

**STONINGTON BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
Thursday, February 13, 2020  
5:00 P.M AT THE STONINGTON POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chairman Henri Gourd & Vice Chairman Robert O'Shaughnessy  
Commissioners Bob Tabor & Bill Turner  
Chief Darren Stewart & Captain Todd Olson

Absent: Commissioner Bob Elmer

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

Chairman Gourd called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**2. Remarks of Public**

Bruce Burton, Clipper Court, Mystic  
Connie Szymonik, School St., Mystic

Mr. Burton suggested to the Police Commission that private parking lots in the downtown area, for example the church parking lots, could install kiosks so people could pay to park in those lots. He has seen these work effectively in areas that he has visited down south. Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy assured Mr. Burton that, together with the Town of Groton, the Police Commission has been exploring private parking options. Chief Stewart stated that both Groton and Stonington's planning departments sent out surveys to local businesses in regard to parking and that Stonington put \$25,000 into CIP to aid in looking at all the available parking in Downtown Mystic. He also noted that Stonington has to match Groton in what they do in regard to parking. There is a lot of ongoing conversation about parking in Downtown Mystic.

Chief Stewart also pointed out that on-street parking limits are enforced by the CSO's in the summer months. The voting annex parking lot has also been suggested as an area that can be utilized for parking but it currently has a lot of drainage issues, needs to be paved and needs to have defined parking spaces marked out. Paul Sartor, who was in attendance for tonight's meeting, informed Mr. Burton and Ms. Szymonik that he is the Chairman of the Stonington Facilities Committee and they are looking at ways to utilize this lot.

**3. New Business**

**a. Planning & Zoning Applications: Mystic Seaport Museum Hotel Plan \*COMMENTS NEEDED\***

Chad Frost, Kent + Frost  
Ken Wilson, Director of Facilities, Mystic Seaport  
John Casey, Robinson & Cole, LLP  
Mark Vertucci, Traffic Engineer, Fuss & O'Neill

Mr. Frost explained to the Police Commission the plans for the removal of the existing Latitude 41 restaurant building and replacing it with a three-story building with a restaurant and hotel. He further explained the easement between the Mystic River Boathouse property and the Mystic Seaport property.

Mr. Kasey stated that there have been meetings in order to understand how the use of the land and of the easement will fit together. The right of way is currently used by the Mystic Seaport.

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy questioned whether the hotel will be completed before the boathouse project. Mr. Frost stated that the hotel will be completed first and a full size, two-way driveway (entrance and exit) will be constructed on the easement. Chief Stewart forewarned that they may run into issues with State DOT. He respectfully requested that they reach out to DOT since it may be necessary to update the existing three-way traffic light to a four-way light. Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy asked if they have conversed with State DOT in regard to the traffic light. Mr. Vertucci stated that they will have to go through State DOT since they are modifying the use of the property so plans will be open to review. Mr. Frost noted that they will be making improvements to what currently exists, the site lines will be improved for the pedestrian cross walks and the driveways. There was some discussion in regard to the issues with the current crosswalk.

Mr. Frost described the access to the site via the easement, the vehicular circulation in and out of the site, the seven shared parking spaces on the easement and the valet parking plans. They will not be using golf carts. The parking spaces will have a two to three-hour parking time limit, no overnight parking. The existing Latitude 41 restaurant has 790 seats, the new restaurant will have 530 seats. There was some discussion about parking in the North Lot. The new building will be elevated two feet above the flood zone.

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy asked why the cut off for the traffic study was at 6:30 pm and also noted that it was not done during the busy summer months. Mr. Vertucci explained how they determine the three peak hours and how they use a seasonal growth adjustment factor (increase of 22%).

Commissioner Turner asked if most delivery trucks are expected to take a left-hand turn when exiting the site. Mr. Frost expects that most will go left, however, Chief Stewart noted that this site might be the first stop for some deliveries and then they will take a right out of the site towards downtown.

