters (5:12)

Chief Spera stated that he has some disappointing news. The Commission recently hired Paul Maturo to be Goodwin School Resource Officer. He worked three days at Goodwin School and decided that the job was not for him. He did not want to stay at the school for 6 hours without taking a break, so he submitted his resignation. That position is currently open. He stated that he will talk more about this in Executive Session with the Commission.

Chief Spera stated that this summer's fundraising will be "Shorts for Survival." The money raised will be donated to the Connecticut Cancer Foundation which is right here in Old Saybrook.

Chief Spera stated that about 95% of staff have committed to the fundraiser and already handed in their donations. The Department asks each member to donate \$200 and the union matches that.

Chief Spera stated that the Department will be doing fundraiser events this summer and that he will let the Commission know when and what they will be.

Chief Spera stated that he wanted to comment on Celebrate Saybrook. He stated that it was a fantastic day and that they estimate about 20,000-25,000 people attended. Chief Spera stated that he worked with a fantastic planning team, headed by First Selectman Fortuna. Chief Spera stated that a lot of things had to happen and a lot of people had to give up their Sunday to work and make the event successful.

Commissioner Manning stated that it was a good event and that she drove down Main Street the morning after and couldn't believe how clean it was.

Chief Spera thanked everyone who worked and helped as it took a lot of people to make the event successful.

Chief Spera stated that Patrolman Egan is now on his own working the road.

Chief Spera stated that Patrolman Tourjee is off the road and on modified duty until she has her baby.

Chief Spera stated that the two recruits will be graduating from the academy in mid-July. They will start field training immediately after graduating.

e. Professional Development Update (14:52)

Chief Spera stated that Patrolmen Simpson and Tourjee and Sergeant Hardy are now car seat certified technicians. He stated that the Department can do car seat clinics this summer. He stated that Sgt. Walsh was the only one who was car seat certified for years, so it's nice to have a team now.

f. Operation Safe Saybrook (15:46)

Chief Spera stated that Operation Safe Saybrook was a tremendous success and that he appreciated Selectman Pugliese, as he was there the whole day.

Chief Spera stated that the event attracted residents who had unwanted firearms in their homes. He stated that the event was not designed for AR-15's to come off the streets.

Chief Spera stated that gun locks were handed out at Operation Safe Saybrook and at Celebrate Saybrook, too.

g. Activity Report (18:06)

Chief Spera stated that the activity report was included in the packet. He stated that the last month was extremely busy with a lot of complex cases.

V. Discussion and Action to Approve a new "Responsibilities of Commissioners" By-Law as amended on May 22, 2023. (19:45)

There was no motion made.

VI. Discussion and Action to Repeal the "Investigation of Personnel-Related Matters" By-Law. (20:07)

There was no motion made.

VII. Discussion and Possible Action Concerning a new "Responsibilities of Commissioners" By-Law. (20:24)

Chairman Wilcox presented his revised version of the "Responsibilities of Commissioners" By-Law to the Commission. The draft has been attached to the minutes.

Chairman Wilcox walked the Commission through his proposal versus the previous version and gave his reasoning for his changes.

Chairman Wilcox stated that his proposal should have no further discussion tonight. He stated that he would like to put discussion off till the next meeting after everyone has had a chance to look at it.

Chairman Wilcox made a motion to table agenda item # VII. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Shippee asked if this was the same by-law that Chairman Wilcox, Secretary Notar-Francesco and Commissioner Maselli worked on.

Chairman Wilcox said yes.

Chairman Wilcox passed around his proposed version to the Commission.

Chief Spera asked what the colors meant.

Chairman Wilcox stated that the yellow is adding and green is deleting.

Commissioner Manning asked if the Commission tables tonight the next meeting will then be the first "read" meeting.

Chairman Wilcox stated that is correct.

Chief Spera stated that at the last meeting the Commission spent 45 minutes collaborating and by the end everyone agreed on the draft. Now one person doesn't agree and the Commission is back to square one.

Chief Spera stated that his concern is that a Commissioner one day will misstep and a bad cop will get his/her job back.

Secretary Notar-Francesco stated that the next time around hopefully all 7 Commissioners will be here so that this matter can be put to rest. She stated that she was troubled by language since the last meeting and that is the only reason why she did not make a motion to approve tonight. She stated that, just by quick review Chairman Wilcox's proposal tonight, she doesn't think that version will fly either, but agrees with tabling.

The motion to table passed with a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

VIII. Correspondence (41:37)

Chairman Wilcox stated that correspondence was distributed.

Secretary Notar-Francesco stated that at some point the Commission needs to talk about the Comments items for the minutes, which came up in this correspondence.

Chief Spera stated that the traffic matter at Main and Maple is with the First Selectman. He stated that it is an engineering issue and, as far as he knows, the First Selectman has tasked it to the engineer.

Chief Spera stated that the minutes are how the clerk views the meeting and they are not a transcript. He stated that everything is on video and everything is now timestamped at the request of the Commission. If someone from the public is interested in hearing what someone says, they can go to that point and watch it.

Chief Spera also added that Tom Hennick from the Freedom of Information Commission has reviewed the minutes over the year and told the Commission Clerk to not write so much detail. Minutes have to be times, motions, who voted and how they voted.

Vice Chairman Shippee stated that Commission members can tell members of the public to go to the exact time in the minutes to hear the public comments within the video.

IX. Comments from the Public (47:29)

Keith Margotta commented.

X. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Matters Related to Collective Bargaining (48:18)

Secretary Notar-Francesco made a motion to enter into Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Matters Related to Collective Bargaining, Employment of the Chief of Police and Legal Strategy Concerning Pending Litigation, inviting Chief Spera to join. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion to enter into Executive Session passed with a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

The Commission entered into Executive Session at 7:19 PM.

XI. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into Executive Session for the Purposes of Discussing the Employment of the Chief of Police (48:18)

XII. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into Executive Session for the Purposes of Discussing the Legal Strategy Concerning Pending Litigation (48:18)

XIII. Discussion and Possible Action to Approve a Communication to the Chief of Police (49:10)

The Commission exited Executive Session and resumed public session at 8:34.

Chairman Wilcox stated that after extensive collaboration between Chief Spera and the Commissioners they have arrived at a communications from the Chair of the Commission to Chief Spera that would replace the *Citizen Complaint By-Law*.

Secretary Notar-Francesco made a motion to authorize Chairman Wilcox to sign the correspondence to the Chief of Police. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

XIV. Comments from the Chief of Police (49:55)

There were no comments from the Chief.

XV. Comments from Police Commissioners (50:05)

Commissioner Von Dassel commented.

XVI. Adjournment (50:30)

Secretary-Notar Francesco made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed with a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

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