



POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2008
BETHEL POLICE DEPARTMENT-CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDING: CHAIRMAN NICHOLAS ELLIS
COMMISSIONER CHRIS McCOLLAM
COMMISSIONER HUGO GRECO
CHIEF JEFFREY W. FINCH

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER ANDREW MATTURRO
LATE: COMMISSIONER BILL OCHS

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

Chairman Ellis noted that Comm Maturro was unable to attend because he was attending the high school graduation of his first born.

1. General Public Comments:
None
2. Review of Past Minutes Apr 16, 2008
Comm McCollam asked that the following (bold italics) be inserted in the minutes of May 21, 2008:
Old Business Item 4b. "Comm McCollam asked for a clarification on parking permit rights ***from Town Counsel as to who adds or removes permit parking, the Commission or the Board of Selectmen,*** before making a decision."
New Business Item 5e. "Comm McCollam read a letter to Chairman Ellis ***into the record*** submitted by Verdi Property manager ---".
Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept the amended minutes of 5/21/08 Regular Meeting; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.
3. Budget Report:
A line graph of overtime expenses was included in the packet. The difference between the period before and after emergency medical dispatch was obvious. Chairman Ellis asked about the negotiated salaries account. Motion by Comm Maturro to accept the budget report as presented; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

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TOWN CLERK

Comm Ochs arrived at 5:15

4. Old Business:

a) Monthly Reports

The Commission considered the reports. The numbers are still fairly low according to Chief Finch. High School Reports now include an attachment which shows all calls instead of only those resulting in a written report. Motion by Comm Ochs to accept the Monthly Reports; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

b) Durant Ave Parking – from May

This item was tabled from the May meeting for clarification of parking permit rights. The Board of Selectmen takes care of permit parking. The designated area (see May 21, 2008 item 4b) can be posted “2 Hours OR Permit Parking”. Motion by Chairman Ellis to post the designated home side of Durant Ave as “2 Hours OR Permit Parking” for a six month trial basis; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

c) Verdi Crosswalk, South St – from May

Ken Carvell of Verdi Construction was in attendance for this item tabled from the May meeting. He briefly described the renovation of an existing structure at 80 South St and the construction of two additional units with an entrance off Taylor Ave. Lt Dickinson projected photos showing the location and described the required new sidewalk construction. Sight lines are good according to the lieutenant, the only issue being the placing of a marked crosswalk on South St, which should instead be on the west side of the Taylor Ave intersection rather than the east side. Comm Ochs asked if a crosswalk advance warning sign should be required. Lt Dickinson stated that given the low approach speeds and sight line on the straightaway, a standard crosswalk sign and arrow at the crosswalk would be preferred. Comm McCollam asked about cutting a curb on the only side where this would be necessary. Verdi Construction is willing to comply as stated by Mr. Carvell. Motion by Comm Greco to accept Lt Dickinson’s recommendation for a marked crosswalk with approved signage on South St and a curb cut; seconded by Comm McCollam – unanimous.

d) Hickok Ave – from May

A petition from residents of Hickok was tabled from the May meeting in order to have Lt Dickinson study the area. The Lieutenant projected aerial and ground level photos as well as a video showing the area in question. This road has an afternoon peak volume of 400 cars per hour and is used as a commuter shortcut according to residents. Lt Dickinson’s research indicated an average of two to three minor accidents per year for the whole

road. 1/3 of accidents were from cars backing out of driveways into the road, 1/3 of collisions were of the rear end type and took place at the stop sign at Maple Ave. 1/2 of the collisions were due to the very steep hill and loss of control on snow and ice. In his report Lt Dickinson addressed the resident requests. A stop sign at the intersection with Golden Hill would likely cause increased collisions. The requested sidewalks on Hickok and widening of the road would require the acquisition of private property within the public domain and serve to shorten the length of existing driveways. Making Hickok one-way would have an effect on the traffic flow of surrounding roads. As with sidewalks and road widening, the requested moratorium on new construction is not within the jurisdiction of the Police Commission. Upgrading some of the older signage and reducing a sight line obstruction on Golden Hill and Hickok are practical, immediate improvements. The lieutenant will send a letter explaining this to petition presenter William McIlrath. Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept Lt Dickinson's recommendation for replacement signage and sight line improvements for Hickok; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.

