
MIDDLETOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

MINUTES – POLICE

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2016

7:00 P.M.

MIDDLETOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT

(COMMUNITY ROOM)

1. Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Robert Santangelo

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilman Robert Santangelo, Chairman
Councilman Carl Chisem
Councilwoman Deborah Kleckowski
Councilman Philip Pessina

STAFF PRESENT: William McKenna – Chief of Police
Captain John Lozefski – Administrative Commander

STAFF ABSENT: Michael Timbro – Deputy Chief of Police
Councilwoman Mary Bartolotta

2. Approval of Minutes – August 15, 2016

Councilman Chisem moved for approval of the Public Safety Commission (PSC) Minutes for August 15, 2016; Seconded by Councilman Pessina. There being no discussion or objection, Motion passed.

3. Public Hearing – Matters on the Agenda Only

Molly Salafia, of 42 High St., spoke on behalf of family at 1031 and 1079 Saybrook Road.

The Salafia properties abut Woodbury and Summerhill Road Apartments, owned by Carabetta Management Company of Meriden. Salafia stated that her grandfather has lived at 1079 Saybrook Road for approximately 60 years and that her parents have lived at 1031 Saybrook Road for approximately 30 years. Salafia stated that Carabetta Builders erected a chain link fence back in the 1970's upon a verbal agreement with the Salafia family. The fence has deteriorated over the years and has become an illegal dumping area for residents of the apartments. Salafia stated that back in May, 2016, she contacted Carabetta Management and advised them that parts of the fence had fallen down and asked them to remove the trash. Salafia stated that she also advised the Chief of Police and the Planning and Zoning Commission of the situation at the same time.

Salafia stated that Carabetta Management did respond, removed the trash and inspected the fence. Salafia went on to say that Carabetta Management later removed all of the fencing, which made the illegal dumping problem worse. Now that the fence is not there at all, the Salafia's have been

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having problems with teenagers throwing rocks at the wildlife, trespassing through the properties and destroying their gardens. Salafia stated that they have been trying to urge Carabetta Management to install a new fence, to no avail. Salafia reported that he grandfather's golf cart was stolen from the property and was later recovered by The Middletown Police Department, and a Juvenile referral was made. Chief McKenna advised Salafia that she could contact the Victim's Advocate at Juvenile Court to try to obtain restitution to replace the totaled golf cart. Salafia stated that family has been in contact with Planning and Zoning and Carabetta Management to try to get the fence replaced. Salafia requested increased patrols of the area and thanked the Chief saying that the Police Department has been very helpful.

Councilman Pessina suggested that Salafia contact Raymond Santostefano of Carabetta Management, who is in charge of maintenance for all of Carabetta Properties, that maybe he would be able to help them.

Tom Salafia, Resident of 1031 Saybrook Road (and father of Molly Salafia)

Mr. Salafia stated that the fence that had been there for over 30 years helped the diversion of debris going into the culvert on the property. Since the fence was removed, they have been having problems with flooding on the property. Mr. Salafia stated that he has found hypodermic needles in the woods and the teenagers trespassing on the property are often disrespectful when he tries to speak to them. Mr. Salafia stated that the theft of his father's golf cart has affected his father's independence and mobility on the property. Mr. Salafia stated that there was never a written record of the agreement regarding the fence. The fence agreement was a handshake deal between his father, Joe Salafia (age 91 of 1079 Saybrook Rd) and Joe Carabetta, the original developer of the apartment complex. Mr. Salafia commended the Middletown Police Department for their quick response and helpfulness in the matter.

Michael Paskow of 1079 Saybrook (and live-in aid for Joe Salafia)

Paskow reported that his iPod was recently stolen from his vehicle that was parked on the property. Paskow reiterated the Salafia's comments that the property is being used as a cut through and that the teenagers from the complex are bothering the wildlife in the area. Paskow said the problems have increased since the last piece of the fence came down, resulting in teenagers taking lawn furniture from the property and bringing to the woods. Paskow said that the trespassers have no regard for other's personal property.

