

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

**Thursday, December 14, 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
Issy Caporale, Secretary
Marianne Coffin
Sharon Dornfeld
Ralph Money

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 7:06pm by Chairman Frey

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Frey requested a motion to accept the minutes of the November 16, 2023 Police Commission Special Meeting. Commissioner Money made a motion and Commissioner Caporale seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Minutes of November 16, 2023 Police Commission Special Meeting accepted as written.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. New Business

A. Division of Professional Standards Annual Report

Captain Jeff Raines, Division of Professional Standards, gave an overall view of the extensive scope of responsibilities included in the division, including oversight of the mandatory and optional trainings available to the officers, the public information role,

accreditation, and reporting requirements. The DARE and SRO officers are also within the Division's purview. Captain Raines answered questions about the number of Field Training Officers and the progress of the most recently-hired officers.

B. Operating and Capital Budget Review and Approval

Operating Budget: Chief Kreitz reviewed the proposed budget for 2024-25. Commissioner Frey questioned the replacement schedule for police vehicles. The Chief responded that this budget includes a request to purchase one new marked cruiser and to lease two unmarked vehicles. The two current unmarked vehicles are coming to the end of their lease terms, and the department would also hope to purchase one of them. There is a total of 21 vehicles, including two new Chevy Tahoe's which were recently delivered. The officers are pleased with it.

There are minor increases in some of the operating budget lines, most of which are numbers provided by the Town. The salaries line reflects only a modest increase due to the recent retirements of some of the more senior officers. Our continued emphasis on training is reflected in the request for an increase for additional funds.

The requested operating budget is a 2% increase.

Capital budget: The big request is to completely replace all the Motorola radios currently in use. They are ten years old, have exceeded their anticipated life, and the software is no longer being supported. A couple of them are already unusable. Additionally, the current radios operate only on one band, and purchasing tri-band radios will allow our officers to communicate as well with the State Police and other departments in our mutual aid group as needed. We do not yet have a written proposal to follow up the numbers provided to purchase 50 radios, but expect one shortly.

Long range, the license plate readers request may not be necessary as we anticipate that the new dash cameras may come with them. Our current incident command vehicle is 28 years old and does not support all of our current needs.

Total requested budget is a 2% increase.

Commissioner Dornfeld moved to approve the Operating and Capital Budgets as discussed. Commissioner Caporale seconded the

motion.

The motion carried unanimously

C. Police Commission Election of Officers

Commissioner Caporale nominated Commissioner Dornfeld to serve as Chair. Commissioner Coffin seconded.

The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Coffin nominated Commissioner Caporale to serve as Secretary. Commissioner Money seconded.

The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Frey commented that serving as Chair has been a privilege and his already high opinion of the quality of our police department had only increased.

All commissioners commended Commissioner Frey for his fine work as chair and thanked him for his service in that role.

D. Annual PC Meeting Schedule Approval for Submission to Town Clerk

Commissioner Money has a conflict with four of the proposed meeting dates and asked if it might be possible to change them. Other possible dates were discussed but there seem to be various problems with most of them. Chief Kreitz and Commissioner Frey also pointed out that there is limited meeting room space in Town and we would have to see if other dates would be available and also that there is a public expectation that we will meet on the second Thursday of each month as we have done historically. Commissioner Money moved to leave the schedule as proposed with the option to consider a change of date for individual meetings on a case-by-case basis. Commissioner Coffin seconded.

The motion carried unanimously.

E. Review of Chief's Goals for 2023

The Chief reported that establishing a Central Dispatch Center was nearly 100% accomplished, and anticipates that it will be

fully staffed and trained in the near future.

The Public Safety Building project continues to make slow progress. The current hope is to have the building open in fiscal 2028-29 and to have a referendum in 2024.

There have been several retirements and we have hired five new officers in 2023. As soon as an officer submits a retirement notice, we immediately start the hiring procedure. We have three officers currently in the Academy; two are expected to graduate early in January.

The Chief attended the highly-competitive FBI National Academy this summer.

Officer Wellness remains a focus. The Chief would like to set up a program to make calcium score checks available on a voluntary basis for all officers age 40 and above. He is pursuing a couple of ideas.

The Training budget has been expanded. We are fortunate to have a sizeable number of training officers who can supplement outside trainings.

Traffic remains a problem, particularly on Route 35 near Copps Hill shopping center in the mornings. The Chief has made numerous contacts with DOT regarding the timing of the lights at the Route 35/Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road intersection without success. He will continue the efforts.

The Policy Review and Consolidation process continues with Major Platt.

Commissioners Caporale and Money will join Commissioner Dornfeld to work on a new set of goals for 2024 with the Chief.

4. COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE

A. Voicemail

There was no voicemails for the month of November.

B. Written Correspondence

There was no written correspondence for the month of November.

5. Old BUSINESS

A. Public Safety Building Update

Public Safety Building planning continues. All police input has been submitted. A new meeting of the committee is anticipated shortly.

6. CHIEF'S REPORT

A. Traffic/Sign Report

The Traffic and Sign Report and monthly stats were reviewed. Commissioner Frey reported that he had received an email requesting a crosswalk across Ivy Hill Road for the Rail Trail. Sgt. Caswell took a look at it – there is already a Pedestrian Yield sign in place which appears appropriate. There have also been requests for a crosswalk where Market Street ends at East Ridge Road. A crosswalk there might encourage ERMS kids to cross mid-block instead of at the four-way intersection at Governor Street and is not recommended.

The boardwalk along Ligi's Way is complete and a flashing crosswalk has been installed across Farmingville Road. Commissioner Coffin reported that some of the signs have not been re-installed, including the "Ligi's Way" sign. The Chief will ask Sgt. Caswell to follow up.

Our new canine Odin graduated from the K-9 academy and is now in service.

The Chief was contacted regarding the need for a twelve-foot zodiac style boat for police department use which he agreed would be useful. The boat would come with an electric motor and trailer and would be stored in the garage at police headquarters. The purchase would be made with remaining ARPA funds. The BPS has approved the request. It will need to be approved by Town meeting in January.

B. Department Stats

Chief Kreitz reported the total number of incidents for the month of November 2023 was 1,357. He highlighted some of the statistics for the month.

7. Union Participation

None.

Commissioner Coffin made a motion to adjourn the Police Commission Meeting at 8:44pm. Commissioner Money seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously,

Respectfully Submitted,

Issy Caporale
Police Commission Secretary