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Bethel Police Commission

12 Judd Ave, Bethel, CT. 06801
Mr. Anthony Rubino, Chairman

**Special Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 24, 2021
6:30 PM
Meeting held via Zoom**

Present:

Chairman Anthony Rubino, Richard Kolwicz, Kevin Cleary, Amy Mannion, Peter Valenti. Also present: Chief Stephen Pugner, Captain Heather Burnes, and Lt. Robert Durkin.

Call to Order:

Chairman Anthony Rubino called the meeting to order at 6:31PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

- Richard Kolwicz made a motion to approve the minutes of 2/17/21; the motion was seconded by Peter Valenti. Vote, all in favor, motion accepted.**
- Richard Kolwicz made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting dated 3/1/2021; the motion was seconded by Peter Valenti. Vote, all in favor, motion accepted.**

Budget Report:

- Comptrollers Reports- The PD is on track in regards to the budget.**
- Overtime Reports- The funding in this account was cut back in last year's budget. At this point we are on track for expenditures of \$290,000. \$300,000 was requested and received \$240,000. The five year average is \$280,000. A motion to accept the reports as presented was made by Richard Kolwicz, the motion was seconded by Peter Valenti. Vote, all in favor, motion accepted.**

Old Business:

- **Police Firing Range Update-** There has been an agreement amongst the attorneys and in short order a repair of the masonry will take place along with the application of a sealant. A conversation took place with the First Selectman resulting in a confirmation that the town will be moving forward with the completion of the firing range.
- **Juniper Road Fence Issue-** Zoning Officer Fred Pollard reached the owner who in turn lowered the fence and trimmed bushes allowing for a better sight line.
- **Whittlesey Drive Guard Rail-** Lt. Durkin had informed Bob Dibble, Highway Superintendent that a guard rail is needed. Dibble informed Lt. Durkin that an issue developed with the property owner and may require an easement. The Town Attorney is looking into this. A guard rail is in the works but until then reflective arrows have been installed and seems to be helping. Chairman Rubino noted that this item will be placed on the May agenda for follow-up.
- **Crosswalk Main/Chestnut Street.** Lt. Durkin informed the Commission of the existence of a crosswalk on both sides of the island however the side in question has faded and needs to be repainted. Discussion took place regarding location and possibly moving the crosswalk mid street. Collectively it was decided a restriping of the existing crosswalk should be done. Bob Dibble will be contacted.

Monthly Reports:

- **UCR Report-** There has not been a significant increase however with the warmer weather approaching and relaxation of covid restrictions more people are coming out. There have been several DWI arrests in the last few weeks and with more motor vehicle activity enforcement has been increased. Commissioner Cleary noted a friend of his was assaulted in Copper Square which is still under investigation. A motion to accept the UCR Report was made by Amy Mannion, the motion was seconded by Richard Kolwicz. Vote, all in favor, motion accepted.

Budget Update:

- During the Board of Finance meeting following the public hearing cuts to the police budget were proposed but not passed. The fourth police car was removed by the Board of Selectmen and another officer by the Board of Finance initially.

Correspondence:

- Two letters from a resident were included in the packets for the Commissioners praising Officers Freeman and Fekieta for excellent conduct. Chairman Rubino asked the Chief to relay thanks to both from the Commission.

Chief's Report:

- **Sickness and Injury-** 1 Officer that was out on Workman's Comp for a back injury is now back. 1 Officer out for a non work related injury will be returning and put on light duty. The Chief will be tasking this officer with the awards dinner to be held sometime in May.
- **Personnel Update-** Three officers are now on their own following their field training. Rodrigo Fuenzalida has just finished the academy and will begin field training. He will be assigned to Officer Robinson.
- **HB 6004 Discussion/Updates-** To be discussed at the next meeting.

Executive Session:

- **New Hire Examination Process-** A motion was made by Chairman Rubino to enter into Executive Session inviting Chief Pugner, Captain Burnes and Lisa Bergh to attend. The motion was seconded by Peter Valenti.

Executive session began at 7:01PM.

A motion to exit Executive Session was made by Chairman Rubino and seconded by Amy Mannion. Executive Session ended at 7:11PM.

Discussion of new hire personnel common practices and procedures took place.

Commissioner Comments:

- Richard Kolwicz noted that on Old Hawleyville speeding is an issue and has caused two rollover accidents in the last several weeks.
- Kevin Cleary again mentioned the assault at Copper Square.
- Chairman Rubino asked that commission members reach out to him via text 1 week prior to the upcoming meetings with subjects to be discussed and added to the agenda. He will also be looking into the budgeting process and reasoning why necessary items are continually cut.

Adjourn:

As no further discussion took place, a motion to adjourn was made by Richard Kolwicz. The motion was seconded by Amy Mannion. Vote, all in favor, motion accepted.

Meeting adjourned at 7:17PM

Respectfully submitted,

**Lisa Bergh,
Recording Secretary**