

**STONINGTON BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
Thursday, July 13, 2023 at 5:00 P.M.  
STONINGTON POLICE HEADQUARTERS  
173 SOUTH BROAD STREET  
PAWCATUCK, CT 06379**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Chairman Robert O'Shaughnessy, Vice Chairman Bill Turner  
Secretary Lisa Tepper Bates, Commissioner Richard Balestracci  
Chief Jay DelGrosso, Deputy Chief Todd Olson, Captain Bryan Schneider

**Absent:** Commissioner Patricia Coan

**1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman O'Shaughnessy called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**2. Remarks of the Public**

None.

**3. Correspondence**

**a. Letters Re: Mystic Outdoor Art Festival**

Chairman O'Shaughnessy stated that a letter was received in June from a law firm in regard to the Mystic Outdoor Art Festival. This letter was referred to the town attorney. In summary, the letter states that there are zoning violations with the Mystic Outdoor Art Festival and the permission given to allow them to close streets is not within the Board of Police Commission's authority. The town attorney responded noting that this decision has nothing to do with zoning and that the Board of Police Commission has total authority to allow the Mystic Outdoor Art Festival temporary use of a public street.

Chairman O'Shaughnessy stated that permission has been given and is standing, no changes.

**4. New Business**

**a. Westerly-Pawcatuck Columbus Day Parade \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Jeffrey Frenette, Vice President of the Westerly-Pawcatuck Columbus Day Parade

Mr. Frenette informed the Police Commission that he has been involved with the Columbus Day Parade for many years. He is asking for permission for the parade to travel across the Stillman Bridge, head down Stillman Ave. onto Liberty St., down Broad St. and over the bridge back into Westerly.

No changes from the last time the parade was held. Deputy Chief Olson asked if they anticipate the parade to be the same size to which Mr. Frenette stated that it may be a bit smaller. He noted that they will have the same funding and have asked the same sponsors to participate.

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to approve the Westerly-Pawcatuck Columbus Day Parade as submitted subject to the requirements the Administration may deem necessary, and upon proof of

proper insurance. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**b. Planning & Zoning Special Use Permit Application: Jannat, LLC \*COMMENTS NEEDED\***

John Casey, Robinson & Cole, LLP

Chairman O'Shaughnessy noted that this project came before the Board of Police Commissioners in 2022 in regard to the property at 54 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck. Mr. Casey stated that they are redeveloping the prior gas station and will have one less island and will have associated parking. They are reducing the size of the building; they have approvals from wetlands and he provided the Police Commissioners with the updated site plan and improvements.

Chairman O'Shaughnessy noted that the Police Commission has concerns with a left turn exiting the property and he asked what prevents a left turn? Mr. Casey answered that the pavement will be marked, there will be signage along with a graduated curb which will still allow large trucks to enter but will deter vehicles to take a left exit. This will also be integrated with the Stonington sidewalk project along Route 1.

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to send comments to Planning and Zoning that the Police Commission sees no issues with this application as amended as it relates to traffic, parking and safety. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**c. Blue Monday Concerts \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Blunt White, Volunteer, Stonington Education Fund, Inc.

Mr. White informed the Police Commission that they have planned a concert on July 17 and have approvals from the Mystic River Park. They have also hired for one officer for coverage as recommended. Last Monday the concert was cancelled due to weather. They have a rain date of either July 24<sup>th</sup> or July 31<sup>st</sup>. Three concerts total. Chief DelGrosso commented that this event was well organized and he sees no issues.

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to approve this event as submitted subject to the requirements the Administration may deem necessary. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**5. Old Business**

**a. October 14<sup>th</sup> Cottrell Street Event**

Bruce Flax, President, Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Flax informed the Police Commission that they are working towards planning the October 14<sup>th</sup> fireworks event. They have approval from Mystic River Park and will have a stage set up. He is trying to make the event better than last year. Now that the stage has been moved to the park, they want to move the pavilion parallel to the stage. He provided a schematic to the Police Commissioners.

Vice Chairman Turner asked if it is solely beer sales in the pavilion to which Mr. Flax stated that they would possibly provide seltzers but would follow any recommendations received. The pavilion is not age restricted; however, no beverages will be allowed to leave the pavilion area. Chairman O'Shaughnessy commented that they had light staffing last year and he asked what the staffing level will be for this

event? Mr. Flax stated that they will have five people monitoring the pavilion. The ID check will be outside the pavilion and bands will be provided before entrance to the pavilion. Mr. Flax further stated that he is happy to do whatever is recommended. It was suggested that two people are stationed at the gates to make sure beverages do not leave the pavilion.

Chief DelGrosso commented that he is happy that Mr. Flax is taking these steps and he further commented that no issues were brought to his attention for last year's event. Chief DelGrosso suggested a rotation of people monitoring the doors to the pavilion to ensure constant monitoring. Mr. Flax stated that this is a family event and he wants to come to the August Police Commission meeting with a full plan for approval.

**b. E-Mail Re: Bike Safety Measures on Mystic Bridge**

Jennifer Lacker, Resident

Ms. Lacker stated that she came before the Police Commissioners in July 2022 in regard to bicycle safety on the Mystic Bridge. She recently had demonstrated to her and several others, a new material that was used in NY City of the Roosevelt Island bridge which has the same grid surface as the Mystic Bridge. This new material provides safe passage for cyclists which encourages the use of bicycles, therefore, encouraging cyclists to park in areas outside of downtown. She is asking the Police Commission to keep pushing this issue with CT DOT. She is hoping that the State would fund this project and solve this safety issue. The cost is roughly \$300,000.

