

**SUFFIELD POLICE COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING, OCTOBER 21, 2015**

The regular meeting of the Suffield Police Commission was held on October 21, 2015, at Police Headquarters, 911 Mountain Road, Suffield CT.,

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

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

**Also Present:** Chief Anthony Riello, and Recording Secretary Karen Doyon

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Armada called the October 21st meeting to order at 7:00 pm, and asked the Recording Secretary to take a silent roll.

**II. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Clerk Stevenson read into the minute's thank you letters as follows:

- Thank you letter from Chief of Police of Westfield Massachusetts dated October 16, 2015 to Chief Riello, in appreciation to K9 Officer Osowiecki for his knowledge and experience during the recent K9 Drug School education class.
- Thank you letter from Officer Christopher Coach of the Westfield Police Department, dated October 17, 2015 to Chief Riello, in appreciation to K9 Officer Osowiecki for taking the time to teach, test, and certify at their K9 Drug School event.

**III. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Chairman Armata asked if there were any changes.

**Regular meeting of August 26, 2015.** *During the September 23rd meeting, Clerk Stevenson requested that verbiage be added to Chief Riello's comment from the August 26, 2015 meeting under Chief's reports [page 3], regarding the review of the internal affairs and the investigation. Page 3 of the August 26, 2015 minutes were changed to reflect Chief Riello's statement and were submitted for approval. Commissioner Quinn made the motion to approve the changes made to the August 26, 2015 minutes to reflect Chief Riello's statement, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Special meeting minutes of September 4, 2015.** Commissioner Quinn made the motion to accept the September 4th special minutes as presented, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously.

**Special meeting minutes of October 2, 2015.** Commissioner Quinn made the motion to accept the October 2nd special minutes as presented, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously.

**IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Budget:** Chief Riello requested that the budget report roll into the Chief's report when presented. The Chair approved.

**Detective Report:** Detective Fuller presented his report dated October 21, 2015.

**School Resource Officer:** Officer Kieselback presented his report dated October 20, 2015.  
**Operations Report:** Lieutenant Brown presented his report dated October 21, 2015.

After which Commissioner Joyal asked about rifle upgrades, status of Tasers [age], status of body armor [age], radio [digital vs. analog] update, and fleet update. Lieutenant Brown responded.

- Rifle: Lieutenant Brown reported that Sergeant Nelson is working on prices for new rifles, locking systems, and accessories. The current comp price is \$1,900.00. The Department is currently under the Government 1033 program.
- Tasers: The Department purchased four new Tasers [to add to the four old Tasers] and eight new holsters for the Tasers. However the new holsters are not compatible with the old Tasers. Lt. Brown reported that the old Tasers had a trade in program, but was never used under the old administration.
- Vests: Commissioner Joyal asked about the expiration date of the bullet proof vests. Lt. Brown reported that the vests are replaced every five years, under the collective bargaining agreement. The Department participates in the Bullet Proof Vest Partnership [federal grant] which gives us fifty percent reimbursement on any vests that are purchased. Sergeant Nelson currently runs the program, and has been keeping the vest up to date.
- Communications: Digital versus analog. Lt. Brown stated that it is still being remediated; the SVAA and the Fire Department is in the process of switching over to digital radios, and are currently working on the Highway Departments communications system. This change will allow for the "dead spots" to dissipate.
- Fleet Update: Lt. Brown stated that he could give a report, but the Commission asked that a report from the fleet manager Sergeant Burrell be made available at the next regular meeting.

**K-9 Report:** K-9 Officer Osowiecki has been in training; therefore no report was submitted for this month.

*[Department reports are available upon request at fifty cents per page.]*

Commissioner Quinn made the motion to accept the reports as submitted, Clerk Stevenson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## V. CHIEF'S REPORT AND UPDATE ON CHIEFS SELECTION

**Budget Report:** Chief Riello's budget report reflects the current fiscal years [f/y] budget [and as a side note, he is in the beginning stages of the 2017 budget].

After careful review of the previous 2014/2015 f/y budget, it was revealed that [unused] money was returned to the Town which should have been expended [training, uniforms, equipment...]. This ultimately resulted in a cut in the 2015/2016 f/y budget. Chief Riello stated that the Department is now working on a "wing and a prayer" while [now] properly training, and purchasing equipment/supplies and uniforms needed for Officers and Dispatchers.

The budget he stated should be a plan that [must] reflect what you are trying to accomplish as a Department, based on goals and programs needed to better serve the Community. Chief Riello stated that there is flexibility to move money's around between different line items; this ability will help provide the minimum needed to get the job done.

Chief Riello said that he and Lieutenant Brown have been working on [better understanding] the overtime line item; and reported having difficulties working with the Town payroll software. A

complete understanding is expected before the next Commission meeting with the help from Finance Director Deborah Cerrato.

**Accolades:** Chief Riello gave accolades to firearms instructors; Sergeant Shawn Nelson and Officer Mark Sargent on their arms training professionalism.

**Update on Captain Huntley:** Captain Huntley met with Chief Riello several weeks ago and announced that he will be retiring on November 2, 2015. Captain Huntley will be using up his accrued time until his retirement. Chief wished the Captain well on his retirement. The position held by the Captain will not be filled immediately, to allow the incoming Chief to fill if he chooses to do so.