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to pass along the following comments to Planning and Zoning; that the Police Commission's support for this project, is subject to the need for an easement agreement review by The Town for use of the Stonington owned property to allow for seven "shared parking spaces", as described in the submission. Commissioner Tabor added that with the recent personnel changes with the Selectman's Office and the Planning Department, it is imperative that all parties are aware that with the applicant's submission, it appears that the singular right of repass, as presently described in the Right of Way, Vol. 138 Page 204, is being changed to provide "shared parking" for the subject parcel. However, there has not been any associated documentation provided by the Mystic Seaport, that this prospective and unilateral change has been acknowledged or authorized, if necessary, by the Town of Stonington. Commissioner Tabor suggests the Board of Police Commissioner's commentary be sent to the Selectwoman's Office, Planning & Zoning, the Planning Department and the Town Attorney for review and clarification. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

Mr. Kasey asked if the EOC evacuates hotels during major storms. Chief Stewart stated that normally hotels are safe havens for those displaced by storms. There was some further discussion about evacuation routes. Chief Stewart recommends they reach out to George Brennan.

**b. Brain Injury Alliance Bike Event \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Chief Stewart noted that there are no changes and he recommends the Police Commission approves this event.

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to approve the Brain Injury Alliance Bike Event, to be held Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup>, as presented, subject to the requirements the Administration may deem necessary, and upon proof of proper insurance. Motion seconded by Commissioner Turner. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

**4. Traffic**

**a. E-Mail Re: Defined On-Street Parking Plans for Willow Street and Jackson Avenue**

Chief Stewart was previously authorized to contact Boundaries to define the parking spaces on Willow Street and Jackson Ave. He has forwarded this to Town Highway to paint the appropriate lines in the spring.

**b. SCCOG Bike and Pedestrian Preliminary Recommendations**

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy stated that he has major concerns with this proposal and feels that a Police Commissioner should attend a SCCOG meeting or even join the committee. Chief Stewart noted that past Police Commissioners have questioned the overall plan.

No Action.

**c. Letters Re: Cottrell Street, Mystic**

Connie Szymonik, School St., Mystic  
Bruce Burton, Clipper Court, Mystic  
Paul Sartor, Jackson Ave., Mystic

Ms. Szymonik informed the Police Commission that she was not aware of the proposed changes to Cottrell Street prior to the Police Commission's decision to make the street one-way. She is upset that local residents that have to navigate this traffic have not been adequately informed. Chairman Gourd reiterated that changing Cottrell Street to one-way will open up more parking spaces. The Police Commission has reached out to residents and businesses and the major issue with downtown is the limited parking. Chairman Gourd further explained that this plan is temporary. It will be revisited in two years and the Police Commission is open to making any necessary changes. This is part of a wholistic approach.

Both Ms. Szymonik and Mr. Burton are opposed to the one-way on Cottrell Street. It will take away a route that they use frequently to circumvent traffic that can take up to twenty minutes to clear up every hour due to the drawbridge. Chairman Gourd stated that making Cottrell Street one-way will improve the rating of the Cottrell Street and East Main Street intersection. The Police Commission is always open to input.

Mr. Sartor expressed his opposition to the Cottrell Street changes and he noted that the neighborhood is also extremely disappointed. The cost for this change is the resident's quality of life. According to Mr. Sartor, the additional parking spaces that will be created on Cottrell Street will not benefit the residents, especially when the new restaurant opens at the Whaler's Inn. He further stated that the Willow Street intersection at East Main Street is a very dangerous intersection. The site lines there are terrible. Mr. Sartor is upset with this decision. He stated that it does not make any sense. Chairman Gourd

commented that if this change does not turn out to be as the Police Commission anticipates, they are open to make changes.

## **5. Old Business**

### **a. Mystic Half Marathon Route Changes**

Chief Stewart noted that the marathon has already been approved by this Commission, however, there have been changes made to the route. The new route will eliminate Deer Ridge Road. According to Captain Olson, Lieutenant Schneider who runs the command post is extremely pleased with the route changes. The new changes are all positive.

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy made a motion to approve the revised route changes for the Mystic Half Marathon. Motion seconded by Commissioner Turner. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

### **6. Approval of Minutes from Thursday, January 9, 2020 Regular Meeting \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to approve the minutes for the Thursday, January 9, 2020 Regular Meeting as written. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

## **7. Correspondence**

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

#### **a. Budget Report**

According to Chief Stewart, the budget report is in good shape. Only one account is in the red by five cents.

#### **b. Monthly Statistics**

Chief Stewart commented that January has been a slow month. There was some push back from motorists in regard to the new stop signs on Jerry Brown Rd. at Coogan Blvd. There was some discussion about the Jerry Brown Rd. and Coogan Blvd. intersection, the Perkins Farm development and the radio coverage at Hartford Health.

