

## **Old Saybrook Police Commission**

Special Meeting

August 3, 2020

MINUTES

A special meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Commission was held on Monday, August 3, 2020 via ZOOM. The meeting was recorded.

**Present:** Chairman Keeney, Vice Chairman Reid, Secretary Maselli, Commissioners Von Dassel, Quish, Shippee and Wilcox. Chief Spera and Captain DePerry was present from the Department of Police Services.

### **I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Keeney called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He then led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Keeney welcomed Alfred Wilcox to the Commission.

Chairman Keeney stated that if there were no objections from the Commission he would move agenda item #4 to after #5.

### **II. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into an Anticipated Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Documents Privileged to the Attorney Client Relationship.**

Vice Chairman Reid made a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing documents privileged to the attorney client relationship inviting Chief Spera, Captain DePerry, Attorney Marshall Segar, Attorney Pat McHale, Attorney Cronin, First Selectman Fortuna, First Selectmen Geigerich and Pugliese, Finance Director Lee Ann Palladino along with Board of Finance chair David LaMay.

Commissioner Quish seconded the motion. The motion to enter into executive session passed with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 against and 0 abstaining.

The Commission entered Executive Session at 7:03PM.

### **III. Presentation, Discussion, and Possible Action Concerning the Department's Fleet.**

Chief Spera spoke about the 2021 Fleet Replacement Program stating that he has a couple of goals regarding the program this year. He is looking to purchase police vehicles that are better suited for required police vehicle equipment, the demands of police work, and most importantly the safety of our dedicated Police Officers, soften the appearance of an Old Saybrook Police Vehicle, eliminate the perception of a "luxury" vehicle assigned to the Chief of Police and reduce the overall fleet by one vehicle all while maintaining the current fleet replacement philosophy which has yielded fiscal and operational success over the past eight (8) years.

He stated that the vehicles are a Law Enforcement Professional's Office and as First Responders they are carrying a lot of equipment at all times.

He stated currently the Department maintains 23 vehicles on a \$15,000 annual budget. The \$15,000 is manageable as most of the vehicles are under warranty.

He stated that four years ago when the Police Department looked to “flip the fleet” they looked at the Chevrolet Tahoe but found it to be about \$10,000 difference between that and the Ford and no aftermarket equipment could be reused that was already owned by the Town.

This year the comparison was much closer in price with the base model for Ford starting at 42,039.96 and the Chevrolet Tahoe is 41,666 and both companies have changed the design of the vehicles meaning any equipment such as prisoner compartments, radio consoles and storage compartments cannot be used. While looking at the different equipment it was found that it was all very comparatively priced.

Chief Spera also stated that looking at another vehicle brand has nothing to do with Saybrook Ford and their customer service. They have been outstanding the entire time, working with the Department every chance they get and always going over and above to help the Department.

Chief Spera asked staff what they would prefer and why and they responded with the Chevy Tahoe. They stated the lack of electrical power and lack of driver compartment and cargo space in the Ford was an issue. The Ford has one (80 amp) battery while the Chevrolet Tahoe has two (95 amp) batteries. Ford offers a 220 amp alternator while Chevrolet provides a 250 amp alternator.

The Ford has a V6 engine while the Chevrolet Tahoe has a V8 engine. Both companies have yet to release miles per gallon for their 2021 models but when comparing data used for the 2020 models Ford's V6 engine has a better miles per gallon rate than the Chevrolet V8.

The Ford offers 52 cubic feet of cargo storage space while the Chevrolet offers 70 cubic feet. The Chevy also offers more head, shoulder, hip and leg room for the Police Officer operating the vehicle. The Chevrolet also offers more visibility for the driver to view their surrounding and has more ground clearance than the Ford.

To soften the appearance Chief Spera stated that the new vehicles will not have push bumpers and will possess a blue and white color scheme instead of the current black and white.

The Chief also stated that his proposed new vehicle will not be a luxury vehicle as historically assigned but a regular patrol vehicle, the only difference between his and the rest of the fleet will be carpet flooring and a regular backseat in his. He is also looking to reduce the overall fleet by one vehicle. The vehicle he is looking to eliminate is an unmarked sedan that was once assigned to a Detective Sergeant.

