

**Old Saybrook Police Commission**  
Special Meeting  
October 30, 2023  
MINUTES

A special hybrid meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, October 30, 2023. The meeting was recorded and can be viewed in its entirety at <https://youtu.be/qx3wBP01Qvw>

**Present:** Chairman Wilcox, Vice Chairman Shippee, Secretary Notar-Francesco, Commissioners Manning, and Calle. First Selectman Fortuna was present from the Board of Selectmen.

**Absent:** Commissioners Von Dassel & Maselli

**I. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance (0:22)**

Chairman Wilcox called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM for the Police Commission and led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Comments from the Public (0:44)**

There were no comments from the public.

**III. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Recommendation by the Board of Selectmen at its Special Meeting on October 24, 2023. (1:03)**

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he and the Board of Selectmen have thought long and hard about this since receiving the July 13<sup>th</sup> letter from Chief Spera. He stated that he and the Chief have negotiated side by side for many years. He stated that he believes that this is the best path forward.

First Selectman Fortuna explained how he found the three consultants. He stated that Commissioner Calle sent him the Wethersfield one, so he reached out to Lisa Barao. CLA is doing the study in the Town Hall right now, and the last one is PERF who was recommended by the town of Clinton. He stated that the Town is looking at increasing the benefits. He also added that the Police Officers contract has a clause for a committee to negotiate increased retirement benefits, and they have never requested it.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he is not insulted by the Chief's letter. Some of the benefits and/or pay may have to be increased.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he brought this to the Board of Selectmen and they made the endorsement. He stated that he then made this recommendation to this Commission. First Selectman Fortuna stated that, if the Police Commission decided to go with a different consultant, he is ok with that. First Selectman Fortuna stated that he based his recommendation upon personal experience.

Chairman Wilcox stated that there are three proposals. One is not very experienced regarding police departments, so he would not recommend that one. One is very extensive, but very expensive. The other is mid-range. He stated that either of the latter two would be acceptable. Personally he prefers the robust proposal, even with the greater cost. He said, however, that the mid-range proposal is

subject to upward adjustments. Chairman Wilcox stated that the PERF proposal gives a top-to-bottom review of the Department. Chairman Wilcox read from the PERF proposal highlighting what they will do.

Secretary Notar-Francesco stated that she feels the Police Department is a department of people, so any study must be guided by objectivity and sensitivity. She believes that PERF is the broader consulting team with services that will have a complete range and give the community what they need in terms of information. She stated that she likes that PERF will assess areas of improvement and recognize superior areas.

Vice Chairman Shippee agrees with what the Chairman and Secretary Notar-Francesco stated.

Commissioner Manning stated that she liked the PERF and CLA ones. Either will be good, she feels. She stated that she likes the PERF proposal as it speaks about police communications and dispatch functions. She also stated that it would be better to do PERF because they will speak with a wide range of people.

Commissioner Calle stated that she found the CLA proposal concerning. She stated that the three people who will do the study are an investigator who does a lot of testimonies, a human resources person, and a Chief of Police who had a focus on technology. She stated that if the Town is spending the money, we should get the most bang for our buck. Commissioner Calle stated that she wanted to eliminate all possible threats to the credibility of the study. She stated that she would like to have the most respected deep dive into OSPD.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he had some sticker shock with PERF and he was thinking that the work could get done for a more modest price.

**Vice Chairman Shippee made a motion to recommend the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to the Board of Selectmen as the chosen consultant. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.**

#### **IV. Comments from the Public (26:11)**

Brad Thorpe commented.

Mike Looney commented.

James Shake commented.

Tom Stevenson commented.

James Shake commented.

#### **V. Comments from the Chief of Police (34:26)**

The Chief of Police was not present at the meeting.

#### **VI. Comments from Police Commissioners (34:46)**

Chairman Wilcox commented.

First Selectman Fortuna commented.

Secretary Notar-Francesco commented.

Commissioner Manning commented.

**VII. Adjournment (38:39)**

**Chairman Wilcox made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Calle seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed with a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

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