



Rochester Police Commission Rochester, NH 03867

Derek J. Peters, Commissioner
David R. Stevens, Commissioner
David E. Winship, Jr. Commissioner

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

The Rochester Police Commission held their regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, August 2, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. in the Police Department Lecture Hall. Participants in this meeting: Comm. Peters, Comm. Stevens, Chief Boudreau, Dep. Chief Thomas, Capt. Swanberry, Capt. Pinkham, Chaplain Cilley, Secretary Warburton and invited guests.

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

All participated in the pledge of allegiance.

Chaplain Cilley led us in prayer.

A. Roll Call. The clerk called the roll marking Comm. Peters, Comm. Stevens present.

Comm. Winship was excused.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No one was present to offer any public comment.

3. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:**

A. June 7, 2023.

Comm. Stevens MOVED to accept the minutes of the June 7, 2023 meeting. Comm. Peters SECONDED the motion. The motion to accept the minutes as presented PASSED 2-0; Comm. Peters yes, Comm. Stevens yes.

4. **OLD AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** There was no old business at this time.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Retirement Recognitions: Dep. Chief Jason Thomas.

Chief Boudreau thanked all for coming to share in wishing Deputy Chief Thomas farewell. He said, "as I sat to write notes this afternoon, I only came up with three bullet points." What do I say, what can I say about a 32-year career, and even longer when accounting for his years as an Explorer.

You really are an example, a legacy and you will not be replaced. Starting in August of 1991 as a dispatcher. When I was hired in 1997 you were in dispatch wearing the polyester pants and the light baby blue uniform shirt. Jason was a leader in the center for the time that he was there. Those on the

road, his calming voice on the microphone. He set an example for peers. Officers and supervision responding to calls were confident in his ability to deliver the information needed. It was a pleasure to work with him in that capacity.

In December of 1998 he was hired as a police officer and went off to the Academy for what was then 12 weeks. He came back and was back in dispatch to help out due to shortages. He did it without complaint, as part of the team. From there Jason has done a little of everything. From training, to front line supervisor, and up through to Deputy Chief. The one position he never did was detectives.

Words cannot express what he has meant to this agency and community. He grew up here. Graduated Spaulding High School, and spent his adult life serving the citizens of this City and being there for his brothers and sisters in the PD and others in the community. I keep hearing his praise these past few weeks. People can't believe he's leaving. He's a staple here. He's been here longer than most of the patrol staff have been alive.

Chief Boudreau said I can't begin to express the gratitude that he deserves, what he's meant to me throughout my career. Coming up through the ranks together where both of us said achieving the rank of Sergeant was as high as we are going. I'm glad he made the choice as well to promote. He's been by my side, to lean on, run things by his level head, where he listens and says that sounds right, or no, that's a little off. I'm personally going to miss you.

Jason was presented with an etched plaque bearing both of the patches we have used during his tenure. He was also presented with a shirt shadowbox containing his badge, ribbons, his FBI National Academy pin. Chief Boudreau said we are happy and proud to present this to you on behalf of the Department.

Given the microphone Dep. Chief Thomas said he has the Chief beat on this. He has six bullet points. He said we are on the same page a lot. I had this whole spiel, but that's not me. I do have to apologize to my family for dropping the ball. My mom is in Florida with my aunt, painting my house so she isn't here. The rest of my family, I forgot to mention tonight to them.

First, I am very proud, honored and grateful to have spent my entire career at Rochester Police Department. 32 years, retiring on my anniversary. Adding my Explorer years is about 36 years. So I have 36 years of emotions tonight.

Dep. Chief Thomas said I want to thank this Police Commission and past Police Commissions, and Chief Boudreau and past Chiefs for affording me opportunities. I will be forever grateful. I work with some of the most amazing people. You can't get through 32 years in a municipality, the type of work we do, the stresses, and tragedies without great peer support and co-workers. We have always had great camaraderie.

Without my family and friends I wouldn't be here. I love and value my family and friends.

To the younger officers in the audience I wish all happy, healthy and safe careers. Life in general is a roller coaster. Work is too. Professionally when you are down here, don't make any decisions. Wait until you are level. I've seen people make hasty decisions they have later regretted. I have always preached one of the things Chief Allen used to say, which was to never pass up an

opportunity. Don't say I've only been, I'll never get, it might not be a promotion, but a specialty team. Don't pass it up.

Lastly, a former Captain up here for his own retirement said this, and this is so true in this particular moment. He said I'm not going to miss the circus, but I will miss the clowns.

15 minute recess – back 7:40

Comm. Peters said on behalf of the Commission and the Citizens, thank you Dep (Chief Thomas) for being part of this great organization. I was privileged working with you when I was at fire. We have seen the good, bad and ugly. I will miss you as a friend as well as a colleague. You have been a great person to deal with and we thank you for your service.

B. Accept Resignations

- 1.) Officer Vatcher
- 2.) Officer Velasquez

Comm. Stevens MOVED to accept the resignations of Officer Vatcher and Officer Velasquez. Comm. Peters SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED 2-0.

C. Monthly Reports

1). Operations. Capt. Pinkham reported that both Lt. Bossi and Sgt. Benjamin attended the Rental Property Owners Association meetings. There were no Honor Guard events. The K9 had two community events this period; one at the Gonic School and another at the Middle School. They also had two tracks this period; one for a juvenile and one for a missing vulnerable adult.