**Chief's Search:** The Commission will comment.

**Meeting with Enfield Chief of Police:** While meeting with Chief Sferrazza, other Police Chiefs from surrounding Towns were in attendance to discuss putting together a local regional drug task force to deal with the growing use of heroin that is plaguing all communities. Although personnel may be an issue Chief Riello is looking for the Commission's support in continuing open communications, and possibly provide some part-time efforts if a task force is established.

**Congratulations to Sergeant Burrell:** Chief Riello congratulated Sergeant Ryan Burrell for his most recent appointment to serve as Commander for the Regional Accident Reconstruction Team. With Sergeant Burrell's high qualifications, the Department is proud that he was selected by the team to lead them. Congratulations to Sergeant Burrell.

**Traffic/Speed Signs:** Chief Riello called on Officer Sargent to report.

Officer Sargent reported that he is in the process of working with the State Traffic Authority to restore speed limit signs according to the State, and to add limits to problem roads without. This is based on the number of fatalities since the spring of 2014, and due to increase traffic enforcement which prompted added policies to implement.

Officer Sargent reported that after researching and talking with the State Traffic Authority it came to light that 67 streets do not have posted speed limits [which may or may not be an issue], and they uncovered a number of speed limit signs that are incorrectly posted. Officer Sargent suggested a Town Ordinance to allow signs to be posted [coming in and out of Town], stating "*Unless otherwise posted the speed limit is [insert miles] miles an hour*". An ordinance would be a more cost effective and more doable process.

Officer Sargent reported that the State Department of Transportation is now working on fixing the limits on State roads. The local traffic authority [Police Commission] could make recommendations if they deem it necessary. Discussion followed. Commissioner Joyal made a recommendation that this information be posted in the Suffield Observer, or the Police Facebook page.

Commissioner Joyal thanked Chief Riello for making additional training happen for the Police Officers.

Based on the Strategic Planning event in September, Joyal asked if there are improvements in moral, and is the Department moving forward. Chief Riello responded.

With nothing further Commissioner Quinn made the motion to accept the Chiefs report as submitted, seconded by Clerk Stevenson. Motion carried unanimously.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

Commissioner Quinn a member of the Selection Committee [for the new Chief] gave an update as follows:

- The Committee has meet with the Consultant,
- Deadline has passed to receive applications [nineteen applications received].
- In the process of going over the applications,
- Went over the function of the Committee:
  - They assist the Consultant appointed by the Commission
  - Include the Towns input within the process
  - In no way make the ultimate decision to choose the next Chief.

Chairman Armata added additional comments as follows with regards to the Chief selection:

- The first committee is the screening committee.
  - The screening committee will develop a number of questions to give to the candidates.
  - The screening committee will give the Commission their recommendation [up to three or more candidate].
  - Applicants will go to assessment center [the candidates go through live assessments].
  - Applicants will go to mini assessment panels [to include sergeant, fire chief, etc...].
  - After which the Commission will make the final decision.
- Chief Riello stated that the applicant's names will become public when there are three candidates remaining.

Clerk Stevenson interjected with information involving the Chief hiring process. Stevenson stated that she spoke to Thomas Hennick, Public Education Officer for the Freedom of Information Commission in regards to the "Screening Committee." Mr. Hennick informed Clerk Stevenson that the Screening Committee should be recognized as "The Executive Level Search Committee" under the FOI laws. Mr. Hennick advised the Police Commission to vote on changing the name. [Reference Section 1-213 [item 2, b], and Section 1-200 [item 2] of the Freedom of Information Law].

Clerk Stevenson made the motion to call the [now] Screening Committee, the Executive Level Search Committee in regards to the FOI Law, Vice Chairman Pascoe seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS - None**

## **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Darlene Burrell Registrar of Voters, thanked: Lieutenant Brown, Officer Kieselback and Officer Devin for supervising the safety of students and voters during the referendum.
- Jackie [inaudible] of Diane Lane commented on possible speed limits and/or speed bumps on Diane Lane.
- Rick Stromoski of North Main Street asked what the response time was when a parent came into the school and caused a lock-down. Officer Kieselback stated 30 second's.
- Nancy Gegesky of 171 Jackson Drive shared her concerns regarding the lack of funding in this years budget, and the lack of initiative for training under the prior administration.
- Darlene Burrell of 374 Halladay Drive thanked Matt Joyal for his years of service, and commitment to the Suffield Police Commission, and wished him well.
- Amy Raye Suffield resident spoke on an incident that happened to her while she was outside [house sitting] and unable to call 911 because of her hearing impairment. She

asked if the Police Department could upgrade to the New Generation 911-for direct text. Lieutenant Brown responded that there is an upgrade in place which will allow your call to be texted to the 911 operator.

- Shannon Adams of Griffin Road spoke in regards to the speed limit changes, and the dangerous turns and grade on Copper Hill Road [may be an issue during the winter time]. Officer Sargent responded.

*Officer Sargent reported that there is now a form available in the Dispatch Center for people to report traffic matters.*

Chief Riello also commented that he is available to talk to when traffic problems arise.

- Thomas Frenaye Warnertown Road was concerned that the Selectman's office and the Chief are not in communication. This is in regards to Captain Huntley's retirement.

Chairman Armata publicly thanked Commissioner Joyal for all he had done while serving as Police Commissioner. Commissioner Joyal thanked the town-folks for their support over the past eight years. He stated that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve, and then asked that the people embrace change.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the October 21, 2015 meeting at 8:30 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

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Chairman Kevin Armata