

STONINGTON BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 5:00 P.M.
STONINGTON POLICE HEADQUARTERS
173 SOUTH BROAD STREET
PAWCATUCK, CT 06379

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chairman Robert O'Shaughnessy & Vice Chairman Robert Elmer
Commissioners Bill Turner, Lisa Tepper Bates, & Patricia Coan
Chief Darren Stewart & Captain Todd Olson

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. New Business

a. Blessing of the Fleet 5K Race *VOTE NEEDED*

Michelle Crowley, Event Coordinator, Blessing of the Fleet 5K Race

Ms. Crowley informed the Police Commission that this will be the seventh year in holding the event. It is contained within the Stonington Borough. There are usually a mix of walkers and runners. Commissioner Turner asked if there were any issues the last time they held the race to which Ms. Crowley responded that there were not. Chief Stewart commented that they need Town and Borough approvals and they need the required insurance and hold harmless agreement.

Commissioner Turner made a motion to approve the Blessing of the Fleet 5K Race as presented. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Elmer. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

4. Old Business

a. Request for Handicap Parking: McGrath Court *VOTE NEEDED*

Chairman O'Shaughnessy invited comments about the requested handicap space on McGrath Ct.

David Kozora, 214 N. Water Street, Stonington

Mr. Kozora is requesting a handicap parking space on McGrath Ct. His partner has medical concerns and they are planning on constructing a ramp on their property which would be more easily accessible off McGrath Ct. instead of N. Water Street.

Denise Spencer, 9 McGrath Ct., Stonington

Ms. Spencer informed the Police Commission that she is not sure that the best solution to Mr. Kozora's issue is putting in a handicap space on McGrath Ct. She thinks this can be made to work utilizing the property's driveway. Ms. Spencer then spoke to the safety concerns on McGrath Ct. and noted that she feels that this is the least safe place for a handicap space.

Tom McCarthy, 212 N, Water Street, Stonington

Mr. McCarthy informed the Police Commission that he feels there is enough space to accommodate Mr. Kozora's plans from N. Water Street and he is unsure of the exact plans.

Jeff Hoadley, Stonington Borough Fire Chief

Chief Hoadley stated that he feels there is plenty of off-street parking on the property and that, from his perspective, a handicap space is not needed. As it stands, a fire truck has to back out of McGrath Ct.

Mr. Kozora further commented that all the neighbors park on McGrath Ct. Chief Stewart noted that it is not for the police to solve these parking issues but for the neighbors to try to solve on their own, he suggests that they figure out who parks where amongst themselves and to keep the street clear for emergency vehicle access. He further suggested that Mr. Kozora send a letter to the Police Commission outlining the proposed handicap space, handicap accessible ramp and ideas on parking.

Vice Chairman Elmer made a motion to table this item to the February Board of Police Commission Meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bates. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

b. 2022 Mystic Half Marathon & 10K

Beth Shluger, Mystic Half Marathon & 10K

Ms. Shluger informed the Police Commission that this is the eighth year for the event. They are proposing to change the course since they have the opportunity to run through the Mystic Seaport. She is suggesting a loop for the 10K and then running the same loop again to complete the half marathon. This will make for a more attractive event and they would only have to secure six miles instead of thirteen miles. Ms. Shluger noted that they will work out any impacts with local churches. Chairman O'Shaughnessy commented that if they are planning on running on Bay Street that the organizers meet with Bay Street residents. He further stated that the Police Commission will be unable to approve this plan this early, until the route is finalized and concerns are addressed. Chief Stewart has some concerns with a possible bottleneck of runners on Route 27. There was some further discussion on the proposed route. Ms. Shluger commented that they may be able to hold the bridge due to the time of the event and the time of year. Chief Stewart noted that he is unsure the bridge can be shut down for such a long period of time. Captain Olson commented that they may need to restrict access to Route 27 and a conversation with the State is necessary. Further discussion with the State and the residents of Bay Street are needed.

Vice Chairman Elmer made a motion to table this item to the February Board of Police Commissioners Meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Turner. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

Vice Chairman Elmer made a motion to add Kelley's Pace Road Races to this agenda. Motion seconded by Commissioner Tuner. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

c. 2022 Kelley's Pace Road Races

Jeff Anderson, Kelley's Pace

Mr. Anderson informed the Police Commission that he is looking for approvals for the January 8th Frostbite race, the March 5th Hare Hop 5K and the August 24th Battle of Stonington 5K. These are all past

events and Chief Stewart sees no issues. Commissioner Bates commented that Mr. Anderson just won an award and she thanked him for his leadership and dedication.

Vice Chairman Elmer made a motion to approve the January 8th Frostbite race, the March 5th Hare Hop 5K and the August 24th Battle of Stonington 5K, subject to the requirements the Administration may deem necessary, and upon proof of proper insurance. Motion seconded by Commissioner Tuner. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

5. Traffic

a. E-Mail Re: Wrong Way Flashers

FYI.

b. E-Mail Re: Concern for Parking/Speeding – Mechanic Street

Michelle Davis, 40 Mechanic St., Pawcatuck

Ms. Davis informed the Police Commission about her concerns with speeding and accidents on Mechanic Street. There have been multiple accidents involving parked cars and she wants to bring this to the Police Commissioners attention and is asking if anything can be done? Chief Stewart commented that there has been speeding all over Town and that people are in a hurry more than ever. There is a speed sign out in the area of 63 Mechanic Street which will provide the Police Department with data.

