

PC 2013/05/01

Rochester Police Commission
Rochester, NH 03867

James F. McManus, Jr., Chairman
Alan B. Bemis, Vice Chairman
David E. Winship, Jr., Commissioner

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

The Rochester Police Commission held their regular monthly meeting in City Hall Council Chambers on May 1, 2013. Present at this meeting was Comm. McManus, Comm. Bemis, Comm. Winship, Chief Allen, Dep. Chief Dumas, Attorney Grossman, and recording Secretary Warburton; as well as members of the Department, the public and the media.

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

A. Pledge. All participated in the Pledge of Allegiance with the assistance of retired Chiefs' Hussey, Auger and Dubois.

B. Prayer. Comm. McManus led the opening prayer. He asked for a moment of silence for all those affected by the Boston Marathon bombing; and also noted a year has passed since the tragic events in Greenland, NH, where Chief Maloney lost his life.

C. Roll Call. The clerk called the roll marking all Commissioner's present.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment offered.

3. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:**

A. April 3, 2013

Comm. Winship MOVED to accept the minutes of the April 3, 2013, meeting as presented. SECOND by Comm. Bemis and PASSED.

4. **OLD AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

A. Budget Update: FY 14. Chief Allen said we are looking forward to

presenting our budget to the Council at the May 21, 2013 workshop. The Deputy Chief will be with me.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

- Recognition and Awards.

1. Life Saving Award – Matthew Flathers. Chief Allen noted that Officer Flathers was again tied up on a work related matter. We will invite him back to the June meeting for recognition.

2. 2nd Annual Red Hayes Community Ambassador Award – Tracy Hayes. Marilyn Berry and her committee were invited to the stage for this presentation.

Marilyn stated this award arose from the wishes of David Hayes, the son of Willis “Red” Hayes who wished to do something that would honor his Dad’s service to the City. This award was created to be given to a patrol officer that most closely represents the essence of the late Willis “Red” Hayes. Red was a patrol officer for 32 years. He was well known to the people and flamboyantly directed traffic, he greeted all by name and was the friendly cop on the square. Everyone who ever knew Red never forgot him. He is a true legend in this City.

Upon Red’s passing, the Foster’s Daily Democrat ran an editorial “Hail Red Hayes.” The article noted that he had a rare universal popularity without critics and 100’s if not 1000’s will mourn him. He genuinely loved people. His Chief, Nelson Goodfield, recalled that Red would come to the aid of anyone in need. He hated to give out tickets for minor offenses, like parking tickets. Former State Police Colonel Paul O’Leary, a tough Irish kid from Boston, said that Red showed him the other side of law enforcement, the humanness. It was said in his eulogy that he could have written the book on how to win friends and influence people.

After reviewing the nominations for the award, the Committee selected Officer Tracy Hayes – no relation to Red. Tracy’s name will be added to the perpetual plaque. She received a ribbon for her uniform. In keeping with the spirit of giving back to the community, a part of the award is to make a donation to a local charity of the Officer’s choice. Tracy chose Rochester Main Street. A check in the amount of \$100.00 was presented to the director Mike Provost.

B. Monthly Reports

1. Operations. Chief Allen said that ward activity this month has been

good. We've had some good attendance. A couple of things that were discussed was the development of a panhandling ordinance to put before the Codes and Ordinance Committee. Comprehensive rezoning was another topic. Ward 4 Councilors, the Mayor and the Planning Department attended to talk about the process.

The Honor Guard will take part in the Law Enforcement Memorial ceremony on May 17 in Concord as part of National Police Week. They are also taking part in the Memorial Day parade here in the City.

The SWAT team was activated this month for a call in Milton. There was a search warrant and arrest warrant. An arrest was made. Lt. Boudreau who is the commander of our team has been fielding requests from the schools on safety issues in light of the tragedy in Newtown, CT., completing training on critical incident assessments over the past couple of months. We will continue to do that as requested and time permits.

We plan to participate in Armed Forces Day at the Lilac Mall set for May 18. We will have a table and display to showcase the various activities of the Department.

The K9 team had a busy month with 12 call outs.

Officers on the midnight shift continue to participate in the breakfast program with the children at St. Charles Children's Home. This has been well received by the children and the staff and we look forward to continuing that program.

