
MIDDLETOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT

222 Main Street
Middletown, CT 06457
860.638.4100 FAX 860.638.4104
Rosa.Perichi@MiddletownCT.Gov

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

MINUTES – POLICE

MONDAY, JULY 18, 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
Councilwoman Mary Bartolotta
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

2. Approval of Minutes – June 20, 2016

Councilman Carl Chisem moved for approval of the Public Safety Commission (PSC) Minutes; Seconded by Councilman Philip Pessina. Councilwoman Deborah Kleckowski advised that on Item 8 (*Public Hearing Reopened – Other Matters*), the PSC advised Chief McKenna to do what he needed to do with the manpower; that they gave their full support to Chief McKenna to do what needs to be done to have Officer Safety and Community Safety; and for him to put a plan in place and come up with some numbers; that she doesn't see that in the Minutes. After a brief discussion, Chairman Santangelo revised the Motion as approving the Minutes that will be corrected. Motion approved.

3. Public Hearing – Matters on the Agenda Only

Derek Puorro (Vice President of the Middletown Police Union Local 1361)

He thanked the Commission for the support they provided the Department last month, adding that it was huge; that with their support, he's worked some regular overtime with the extra manpower and it's going well; that he and many of the other officers feel better. He also thanked Chief McKenna; that he met with the Union in two (2) days; that the Union and the Management were on the same page; that they negotiated minimum manpower for all shifts and were in complete agreement. He again thanked everyone for their support during these tough times.

4. Correspondence

Chief William McKenna reiterated what Detective Puorro said regarding the PSC's support, stating that it's going very well; that it works, and they're being creative. Councilman Pessina gave Chief McKenna high praise for the excellent job he's done with the Department. He then asked how the men and women are at the Department. Chief McKenna explained that they're discouraged; that it's been physically and mentally draining, seeing brother and sister officers go down like that. He added that they're lucky in Middletown with the support base from both the community and its leadership.

4. Correspondence (cont'd)

He spoke about the extra meetings and suggestions they've been having and how they're keeping the lines of communications open with the rank and file; that while difficult, the men and women are pulling together and acting safe when sent to calls. Councilman Pessina also commended the Officers who went to Dallas, representing the Department. He also commended the Dive Team, Marine Unit, Captain John Lozefski, and their coordination with others on the River during the Fireworks (*July 2nd*).

As for the rest of the correspondence, Chief McKenna stated that he couldn't even carry the amount of letters, E-mails, and cards of appreciation that they've received from strangers, random members from the public, and their friends, as well as food; that even though Dallas is miles away, the amount of support given to the Police Department has been unbelievable. He added that little kids have made cards for Officers working on road jobs; that while it's been difficult, it's nice to know that there's such support and appreciation.

Councilwoman Mary Bartolotta added that with the tragedies in Dallas and, most recently, Baton Rouge, everyone in the PSC gives their condolences and their prayers; that as a member of this Commission, as well as a spouse of a serving police officer, and knowing many of the police force as long as she has, she appreciates what they do; that she hopes they're doing everything they can to ensure that they're safe; that if they need anything from the PSC to make sure that happens, ask; even if it's just to talk. She ended by saying she hopes the Department could get through this in the healthiest way possible.

Councilman Chisem added that he knows it's been a rough time for the men and women, especially their spouses; that if there's anything they could do as a Commission or as a Council, to please know they're right there. He also commended the Officers who went to Dallas.

5. Monthly Reports (Attached)

Chief McKenna briefly went over the reports and stated they did not have to go for an appropriation – second year in a row.

6. Old Business

a. Firing Range – Noise

Chief McKenna said they're attending the next Finance & Government Meeting (July 27th), as well as the Common Council Meeting (*August 1st*). He added that they have two (2) good developers with proven abilities to get the job done; that he believes the next step after the Council Meeting would be the formation of a Building Committee, then turn it over to Public Works for the Engineering Phase, and put one of his members on it to oversee it.

b. Wharfside Commons

Chief McKenna said they basically shut down the major activity that was occurring there. However, it has now moved to another area. The hot spots are in the areas by Aresco's Market, Grand and Pearl, and Grand and High Streets. He then went through the numbers of calls and what some of them were. Chief McKenna advised they already have scheduled meetings with Michiel Wackers and Linda Reed of Planning & Zoning to discuss the Blight Statutes.

c. Animal Shelter

Chairman Santangelo advised that he's been charged with creating a Building Committee for the Animal Shelter; that he's spoken with Captain Lozefski, and is meeting with Senior ACO Gail Petras the next morning, and invited Captain Lozefski if he wanted to join them.

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6. Old Business (cont'd)

c. Animal Shelter

He added that while all the members of this Committee have not been selected yet, Councilwoman Kleckowski will be one of them. He should have it completed by the end of the week. He added that hopefully they'll have the Referendum by November 2017.

