

**Rochester Police Commission
Rochester, NH 03867**

Derek J. Peters, Chairman
Bruce E. Lindsay, Commissioner
Lucien G. Levesque, Commissioner

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

The Rochester Police Commission held their regular monthly meeting in City Hall Council Chambers on Wednesday, February 1, 2017. Present at this meeting was Comm. Peters, Comm. Lindsay, Comm. Levesque, Chief Toussaint, Dep. Chief Boudreau, Capt. Pinkham, Chaplain Edward Cilley, and 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.

B. Prayer. Chaplain Cilley led the opening prayer.

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no comment from the public.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

A. January 4, 2017 regular meeting.

Comm. Levesque MOVED to accept the minutes of the January 4, 2017, regular meeting as presented. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay and PASSED unanimously.

4. OLD AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

No old business for discussion.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Awards and Recognitions

1. 20-Years Service – Sgt. Jamey Balint. Chief Toussaint said “Jamey was here last month taking the oath for promotion to Sergeant. Yesterday, (1/31/17) he completed 20 years of service to the City of Rochester. This is a milestone in any career, but this is truly special because the job of a police officer can be so challenging. Police officers often see people at their worst moments and over the past twenty years Jamey has pretty much seen it all.”

In addition to being our newest Sergeant, Jamey is a field training officer and leads the regional traffic accident reconstruction team. He is also a bicycle officer, and a previous explorer advisor. He is on the board of the Rochester Police Benevolent Association. Over the past twenty years Jamey has received in excess of 25 letters of appreciation in his file noting his dedication. He received recognition for the distinguished unit action awards several times, the medal for bravery, the life saving award, and was also selected for the Red Hayes Community Ambassador award.

2. Employees of the Year. Employees of the Year awards are given out to members of the department who consistently give high levels of performance throughout the year. This year we recognized Police Officer of the Year Geoffrey Moore, and Support Person of the Year Communications Specialist Jen Holman.

Patrol – Off. Geoff Moore. Geoff just completed his fourth year with the department; and this is the second time in two years that he has been chosen as Officer of the Year. Geoff is consistent, dependable and demonstrates competence in many areas, tapered with good common sense. He is highly motivated and very proactive; often exceeding expectations. He demonstrates a strong ability to identify, analyze and solve problems. His quality of work reflects high professional standards.

Geoff has an uncanny ability to recognize and remember faces. Many of his arrests are for active warrants. He is able to recognize people walking down the street and remember who has warrants. Any officer who works with him will tell you that “Geoff knows everyone.”

This year he transferred to our motor vehicle unit, handling primarily all accidents and motor vehicle related calls on his shift. This unit has a heavy focus on motor vehicle enforcement targeting drug interdiction. In 2016 Geoff made 1,712 traffic stops and 230 arrests. In both of these categories Geoff is far above the average number of a patrolman.

Geoff has been building relationships in the community since his hire date. Recently he was able to refer a couple of citizens to the recovery center, after they called specifically asking to speak to him.

It was noted in his nomination letter from a senior officer that Geoff will not go through the drive through to purchase food or coffee. Geoff insists on going inside so that he can interact with employees and customers. This is just another example of Geoff's dedication to community engagement.

Geoff received the lifesaving award this year, and he was recognized along with six of his co-workers as an everyday hero by McDonalds. He is also an avid hockey fan and player, and has participated in the CHAD (Children's Hospital at Dartmouth) Battle of the Badges hockey game for several years.

Geoff has recently risen to "fame" as one of the managers of our face book page. Geoff excels in dependability, teamwork and cooperation and we are pleased to recognize him as Officer of the Year.

Support – Specialist Jen Holman. Jen has been with the City for 18 months. She has a Bachelor Degree in Sociology from UNH. Jen is a valued, dedicated employee with a solid understanding of the job. When she was hired, we had a severe staffing shortage. Jen worked multiple extra shifts to help fill these vacancies. She showed good judgment and decision making on several occasions.

Jen received two nomination letters for this award. One of her coworkers noted that she is always professional and is able to think on her toes when officers are out on calls. She has proven over and over again that she is able to do research into past calls to provide valuable information to officers who are en-route. Another coworker noted that Jen shows great maturity and dedication along with possession a positive attitude. She always goes above and beyond and is always interested in making things better.

