

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

**Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 7:00p.m.
Town Hall Annex
66 Prospect Street**

Anyone requiring special accommodations due to disability is asked to contact Headquarters at 438-6531 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Commissioners Present: John Frey, Chairman
Marianne Coffin
Sharon Dornfeld
Ralph Money

Present by Phone: Issy Caporale, Secretary

Also Present: Chief Jeff Kreitz
Major Shawn Platt

These minutes are an overview of the meeting; not a verbatim text.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Frey

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Frey requested a motion to accept the minutes of the October 12, 2023 Police Commission Meeting. Commissioner Money made a motion and Commissioner Dornfeld seconded the motion.

All in Favor

**Minutes of October 12, 2023 Police Commission Meeting
accepted as written.**

Chairman Frey requested a motion to accept the minutes of the October 24, 2023 Police Commission Special Meeting. Commissioner Money made a motion and Commissioner Caporale seconded the motion.

All in Favor

**Minutes of October 24, 2023 Police Commission Special Meeting
accepted as written.**

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. George Kain, who is a Ridgefield resident and past Police Commissioner for 24 years, presented a letter to the Police Commission conveying his disappointment that the Police Commission voted to allow the painting of a crosswalk in unauthorized colors. He stated that this goes against the rules of the latest version of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Kain stated that even though the guidelines in the MUTCD are not laws, they are to be followed just like other commissions and boards follow the guidelines set forth for them. Kain stated that the Police Commission should have followed the rules and encouraged them to change their vote before they are inundated with new crosswalk requests or a lawsuit because the guidelines were not followed.

B. Andrea Beebe, of Main Street Ridgefield, presented to the Police Commission her concern about some of the roadway markings on Main Street. Beebe stated that motorists park in a non-designated parking spot blocking the alleyway near 384 Main Street. Chief Kreitz stated that he would look into the markings and follow-up.

Beebe stated that another concern was motorists parking in handicap parking spots without displaying the appropriate placard. She stated that often times motorists will also park on the striped lines next to the spot. Beebe requested that we put out a public message regarding handicap parking laws. Chief Kreitz stated that the department would put out an awareness message regarding the law. Chief Kreitz also stated that he would speak with Captain Fowler, the Uniform Division Commander, to make him aware of violations. Commissioner Dornfeld stated that the Parking Authority also enforces these violations.

Beebe also requested that the commission look into block the box at the intersection of Copps Hill Plaza and Danbury Rd. as well as Main St. and Catoonah Street. Chief Kreitz stated that the two traffic control signals on Danbury Road at Copps Hill Road and at Copps Hill Plaza do not communicate with each other. He stated that the plaza light is outdated and until that gets updated it will continue to be a problem. He stated that he is willing to look into the block the box.

C. Two residents from Main Street, John Loehr and Dan Tewes asked what the next steps were for the installation of speed cameras on

Main Street. Members of the commission spoke that they had just attended a training through Connecticut's T2 Center at UCONN regarding this matter. At this time, we are awaiting the guidelines for installation which are to be released by the State in January. These guidelines will state the installation parameters and whether or not the Main Street area will qualify for the installation.

- D.** Chris Murray, a member of the Board of Selectmen, reiterated what George Kain said about not changing the colors of the crosswalk. He feels that public safety is at risk, that he is exclusively for law and order and that the commission should be appointed not elected.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Detective Division Commander Report to Police Commission

Captain Jeff Smith, Detective Division Commander, gave an overall view of the Detective Division and what the detectives responsibilities are including fraud, stolen cars, computer investigations, Juvenile cases, fatal and serious accidents, larcenies, robberies, pistol permits and School Resource Officers (SRO's) to name a few. He stated there is a 95% success rate with the Juvenile Review Board, that all of the stolen vehicles have been recovered, that there have been 4 burglaries which is up 1 from last year. Jeff Ladue has joined the Detective Bureau and is adapting very well. Capt. Smith praised the detectives including Victoria Ryan, Dave DuBord and Tom Dardis for the thorough job they do and that it is an honor and a privilege to work with them. Commissioner Money stated that the Police Commission appreciates all the work the Detective Division does. Chief Kreitz thanked Capt. Smith and the detectives for a job well done.

B. Officers Survey

Chief Kreitz went over the survey results with the Police Commissioners and answered any questions they had. Commissioner Coffin requested that the commission see a sample of the TDU pant requested by the officers. The commission had no issues with changing the cruiser graphics to black and white.-

C. State Project 0174-0463 – Road Sign Replacement on State Roads

Chief Kreitz stated that the CTDOT sent a project notification regarding the review/replacement of signs in town on State Routes 35, 102, and 822. Chief Kreitz stated that all of the existing signs on these routes will be evaluated to ensure their necessity, proper

placement, and compliance, with current standards.

4. COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE

A. Voicemail

Commissioner Caporale stated there were no voicemail received for the month of October.

B. Written Correspondence

Chief Kreitz stated he received one Highway Use Permit, which was signed by Chairman Frey.

Annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot 5K Race

11/23/23
Kids Race 0800
5K 0830

5. Old BUSINESS

A. Hiring Update

Major Platt stated we are moving forward in the hiring process as the background check of the three new candidates is almost complete.