4. Monthly Reports (Attached)

Chief McKenna briefly went over the reports and further explained that regular overtime was in good shape this month; however, replacement overtime was up due to the increase in manpower needs due to D.A.R.E. Officers in Training. Chief McKenna noted that the Finance Dept. increased the rate that the City charges for a Private Duty Officer as of July 1, 2016 and that the Department's Overtime was much better this month than it has been in the last year.

5. Correspondence

Chief McKenna went over the Letters of Appreciation he received.

-Letter from N.E.A.T. (North End Action Team) recently had held a hike and an (unidentified) Officer from the third shift participated off duty and an on-duty Sergeant stopped by the event. N.E.A.T. was happy with the participation.

- N.E.A.T. (Facebook Post) – A contractor working in the North End took a picture of an (unidentified) Officer walking a girl home. The girl was nervous to walk past the construction equipment alone. The photo was posted on Facebook.
- Letter from Member of CCDL (CT Citizen's Defense League). A member of the Pro-Gun group was involved in an accident recently and was armed at the time, exercising his right to bear arms. The member overheard a firefighter on scene ask the Police Officer on scene (Bloom) if he was going to take the weapon. Having no reason to do so, Officer Bloom did not confiscate the weapon. The CCDL member was happy with the way that Officer Bloom handled the situation. Chief McKenna stated that the CCDL group challenges law enforcement all the time regarding the state's open carry laws and that the Police Department recently conducted training on the subject (prior to Motorcycle Mania).
- Letter from Larry McHugh of The Middlesex Chamber of Commerce commending the Traffic Division, Deputy Chief, Emergency Management, Fire Department and The Incident Command Post for a great job during Motorcycle Mania. The event drew over 10,000 motorcycles and over 14,000 people into the downtown and went off without a hitch.
- Letter from Phil Ouellette of Eli Cannon's thanking the Police Department for providing Security at his charity beer fest. Ouellette also thanked Public Works Director Bill Russo and The Mayor's Office for providing great service from the city.
- Letter of appreciation from The Gasman Gas Station on Broad Street for the quick apprehension of a robbery suspect. Within two hours of the robbery, the suspect was identified, his house surrounded, the SWAT Team Deployed and the suspect was apprehended.
- Councilwoman Kleckowski reported that she had received emails and Facebook posts from the Majewski family who has been having some difficulties recently. Councilman had indicated that she had sent a letter to Chief McKenna regarding the ongoing issues. Ms. Majewski wanted to thank the officers involved for handling the situation during a tumultuous time.

6. Old Business

a. Firing Range – Noise

Chief McKenna reported that the Common Council had approved funds for the improvements to The Firing Range and praised Captain Lozefski for doing a great job with the project. The Mayor's Office is in the process of putting a building committee together.

b. Warfside Commons

Chief McKenna reported that the situation at Warfside has quieted down and that there is no longer the need to hire private duty officers. The Richmond Group has put up a fence and the Cameras have been updated. Chief McKenna reported Sgt. Lukanik did a great job taking control of the situation. Councilman Pessina praised Sgt. Lukanik's efforts and Chief McKenna advised that he nominated Sgt. Lukanik for a Community Policing Award, which he will be awarded by The Department of Justice at a date and time to be announced. Councilman Pessina asked to be Advised of the date and time. Councilwoman Kleckowski recommended acknowledging Sgt. Lukanik's efforts at the upcoming Director are meeting, since it will be televised.

7. New Business

Purchase of 14 New Police Cruisers

Chief McKenna stated that a proposal was submitted to Finance & Government last week regarding the bond proposal for \$657,000 to purchase fourteen (14) new police cruisers. Chief McKenna reported that the Police Department has not purchased more than two cruisers a year for the last three to four years. Prior to that, the average was to purchase between five to seven vehicles per year. The older vehicles have become a safety issue and the Finance & Government has approved funding pending a breakdown of which cars would be leaving the fleet and where the incoming new vehicles would be going, stressing that the vehicles would be used for the Patrol Division. Chief McKenna stated that twelve (12) vehicles would be designated for the Patrol Division and two (2) vehicles would be unmarked vehicles for Investigative Services, whose fleet is depleted. Chief McKenna reported that when new Patrol vehicles are received, the older Patrol vehicles are then painted and turned over to other divisions, such as Investigative Services, Records and other divisions. Chief McKenna stated that Finance & Government made a motion to approve the funding pending a spreadsheet as to where the vehicles would be going to. Now that the spreadsheet has been completed by Captain Lozefski, it will be presented at the next Finance & Government Meeting and will hopefully have the support of the Public Safety Committee, when it is presented to the Common Council.