Recently Jen demonstrated her dedication to the dispatch team by voluntarily switching her shift to prevent the entire center from having to rebid their shifts to fill an opening in the schedule. Jen displays a great attitude and consistently shows dedication to customer service.

It is interesting to note that we met Jen as a participant in our Citizen's Police Academy. During her dispatch observation she came to believe that this was a job she would not only enjoy but that she would be able to help people as well. We are happy to have Jen an employee and congratulate her on being selected as Support Person of the Year.

B. Community Outreach. Amanda Pinkham is the Coordinator of the **Rochester Community Recovery Center**. They are a valued partner in the community and are doing great work helping with the addiction issue.

Ms. Pinkham noted that the Recovery Center opened on October 3, 2016. It has steadily increased in visits. At the end of the first month there were 19 members and 1.875 visits per day that the center is open. At the end of January those numbers increased to 69 members averaging 3.76 visits per day.

Each Recoveree is asked to take 4 self assessments each month. These are:

- Assessment of Recovery Capital
- Wellness
- Quality of Life
- Sense of Community

These assessments measure their internal and external resources and shows ability to stay in recovery for better outcomes. It is a work in progress to get people to complete the assessments. We like them to take the assessments each month because it shows them their progress in their recovery goals.

The Recovery Coaches undergo the five-day CCAR training. They work with members on a 1:1 basis to help them achieve their self-identified and self-designed recovery goals and link them to needed supports in the community. We just completed a five day CCAR Recovery coaching training.

Recovery Coaches offer telephone support and will call members each week to check in on a member's sobriety, progress towards recovery goals, offer skills coaching, and educate them about different or new offerings at the center. We can also make contact via text or emails. At the end of January 48 people were receiving telephone support. It is positive to note they are answering their phones.

The Recovery Center provides 4 main types of services:

- Ancillary- Computer lab; Housing Assistance etc.
- Educational-Recovery Coach Academy; Teaching about addiction etc.
- Referrals-Referrals to Treatment, Employment services, etc.
- Events-AA, NA SMART Recovery etc.

The following outlines the services accessed by members in January 2017:

- Ancillary -- 4
- Educational -- 178
- Referrals -- 26
- Events -- 0

The referrals keep going up. Volunteers are the heart of how the center runs. We can use help with general admin, group facilitator, or being trained as a recovery coach. To date we have six volunteers and in January they donated 42 hours of service. The numbers for February are expected to increase as we just completed the five day CCAR Recovery coaching training. There will be additional classes moving forward.

We are on face book at RochesterRecovery. We are on Twitter at RochRecovery and on the web at www.rochesterrecovery.com

Our physical address is downtown at

48 North Main St
Rochester, NH 03867
P: 603-948-1153
F: 603-822-2806

Comm. Lindsay said the work you are doing is respected by a lot of people in the community. Generally what is the geographic region being represented?

Ms. Pinkham replied the majority are from Rochester, but they are seeing people from Dover, some as far away as Wolfeboro and also some from Maine. People are hearing about us and coming in.

Comm. Lindsay said you deal with a host of addictions, not just heroin.

Ms. Pinkham replied that's correct. There is alcohol, pain medications, and other drugs and the addictions to them.

Comm. Peters stated the doors are open regardless of their residence address.

Comm. Levesque asked if other recovery centers take all comers, or if one is closer to them do we refer them.

Ms. Pinkham replied that we may let them know of a center closer, but as far as she knows no center turns people away. We work closely with Safe Harbor and SOS.

C. Accept Resignation – Off. Dominique Murphy. The Department received a letter of resignation from Officer Dominique Murphy, effective January 20, 2017.

Comm. Levesque MOVED to accept the resignation, with regret, and to have the clerk send a letter acknowledging her years of service. Comm. Lindsay SECONDED the motion.

Comm. Peters added his thanks for her ten years of service, noting that she will be greatly missed.

The motion to ACCEPT the resignation PASSED unanimously.

