
MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

**of
Thursday, February 14, 2019
at
7:00pm to be held at Town Hall Annex
66 Prospect Street**

Commissioners Present: George Kain, Chairman
Marianne Coffin, Secretary
Charles Knoche
Joseph Savino
Nicholas Perna

Also Present: Chief Jeffery Kreitz
Major Stephen Brown

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

The meeting was called to order at 07:00pm by Chairman Kain.

AGENDA REVIEW ITEM #1

Commissioner Kain requested to move 6C to 4A. Commissioner Savino requested to add 7D Planning and Zoning Master Plan and add 7E the Route 35 Traffic Study.

AGENDA ITEM #2 MINUTES OF JANUARY 10, 2019 POLICE COMMISSION MEETING AND MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2019 SPECIAL POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

Commissioner Coffin requested a motion to accept the minutes of January 10, 2019. Commissioner Savino seconded the motion. The vote was 4-1 with Commissioner Perna abstaining because he was not on the Board at that time. The minutes were approved as written.

Commissioner Coffin made a motion to amend the minutes of January 28, 2019 to reflect the vote on Commissioner Nicholas Perna. In the minutes it was stated that the new Police Commissioner is Nicholas Perna. The vote was 3-1 in favor of Nicholas Perna. It now states that Commissioners Coffin, Knoche and Savino voted in favor of Nicholas Perna. Commissioner Kain opposed the vote. Commissioner Savino seconded the motion to accept the amended minutes. That vote was 4-0. Nicholas Perna abstained from the vote.

AGENDA ITEM #3A COMMISSION CORRESPONDANCE VOICEMAIL

There was no voicemail correspondence for the month of January.

AGENDA ITEM #3B COMMISSION WRITTEN CORRESPONDANCE

Commissioner Kain received and signed permit applications for road closures 2019. Chief Kreitz stated he received an email from the state that a no turn on red will be installed at the intersection of Prospect Street and Main Street for westbound Prospect Street traffic. The no turn on red sign at the intersection of Grove Street and Route 35 was denied due to proper sight lines. Both requests were made by the board.

AGENDA ITEM #4 CHIEF'S REPORT

- A. **Statistics.** Chief Kreitz discussed the 2018 departmental statistics, highlighting the increased number of arrests and the decrease in accidents. Chief Kreitz praised officers for these positive statistics. Chief Kreitz commended officers and citizens for the decrease in the number of stolen motor vehicles and larcenies from motor vehicles. This is due in part to the diligence from the Officers, residents calling in and the department putting the information in the paper/social media.

Commissioner Savino noted that the overall number of incidents was down as compared to the previous two years. Chief Kreitz pointed out the increase in arrests and the reduction in accidents. He noted that policing efforts such as traffic enforcement and community policing help to reduce the number of incidents, and that the number of incidents is not necessarily reflective of the department's efforts. Chief Kreitz spoke of Chief Roche's death and services and the transition of positions within the department. Chief Kreitz also spoke about the amount of time officers spend on certain calls for service such as domestic incidents.

Commissioner Kain noted that overall statistics, like total number of incidents can be deceiving. He stated the number will fluctuate based on citizen's needs. He complimented officers for the increase in arrests and the decrease in accidents.

NIBRS. Major Stephen Brown explained NIBRS (National Incident Base Reporting System) and reviewed the departments 2018 NIBRS offense and clearance rates, codes are different than the state statutes.

Major Brown pointed out that the Commissioners had not seen the department NIBRS reports in the past and explained its importance. Major Brown stated that Captain Terzian has been put in charge of NIBRS w/ Alison Heibeck assisting him. Captain Terzian, Alison, Chief Kreitz, Major Brown received training from the CT liaison to the FBI in NIBRS.

With the increased training and awareness, the administration believes the NIBRS numbers will be accurate and will reflect officers' hard work. The department's clearance rate for 2018 was good; it was higher than the national average. The clearance rate reflects the incidents that were cleared for arrest. A higher clearance rate means a higher arrest rate.

The average nationwide was 20% and Ridgefield Police Department was 35%. The 2019 clearance rate should improve on this with Chief Kreitz emphasis on relentless follow up and Captain Terzian's supervision of NIBRS. A report is sent to NIBRS at the end of every month.