Chairman Santangelo questioned why the average purchase of five (5) to seven (7) vehicles per year had been dropped down to two (2) vehicles per year and asked if it was due to funding. Chief McKenna stated that the drop in the number of vehicles purchased was a direct result of CNR. Chief McKenna reported that in 2011-2012, the Police Department alone received approximately four hundred to five hundred thousand dollars for the purchase of cruisers and other items on the ten year plan. Chief McKenna explained that in the past three years, the CNR budget for the whole city has only been approximately six hundred and fifty thousand dollars, (\$650,000) with every city department requesting money from the CNR budget.

Chief McKenna stated that he met with Carl Erlacher, City Finance Director earlier this year and advised him that the Police Department needed six hundred and fifty thousand dollars to get the fleet back in order. In turn, the Finance & Government asked for proof that the police department vehicles last for more than ten years. Captain Lozefski compiled a report for Finance & Government which showed that seventy-five percent of the fleet was over ten years old and many of those vehicles had over 98,000 miles. Ford Motor Company recommends that vehicles be taken out of Patrol Service when they reach that many miles. Chief McKenna said that the report proved loud and clear that \$657,000 is needed to replace the vehicles and that \$7,000 of that money will go towards the bonding fees. Captain Lozefski's report broke down exactly how much it will cost to outfit each vehicle and the report will be presented at the next Finance & Government meeting before going before the Common Council. After some discussion as to whether a motion was needed to bring the matter forward, Councilman Pessina made a motion to approve the funds as outlined and forward to Finance & Government. The motion was seconded by Councilman Chisem. There being no further discussion or objection, Motion Approved.

8. Public Hearing Reopened – (Other Matters)

a. 1031/1079 Saybrook Road

After additional discussion regarding the problems the Salafia's are having on their properties, Chief McKenna reported that the Police Department cannot handle quality of life issues alone.

Chief McKenna stated that the assistance of other city departments will be needed to effectively address the situation, as they have done recently with Warfside Commons and cited other examples. Chief McKenna recommended getting the City Attorney's Office and Code Enforcement get involved. The Police Department will continue to perform periodic patrols and make arrests for on-sight violations. Code Enforcement will coordinate with the Health Department and Public Works to address the "Quality of Life Issues".

Chairman Santangelo stated that the situation is a major health issue and that the City Attorney's Office can try to enforce the verbal agreement regarding the fence since only one fence was built there over thirty years ago. Councilman Santangelo indicated that other residents on Bartholomew are also experiencing similar problems with teenagers on their property late at night. Chief McKenna said that he would forward the matter to Code Enforcement to compel Carabetta Management to the table to work out a solution. Chief McKenna stated that having cameras in the area to help identify teens with absentee parents would be very useful. Chief McKenna stated that he would forward Molly Salafia's emails to Code Enforcement.

Salafia asked about receiving restitution for the golf cart from the arrested subjects. Chief McKenna advised to contact the Victim's Advocate at Court and explained how the juvenile court system worked regarding restitution.

b. North End

Stephen Clark 81 Grand Street

Mr. Clark thanked Chief McKenna for all of the great Police Work in the North End since Mr. Clark appeared before the Public Safety Committee two meetings ago. Mr. Clark stated that he had a scooter that was stolen and later recovered. Chief McKenna noted that The Police Department recently conducted two raids in the North End, which resulted in the seizure of guns and ammunition and the closure of a Tattoo Parlor.

Chief McKenna stated that the registration for Mr. Clark's scooter was recovered in the safe of a drug dealer during a raid on the other side of town. A cache of mountain bikes and streets bike were also recovered during the raid which had a total value of \$6,000 to \$7,000.

9. Meeting Adjourned...

Next Public Safety Commission Meeting: Monday, October 17, 2016, at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



William J. Warner
Recording Secretary