



POLICE COMMISSION

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JUL 20 2007

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2007
BETHEL POLICE DEPARTMENT-CONFERENCE ROOM

TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

ATTENDING: CHAIRMAN NICHOLAS ELLIS
COMMISSIONER ANDREW MATTURRO
COMMISSIONER HUGO GRECO
COMMISSIONER CHRIS McCOLLAM
COMMISSIONER EDWARD ROBINSON
CHIEF JEFFREY W. FINCH

Chairman Nicholas Ellis opened the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

1. General Public Comments:

Duncan Hume of 10 Weed Rd complained about traffic volume on his road, especially Walnut Hill Community Church traffic on Sundays. The original agreement with the church was that parishioners use Old Hawleyville Rd. Because the large proportion come from out of town, Weed Rd in fact receives most of the volume. The road is narrow, bordered by stone walls on the undeveloped side and in poor repair. Mr Hume's request and that of the community is that the Town post Weed Rd as "No-Thru-Traffic". Mr Hume asked that the Commission address this issue. Chairman Ellis noted that this is an agenda item which will be addressed under Old Business as item b and invited Mr Hume to remain.

2. Review of Past Minutes June 20, 2007:

Under Old Business item b, (page 2) Chairman Ellis requested that the word "negotiated" be replaced by "discussed" in the sentence "New additions were negotiated between Sgt Bruckenthal and Chairman Ellis". Also that the words "to attend to family matters" be added to page 4 after "Comm Greco left the meeting at 6:05". The Chief's Report sections need to be renumbered as: "a) FBI Academy; b) New Hire and c) Accreditation". Motion by Comm Matturro to accept the minutes of 6/20/07 as amended; seconded by Comm Robinson – unanimous.

3. Budget Report:
End of year numbers are still being finalized according to Chief Finch. Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept the budget report with the end-of-year summary to be presented at next month's meeting; seconded by Comm Maturro – unanimous.
4. Old Business:
- a) Monthly Reports
Commissioners considered the reports. Comm Robinson asked about the missing MACO report. Chief Finch will locate this and present it next month. Motion by Comm McCollam to accept the monthly reports as presented; seconded by Comm Maturro – unanimous.
- b) Weed Rd Traffic:
In response to Mr Hume's letter, Lt Dickinson had been assigned to review the request for No-Thru-Traffic on Weed Rd. Chief Finch read the Lieutenant's letter to the Commission. The recommendation is for no change to the road's status. Safety would not be improved. The accident rate on Weed Rd is only a quarter of Old Hawleyville's. Rerouting traffic onto Old Hawleyville would not improve traffic flow and would be unfair to those residents. There is no legal or valid reason to justify restricting traffic as requested by Mr Hume. One possibility would be that residents contact the Church to have a "traffic-this-way" sign posted on church property. Any Route 6 signage requests would have to go through the State. Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept Lt Dickinson's report on Weed Rd; seconded by Comm Robinson – unanimous.
- c) Blackman Av No-Thru-Trucks:
Included in Lt Dickinson's report is a State traffic investigation report which recommends No-Thru-Truck signs not be established on Blackman Av. The lieutenant concurs with the State's findings. Trucks using Blackman are going to a location within Bethel so No-Thru-Trucks would not apply. Blackman is wide and straight enough, no hills, and has sidewalks on both sides. Year-to-date accident rate is zero while the South St alternative is five. Traffic counts indicates only 1.4% of traffic on Blackman is trucks. Chief Finch disagrees with the State's basic premise. Parking leaves the road "not significantly wider than the narrowest part of South St". There are 15 residential homes on Blackman and only 3 on South St increasing public exposure to passing trucks. Comm McCollam pointed out that the widening of South St at Rt53 has changed the picture. Motion by Chairman Ellis to forward an appeal to the State; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous. The Chairman offered his and the Commission's help in the appeal process.

Motion by Comm McCollm to add Elizabeth St (Village Square) to New Business as item c and Hawleyville and Old Hawleyville Rd as item d; seconded by Comm Maturro – unanimous.

5. New Business:

a) Site Plan, 49 Nashville Rd

Motion by Comm McCollam that as a result of having seen the plan the Commission concurs with Capt Cedergren's report and forwards it to Planning and Zoning; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

b) Bike Tour Sept 16, 2007

This is the same tour which has been held in the past. Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept Capt Cedergren's approval of the Bike Tour on 9/16/07; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

c) Elizabeth St (Village Sq)

Comm McCollam sees two problems. The original entrance and exit signage has disappeared. The involved condo association will have to be approached to replace the signs. Also street parking creates a hazardous situation blocking the view of those turning left on Elizabeth toward Blackman. The recommendation is for Lt Dickinson to look into zoning requirements for the posting of entrance and exit signs and the creation of marked spaces on Elizabeth St between the entrance and the exit. Comm Robinson stressed the importance of enforcement of the posted signs.

d) Hawleyville and Old Hawleyville intersection

Residents complained about vehicles going through stop signs and speeding. Comm Maturro noted that the housing development will make the situation worse.

6. Correspondence:

Off Zavatsky, selected for Officer Of The Year for 2006 will be recognized at an awards ceremony to be held in Feb. or March.

In his letter Bob Dibble stated that South St will be closed all of next week and part of the following week.

Chief's Report:

a) New Test

Chief Finch reported that the officer application list has been exhausted. The Department is looking to hold a new recruit test in October or November to fill two openings for hiring in January to be ready for the Academy in February.

b) Training

Chief Finch reported that Det Bryce has been selected from three candidates to attend training in computer related cases. Because the Department currently lacks expertise in this area, hardware involved is sent to the State, the backlog may require a year or more to resolve. The cost of the 6 week course will be fully paid for out of asset forfeiture monies.

8. Commissioner Comments:

Comm Maturro stated that Big Y required signage across from the ballfield is not yet in place. Trucks park on Old Hawleyville restricting visibility of cars leaving the parking lot. Chairman Ellis asked about the State's not striping at the crosswalk and asked that Lt Dickinson enlighten the Commission as to their reasoning at next month's meeting.

Comm McCollam stressed the need to enforce no parking in front of fire hydrants using the example of a hydrant being blocked during The Spot's recent block party.

Chairman Ellis inquired about cementing in signs at Oak Ridge and Hilldale La. Older signs are not cemented in place for safety reasons. Newer signs have a breakaway feature.

9. Executive Session: Evaluations

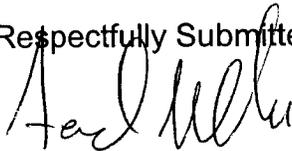
At 6:15 pm motion by Chairman Ellis to go into executive session to discuss the evaluation of Chief Finch and Capt Cedergren with recommendations for any increase in salary; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

The Commission came out of executive session at 6:50 pm.

Motion by Comm Greco to give both Chief Finch and Capt Cedergren a 4% increase over last year's salary retroactive to the first pay period in July; seconded by Comm Robinson – unanimous.

At 7:07 motion by Chairman Ellis to adjourn; seconded by Comm Maturro – unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted



Ferdinand Miller Jr.

Secretary