B. **Training and PR Reports.** Chief Kreitz reported that all of the Officers had CPR and AED training. They have all gone to recertification. They have visited the houses of worship. They show their presence. They are there for the community.

RIDGEFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT
TRAINING & COMMUNITY POLICING/PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT
January 2019

January 7-11 Lt. Smith, PO Mulvihill, PO Ryan, PO Geller, PO Luis, Det. Dubord, Sgt. Gogola, PO Ekstrom attended Recert Training at WCSU Campus.

January 11 PO McKnight was Taser certified.

January 15-16 CPR/AED Recert Training was attended by all Officers.

A total of 21 Public Relations were performed during the month to include:

- Nine car seat installations
- Multiple stop and talks at houses of worship
- Monthly Youth Commission Meeting was attended by Det. Dardis.
- Various talks with downtown shop owners and community members.

This report was submitted by Captain Shawn Platt, Division of Professional Standards.

C. **Accident Study.** The Chief and Commissioners had a general discussion about UConn's 2018 motor vehicle accident study. The study reflected the department's motor vehicle enforcement activity and reinforced the officer's concentration on Route 35 and Route 7. This effort certainly led to fewer accidents in Ridgefield.

Accident Team. Chief Kreitz advised the Commission that Captain

Shawn Platt has been put in charge of the department's Serious and Fatal Accident Team. Captain Terzian had been supervising the team, but with Captain Platt's promotion it made sense to have only one captain on the team. Captain Platt is a trained accident reconstructionist. Chief Kreitz would like to recognize Captain Terzian for his many years of dedication to this unit.

D. **Sign Report.** Traffic Officer Mark Caswell reported the following:

Regarding: Blue Ridge Road Request.

On January 28, 2019, Captain Terzian requested that I survey the area of 99 Blue Ridge Road. First Selectman Rudy Marconi received a letter from Ron Giustino, who resides at 99 Blue Ridge Road. Mr. Guistino has concerns regarding the number of accidents that occur on the sharp corner in front of his home.

On January 30, 2019 I surveyed the area to determine what can be done in regards to additional signage. I found that there are two sharp curve signs, one in each direction, as well as van arrow sign at the apex of the corner. I also found that there currently are no speed limit signs on Blue Ridge Road.

I then researched a 10 year period for accidents at that location. I found that there have been ten accidents on that corner, seven of which were weather related. I determined that the dangerous curve signs are at an adequate distance from the corner.

It is my recommendation 25MPH Speed Limit signs be installed at both entrances to Blue Ridge Road. 20MPH Advisory signs can be added to the dangerous added to the dangerous corner signs to aide in the navigation of the area. I would also recommend that town highway make that area a priority when plowing and treating the roads.

E. **Chief's Goals – Update.**

- **New Officer – Hiring Process.** March 22 is the deadline for the applications for the police officer position.
- **Community Partnerships.** Chief Kreitz reported that he presented to the OWLS and attended the January RCASA meeting. Chief Kreitz reported he is in favor of a Juvenile Review Board. This is a community based diversion program to help juveniles. It would be limited to the types of cases they take. This will be on the agenda for next month. Captain Shawn Platt will be joining the RVNA Community Spelling Bee on

Wednesday, March 6 at 7:00pm at the Ridgefield Playhouse.

- **IT.** The Police Department is in the process of upgrading their software in the cruiser laptops. New cameras are being purchased for the prisoner processing area as well as for the building's exterior. We are getting bids at this time. The department is also in the process of receiving a server upgrade.
- **E-Scheduling.** The Chief and the Major updated the Commission on the department's efforts to find e-scheduling software that fits the needs of the department. The Chief and the Major attended a presentation at the fire department.
- **Wellness – Committee.** Major Brown discussed the formation of a department Wellness Committee. The Committee will be comprised of Major Brown, Captain Platt, and Officer Daly. The department's peer counselors will be involved too. The committee will formulate ideas for officers' health, wellness, and safety. Major Brown is in charge of this committee. Chief Kreitz stated the goal is to meet as a committee for the Officers health and wellbeing. This would keep officers safe and helps morale. There is also a fitness program that the officers participate in, which is well received by the officers.

