



POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2011

BETHEL POLICE DEPARTMENT-CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDING: CHAIRMAN NICHOLAS ELLIS
COMMISSIONER BILL OCHS
COMMISSIONER HUGO GRECO
CHIEF JEFFREY W FINCH

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER DAN GROSSO
COMMISSIONER CHRIS McCOLLAM

Chairman Nicholas Ellis opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m. First Selectman Matt Knickerbocker was in attendance.

1. General Public Comments:

Ann Cleary of 2 Eagle Rock Hill Rd presented a packet of notes and other documents to the Chairman.

First Selectman Matt Knickerbocker requested that the crosswalk, nearest Beyond the Flea at PT Barnum Sq be moved north to alleviate this business's ongoing flooding problem. Currently the crosswalk's curb cut directs flood waters directly at the building. Lt Dickinson proposed an alternate location, closer to the green which would require pedestrians to have to look only one direction when crossing with the green serving as a safety island in-between. Mr Knickerbocker will have proposals drawn up for both proposed solutions.

Motion by Chairman Ellis to move up item 5a, Economic Outreach Signage; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

5. New Business

a) Economic Outreach Signage

Mike Boyle and Roy Steiner of the Economic Outreach Committee proposed the placement of signs at entry points which would direct visitors toward the two economic centers of Bethel, downtown and the Route 6 corridor. Mock up samples of the signs were shown to Commission members along with a list of desired roads and intersections. A separate application has been made with the State for state roads. Chairman Ellis asked that because of his experience in these matters, Lt Dickinson be involved in location and placement decisions. Lt Dickinson stated his concern is always traffic flow and safety. Besides being needed, such signs if properly placed can help traffic flow along the safest and most direct routes as well as alert drivers to upcoming intersections. Signs should be the larger of the two proposed sizes, 18x24, so drivers can take in the message

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

in a couple of seconds and be placed in such locations where they do not compromise safety. Comm Greco favored the use of as large a sign as possible. Comm Ochs asked that a final report be presented to the Commission. Motion by Chairman Ellis approve of the suggestion with the recommendation that Lt Dickinson be involved, and report back with a final decision; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

2. Review Past Minutes 4/20/11

Motion by Comm Greco to accept the minutes of 4/20/11; seconded by Chairman Ellis – motion passed with Comm Ochs abstaining due to his absence at this meeting.

3. Budget Report

Chief Finch stated he is still attempting to get the report properly formatted. Chairman Ellis questioned several balance differences between the Department's and the Comptroller's reports. Somewhat different parameters concerning dollar values and starting times accounted for the minor differences. One larger line item will be looked into by the Chief. Motion by Comm Ochs to approve the budget report as presented; seconded by Comm Greco – unanimous.

4. Old Business

a) Monthly Reports

Comm Ochs questioned a single case with 38 charges. Off Ashker was complimented for his handling of this difficult and time consuming fraud case. Motion by Comm Greco to accept the monthly reports as presented; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.

5. New Business (continued from page 1)

b) Dispatch Regionalization

Chief Finch reported that two representatives and alternates from Danbury, Bethel, Brookfield, Newtown and Ridgefield have been meeting every two weeks to discuss the regionalization of their departments' dispatch function. First Selectman Knickerbocker stated that the decision whether or not to regionalize turns on two factors:

1) Can the same level of service including response time and level of public safety be maintained? Because of its mandate, this is the area the First Selectman needs the Commission's input before making a decision.

2) Is there a significant dollar saving?

The Commission will be advised and consulted as necessary during this process. Though common in the Midwest as well as Vermont and New Jersey, there is no guarantee regionalization will work locally. Mr. Knickerbocker urged that Commission members attend the biweekly meetings as alternates. Dispatch regionalization would not be run by the Danbury PD but would run out of Danbury by Northwest CMED, a private organization, the cost prorated by population. Issues discussed to date, pro and con were discussed. The consensus is that it would represent a major change in operations and operation prodigals.

c) MS Society Bike Ride - 6/12/11

This is a bicycle ride which has been held for several years. Motion by Comm Greco to allow the MS Society bike ride on 6/12/11; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.

6. Correspondence
None

7. Chiefs Report

a) Training Report

Lt Kennedy's training report was in the hands of the Commissioners.

Chief Finch reported that the Detective Bureau made a quick arrest with the help of New Milford PD in the recent Subway robbery.

An opening in dispatch again needs to be filled. The job will be advertised and candidates interviewed. Comm Ochs asked that the Department immediately go forward with filling this job. The position of MACO officer has been returned as a full time position. A candidate is currently being considered.

The annual Memorial Day parade will be held this Sunday 5/22/11. Inspection and flag raising will begin at 11:45.

8. Comm Comments

Comm Ochs stated that the officer of the year party went well. The commissioner was happy to see the Police Union contract settled and to be signed.

At 7:05 motion by Comm Greco to adjourn; seconded by Comm Ochs – unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ferdinand Miller Jr

Secretary