B. Public Safety Building Update

Chief Kreitz stated he is waiting on hearing back from Jake Muller about the meeting with Kaestle Boos.

C. Automated Traffic Safety Devices

This was discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

6. CHIEF'S REPORT

A. Traffic/Sign Report

The following report was submitted by Sgt. Mark Caswell.

Re: November 2023 Sign Report

Sign Maintenance:

1. There was no sign maintenance performed this month.

Sign/Traffic Follow Up:

1. Joseph Sciarra requested that "No Thru Truck" signs be installed on Ramapoo Rd as it is used as a cut through to Copps Hill Plaza by large delivery trucks. I contacted Mr. Sciarra and explained that trucks do need access to the area for local deliveries. I did research the restrictions and suggested that a weight limit of 7 tons would help limit the larger trucks. The 7 Ton Limit signs need to be ordered and will be installed on Ramapoo Rd as well as Cains Hill Rd and Florida Hill Road to help with enforcement.
2. Kalyn Bard emailed and requested that "4 WAY" signs be added to the stop signs at Ridgebury Rd/George Washington Highway/Canterbury Ln intersection. I responded to Ms. Bard and explained they will be added the next time sign maintenance is performed and hopefully it will have the results she is looking for.
3. The ACT signage as well as the Restricted Access signage for the Police Department property has been ordered and will be installed when it is delivered.

Chairman Frey requested a motion to approve the ACT signage. Commissioner Dornfeld made the motion and Commissioner Money seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Chief Kreitz stated a mid-block crosswalk was suggested by a resident at the intersection of East Ridge Road and Market Street. Chief Kreitz stated Sgt. Mark Caswell will take a look at it and give his recommendation.

Chief Kreitz stated that John Rosa, a Lead Fire/Police Dispatcher for the Town of Ridgefield, retired after serving the Town of Ridgefield for 44 years. We wish him well in his future endeavors.

Officer Dan Gjodesen, a long time Police Officer with the Town of Ridgefield will be retiring the end of November.

B. Training/PR Report

Capt. Jeff Raines, Division of Professional Standards, submitted the following report for the month of November.

**Ridgefield Police Department
Training & Community Policing/Public Relations Report
October 2023**

Training Attended:

Oct. 4: Captain Raines and Lieutenant Knoche attended Caught on Camera at the Newtown Police Department.

- Oct. 4-6:** The entire department attended Taser/De-Escalation/OC/Baton recertification training at HQ. It was taught by Lieutenant Durling, Sergeant Geller and Sergeant Van Watum.
- Oct. 9-13:** Detective Ladue attended Death Investigations at the Fairfield Regional Fire Academy.
- Oct. 11:** Dispatcher Gallagher, Simon and Almonte attended Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) at HQ on 10/11, 10/18 and 11/01 at HQ. It was taught by Fire Chief Myers.
- Oct. 13:** Captain Smith attended Search & Seizure with the 379th Session at POSTC.
- Oct. 16:** Officer Seibert attended School Resource Officer training at the Newtown Police Department.
- Oct. 16-20:** Sergeant DiFalco attended Basic Instructor Development (MOI) at POSTC.
- Oct. 24:** The department's annual Inspection and New Laws class was held at HQ. The class was taught by State's Attorney David Applegate, who was assisted by State's Attorney Mary Caitlin from Danbury Superior Court.
- Oct. 26:** Officer Clark attended Traffic Direction with the 379th Session at POSTC.
- Oct. 30:** Captain Smith, Captain Raines and Detective DuBord attended Gun Laws & An Act Concerning Cannabis Regulations online.

P/R Events:

- Oct. 4:** Sergeant DiFalco and several other members of the department hosted Coffee-With-A-Cop at the Queen B Coffee Co.
- Oct. 16:** Captain Raines taught DUI to seven lateral transfers at the Danbury Police Department.
- Oct. 28:** Captain Raines completed the National Drug Take-Back day

at Bissell's Pharmacy from 10:00am to 2:00pm with assistance from the Ridgefield Prevention Council.

Oct. 31: Captain Raines, Officer Giglio, Officer F. Luis and Officer Mulvihill and Major Platt completed the 2023 Trunk or Treat at the Lounsbury House. The turnout was great, as usual.

Upcoming Events:

There are no upcoming events planned for the month of November.

A total of 27 Public Relations were performed during the month(s) to include:

- Officers met with the staff and children at the Shir Shalom Temple.
- Several car seat installations were performed.
- Officers met with local businesses and spoke with employees.
- Multiple Social Media posts were put out in regards to Police Activities & Safety Messages.

C. Department Stats

Chief Kreitz reported the total number of incidents for the month of October 2023 was 1,617. Capt. Smith highlighted some of the statistics in his Detective Division Report.

7. Executive Session

A. Discussion on Received Notice of Intention to Commence Suit

Commissioner Money made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:45pm. Commissioner Dornfeld seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously

The Police Commission returned to Public Session at 8:50pm. No votes were taken.

Commissioner Dornfeld made a motion to adjourn the Police Commission Meeting at 8:50pm. Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously,

Respectfully Submitted,

Issy Caporale
Police Commission Secretary