Chairman O'Shaughnessy is happy to send a letter to CT DOT in support of this safety measure.

Vice Chairman Turner suggested looking into getting support from Representative Howard, Representative Bumgardner and Senator Sommers. Chief DelGrosso requested she forward him any letters of support.

**6. Traffic**

**a. E-Mail Re: Pleasant Street Pedestrian Crossing Sign \*POSSIBLE ACTION ITEM\***

Ellen Warfield, Resident

Ms. Warfield sent on email with her concerns with pedestrian crossings. There is not enough signage. Chairman O'Shaughnessy stated that the Chief obtained permits from CT DOT for crosswalk warning signs that are put out on the double yellow lines. Chief DelGrosso commented that the Department of Public Works has been fantastic with maintaining these signs. At this time, the Police Commission approved the use of the pedestrian crossing signs past daylight hours.

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to approve the pedestrian crossing signs for use past daylight hours and for the Chief to facilitate this process. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**b. Parking Issues: 44 Williams Avenue, Mystic**

Jay Pellegrino, Resident

Mr. Pellegrino stated his concerns with the development at 44 Williams Ave., Mystic at the corner of Route 1 and Hatch Street. This property is being converted into an Air BnB and the changes being made pushes the parking closer to Route 1, therefore, causing a site line issue. Deputy Chief Olson will reach

out to Rick Chapman at CT DOT to get their recommendations on the issue. Vice Chairman Turner suggested horizontal parking in front of the building. There is also a lot behind the building.

**c. Request for "No Parking This Side of Street" Sign: Oak Street, Mystic**

Virginia Wydler, Resident

Ms. Wydler stated her concerns with parking and traffic on Oak Street, Mystic. She noted that google maps directs people down Oak Street and onto Bay Street to get downtown. The parking along both sides of Oak Street causes issues with travel and for emergency vehicles. This is an issue for all the small streets in town.

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to look into "No Parking this Side of Street" signage on Oak Street. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**d. Isham Street Proposal for Change to One Way Street**

Dave Ryan, 8 Bay Street

Mr. Ryan stated that a proposal and petition has been put together and submitted to the Board of Police Commissioners in regard to possible options to address multiple safety issues in the area of Isham Street. Isham Street is used as a cut through and has seen increased traffic and speeding, among other hazards. They propose changing Isham Street to one-way eastbound from Bay Street out to Greenmanville Ave.

Anthony Caporale, 7 Isham Street

Mr. Caporale addressed his concerns with this proposal to the Police Commission. He feels a foreseeable consequence is that more traffic would be forced onto Oak Street and it would restrict community access to the public dock. Drivers may disregard the one-way signage. He is unsure if this proposal will solve the issue or if the concerns warrant any change.

Roderick Desmarais, 2 Bay Street

Mr. Desmarais is in favor of the proposal. He stated that it would reduce the traffic on Bay Street. There is the potential of negative consequences but they could do the same as on Cottrell Street, handle the changes to the roadway in-house and do a trial period and revisit. Mr. Desmarais feels that not doing anything is a mistake and this is supported by the majority of the neighborhood.

Virginia Wydler, Resident

Ms. Wydler is not in favor of the proposal. She stated that the one-way would be confusing and create a bottleneck.

Chief DelGrosso commented that increased traffic is town-wide. They have been doing speed monitoring. The speed signs have been deployed in the area and results have been that it is a non-issue. He has been personally in the area and observed a few roll-thru violations at the stop signs. There are a lot of pedestrians in the area and a lot of people parking on Isham Street to utilize the boat launch.

No motion proposed at this time. Chairman O'Shaughnessy invited the group to come back to the Police Commission if there are any significant changes to the area, possibly in regard to any potential changes with the gate at the Mystic Seaport.

**e. New Streetlight Request Form: 1 Extrusion Drive, Pawcatuck**

According to Chairman O'Shaughnessy, the town is already acting on this item.

**7. Approval of Minutes from Thursday, June 8, 2023 Regular Meeting \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to approve the minutes for the Thursday, June 8, 2023 Regular Meeting as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**8. Report of the Chief of Police**

**a. Budget Reports – FY23 & FY24**

Chief DelGrosso commented that last year's budget was managed well and they worked as a team. There have been new procedures put in place in regard to budget tracking.

Three new recruits have started at the Academy. This puts the Department at full staff; however, an officer will be retiring in October. The new recruits will be commuting so this will affect the budget.

Sergeant Ritacco is back to work and will be heading up the Nexgen project.

**b. Monthly Report**

**c. Special Events Schedule**

Chief DelGrosso noted that they have been working on streamlining the special events process and organizers can go to the website to get necessary information and forms. Chief DelGrosso wants to be able to hold events but he also does not want a negative impact on the Department. He is looking for a balance. Commissioner Bates thanked Chief DelGrosso for taking the initiative on this item.

**d. E-Mail Re: New Event Procedures**

These procedures will also reduce the burden on the Police Commission when making decisions on the events.

**e. Pedestrian Crossing Signs \*APPROVAL NEEDED FOR USE PAST DAYLIGHT HOURS\***

Motion made and recorded under 6. Traffic a. E-Mail Re: Pleasant Street Pedestrian Crossing Sign

**\*POSSIBLE ACTION ITEM\*** to approve using the three pedestrian crossing signs past daylight hours.

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to approve the Report of the Chief. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**9. Consent Agenda**

**a. Highway Use Permit: Back the Blue Motorcycle Ride**

Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**10. Adjourn**

At 5:46 p.m., Vice Chairman Turner made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Bates, all in favor, motion approved. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lisa Tepper Bates  
Secretary