AGENDA ITEM #5 UNION PARTICIPATION

P.O. Jim VanWattum attended the meeting to represent the Union. He wanted to commend Chief Jeff Kreitz for a job well done since being appointed. He stated the Union would like to praise and thank Chief Kreitz for the progress and direction of the department. He thanked him for all his hard work and his dedication. He stated it shows he really cares about the Police Department and will do whatever he can to make it even better.

AGENDA ITEM #6 NEW BUSINESS

Officer of the Year. The Police Commission discussed the officer of the year nominations and the process. Commissioner Perna noted that four supervisors nominated Detective David DuBord as the Officer of the Year for 2018. He received the most

nominations.

Commissioner Kain praised the forms written by Lt. Smith and Sgt. Brown which mentioned their recognition of all members of the department working together after Chief Roche's death. Lt. Smith and Sgt. Brown praised officers' teamwork in continuing to provide quality service to the town during the transition. He also noted that officers did their best to help the Roche family and to honor Chief Roche's service to the community.

Commissioner Kain stated that the Commission will write a letter of commendation for each officer which will be placed in their personnel files. All Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Kain made a motion to accept Det. David DuBord as the Officer of the Year for 2018.

Commissioner Knoche seconded the motion. All in favor.

- A. **Website.** Chief Kreitz stated that Major Brown did a great job creating the Police Department website.
- B. **Budget Presentation to Board of Selectmen.** The Chief reported that the presentation went smoothly. There were few concerns and the BOS was pleased with the Chief's effort to keep the overall budget increase low.
- C. **Coffee with Commissioners.** Commissioner Coffin stated that it was suggested by one of the officers to set up an informal meeting twice a year with the police department and the police commissioners. This will be brought up at the April meeting to finalize the dates.
- D. **Autism Awareness.** Chief Kreitz mentioned that April is autism awareness month, the department is planning on putting magnets for awareness on their patrol cars. The PBA states that they would donate the money for the patches. Chief Kreitz said this program is a great idea.
- E. **Change March Meeting Date.**

Commissioner Kain made the motion to move the March 14 Police Commission Meeting to March 7. Commissioner Savino seconded the motion. All in favor.

AGENDA ITEM #7 OLD BUSINESS

- A. **New Building.** Four companies submitted proposals for the feasibility study. Some will be chosen to do a presentation for the Board of Selectmen and the Police Commissioners. Chief Kreitz will consult with Chief Viadero of Newtown PD.

- Newtown is in the process of building a new facility. This will be discussed in the March 7 Police Commission meeting.
- B. **Ned's Mountain Road.** Chief Kreitz continues to update residents on the status of signage.
 - C. **Scenic Roads.** The Police Commission discussed lowering speed limits on established scenic roads. They will look into steps to change the Town Ordinance. Commissioner Savino suggested all scenic roads be looked at. The roads are narrow, there is speeding, and used for a cut through. Traffic Officer Mark Caswell will check all scenic roads to check which ones should have the limits lowered. Officer Caswell will report this for the April meeting.
 - D. **Planning and Zoning Master Plan.** Commissioner Savino inquired about meeting dates. Chief Kreitz stated he has contacted the person coordinating the meeting and is waiting for the call back.
 - E. **Route 35 Development.** Chief Kreitz will contact Richard Baldelli to discuss the Commission's concerns regarding potential traffic issues.

Commissioner Knoche made a suggestion to change the lettering on the police cruisers. He suggested using block black letters for Ridgefield. He stated the gold script lettering for the name Ridgefield, which is on the cars now, is hard to see. Chief Kreitz stated he will check into this.

Commissioner Kain made a motion to adjourn the Public Session; seconded by Commissioner Coffin.

The Public Session Adjourned at 8:24pm. All in favor.

The Executive Session to discuss employee performance commenced at 8:24pm

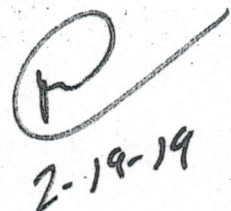
The Executive Session ended at 8:35pm. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcie Coffin

Police Commission Secretary


2-19-19