



Bethel Police Commission

12 Judd Avenue
Bethel, CT 06801
Mr. Anthony Rubino - Chairman

Minutes of Regular Meeting Bethel Police Commission

Video link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6690515605>

Wednesday April 21, 2021, 6:30pm

Attending: Anthony Rubino, Kevin Cleary, Peter Valenti, Richard Kolwicz, Amy Mannion, Chief Pugner, Capt. Burnes, Lt. Durkin
Civilians: Simone Kelly, Dan Spinella

Chairman Rubino called meeting @ 6:30

1. Public Input:

No public comments.

2. Review of past minutes:

It was noted that there was a mistake in last month's minutes regarding the Whittlesey Drive guardrail. It will be clarified in the update during this meeting.

Comm. Kolwicz made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2021 meeting, except the Whittlesey Drive guardrail section under Old Business.

Seconded by Comm. Mannion. Vote, all in favor, motion approved.

3. Budget Report:

The Comptroller and Overtime reports were reviewed. Chief Pugner stated the finances were on track to date. He said that he expects to see an increase in the next few months for professional services due to the now mandatory psychological evaluations, and overtime will likely increase next month due to scheduled training.

4: Old Business:

Police Range Update: Chief Pugner was told that there was finally an agreement on how to fix the range. The sealing and painting of the exterior will begin in about two weeks.

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Main St. Cross Walk: Lt. Durkin said he spoke to Public Works Supervisor Bob Dibble regarding re-painting the crosswalk. Mr. Dibble said it is on their list and will be done soon.

Hickok Ave Guardrail: Lt. Durkin said there is an issue with an easement and the Town attorney has been trying to contact the homeowner, who will not respond. Right now there are reflective arrows there that help with traffic safety.

Whittlesey Drive Guardrail: *Clarification from last month's minutes*-there is no easement or issue where the guardrail needs to go. Lt. Durkin said he talked to Bob Dibble about it and he does not think there is enough money in this year's budget for it, but will plan for it next budget year (July 1st).

5. New Business:

Comm. Rubino made a motion to add Benedict Road speeding and stop sign request to the agenda. Motion seconded by Comm. Valenti, all in favor.

Police ID's: Chief Pugner told the commission that Lt. Bryce is now doing the ID's with the new address and to contact him for updated ones.

Monthly UCR Reports: Chief Pugner noted that the department is busier because Covid-19 numbers are down, there have been more car stops, and the warmer weather brings more crime. Comm. Cleary inquired about any recent car thefts in town. The chief said thefts are down for Bethel for now but expects they will go up since they are still happening around the state. Comm. Cleary made a motion to accept the monthly reports, seconded by Comm. Kolwicz. Vote, all in favor, motion approved.

Budget Update: Chief Pugner noted that the budget referendum passed. One requested vehicle was cut and the overtime is back to what it was two years ago.

Hiring Update: The chief told the commission they are actively taking applications for one open officer position. The deadline is this Friday and in-house interviews will be done next Monday and Tuesday. He noted that application numbers are considerably down. He asked if the Commission could schedule their interviews for Thursday April 29th at Bethel PD. The Commissioners agreed and set the time for 6 pm.

MACO Building Update: Comm. Rubino requested that the chief find out the status of the previously allocated funds to fix the building. He stated that there was \$30,000 allocated in 2012 and \$65,000 allocated in 2018. Chief Pugner said the First Selectman is looking to secure previously cut funds for repairs and that he believes the 2012 money had been used, but will look into it. He also said they looked into the possibility of sharing Danbury's new shelter but it will not work for us since they have too many restrictions. Comm. Rubino requested a copy of the State Inspection Report of the animal shelter for next month's meeting.

Police Fund Statue Info: Chief Pugner explained that per the statute, funds generated by the department are allowed to come back to the department rather than go into a General fund and there are several towns that use this. Comm. Rubino stated that vehicles being charged for extra-duty should go into a set aside account for future vehicles since they are always being cut out of the budget. Comm. Cleary agreed that the department should not have to fight for cars every year and the Commission agreed to explore doing this for patrol vehicle replacement. Comm. Rubino will call the chief next week to set up a meeting with the Comptroller.

Benedict Road: It was brought to Comm. Rubino's attention that a resident requested speed enforcement and stop signs at the intersection of Benedict Rd and Chimney Dr. and Benedict Rd and Holly Berry to slow down traffic. Lt. Durkin explained that he had the speed sign up for several weeks and the data collected showed that there is an average of 1,150 cars per day and the average speed was 27.2 mph. He does not recommend stop signs for speed enforcement and will schedule future Selective Enforcement on the road when possible. Comm. Rubino requested Lt. Durkin contact the resident and notify him of the commission's discussion.

6. Correspondence:

Chief Pugner noted several positive letters were received and put into the officers file: A letter thanking Officers Morris and Perun for their assistance.

A letter of appreciation and thanks for Officers Morris and DiTullio.

A letter praising Off. Freeman for his kindness and help.

A letter of appreciation for Lt. Libertini's assistance from Simsbury Police Dept. for his help with their CALEA recertification.

7. Chief's Report:

Sickness & Injury: Chief Pugner said there were a few officers out sick recently but have now returned.

Personnel update: Off. Fuenzalida is 1/3 done with Field Training and is expected to be on his own around July, just in time for when more officers are expected to be out on vacation.

HB 6004 discussions/Updates: Chief Pugner said there have been some changes made to the Use of Force language and timing.

Comm. Rubino asked about the body cameras that will be required. The chief explained that they are in the budget and they have been working on getting them.

Commissioner's Comments:

Comm. Kolwicz asked Capt. Burnes how many people in the department received Covid-19 vaccines.

Comm. Cleary inquired about the Awards Ceremony. Chief Pugner said he hopes to have one by fall for last and this year. Finding a venue has been a problem.

Comm. Rubino said the officers are doing a fine job, despite the negativity in the nation, and that we are behind all the members and have their back.

Comm. Mannion agreed.

Comm. Kolwicz made a motion to adjourn at 7:32, seconded by Comm. Rubino. Vote, all in favor, motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Kavallines, Recording Secretary