
MIDDLETOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

MINUTES – POLICE

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 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
Councilwoman Mary Bartolotta

STAFF PRESENT: William McKenna – Chief of Police
Michael Timbro - Deputy Chief of Police

ALSO PRESENT: Robert Kronenberger – Chief, Middletown Fire
George Dunn - Director of Emergency Management
Colleen Wiener - Principal, Middletown High School
Michael Fraulino - Faculty, Middletown High School

2. Approval of Minutes – September 19, 2016

Councilman Pessina moved for approval of the Public Safety Commission (PSC) Minutes for September 19, 2016; Seconded by Councilman Kleckowski. There being no discussion or objection, Motion passed.

3. Public Hearing – Matters on the Agenda Only

Listed under New Business, Item # 7a

4. Monthly Reports (Attached)

There was no discussion on the monthly reports.

5. Correspondence

Chief McKenna went over the Letters of Appreciation he received.

- Letter from South Fire District for participation in their “Open House” on October 8, 2016.
- Letter from Westfield Fire Department for participation in their recent Car Seat Clinic.
- Noted Sgt. Lukanik’s recent Department of Justice Award for his Community Policing Efforts.
- Letter from Woodbury Apartments (Carabetta Management). Happy with the actions taken in the Salafia case.

- Letter from Southwest Airlines to Sgt. Clark regarding their recent trip to Dallas Texas to attend Slain Dallas Police Officers' Funeral.

NOTE: Councilman Pessina made a motion to change the rules of the meeting and conduct the New Business first; Seconded by Councilman Chisem. There being no discussion or objection, the Motion passed.

6. New Business

a. Traffic at Middletown High School

Michael Fraulino, Teacher at Middletown School spoke on behalf of Faculty and Staff of the school.

Fraulino stated that last Spring he came before the commission and expressed (the Faculty's) collective concern about the traffic issue at Middletown High School. Fraulino provided the following information:

- That there is a traffic grid every day from 6:55 -7:25 am, as well as a problem in the afternoon when school is dismissed. The bus turn from LaRosa Lane to the parking lot is too narrow. The buses have to alternate turning into the lot, causing back-up onto LaRosa Lane.
- The current Parent Drop-Off Area on the left side of the school is not safe. There are parking stalls on the far left side and two very narrow lanes. One lane is supposed to be the parent drop off lane, but is not distinctly marked. It is unsafe with students crossing in between moving cars. With parents double parked on the right side and vehicles coming close to one another to maneuver around them, there is a potential for car accidents.

Colleen Wiener, Principal of Middletown High School

Wiener added that during arrival, dismissal and school events, once the bus lane backs up, it prevents traffic flow from Spruce Street and backs up onto LaRosa Lane. Wiener stated that the morning traffic problem usually extends to approx 7:40 am with student drivers, 40 school buses, students and teachers parking and parent drop off. At dismissal, the traffic is very congested with forty buses in four lanes, packing the entire North side of the building. Wiener said that staff does due diligence to make sure no one goes between the buses. Wiener said the staff has been dealing with the traffic for 10 years and some things could be an "easy tweak", but some areas need to be re-engineered. The North side of the building is a "nightmare" in the winter, because it stays so cold and dark all winter long and doesn't get any sun.

Fraulino added that the bad weather, rain and snow, makes the situation worse as more parents bring their children to school on those days.

Councilman Santangelo said that an immediate solution will fix the traffic flow but engineering would be required for a long term solution. Councilman Santangelo stated that Mr. Fraulino came up with a simple solution: cutting one corner of the parking lot curbing to alleviate problems at the bus area.

Chief McKenna reported that after Mr. Fraulino came before the commission the first time, he assigned Sgt. Godwin to assess the situation. Chief McKenna also reported that the Police Department was not involved in the traffic configuration during the initial construction of the school, had the Department been involved, some additional recommendations would have been made regarding the access road leading to the parking lot.

Chief McKenna noted that Sgt. Godwin reported that the third egress point, by the football field, was not wide enough for regular egress, that it should be used to Emergency Vehicles only. Chief McKenna said that the issue is between the Board of Education and Public Works and that they can include Sgt. Godwin to discuss the traffic laws regarding widening the roadway.

Chairman Santangelo agreed with Chief McKenna that they cannot open up the Emergency Egress Point, but that widening LaRosa Lane to a double lane on the exit would help. Chairman Santangelo also agreed that widening the parking lot and removing some parking stalls to create a parent drop off area would be a good solution.

Mr. Fraulino stated that the faculty would appreciate a long term engineering solution, not just a "quick fix". Principal Wiener suggested the re-working of the parent drop off area on the left side of the building. She also brought up the ICS (Incident Command System) and that the area is used when the school is activated as a shelter during Emergencies and for special events.

Councilwoman Bartolotta recommended inviting the Superintendent of Schools to a PSC meeting to talk with Public Works Commission to discuss possible solutions. Councilman Pessina recalled previous meetings with the Board of Education discussing the same issue and recommended moving the matter to Public Works. Chief McKenna recommended a meeting with Public Works, Traffic Division and the Superintendent of Schools to establish both long and short term solutions.

Councilwoman Kleckowski recommended that the Police Department Traffic Division meet with Principal Weiner for short term solutions, which the Principal is authorized to implement. The long term solutions can be discussed at the next Public Works meeting in November. Councilman Chisem will add to the Public Works Commission Agenda. Chief McKenna will follow up with the Traffic Division.

Councilman Pessina made a motion to refer the matter to the Public Works Commission.

Councilwoman seconded the motion. There being no discussion or objection, Motion passed.

7. Old Business

a. Firing Range

Chief McKenna reported that the Mayor's Office is putting together a building committee which should include Deputy Chief Timbro, Captain Lozefski and the Finance Department. The committee would then report to Public Works for Engineering and Oversight of the project.

8. Public Hearing Reopened – (Other Matters)

None.

9. Meeting Ajourned...

Next Public Safety Commission Meeting: Monday November 21, 2016, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



William J. Warner
Recording Secretary