Deputy Chief Dumas and Captain Triano remain busy with the Citizens Academy in partnership with the Somersworth Police Department. We are planning another version with youth over the summer. A curriculum is currently being developed.

Over on our support side the

investigations bureau had two call outs for death investigations and one for an armed robbery, which we made an arrest on.

We publicly thank the NH State Police who offered their K9 to us that night. Their assistance was instrumental in developing some leads in that case that led us to the arrest in that case. We have a great relationship with the NH State Police and excellent interagency cooperation.

Specialist Bruce Daigle will return to work in the Center on May 12. That puts us at full staff.

Officer Hayes continued to work on the retailer website targeting shoplifting and organized retail theft. Nine retailers have signed on so far with more interested. We have been contacted by a couple of retailers outside the state who are interested in starting similar programs of their own. We have to give kudos to Tracy for her innovation and creativity attacking a problematic issue in our community. Shoplifting accounts for one of our highest property crimes. We hope this and other strategies will deter such activity and make an impact over time.

Comm. McManus noted it lets people know not to do it in Rochester. We have a zero tolerance. The retailer loss is passed on through increased costs to everyone else.

Chief Allen said the annual Wings and Wheels event on June 8 at Skyhaven is shaping up to be a big event and we anticipate double the

crowd we had last year. We just learned that Director Vittum has authorized the roll over convincer to be one of the displays. This unit demonstrates the importance of seatbelts. He will have a staff person on site to set that up for us. It does involve overtime from his budget and I thank him publicly for supporting this event and our community. He has also authorized the unit to be present for National Night Out in August.

Secretary Linnette Richardson in our Prosecution Unit has submitted her letter of resignation. She worked part time for us for ten years. We are having a small potluck lunch on May 3. The Commission is welcome to join us.

The Commission asked that a letter be sent to Linnette thanking her for her service.

Officer Funk graduated 370 children from the Middle School DARE Program. He does a great job with that program.

We are in the process of posting all of our temporary specialty positions. We do this on an annual basis. We either reappoint or get some new faces. Officer Blair has decided not to reapply for the High School SRO, so we will interview other interested officers for that.

Our Diversion Coordinator Nicole Rodler had a busy month. She made a couple of presentations on current drug trends in the schools for the district nurses and also for the Conway Office of DCYF. This is proactive

education on substance abuse prevention.

Our final teen night of the year will be Saturday at the Ice Arena on Lowell Street.

2. Administration. Deputy Chief Dumas said that most of the training this period has focused on our mandatory use of force training. We have completed the classroom portion and hope to have the qualifications done by months end.

We anticipate our two new officers to start within a week or two, and will have their oaths at the June meeting. They are set to attend the Academy in June, and we will be at full staff on the police side, for now.

Officer Ducharme has been released to solo patrol. He played a significant role in our apprehension on the recent strong armed robbery.

The Citizens' Academy is moving along. They recently had presentations by the K9 and the motorcycle officer. Both are assets to this Department. We are working on a youth citizens' academy for the summer. When we listened to the presentation on our survey results it was clear that we are missing something in our connection with youth and we need to find ways to make that connection. We will have a reduced curriculum; and run for 8 weeks in three hour sessions. Our SRO's who work with the youth will run the program.

The budget overall is in good shape. We presented an agenda bill to

the Council for the possibility of purchasing our frontline cruisers from the FY13 budget. The benefits are three fold. This gets us the cars earlier in the year, it reduces the maintenance costs on the remaining cars and it gets us on the State bid schedule as well as the manufacturers schedule for new cars. If we wait until July, we have to go out to bid on our own, and generally see higher purchase costs. We would also suggest keeping the funds in our CIP request because then we are on the manufacturers schedule for new cars. This proposal doesn't cost the city any additional money than what has already been budgeted.

Comm. Winship said this saves the City money in the long run.

Dep. Chief Dumas said that's correct.

Comm. McManus said you have to get the City Manager and Finance to agree.

Chief Allen said they support it insomuch as putting it on the agenda for discussion.

Dep. Chief Dumas said the cruiser that stayed in line because of cuts to the budget cost us significant money. At a certain mileage, these vehicles go. Many departments cycle them out earlier than we do. Our fleet is too lean to do that and running basically every day you have to fix these items to keep them safe. We have made 2 or 3 transfers into that line.

