

**Rochester Police Commission
Rochester, NH 03867**

Derek J. Peters, Commissioner
David R. Stevens, Commissioner
Lisa M. Stanley, Commissioner

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

The Rochester Police Commission held their regular monthly meeting at City Hall, Council Chambers on Wednesday, January 2, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. Present at this meeting was Comm. Peters, Comm. Stevens, Comm. Stanley, Chief Toussaint, Dep. Chief Boudreau, Capt. Thomas, Chaplain Cilley and Secretary Warburton and invited guests.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

A. Pledge. All participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Prayer. Chaplain Cilley led the prayer.

C. Roll Call. The clerk called the roll marking Commissioner's Peters, Stevens and Stanley present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

A. December 5, 2018 regular meeting.

Comm. Stanley MOVED to accept the minutes of the December 5, 2018, regular meeting. Comm. Stevens SECONDED the motion. The motion to accept the minutes PASSED unanimously.

4. OLD AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS: No discussion.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Awards and Recognition

1. Captain Jason Thomas – 20 Years. Chief Toussaint said although this award says 20 years, Jason has put in more time than that. He started out as a Police Explorer, went on to become a dispatcher for about seven years, and in 1998 transitioned to police officer where he

has worked his way up to his current Captain rank. Capt. Thomas oversees the support bureau. He is one of the most valued members of my senior command staff. I rely heavily on his judgment and opinion. It is certainly a pleasure to work with him every day.

A plaque was presented to Capt. Thomas for this achievement.

2. Det. Christopher Mangum – Retirement. Chief Toussaint said anyone who has lived for any period in Rochester has heard of Chris. He served a bit over twenty years with the City, and was with Farmington PD before that. He retired late last year and is part time with the Sheriff's Department.

Chief Toussaint said Chris is going to be missed. He is one of our most valuable employees over the years. He spent the majority of his career in Detectives. He honed and sharpened his interview skills and solved many high profile cases over the years. Chris has the gift of gab and can talk to anyone be it a politician or a hardened criminal. He gives respect and gets it back. Many times, we would hear they would only talk to Chris Mangum. We thank you Chris for your service. You've been an incredibly valued member of the Department and whomever takes your position will have some big shoes to fill.

Traditionally when someone leaves the Department we present a shadowbox to them of their uniform shirt with a badge and all the awards and hash marks denoting their service. Flowers were presented to Chris' wife Kelly. Chief Toussaint noted that being the wife and family of a police officer is not an easy task. We thank you for sharing Chris with us all these years. The flowers will not make up for missed events and late nights, but we ask that you accept them as a token of our appreciation.

Recess called for for photo opportunities. Back in session 7:15

B. Policy Update: 32.1.1 Police Officer Selection, Personnel Selection. First Reading. Chief Toussaint noted, as you know there is difficulty throughout the county and state finding qualified applicants. Everyone is competing for the same small pool. We are part of the Great Bay Testing Alliance, which is a regional written general aptitude test. All members of the alliance pull from that same list for people.

We thought we would try something different in that we could potentially get some qualified candidates and forgo the written test if they have prior military experience or a college degree and accept those candidates without that test. That is the change to the policy, formally waiving the written exam for those meeting that criterion.

The applicants would still have to do the oral board, meet the Commission, a full background. We have had good luck with applicants with prior military experience. They are generally mature and intelligent.

The Commission can waive any portion of the process, but if we are going to make it a standard, we should change the policy to reflect that.

Comm. Stanley MOVED to place Policy 32.1.1 Police Officer Selection, Personnel Selection into first reading. SECOND by Comm. Stevens and PASSED unanimously.

Comm. Stevens MOVED to suspend the rules to Policy 32.1.1 Police Officer Selection, Personnel Selection into SECOND Reading for adoption. SECOND by Comm. Stanley and PASSED unanimously.

C. Monthly Reports

A. Operations. Capt. Thomas noted that three of the six wards met this period. Of note in Ward 6 referencing a particular residence is this is an area we are focused and working on. We have collaborated with probation and parole, Building and Zoning, and the Fire Department. There have been a number of extra patrols and we have made an impact. We continue to work with the property owner. Calls there have decreased.

Lt. Bossi attended the Rental Property Owners Association meeting and provided an overview of the comp stat process.

The Honor Guard participated in the Holiday parade, and have been requested to present the colors at the Annual Battle of the Badges hockey game in March.

The K9 team responded to three calls, one track was in Farmington and the other calls were in Rochester.

Calls and field activities are consistent with prior months. We have seen a slight increase in traffic stops. There has also been an increase in DWI, as well as an increase in accidents. There were a high number of accidents (51) attributed to inclement weather, as well as 11 struck animals and 20 accidents in parking logs. Property crime has decreased and year to date is down 8% overall. Violent crimes are down 4% year to date.

