

SUFFIELD POLICE COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING, JULY 15, 2015
AMENDED August 26, 2015, See **

**The regular meeting of the Suffield Police Commission was held on July 15, 2015, at Suffield High School, 1060 Sheldon Street, West Suffield CT.

Present: Chairman-Kevin Armata, Vice Chairman-Kenneth Pascoe.

Commissioners: Matt Joyal, Jeff Davis, and Jack Quinn, and Clerk-Linda Stevenson

Also Present: Chief Anthony Riello, and Captain Huntley

Absent: Recording Secretary Karen Doyon

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

A motion was made and seconded to call the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, a silent roll was taken.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Clerk Stevenson made the motion to go into executive session to discuss litigations at 6:02 pm, seconded by Vice Chairman Pascoe. Invited into the executive session were; Chief Riello, Town Attorney Joseph Flynn, Attorney David Monasterski, First Selectman Ed McAnaney, Selectmen: Joanne Sullivan, Tim Reynolds, Ed Basile and Brian Fitzgerald. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

The Commission ended the executive session at 7:16 pm, with no votes taken.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Ginny Bromage of 576 North Main Street had questions regarding retired Chief Manzi's retirement package and wanted clarification on additional payments.
- Jackie McMahon of 50 Diane Lane stated that the retired Chief Manzi's retirement does not solve all the problems, and still have concerns with the "No Confidence" vote in a Union letter submitted at the June 17, 2015 meeting. Spoke of her concerns on how the investigation was handled as a whole, and continues to support an external investigation.
- Amy Reay of Bridge Street welcomed Chief Riello then spoke on her concerns regarding inaccuracies in meeting minutes, communications with the SVAA and the Fire Department. Wants to see more Dispatch training. Has no trust in Chairman Kevin Armata.
- Nancy Gegesky of 171 Jackson Drive welcomed Chief Riello then spoke on her hope to re-establish trust with the Suffield Police officers. She stated that the officers need good leadership and the people in charge have failed. She said that the Commission lacks transparency, and wanted to know where the motion made by Linda Stevenson last month's meeting stands.
- Ally Kuras of 1628 Ratley Road would like to discuss the findings of the internal investigations and continues to support an external investigation. She stated that it is the commission's job to look out for the officers.

- Melissa Mack of 321 North Main Street questioned if any "ethics" training have been provided to the Commission, and asked if the Commission has ever adopted a "whistleblower" policy [so officers can report problems directly to the Commission].
- Gordon Stagg of 1575 North Stone Street stated that an independent third party investigation may not be necessary anymore. He thinks the Town needs to move forward and likes the Interim Chief. He cautioned the Commission that they should not want to go to court with the existing internal investigations.
- Julie Grano of Ratley Road stated that the Commission was supposed to meet in the ten days to discuss the investigations, and that the Union letter was never addressed. Ms. Grano asked repeatedly for the Commission to answer questions and stated that even though retired Chief Manzi is gone, the allegations still remain. She also asked that the Dispatch Department be "fixed".
- Shannon Watson of Griffin Road asked for better communication from the Commission during their meetings. She stated that the Commission can answer questions, but chooses not to, and reiterated that the communication has been horrible. She also asked the Commission to address the Union letter dated June 17, 2015.

Chairman Armata closed public comment at 7:41p.m.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

V. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Commissioner Quinn made the motion to accept the June 17, 2015 regular meeting minutes as submitted, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

Commissioner Quinn made the motion to accept the July 7, 2015 special meeting minutes as submitted, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

VI. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Budget: The Police Budget was highlighted as follows by Captain Huntley.

- The 2014/2015 budget is now complete, with a savings of \$25,000 on gasoline; purchase of vehicles, uniforms, two "Stalker" radar units, Glock duty pistols with rail units mounted, generator, portable lights, power-washer, and additional training for the officers. In addition, a grand was accepted to purchase a much needed Detective vehicle.
- Current budget: includes funding for the purchase of two additional SUV cruisers and one additional cruiser for community service and the School Resource Officer [SRO], two additional "Stalker" radar units.

Activity: None

Detective Report: Reviewed by the Commission with no questions.

K-9 Report: Reviewed by the Commission with no questions.

Commissioner Quinn made the motion to accept the department reports as presented and submitted, Clerk Stevenson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

VII. CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Riello introduced himself and stated that he is happy to be in Suffield. During his first week he has meet with a few Department employees as possible on a one-on-one basis; he stated he will meeting with all the employees of the Department to have a formal introduction on an individual basis.

He stated that he has had the opportunity to observe K-9 training by Officer Peter Osowiecki and K-9 "Z", and it proved to be an excellent demonstration. He reported meeting some residents when visiting the Suffield Senior Center during his first week.

He sadly commented that there is no strategic plan in place, but that he plans to have the Department create one, along with a mission statement and a code of values during an upcoming strategic planning conference. All of these he stated will not be implemented from him. He plans on bringing in a consultant to help with this in August. The Chief stated that the wants to examine the organizational structure of the Department, as well as the physical plant and make any changes needed. Chief Riello said his door is always open to the public, and reiterated that good changes are coming.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Clerk Stevenson asked for an update on the new police officer. With that, Chairman Armata ******stated that with the on-boarding process of the new of **Chief**, two new Committees have been formed; one Dispatch Committee [being Vice Chairman Pascoe and Commissioner Quinn]. The second Committee "Manpower" will be head-up by Commissioner Davis.

Chairman Armata asked Attorney Joseph Flynn if he wanted to comment at this time. Attorney Flynn stated he had no comment at this time.

Chairman Armata asked Commissioner Joyal to comment on the statues of submitting the internal investigations to a third party for review. Commissioner Joyal stated that because Chief Riello will be reviewing the investigations the need to go to an outside source is not necessary. He asked that a motion be made to remove Novembers motion, "*Chairman Armata motioned that the Chief complete his investigation within three weeks, upon completion formally request from the Board of Selectman for a private third party review of the investigation...*" to have Chief Riello do the review. Commissioner Joyal made a motion, that the motion approved by the Commission at the November 2014 meeting, which called for a third party review of the internal investigations be removed, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

Chairman Armata made the motion to fund in the search for a Consultant for strategic planning within the Department to be completed within a three month period, Commissioner Quinn seconded. With no discussion, the motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

I. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Armata made a motion that at the next regular meeting, the selection process for a permanent Chief begin, to include a selection committee from the Commission, members of the Community and significant stakeholders. Discussion followed on time frame. Clerk Stevenson suggested having interim meetings between the regularly scheduled meetings. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion to have a selection process for a permanent Chief. Motion carried unanimously 6-0.

II. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Davis suggested a new procedure for emails sent to the Police Commission mailbox. [He noted that a resident felt the need to send an email three times since she did not receive a reply from the first two recipients.] He suggested that emails be automatically forwarded to all Commission members and that an auto reply be sent to the sender which says, *"Thank you for contacting the Suffield Police Commission. Public input is always welcome and appreciated. As with all written communications received, your email will be read aloud during the "Communications and Announcements" portion of the next regular meeting. Again, thank you for contacting the Suffield Police Commission". "This email is automatically generated...please do not reply"*.

In this way, Commissioner Davis stated, residents know that their email has been received and will be read at the next regular meeting and no Commission members feel the need to reply to an email on behalf of the Commission as a whole.

This suggestion was put to a vote as stated above by Commissioner Joyal, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

III. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the July 15, 2015 meeting at 8:13 pm.

Chairman Kevin Armata