Comm. Bemis inquired into our

maintenance costs over the past two years compared to the cost of a new car. Would that be worth looking in to? Wouldn't it be wise for you to look into the cost factor of a line car to reduce the maintenance cost for keeping a car longer.

Dep. Chief Dumas said that our fleet has never been in better shape, as long as the council continues with the replacement plan of the cars. This proposal saves money by earlier delivery, end of year pricing and getting on the manufacturers schedule. We could always use another cruiser. I suspect the cost of a new car to the repair of a two year old car would cost less in the long run.

Comm. Bemis inquired about the unmarked fleet except for the reflective strip that you can see at night identifying it as a cruiser. Have we explored that?

Dep. Chief Dumas said yes we have looked into this and discussed it. We are considering one to see what impact it has not only with motor vehicle enforcement effectiveness, but also the way that it lights up.

Comm. McManus asked for more information regarding the email about federal money to hire one or two more officers.

Chief Allen said the COPS office has grant funding for hiring military veterans and School Resource Officers. There are guidelines and restrictions on the grant and we don't think it's cost effective this year to apply because of

the matching costs involved in the grant. We'd actually have to fund more out of city dollars over the course of the grant than we would receive toward the salary and benefits. After careful review of that it is not in the best interest of the city at this time. We will evaluate it again if it becomes available again. Furthermore, with the tax cap and our budget restrictions I was not comfortable bringing a request to you and the Council to ask for additional police officers given our economic constraints.

Comm. McManus said the size of our department, the number of officers and the number of calls, how do we rate in the state for personnel.

Chief Allen said that we've used workload analysis in the past to determine the number of officers that we need to handle the service demands. There are different ways of doing this. The FBI puts out ratio statistics on how many officers per thousand of population base, but personally I don't like using that formula. We've done it in the past. I would rather use our own data and our own demands to determine what our staffing needs are in the city based on the workload. Could we use more? Absolutely. Is there this year to do it? I don't support that based on the economic constraints we are facing. The City is growing and I certainly would love to have more to keep pace with the growth. We will evaluate this again next year in building the budget.

Comm. McManus asked if the School Resource Officers are still in the

budget.

Chief Allen said they are in the budget the City Manager presented to Council. Initially we did have one position removed as that was funded by the state drug task force grant. Because that funding has been reduced and we are not in a position to assign an officer to the task force, we have asked the city to fund that position.

6. **CORRESPONDENCE:**

Members of the Department, including the following were recognized this month. Jenny Stimac of Jenny Wrenn Gallery thanks Officers' Worthle and Kusnierz for their response to an unwanted subject at that location. Officers' Ricker and Smith are thanked by a citizen for treating them with dignity and respect during the booking process. Officers' Ricker and Hayes are thanked by a citizen for their help assisting the Strafford County Commission on aging. Off. Gantert is thanked by Susan DeRoy for a ride along completed as part of the Leadership Seacoast. Sgt. Burke is recognized by the Dep. Chief for research on cruiser replacement following the discontinuation of the Ford Crown Victoria. Dep. Chief Dumas is thanked by students from the Middle School for his participation in their leadership day. Secretary Karen Bonneau is recognized as the City Employee of the Month for May.

Comm. McManus gave kudos to Sgt. Babine for going above and beyond to reunite a family with their lost pet. His daughter and son in law found a dog and the tag numbers were

called in. The family had recently moved but were reunited with their pet at the station.

7. INFORMATION:

- Information Other; enclosed with Agenda: No discussion.
- Other.

Chief Allen noted that Capt. Triano has announced his intent to retire at the end of June. Officer Roberts (nee Ricker) is also going to be relocating to Texas in the near future.

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

Commissioner McManus MOVED to enter a nonpublic session at 8:18 P.M. pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, paragraph II, section A (personnel) and section E (legal.) SECOND by Comm. Bemis. The motion PASSED by roll call vote with Comm. Winship, Comm. Bemis and Comm. McManus all voting in the affirmative. The non-public session closed at 8:43 P.M. on a MOTION by Comm. McManus, SECOND by Comm. Winship and PASSED unanimously.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Comm. Bemis MOVED to adjourn. SECOND by Comm. Winship at 8:44 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca J. Warburton,
Secretary