#### **c. Alarm Report**

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy asked if any of those that are past due repeats to which Chief Stewart stated that they are not. The number of registered alarms is down due to the fact that people are using other forms of security systems.

#### **d. Special Event Schedule**

#### **e. IT Three Year Strategic Plan**

Chief Stewart commented that Roger Kiser has made some strides with the IT plans. The IT Three Year Strategic Plan was in the Police Commissioner's packet and will be discussed in the near future.

#### **f. MOU – Safe Futures**

Chairman Gourd commended the Administration for setting up the MOU with Safe Futures. Chief Stewart noted that they are still working some things out.

#### **g. Boundaries LLC Consulting Proposals**

According to Chief Stewart, the Town Highway Department will be splitting the cost.

#### **h. Radio Updates**

Chief Stewart stated that the RI radio has been delivered. He is waiting for it to be programmed then it can be installed in Westerly. This is part of the ongoing process of being able to properly communicate between CT and RI.

#### **i. Wrong Way Drivers – Great Job by Officers**

Chief Stewart informed the Police Commissioners that Officer Friend was able to stop a wrong way driver on Route 95. If not for the quick action by Officer Friend, this incident more than likely would have had a tragic ending. Officer Barrell also stopped a wrong way driver headed up the Route 95 exit ramp.

#### **j. Letter Re: Wrong Way Driver Accidents**

There was some discussion about new signage to help reduce the number of wrong way drivers.

#### **k. Memo Re: Good Job – Officer Hewes**

Officer Hewes recently performed lifesaving aid at Bravo Bravo.

#### **l. EMS Update**

There will be a meeting at the beginning of next week.

Chief Stewart informed the Police Commissioners that Officer Sousa has been deployed and the Department is putting together a care package to ship to him.

On June 18<sup>th</sup> the CT Police Chiefs Association will be having a ceremony at the Farmington Club. More to follow.

Chief Stewart stated that the Chaplains will be providing all shifts with food on Mardi Gras.

Chief Stewart noted that Officer Hersh is working on a project to create a layer on the Town GIS for those with Alzheimer's Disease. There is already a layer for those with Autism. Commissioner Elmer will be providing training. Human Services is also working on the project so there are a lot of moving parts at this time.

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to accept the Report of the Chief of Police. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

#### **9. Consent Agenda**

**a. Thank You Note: Family of Jim Dodd**

**b. Thank You Note: Family of Mel Olsson**

**c. Memos Re: Planning & Zoning Applications**

**d. Letter Re: "No Outlet" Sign**

**e. Letter Re: 2020 Mystic Half Marathon**

**f. Note of Appreciation**

**g. Letter Re: Uniforms – FYI – Old Memorabilia**

**h. Memo Re: Westerly Shooting**

Chief Stewart sent letters to all who were involved. He would also like to reestablish the Awards Committee to recognize officers who do an outstanding job. He suggested a Chaplain and Police

Commissioner be on the committee. Commission Tabor volunteered to be on the Awards Committee. There was some additional discussion in regard to the committee.

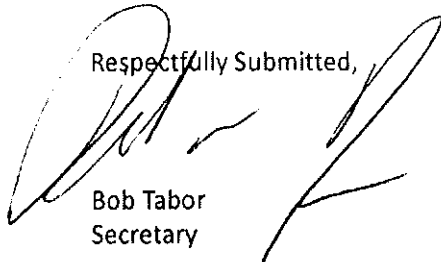
- i. Letter & Highway Use Permit Re: St. Michael Church Dedication**
- j. Letter Re: Donation to Animal Control**
- k. Perfect Attendance Memos**
- l. Highway Use Permit: Duck Race**
- m. Letter Re: Thank You – Norwich Police Department**
- n. Letter Re: Blessing of the Fleet Procession**
- o. Letter Re: Our Lady of Fatima Processions**
- p. Article Re: New Radio Technology**
- q. Letter Re: Thank You – St. Michael Church Dedication**
- r. Memo Re: Nice Job – Officer Barrell**

Commissioner Turner made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Motion seconded by Commissioner Tabor. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

#### **10. Adjourn**

At 6:46 p.m., Commissioner Turner made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Tabor, all in favor, motion approved. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bob Tabor  
Secretary