5. New Business:

a) CT Nutmeg State Games July 26, 2008

The scheduled torch run for this event is the same date as the cancer cause Bicycle Ride. Because of the different routes there should be no conflict according to Chief Finch.

b) Site Plan – 6 Francis Clark Cir

In his letter, Capt Cedergren sees good sight lines and adequate parking in this plan for a new commercial building and recommends approval as submitted. Motion by Chairman Ellis to accept Capt Cedergren's report and forward it onto the Planning and Zoning Commission; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

c) Signage – Chestnut & Nashville

This major reconfiguration of Chestnut and Nashville has caused a concern over signage according to Chief Finch. Town Engineer Andrew Morosky, in attendance, and Lt Dickinson discussed plans to include seven parking spaces on the west side of Nashville and the restoration of the stop bar at the intersection with Chestnut as well as the location of stop signs, "Stop Sign Ahead" and "No Parking" signs. Comm McCollam asked if "No Parking" signs can be installed along Chestnut adjacent to Whaleys Flower Bowl and property likely to be commercially developed to prevent future on-street parking. That would serve to obstruct traffic and the seven new spaces provide much more parking than before. Object delineators were proposed to be installed along the west side of Chestnut and Nashville to indicate the path of the road because in

winter, snow cover may obscure the newly created island. Motion by Comm McCollam to accept Engineer Morosky's and Lt Dickinson's recommendations, and additionally to post no parking signs on the east side of the street on Nashville and on Chestnut; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.

The Commission thanked Andrew Morosky for attending.

6. Correspondence:

a) L. Cole – 9 Linda La

This letter expressed concern over the intersection of Plumtrees and Taylor (which is posted as a two-way stop). Lt Dickinson reviewed this intersection and determined that the accident rate compared to the nearby and similar intersections of Plumtrees and Rockwell and Plumtrees and Old Hawleyville which are posted 4-way stop was much less. The intersection has an average of 1.33 minor collisions a year compared to 1.67 and 3.67 for the 4-way stop designs with only 50% being right-of-way conflict vs. 60% and 72%. The only injury (minor) accident in the past 2½ years was from a rear end type collision. There is no traffic back up, so adequate gaps exist. Making the intersection a 4-way stop would make it seem safer but is likely to increase the frequency of collisions, especially east bound on Plumtrees on the curve where traffic would back up and the down slope to the intersection. Recent improvements here over the past few months include sightline obstructing brush removal, removal of a telephone pole in the sightline which will happen when the new wires are transferred over to the new pole, installation of an intersection sign with flashing lights and removal of distracting unneeded signage. The recommendation is to not make Plumtrees and Taylor four-way at this time.

7. Chief's Report

Chief Finch reported selective enforcement at Walnut Hill Rd at Farmview Dr; Winesap Run at Appletree Rd and Rockwell Rd at Walnut Hill Rd. The radar trailer was used on South St and Briar Cliff Manor.

Additional work has been done with the Spring Hill Tower site generator grant.

A Town Emergency Op. Commodities distribution drill was held on 6/11.

A letter was received notifying the Department that traffic will be detoured up Rt53 onto Reservoir because of railroad crossing work at the West Redding train station.

8. Commissioner Comments:
Comm Ochs asked that the Department look into graffiti in and about the play area of Parloa Park. Capt Cedergren stated that this is in the process of being addressed.
Comm McCollam believes it is time to look again at the issue of speed bump/humps. To add to the usual objections usually put forward, Chief Finch mentioned cost. \$2K to \$4K per bump/hump. The Chief asked that a list be put together of appropriate areas. Major thoroughfare roads should not be on this list.

At 6:23, motion by Comm Greco to adjourn; seconded by Comm McCollam - unanimous

Respectfully Submitted



Ferdinand Miller Jr.

Secretary