D. Policy 26.1.2 Standards of Conduct: Commendations and Awards: Update: First Reading. This update is minor and combines part of the employee of the year awards. We used to have both a communications specialist and a support person recognized. Because both groups work in a support capacity and our support team is dwindling it makes sense to combine this award to one. It will still adequately cover the sworn and non sworn staff.

Comm. Levesque MOVED to place Policy 26.1.2 Standards of Conduct: Commendations and Awards into a first reading. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

E. Monthly Reports

1). Operations. Capt. Pinkham noted that four of the six wards met this period. The Honor Guard is presenting the colors this evening (2/1/17) at TD Garden before the Celtics Game. They also posted the colors for the January 10th Council meeting.

Field activities in December remain comparable to where they have been and no major trends have been identified for the month. The K9 unit had three call outs this period. Two tracks and one drug search.

We have started to add information regarding the recovery center. We had one visit to the Department in reference to the community access to recovery and we also transported a person to Frisbie Hospital to meet with a recovery coach.

On the support side ISB had 33 cases sent up from patrol for review. There are currently 101 cases assigned. There were five call outs. There were also 7 backgrounds conducted and 6 polygraphs. We presented 12 cases to the Grand Jury and all were true bills. We logged in 287 pieces of evidence and returned 65 pieces to owners. We also destroyed an additional 870 pieces of contraband.

The Communications Center is down two positions. Interviews have been conducted and two people are deep in the background process. Specialist Nicole Knox has been selected to fill the open lead dispatch position. She will start that role in the next rotation.

Community engagement Officer Miehle remains active attending numerous events including, crime line meetings, main street meeting, and helping to cook for the senior breakfast in conjunction with the Recreation Department. He also assisted Officer Moore and Officer Jackson with the criminal justice class tour of the department and review of some of our resources and equipment.

Teen night was canceled this period due to inclement weather.

The LEAD Program has begun in the elementary schools and the middle school. It will start in the high school this week. We are getting a lot of positive feedback regarding the program.

Comm. Peters inquired about the Recovery Center. What transpires? What is our role?

Chief Toussaint said to date we have had five people come into the PD seeking help. We have taken a position that we are much better off getting people with addiction disorders into recovery rather than arresting our way out of the problem.

So any time of day, 24/7 if a person is at the point they need to speak with someone, they can come into the police department lobby and tell dispatch why they are here. An officer will be sent out to talk with them, to give them a ride to the hospital for treatment. They will be connected with a recovery coach in a short period of time, usually about 20 minutes. We stay with the person until the recovery coach arrives and we hand them off. The recovery coach will then discuss the best options to get them on the road to recovery.

We fully realize that it's a leap of faith for people struggling to walk into the station and say I'm here for help. We are doing it. If they have illegal substances on them we will take them and destroy them, no questions asked. I'm hoping more people will use this program. We are promoting the program in the community through the officers. There are a lot of people dealing with issues that are borne of substance abuse disorders. We want to get them the help they need.

Comm. Lindsay asked if an officer makes a traffic stop and sees paraphernalia on the front seat. What if the person says I want to get help? What happens there?

Chief Toussaint said this is dependent on the situation at hand. If you are dealing or hauling large quantities this is not a get out of jail free card. An officer will use their discretion. But if this is possession level stuff and the person says I'm an addict and I want help. We can forgo charges and get them that help. That is what we are looking for.

2). Administrative. Dep. Chief Boudreau noted that the Patrol PC units were installed today in the front line cars. We had to buy a couple of cables that we needed, which we hadn't planned on. The equipment for the E-Ticket system also arrived. We are working on a mounting system for the printer, which is very small, about the size of a printer toner cartridge. The install and training is part of the grant match we were required to meet.

All of the new cruisers have been received, outfitted and are on the road.

Comm. Levesque asked when we talk about updating cruisers and installing modern technology, how does it help the officer.