Mark Max, Resident, Mechanic St., Pawcatuck

Mr. Max stated that the yellow lines used to be offset but now they are dead center so he suggests moving the line to its previous location since there are more issues now that the road has been relined. Chief Stewart stated that he will look into this with Town Highway. He explained how the data from the speed sign will help get necessary information for the Police Department and he will share the results with them.

c. Gas Station – No Left Turn Signs

Chief Stewart will send a letter to the gas station on the corner of Route 27 and Coogan Blvd. requesting them to put back up the "No Left Turn" sign at the Coogan Blvd. exit.

6. Approval of Minutes from Tuesday, November 16, 2021 Special Meeting *VOTE NEEDED*

Commissioner Turner made a motion to approve the minutes for the Tuesday, November 16, 2021 Special Meeting as submitted. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Elmer. No discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

7. Report of the Chief of Police

a. Budget Report

According to Chief Stewart, we are 41.5% through the fiscal year and are 1% over budget. The three recruits in the Academy are still commuting.

b. Monthly Report

According to Chief Stewart, there were a record number of medical calls, this continues to grow. There were forty-five 211/Human Services referrals. Chief Stewart noted that they had seven referrals in one day. There has been an uptick in homelessness. Malta, a faith-based organization, has been in town helping with the homeless population. Community outreach is being done on a daily basis. Chief Stewart commented on the efforts of Pastor Ray Jones in helping with housing.

There were 11 motor vehicle accidents involving deer.

c. Alarm Report

d. Special Events Schedule

The list is growing.

e. FY 2022/2023 Departmental Budget Requests *VOTE NEEDED*

Chief Stewart is requesting the Board of Police Commissioners approve the 2022/2023 Departmental Budget including matching the union's 2.7% COLA increase for civilian employees, the Chief and the Captain. He further noted that there are small increases within the budget based on normal increases. Chief Stewart commented that there are more responsibilities, training requirements, social services issues, etc. which justify the increase in the budget.

Chairman Elmer made a motion to approve the FY 2022-2023 Departmental Budget requests and forward it to the Board of Finance. Motion seconded by Commissioner Turner. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

f. Discussion on Police Chief Position

Chairman O'Shaughnessy commented that at the last meeting, the Board of Police Commissioners appointed themselves as the Police Chief Selection Committee. The Selection Committee sent out requests for anyone interested internally at Stonington Police Department, rank Lieutenant and above, to apply. As a result, Lieutenant Bryan Schneider has applied to this position. There will be a meeting Thursday, December 16th for an interview to determine suitability.

g. Letter Re: POSTC Graduation

The recruits will be graduating from the Academy on December 23rd.

The Stuff-A-Cruiser event will be held this Saturday, December 11th from 10am-3pm.

Chief Stewart commented that Chairman O'Shaughnessy assisted with handing out trophies at the Thanksgiving Day game.

There was some discussion regarding the work Human Services has been doing to help people out. Commissioner Bates commented that the housing market is shrinking and this will be a challenging winter. There are programs that can provide emergency hoteling to help those in need.

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

8. Consent Agenda

a. Memos Re: Planning & Zoning Applications

b. Memo Re: Good Job – Officer McDermott

Chief Stewart commented that the good work continues and he acknowledged that Officer Brito recently made a notable drug arrest.

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

9. Executive Session

a. Discussion of Personnel Matters

Chairman O'Shaughnessy noted that this was an error on the agenda and personnel matters will not be discussed.

b. Interview of Police Officer Candidates

Vice Chairman Elmer made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Motion seconded by Commissioner Turner. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

Commissioner Turner made a motion to exit Executive Session. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Elmer. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

10. Possible Personnel Action on Hiring of Police Officer Candidates (Conditional Offer(s)) *VOTE NEEDED*

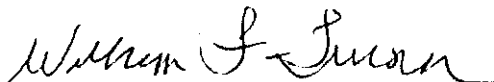
Chairman O'Shaughnessy made a motion to extend a conditional offer of probationary employment, contingent upon the successful completion of the Police Academy standards that would additionally include a background, polygraph, psychological, physical and any other test needed to: first, Dylan Foley and second, to Justin Ramirez for the two open positions. Third, Peter Johnson will be placed on a short-term recall list if either the first or second candidates do not successfully complete the process or if there are any additional openings in the short-term. Additionally, Wendy Amaya will be placed on a list to compete with any other candidates for any future openings for the next six months to a year. Motion seconded by Commissioner Turner. No discussion. All in favor, motion approved.

There was some discussion on the timing of next Thursday's meeting to interview Lieutenant Schneider and for the Commissioners to be prepared with questions in order to make the right choice for the future of Stonington.

11. Adjourn

Commissioner Bates made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Turner, all in favor, motion approved. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bill Turner
Secretary