7. New Business

a. Resolution – LoCIP Police Department Flooring (\$60,000.00)

Chief McKenna explained their floors in the basement and the main level are popping up. He then read the Resolution:

Be It Resolved By The Common Council of the City of Middletown: That Mayor Daniel T. Drew be authorized to sign an application to the State of Connecticut for \$60,000 from the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) for the replacement of flooring in the Police Department building, including in hallways, two breakrooms, landings, roll call rooms, the office across from roll call, the reports room and the entrance to the parking lot; and

Be it Further Resolved: That a new Capital Improvement line item, Police Department Flooring, in the amount of \$60,000, be approved in the Capital Plan.

Councilwoman Kleckowski made a Motion to move this forward to the Common Council; Seconded by Councilwoman Bartolotta. There being no further discussion or objection, Motion approved.

b. Resolution – LoCIP NCIC Locking Mechanism (\$3,500.00)

Chief McKenna explained that this is for a new key card reader for the NCIC Terminal; that it's really needed. He then read the Resolution:

Be It Resolved By The Common Council of the City of Middletown: That Mayor Daniel T. Drew be authorized to sign an application to the State of Connecticut for \$3,500 from the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) for a security upgrade in the Police Department to put a locking mechanism on the door to the room that houses an NCIC terminal. This upgrade will include an additional card reader board to the existing control panel, an additional card reader, electric door strike, request-to-exit motion detector, and a "door status" contact; and

Be it Further Resolved: That a new Capital Improvement line item, NCIC Locking Mechanism, in the amount of \$3,500, be approved in the Capital Plan.

Councilman Pessina made a Motion to move this forward to the Common Council; Seconded by Councilwoman Kleckowski. There being no further discussion or objection, Motion approved.

Chief McKenna asked to sneak another item:

Finance Director Carl Erlacher, Assistant Director Diana Doyle, the Mayor's Budget Analyst Tina Gomes are backing a request from the Department that they bond this year for their cruisers rather than fight with everyone on a CNR. After a Q&A and discussion, Councilman Pessina made a Motion to support this and move this forward to Finance & Government; Seconded by Councilwoman Kleckowski. There being no further discussion or objection, Motion approved.

c. Waterfront Dance (per Chairman Santangelo)

Chairman Santangelo spoke to a Mr. Daniel Cronin (*Matabesett Canoe Club*) about the Waterfront Dance Festival, scheduled for September 17, 2016.

7. New Business (cont'd)

c. Waterfront Dance (per Chairman Santangelo)

Chairman Santangelo spoke to a Mr. Daniel Cronin (*Matabesett Canoe Club*) about the Waterfront Dance Festival, scheduled for September 17, 2016. A Development Committee was formed to look into this and they support this event. As such, Mr. Cronin was told to attend all the Committees that would be affected, i.e., Public Safety, Public Works, etc.

Mr. Cronin explained that this event is similar in scope to "Feet to the Fire" with music and dance; that the intent is to expand the utilization of the riverfront, increase activities, and build new boathouses; that they would like more people out there; that it's an attempt to bring large communities to the event, to promote Middletown Pride, focusing on its rich history, and the ethnic and racial diversities; that the focus will be music and dance.

The event will take place on Saturday, September 17, 2016, from 12:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.; that he believes the number of people attending could range from 3,000 to 5,000; that it would be an outside event throughout the entire Harbor Park.

Chief McKenna said the while he has no objection to this event, he wanted everyone to be aware that this is another unfunded event; and that it will cost money to provide the necessary services needed for same. He added that he presumes an official meeting will occur at some point with the City's Administration and Directors; that normally Health, Fire, Police (*with Traffic Unit*), and the Mayor's Office put the final endorsement on this event as far as the preparations.

8. Public Hearing Reopened – Other Matters

Steven Clark, owner of house at 81 Grand Street and NEAT's Board Member

Ryan Cayer, owner of house at 450 High Street and NEAT's Board President

Mr. Clark said he's been having problems in that neighborhood for a long time, but that it has never been this bad; that he's tried to work with the Police Department, but doesn't feel there's been much progress. He continued by giving a couple of the "problem" addresses:

203 Pearl Street (Back-to-Back Gang members moving in and out of that house. There are open drug dealings; open drinking; back & forth trafficking, dealing drugs, etc.)

188 Pearl Street (Sometimes at night, there are about 10 to 25 people out there yelling and screaming. Not too long ago, someone was arrested; that no one wants to come forward because they're afraid.)

Mr. Clark stated that he's not afraid to come forward; that he's given the Police videos from the stabbing in the area and the shooting at Wharfside; that he's worked with Street Crime. Mr. Clark spoke about his frustrations in the neighborhood, along with his neighbors; that there's prostitution, people relieving themselves on properties, openly drinking alcohol and smoking pot.

Chief McKenna advised that hopefully, by the next meeting, Mr. Clark will see a positive difference; that he'll try to get more 'uniforms' out there; and to bear with the Department; that plans are in effect. A Q&A and discussion followed.

9. Meeting Adjourned...

Next Public Safety Commission Meeting: Monday, August 15, 2016, at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rosa B. Perich

Recording Secretary