Chief Toussaint replied the cruisers are essentially mobile offices. Having the new high definition cameras, which can record front and rear collecting evidence,

particularly on traffic stops is big. The patrol PC modern rugged MDTs they can see the dispatch screen of calls pending, they can add narratives to the call being sent to and pull report numbers, to complete a report in the field rather than in the station; this keeps them more efficient and accessible to the public. It cuts down on travel time. When you couple that with the e-ticket system that with a scan will backfill a lot of the information officers once had to handwrite, it doesn't get much more state of the art than that in efficiency and safety where prior they would have their heads down. Now they are still aware of their surroundings. These are not just "cool toys" they are making officers efficient using the resources we have in the best way possible.

Our budget projection looks good overall. We have talked with the finance department about our overtime challenges we are facing and getting them on board with us to work through this.

Dep. Chief Boudreau said we presented our FY18 budget to the City Manager this week. It was the first time for both me and Chief Toussaint doing this and overall it was a productive meeting.

We have started our training requirements for the year. We are starting with Taser recertification. We sent several officers to UNH for training on understanding and resolving conflict and de-escalation techniques for officers.

Officer Mann is almost a full month in the academy. Overall she is doing well. We are deep in the process for filling several of our police officer openings. Candidate Bailey is set to start later this month. A couple candidates need to complete the medical and psychological tests. Once those are received back we can move forward with getting them on the list for registration for the next Academy.

Bridging the Gaps will hold its next series of "It Takes a Village," on March 16, with a follow up in May at the Rochester Opera House.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence for the month included: Specialist Jen Holman is recognized for teamwork, adjusting her schedule to fill a shift vacancy and minimizing disruption to the team. Off. Miehle is thanked for providing a tour of the station to a Boy Scout group.

Det. Flathers noted a suspicious person in the area and was able to apprehend a robbery suspect while he was off duty.

7. INFORMATION:

A. Information Other; enclosed with Agenda.

1. Year End Comp Stat Overview. Chief Toussaint noted that we did a comparison from this year to last year, as well as to five years ago to measure our progress. Last year was an exceptional year. It is unrealistic to think that we will put up the same numbers this year as last year. The thumbnail sketch is that we stayed level with last year. We didn't lose anything, but we didn't gain either. We are always looking at the way we do things to make us more efficient. We are significantly short-handed currently, and will be until the fall, so we anticipate a drop in motor vehicle stops and proactive work due to staffing. But the commanders are working with the officers on this.

The big issue over the past year has been drugs. We saw a 21% increase in 2016 in overdoses, with a 90% increase in fatalities. This just shows the importance of getting on board with the recovery programs. We have a three-prong approach we are using starting with the LEAD program, then Bridging the Gaps to prevent future generations from going down the same road, and we also have the recovery aspect. There is still a traditional place for law enforcement in this. Drugs are causing robberies and burglaries, so we are still dealing with that.

Violent crime is up slightly, and that is a concern, but the majority is not of random acts of violence. We are seeing increases in domestic violence.

Overall, we are happy for where we are, but we are also always working on ways to improve.

2. Community Outreach. Comm. Levesque finds these helpful and he commends the department for continuing them. Are we going to still do them?

Chief Toussaint stated that is up to the Commission. We have pretty much exhausted our list of outreach that we do. If the Commission would like us to start to repeat those we certainly can.

It would be helpful to have Bridging the Gaps come to the March meeting, that way we can review the It Takes a Village program set for March 16.

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

Commissioner Levesque MOVED to enter a nonpublic session at 8:00 P.M. pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, paragraph II, section A (personnel) and section E (legal.) SECOND by Comm. Lindsay. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 3 – 0 with Comm. Levesque, Comm. Lindsay and Comm. Peters voting in the affirmative. A five-minute recess was called. The non-public session closed at 8:35 P.M. on a MOTION by Comm. Levesque. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay and PASSED unanimously.

9. MISCELLANEOUS

Comm. Lindsay MOVED to award merit increases on the respective anniversary dates to Sgt. Patrick Emerson (3.75%), Off. James Murphy (3.4%) Off. Justin Worthley (2.85%), Off. Justin Seckendorf (3.4%) and Off. John Gantert (3.1%). Comm. Levesque SECONDED the motion and it PASSED 3-0.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Comm. Lindsay MOVED to adjourn. SECOND by Comm. Levesque at 8:40 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

**Rebecca J. Warburton
Secretary**