Chief Spera discussed vehicle costs by breaking it down in to 10 different types of expenditures.

1. Base Vehicle Cost
2. Exterior Graphics
3. Emergency Warning System
4. Storage Compartment
5. Prisoner Transport System
6. In Vehicle Camera System
7. Component Console

8. Police Vehicle Components (various connectors, brackets, cables, etc.)
9. Police Vehicle Equipment
  - a. Additional K9 Vehicle Equipment
10. Component Installation

He also added that Whelen Engineering has pledged to continue its long standing relationship with the Department by providing Emergency Warning System Equipment at no charge in exchange for the ability to monitor the performance of the products.

He stated that the in vehicle camera systems will be funded from monies received from the State of Connecticut that reside in the Town's Capital Non Reoccurring Account (\$56,000).

The Department will be reusing mobile computers and all law enforcement equipment.

All costs associated with the purchase and installation of specific K-9 equipment will be funded through already established donations.

Chief Spera said that for the trade in the Department will be looking into the best ways to get the most money back.

Finance Director Palladino spoke about the proposal stating that she agrees with the strategy. She stated that the interest rates are extremely low right now (1.27%) and that the Town will be paying \$15,000 to borrow 495,000.00 to finance this proposal.

First Selectman Fortuna also stated that he supports the proposal and that it is good because it keeps the budget flat and level funded.

Commissioner Shippee asked if CALEA requires anything specific in the vehicles.

Chief Spera stated that was a good question but not just the Police package is required.

**Commissioner Quish made a motion for the Police Commission to endorse the finance purchase of ten (10) Chevrolet Tahoe Police package vehicle within FY 21. Secretary Maselli seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstaining.**

**Commissioner Quish made a motion to recommend to the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectman to approve the finance purchase of ten (10) Chevrolet Tahoe Police Package Vehicles to be funded in a manner consistent with the 2013 and 2017 Fleet Programs including:**

- A. The use of the Capital nonrecurring account for in vehicle camera systems (\$56,000)**
- B. Establishing a flat capital expenditure for future fiscal years**
- C. Use of the off budget Outside Services Account to offset tax payer capital costs**
- D. Establish a project contingency of no more than 5% of total project costs (perhaps derived from Town funds or if financed any uncommitted monies at the end of the projects could be used to offset the loan principal.**

**Vice Chairman Reid seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstaining.**

#### **IV. Personnel Update**

Chief Spera spoke about the ceremony talking about what a great event it was and how so much people were pleased to attend it and be able to view it.

He spoke about how Detective First Class Perrotti has chosen to retire and accept the Goodwin Elementary School Resource Officer position. He spoke about the importance of that position and how Detective First Class Perrotti will excel in that position.

He stated that Patrolman Harris has officially completed Field Training and is a full asset to the Department now.

He stated that there has been no more additional Sergeant applications.

He received 2 Detective applications and 3 Master Sergeant applications.

He stated the Department has been put on a 3 hour call in notice due to the impending storm.

#### **V. Discussion and Possible Action to Enter into an Anticipated Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Documents Privileged to the Attorney Client Relationship**

Vice Chairman Reid made a motion to enter into executive session inviting Attorney Pat McHale and Chief Spera to join. Secretary Maselli seconded the motion. The motion to enter into Executive Session passed with a vote of 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstaining.

**The Commission entered Executive Session at 8:55PM.**

**The Commission exited Executive Session at 9:52PM.**

#### **VI. Comments from the Chief of Police**

He advised the Commission about the how the Town will now be in charge of helping feed people in need, stating that they have partnered with local restaurants to help.

He spoke about Senator Chris Murphy's recent comments about taking away SRO's from schools. He stated that while some other town's might push the enforcement in the schools, Old Saybrook's philosophy is never enforcement based and that the SRO's play such an important part in our schools.

#### **VII. Comments from Commissioners**

Secretary Maselli stated that since he works in the school he can attest that there is a big difference between a School Resource Office vs a Cop in the School.

**VIII. Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

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