On the support side there were 38 cases sent up for review and investigation from patrol. There are currently 49 cases assigned. There were 23 cases presented to the Grand Jury. All were true bills. In evidence there were 289 pieces taken in, 445 pieces destroyed and 44 pieces returned.

There were ten pawnshop compliance checks, five sex offender checks and there are five backgrounds underway along with three polygraphs conducted. There were three detective call outs.

Last month we reported that three conditional offers were given for openings in dispatch. Only one made it through the process and started this week. There are two additional backgrounds underway.

Capt. Thomas said I publicly thank our current full time dispatchers, per diem dispatchers and officers for filling in these vacancies during the holidays. They stepped up to the plate voluntarily.

Housing had 36 calls to various complexes within the city. Both officers participated in the distribution of food boxes and attended the holiday party with the residents.

At Teen night in there were 150 youth. Nicole continues working with the new coordinator for the Strafford County Diversion program, and she is working to bring that model to other counties.

Lt. Gould and other members of the Department handed out gifts to underserved youth of the community during Christmas.

Adult prosecution had 320 new cases with 431 charges. There were 127 guilty pleas, 79 not guilty pleas, 88 failed to appear and there were 39 cases dismissed by the court.

Juvenile prosecution had 23 petitions, 18 arraignments, 12 trials resolved by plea.

The Explorers had two meetings this period. They had an open house and there may be as many as 20 new members. This is such a great program and teaches the youth a lot of what goes on. They are trained in all aspects so they have a good insight into a law enforcement career.

The School Resource officers are all on track with the LEAD program. They also took part in handing out gifts to the students in need.

The Community Engagement Officer remains busy. Highlighting some of the work he did this period included working with Recreation on Christmas on the Commons. Santa was in the bandstand for pictures. There were food vendors, the bonfire, music - it was a great turn out. He is currently planning the second annual skate with a cop. We have expanded the program to include the Fire Department this year.

Comm. Stevens and Comm. Peters noted they both attended the Christmas on the Commons and it was excellent with good attendance.

B. Administration. Dep. Chief Boudreau reported that we have received all three of the cars.

We had a recent meeting with the Union and we will be putting bars in the rear windows in the transport van. The third car we just received also will be fitted with bars. This will be part of our changeover package moving forward.

The City Council approved the supplemental appropriation for the purchase and outfitting for replacing Car 5. We are working with MHQ in Massachusetts to obtain the vehicle they have on their lot.

We are starting to do our monthly projections as we move into the second half of the fiscal year. We are trending to the good right now, most of the savings coming in salaries and benefits.

Our FY20 budget entries are essentially complete. We are doing a final review and making small adjustments. We have to submit this by the 11th. The City Manager will then start meeting with the Departments.

Dep. Chief Boudreau stated that the City Council also approved the sole source vendor request (Motorola) for the radio replacement. The project is moving along. We met again last week. Part of the project is the refurbishing of dispatch, which will be a significant undertaking. Dispatch still has to operate during any changeover.

Comm. Peters asked about the time line.

Dep. Chief Boudreau said we are looking at summer and into the fall for replacing gear on some of the towers. Some of the scheduling will depend on Motorola's time line and their installer.

Comm. Stanley asked if you look at our calls for service, it is a bit of a bell curve. Are we taking into consideration when the busy times for dispatch are?

Dep. Chief Boudreau said it doesn't slow as much as it used to. It will be a tight schedule hopefully with one installer and we want to do this as seamless as possible as opposed to working with different vendors. As the replacement is happening downstairs of our equipment we can transition upstairs. There is phone integration with IT as well. There are a lot of moving parts.

Comm. Peters said so we will have a couple of consoles up and running and a couple of back up stations as well. A couple of consoles up and running

Dep. Chief Boudreau said we will set up a temporary dispatch, probably in the room adjacent to dispatch used by the supervisor, as well as the specialty units office. It will be easier for the install to take all of the consoles out of the center and to reroute some of the wiring that we will have to move. There isn't any more room in the radio room without adding additional

wiring and drilling the floor. It's going to be hectic; it's going to be inconvenient. Therefore, we want to time it out as best we can so they are in and out.

Comm. Peters asked would we use Strafford County as our back up.

Chief Toussaint said yes, we always do.

Dep. Chief Boudreau added it will be tight, crammed, and not fun, but the backside will be better with significant improvement for the dispatchers.

Comm. Peters asked what the life expectancy is.

Dep. Chief Boudreau said the furniture is ten years, and the equipment 20 years.

Dep. Chief Boudreau said in training and hiring, Officer Butcher and Officer Costin graduated from the academy and are finishing up in-house training, re acclimating to the police department. They will start on Sunday with their field-training officers for the next 10-12 weeks. The four new officers head to the academy on January 7. We have completed all training requirements for Police Standards.

Lt. Harris from the NH State hospital provide an 8-hour training for the crisis intervention team.

