

**STONINGTON BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

Thursday, May 14, 2020 at 5:00 P.M.

VIRTUAL WEBEX MEETING

Dial: 1-408-418-9388

Enter Access Code: 715 402 275

-OR-

Streaming live on the Town of Stonington's Facebook page

MEETING MINUTES

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

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

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

This meeting is being held as a virtual Webex meeting. Chairman Gourd instructed all to please mute until you have a question and please announce yourself before speaking.

2. Remarks of Public

None.

3. New Business

a. Planning & Zoning Application: Relocation of Liquor Store from 44 Williams Avenue to 55 Williams Avenue *COMMENTS NEEDED*

Brent & Diane Devine

Mr. Devine informed the Police Commission that they are losing their current lease at 44 Williams Ave. and the best option for them is to move the liquor store to 55 Williams Ave.

According to Chairman Gourd, the Commissioners are all familiar with the request. Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy stated that the new site is an advantage and there is more parking at the 55 Williams Ave. location. Commissioner Tabor mirrored Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy's remarks, stating that access and egress of the new location are preferential. Chief Stewart commented that the application is pretty straight forward and he sees no issues.

Commissioner Elmer made a motion to pass along the following comments to Planning and Zoning; that the Police Commission sees no material adverse impact on traffic, parking or public safety with this application. Motion seconded by Commissioner Tabor. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

b. Pawcatuck River Duck Race – Date Change *VOTE NEEDED*

Chairman Gourd questioned whether the rescheduled date conflicts with any other events and how they will practice social distancing. Chief Stewart stated that they will have to follow State mandates. He does not see any issue with approving the date change.

Commissioner Turner made a motion to approve the date change for the Pawcatuck River Duck Race from April 25, 2020 to Saturday, June 27, 2020. Motion seconded by Commissioner Elmer. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

c. Mystic Half Marathon – Date Change *VOTE NEEDED*

Chairman Gourd would like to make sure there are no conflicts with other scheduled events.

Commissioner Elmer made a motion to approve the date change for the Mystic Half Marathon from Sunday, June 21, 2020 to Sunday, November 15, 2020. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O’Shaughnessy. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

d. St. Michael School 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk *VOTE NEEDED*

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to approve the St. Michael School 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk, to be held Saturday, October 10th, as presented, subject to the requirements the Administration may deem necessary, and upon proof of proper insurance. Motion seconded by Commissioner O’Shaughnessy. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

e. Feast of the Assumption Friday Evening Procession *VOTE NEEDED*

Chief Stewart recommends approving this event with the hope that it will be able to go forward as scheduled.

Commissioner Elmer made a motion to approve the Feast of the Assumption Friday Evening Procession, to be held Friday, August 14, 2020, 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: Traffic Zone Route 201 @ Olivia Lane *POSSIBLE VOTE*

Christina Healey, Resident, Olivia Lane, Stonington

Ms. Healey joined this meeting to bring this area to the Police Commission’s attention. The stretch of Route 201 at Olivia Lane is currently a passing zone. Also, there is no break in the white solid line showing that Olivia Lane is a joining street.

Chief Stewart stated that Route 201 is a State road and he will need to contact the State DOT and recommend the proposed changes; taking out the passing area by making a solid double yellow line and removing the solid white line across where Olivia Lane joins Route 201. According to Chief Stewart, it may take the State some time to approve and complete the changes.

Commissioner Elmer asked Ms. Healey if there was any incident that prompted her to asked for this change. Ms. Healey stated that she is just concerned with safety. She also noted that neighbors have been passed when slowing to turn onto Olivia Lane.

Commissioner Turner commented that Route 201 is a heavily traveled road and asked how the State would handle making the recommended changes. Chief Stewart does not feel that the State would consider this to be a heavily traveled road. He noted that there are speed complaints in that area.

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to request Chief Stewart to pass on to the State a request to adjust the road markings on Route 201, in the vicinity of Olivia Lane, and make them a no passing zone and also, include the associated signage. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

b. E-Mail Re: Truck Sign on William Street *TABLED FROM MARCH MEETING*

No one was in attendance for this item.

According to Chairman Gourd, this was tabled from the March meeting. It was discussed at the March meeting that Ms. King was going to reach out to her neighbors about the proposed signage. The Police Commissioners have had a chance to view the signs on Cutler St. Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy and Commissioner Tabor conveyed that the Police Commission needs to hear Ms. King's neighbor's opinions about the proposed truck signage.