D. Other.

A. Staffing. Chief Toussaint said we keep talking about staffing levels and low staffing. He would like to note what that means. As of January 1, we have an authorized strength of 58 full time sworn positions. We have:

- Two new graduates from the academy with 12 weeks of field training ahead
- Four officers leaving next week for the academy for 16 weeks, with an additional 12 weeks of field training when they graduate.
- One officer leaving this month for military deployment for a year.
- One officer out on workers compensation since August 2018.
- One officer leaving to another agency at the end of this month.
- Five additional vacancies (including the two new positions as of 1/1/19).

That is 14 of the 58 positions or 25% of our sworn full time personnel not on the street. When we talk about response times at ward meetings and people getting upset, it is not an excuse. We are doing everything we can to fill these positions, but it is a long process. The existing patrol officers are tasked to the max. We get a lot of work out of these people and we are

seeing people burned out. They can go work for another agency, and not work as hard, for similar money.

Comm. Stanley said this is critical. We cannot afford to lose any more without putting public safety at risk.

Chief Toussaint said to some extent we can't compete with these communities. I am told with two years' experience, Nashua will start at \$72,000.00

Comm. Stanley said we can't compete with that. As a community, we need to show the officers that we have that we value them.

B. Meeting with Union Leadership. We met with the Union leadership and they provided a list of things to improve morale. Some things are doable, but some things I don't necessarily want to change. If I said okay to beards, earrings and BDU pants, it won't keep them here. Without fail, people are leaving for places with take-home cars, a Monday to Friday day shift, less activity and better benefits.

Comm. Peters said we want the officers to know we value what they say, which is why we are discussing this in public and have made recommendations.

Shoplifting – takes a huge amount of time. We want to streamline that process and reduce the workload for shoplifting complaints.

Cages for cruisers. Eliminates to a degree the need to ride in the back with a combative suspect. We will put these in the cars moving forward.

3-Year PT Test. We pay them while at the academy; it makes sense to allow this test to be completed on duty.

Uniform Policies.

Winter Uniform Tie – mock turtleneck or t-shirts. Consensus after discussion is yes. This is not an issue.

Beards – consensus after discussion is no. Compromise with currently allowed mustache and goatee. The “beards for bucks” is a special, limited time, event.

Earrings- consensus after discussion is no. Safety issue.

BDU pants. The consensus after discussion is no. This is a cost item. They would not go with current uniform shirts. One pair is provided for training or outside details.

We are looking at the outer vest carrier as well to minimize the weight of things on the duty belts. We will be working with vendors to do wear tests in the future.

Report Writing. Requesting exceptions to the report writing. The Union didn't discuss this with the DV Officer and he is vehemently opposed to any changes to the DV policy. We shouldn't change this area.

We are also exploring a software program that residents can do a report for low level reports that will upload to our system. The current on line crime report still requires an officer to take the information submitted and enter it.

Information Technology – this was more miscommunication than anything. There were some not aware of the helpdesk email. IT is very responsive to handle issues they know about.

E-Tickets is still hung up with J-One process. It is outside of our control.

MDT coverage there are areas that still have poor cell coverage.

Dep. Chief Boudreau said that is going to happen, and it is not part of the radio upgrade.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence for the month included: Officer Bailey, Officer Brinkman and Officer MacKenzie are thanked by a resident for their professional and compassionate assistance with a welfare check.

7. INFORMATION:

A. There was no discussion.

8. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: (Pursuant to: RSA 91-A:3)

Commissioner Stanley MOVED to enter a nonpublic session at 8:08 P.M. pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, paragraph II, section A (personnel) and section E (legal.) SECOND by Comm. Stevens. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 3 – 0 with Comm. Stanley, Comm. Stevens and Comm. Peters voting in the affirmative.

The non-public session closed at 8:53 P.M. on a MOTION by Comm. Stanley. SECOND by Comm. Stevens. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 3 – 0 with Comm. Stanley, Comm. Stevens and Comm. Peters voting in the affirmative.

Comm. Stanley MOVED to seal the minutes indefinitely. SECOND by Comm. Stevens. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 3 – 0 with Comm. Stanley, Comm. Stevens and Comm. Peters voting in the affirmative.

9. MISCELLANOUS:

Comm. Stanley MOVED to award merit increases on the respective anniversary dates to Off. Eric Ball (2.85%), Sgt. Eric Babine (4.25%), Sgt. Chris Cost (2.88%), Lt. Andrew Swanberry (3.28%), Lt. Anthony Bossi (2.72%), Capt. Jason Thomas (3.6%), Capt. Todd Pinkham (3.6%), Dep. Chief Gary Boudreau (3.6%). Comm. Stevens SECONDED the motion and it PASSED unanimously.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Comm. Stevens MOVED to adjourn. SECOND by Comm. Stanley 8:53 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Rebecca J. Warburton
Secretary