Commissioner Elmer made a motion to table this item to the next regular Police Commissioner's meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Tabor. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

c. E-Mails Re: Cottrell Street & Washington Street Field Layout Proposal

According to Chief Stewart, this is a modification to the plan to eliminate a few parking spaces to accommodate large trailer trucks and fire trucks. It was also recommended by Damien Sorrentino to install a No Right Turn sign heading south on Willow St. at Washington St. and a No Left Turn sign heading north on Willow St. at Washington St. Chief Stewart commends the Town Highway Department for all the work that has been done. Chairman Gourd and Commissioner Tabor agreed that this has been a job well done. Commissioner Tabor commented that the semicircular loop is a nice addition.

Chief Stewart sent a letter to the owner of 5 Stanton Lane, Mystic requesting that they trim some foliage in order to help with site lines.

The Highway Department noted that they observed only one car going the wrong way. According to Chief Stewart, the police have not seen any problems. Chairman Gourd commented that time will tell if this is successful.

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy asked about the line painting on Jackson St. and Willow St. Chief Stewart stated that they will be starting that project within the next two weeks.

d. E-Mail Re: HHC Signage

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy concurred that the signage is too small and the color blends into the background. Chief Stewart feels that they are looking to make sure there are no issues with significantly enlarging the signs. Chairman Gourd looks forward to these changes.

No Action.

5. Old Business

None.

6. Approval of Minutes from Thursday, March 12, 2020 Regular Meeting *VOTE NEEDED*

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to approve the minutes for the Thursday, March 12, 2020 Regular Meeting as submitted. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy. No

discussion, all in favor (with the exception of Commissioner Elmer -- lost connection), motion approved.

Commissioner Tabor thanked Roger Kiser for assisting with setting up this online meeting. The rest of the Police Commission agreed and thanked Mr. Kiser.

7. Report of the Chief of Police

According to Chief Stewart, the Department's way of policing has changed significantly as the police have been trying to avoid contact with the public whenever reasonably possible. The police have been meeting people outside their homes or outside the Department. Chief Stewart noted that an officer has been assigned to deal with Covid-19 related issues. He further noted that there has been more cleaning of the Department and the cruisers. He thanked the Board of Education for sending a member of their custodial staff to the Department three times a week with the disinfecting fogger. Chief Stewart mentioned that one of the Department's maintenance staff comes in on the weekend to further clean the Department.

a. Budget Report

Chief Stewart informed the Police Commission that the budget passed, however, the Board of Finance has asked to be conservative in spending where possible in case the budget needs to be readjusted.

b. Monthly Statistics – March & April Reports

Some numbers have dropped significantly.

Chief Stewart commented that very few officers have been out for any reason during the pandemic.

c. Alarm Report

d. Special Event Schedule

Some cancellations and changes have been made to the special event schedule.

e. Officer Dale Brummund Retirement

Officer Dale Brummund has been with the Department for forty-three years. Officer Brummund was a sergeant at one time and was also the head of the Detective Division. Chief Stewart recommends that the Board of Police Commissioner's officially accept Officer Brummund's retirement.

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to accept the retirement of Officer Dale Brummund. Motion seconded by Commissioner Elmer. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

Chairman Gourd offered his sincere thanks to Officer Brummund for his service.

f. Officer Dale Brummund – Request to Serve as Reserve Officer *VOTE NEEDED*

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to accept the request from Officer Dale Brummund to serve as a reserve officer. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

Commissioner Elmer asked when the next meeting for interviewing new candidates will take place to which Chief Stewart noted that they are doing the best they can under these

circumstances. The in-person testing process has been affected by the pandemic. Chief Stewart noted that things are in the works for the part-time Animal Control Officer and the CSO's. He further mentioned that two more retirements will be coming up in the summer and fall so the sooner they can get interviews going the better. Virtual meetings are not the best way for the Police Commission to decide on a candidate, however, Chief Stewart affirmed that they will do the best they can. Commissioner Elmer agreed that the in-person interviews are a very important part of the hiring process. Chief Stewart commented that they will have to be flexible. According to Chief Stewart, there are not a lot of people that want to be officers today so there have been challenges with the number of people taking the exams.

Chief Stewart added that the Stonington Police Department "Story Time" has been implemented and is available to view on Facebook and has also been written about in the newspapers. Officer Hersh has been working on this and has also been working with Human Services to reach out to the community. Chief Stewart extended the invite to read to the Police Commissioners.

Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy asked if the ACO vehicle is still on the budget to which Chief Stewart stated that it is and he noted that the dealerships may be willing to negotiate the price. Chief Stewart also noted that the Department should be able to replace the cruiser that was disabled in an accident.

Chief Stewart commented that the Department's maintenance staff has been very dedicated to keeping the Department clean and sanitized.

Commissioner Tabor wondered if the officers have seen any increased evidence of loneliness or isolation as a result of this pandemic to which Chief Stewart gave a brief overview of what Officer Hersh has been doing to reach out to the community. According to Chief Stewart, people will be starting to go out and some calls about social distancing have already been coming in. The numbers indicate that the police have been dealing with an increase in suspicious person calls, domestic cases, and four stolen vehicle reports, so crime has not ceased.

Chairman Gourd asked Chief Stewart to comment on restaurants moving to outdoor service. Chief Stewart commented that most restaurants are looking to put tables outdoors in the parking lots and he does not see any issues with those restaurants that have patios and parking lots. Chief Stewart noted that there was some talk of closing or blocking the roads in the Stonington Borough to accommodate tables, however, they may decide to use only the sidewalks. This would be a Stonington Borough decision, however, Chief Stewart suggests, if necessary, side roads could be blocked and not the main roads.

Chairman Gourd asked if the police are supposed to police social distancing to which Chief Stewart noted that the police have asked some people in groups to spread out. With good weather coming, more people will be out so the police will be called. According to Chief Stewart, the police can enforce the orders of the governor, the charge is a misdemeanor.

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to accept the Report of the Chief of Police. Motion seconded by Commissioner Elmer. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

8. Consent Agenda

- a. Memo Re: Planning & Zoning Application: 1189 Pequot Trail, LLC**
- b. Letter Re: Gardens by the Sea Tour**

c. **Letters Re: Feast of the Assumption Sunday Procession**
d. **Letter Re: Lion's Club 5K Road Race**
e. **Letter Re: Mystic Memorial Day Bearathon 5K**
f. **Temporary Liquor Permit Applications: Mystic Aquarium**
Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy asked if this has been withdrawn. Chief Stewart noted that events are all subject to whatever the State mandates.

g. **Memo Re: Sergeant William Morrison 15 Year Anniversary**
h. **Memo Re: Officer Joseph McDermott 15 Year Anniversary**
i. **Letters Re: Thank You – Pizza Delivery**
j. **Thank You Note: Morrone Family**
k. **Letter Re: Thank You – Chaplains**
l. **Memo Re: Life Saving Efforts – Officer Hersh & Emery**
m. **memo Re: Job Well Done – Officer Hersh**
n. **Memo Re: Dispatcher Michael Napolitano 5 Year Anniversary**
o. **Memo Re: Officer Troy Powell 5 Year Anniversary**
p. **Memo Re: Officer Britton Friend 5 Year Anniversary**
q. **Letter Re: Thank You – Stonington Community Center**
r. **Letter Re: Thank You – indulge Coffee & Sandwich Co.**
s. **Letter Re: Thank You – Vittoria's**
t. **Letter Re: Thank You – Patience Banister**
u. **Letter Re: Thank You – Melinda Carlisle**
v. **Memo Re: Thank You – Officer Hersh & Officer Browning**
w. **E-Mail Re: Cancellation of Brain Injury Alliance Bike Event**
x. **E-Mail Re: Cancellation of Pawcatuck Lion's Road Race**
y. **E-Mail Re: First Responder Status**
z. **Highway Use Permit: Maria Assunta Processions**
aa. **Letter Re: Thank You – Bogues Alley Delivery**
bb. **Letter Re: Thank You – Domino's Pizza, Mystic**
cc. **Memo Re: Thank You – Detective Howard- No Shave November**
dd. **E-Mail Re: Cancellation of Gardens by the Sea Tour**
ee. **E-Mail Re: Cancellation of Stonington 5K Cross Country & Fun Run**
ff. **E-Mail Re: Cancellation of Bearathon**
gg. **Letter Re: Thank You – Dennis Cambria**
hh. **Letter Re: Thank You – Shortman Family**
ii. **Weapons Inventory**
jj. **Memo Re: Good Job – Officer Hersh**

Chief Stewart commented that he wanted the Commission to see all the donations that have come in to the Police Department from those who wanted to reach out to the first responders, it is much appreciated.

Commissioner Tabor made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

9. Adjourn

At 6:04 p.m., Commissioner Tabor made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman O'Shaughnessy, all in favor, motion approved. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Labor
Secretary
6/20/20

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Secretary

For 5/14/20
webex meeting