Capt. Pinkham reported that he is overseeing comp stat with the resignation of Steve Kerlee. We have had some technical issues with the program looking the same as prior reports, but that report is forthcoming for the Commission. We can report that there are no concerning trends this period.

Support. Capt. Swanberry reported that 27 cases were sent to ISB or detective generated. There are 85 cases under investigation. There were two call outs, one evidence call out and three backgrounds.

As we start the move to a new records management program we are validating the data in evidence and are conducting an internal audit. This is a hand checking over 50,000 pieces of evidence.

The CEO and POP unit have been stopping by the summer camp programs and also doing community outreach and extra patrols and foot beats. The POP unit has 15 open cases and made nine arrests this period.

We had a resignation in the Communications center. A new hire is progressing well. We have two backgrounds underway and if both are successful it will leave us with two openings.

Comm. Peters inquired if we are still backfilling those vacancies with police and fire. Capt. Swanberry replied occasionally but more so with dispatchers and per diems.

2.) Administration. Dep. Chief Thomas reported this report covers two months. Officer Smith and Officer Harris both passed the law package test out. Officer Smith has resumed solo patrol. Officer Harris is in field training and accelerating rapidly. Vermont has similar laws and we anticipate him being released to solo patrol in two weeks. Officer Birmingham was also released to solo patrol this period.

On June 12 Officer Bernstein and Officer Ball started the 193rd Academy. They are in week 7. Officer Settele and Officer Hill are progressing well in field training.

We ended FY23 in very good financial shape.

The beginning of a fiscal year is always busy as we prepare purchase orders for items that we pay out annually such as maintenance contracts and utilities. Those purchase orders over \$5,000.00 were blanket purchase orders being put in place to pay for these things.

We were funded for four vehicles in this year, there were no new cars added to the fleet. We took delivery on Friday of a Transit van from a dealership in Massachusetts. This will replace the 2005 SWAT van that has not been road worthy for over a year. We will be purchasing two front line cars, to replace our two oldest car from a dealer in NH who had a cancellation. This same dealer also had a backline car on the lot that we will purchase to replace a 2013 Ford Focus that has heavy rust.

To put these purchases in perspective; we were authorized in FY23 to purchase a new backline car to add to the Investigations bureau. We have nine detectives sharing three cars. We ordered this car in January of 2023 and are being told it has a build date of July 20, and can expect to take delivery of it in August. So finding this other backline car on a lot is very lucky.

Officer Adams started with the agency on July 9. She and Officer McCann are off to the Academy as of July 31.

Chief Boudreau added that in the training portion you will see that we sent several officers in June to crisis intervention training. I want to highlight it to show we started making a concerted effort a couple of years ago to get our officers training. We were hamstrung in completing this by the pandemic. We were the first CIT team in the state. Lt. Turner has done an outstanding job of taking over and getting officers into available CIT trainings. We are 80% all certified in the patrol, detective and sergeant levels. The basic police academy will now offer this class as part of the academy training. This is a huge step. This is an important part of our function. I wanted to highlight the excellent work Lt. Turner is doing in this area.

Comm. Peters commented that a lot are taking training.

Chief Boudreau replied that we have a young department and they want training and we are working on that.

Comm. Peters noted that we are hosting a couple of upcoming courses that gets us seats for free. We appreciate the hard work the men and women do to find these courses, but to also get our young officers in there, or to host them makes a difference.

Comm. Peters commented we are currently down two positions. The next academy class will be in January.

D. Other.

Chief Boudreau provided the Commission with some updates.

1. Body Cameras. We continue to work with our vendor on that. We believe the website is all set and we have been testing it this week. We hope to bring them on line this month.

Comm. Peters ask if all had had training.

Chief Boudreau said some have had training.

2. Crime Analyst. With the resignation of Steve Kerlee Lexis Nexis has conducted interviews for a replacement. There was a candidate we liked and following the job offer, she turned it down. So we are back to advertising for that position.

3. National Night Out. This was held the previous evening. We had an excellent turnout and great weather. Nicole Rodler did an outstanding job coordinating this for another year. She was a bit stressed out getting all the pieces together but it went off well.

4. Lilac City Fun Festival. The City hosted this event again and it was very successful. We had maxed out the vendor capacity for this. There were a large number of city staff and volunteers on hand.

5. Promotions. Comm. Peters announced next month we would be naming the new Deputy Chief and Captain, following by other promotions from those moving up.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received for the month included: Off. Masse and Specialist Brinkman are recognized for connecting residents to services. Det. Garstin and Det. Decost are thanked by PSTC Director Scippa for assisting at the 191st Academy Training. Capt. Swanberry is recognized by William Elwell for his coordination of a successful Citizen's Police Academy. Off. Lazzar is thanked for participating in the summer reading program kickoff at the Library.

Comm. Peters noted our help with the full time academy. He also noted the father and son who walked into the PD lobby needing a warm place to stay. Staff met with them and put them in touch with people and currently they are not homeless. They wrote a nice letter. It goes to show you can walk in off the street with a need and if they can do it, they will. This is a credit to the Department and the training our officers have. Thanks for the way you interact with the public out there.

7. INFORMATION: There was nothing for discussion.

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

Commissioner Stevens MOVED to enter a nonpublic session at 8:00 P.M. pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, paragraph II, section A (personnel). Comm. Peters SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 2 – 0 with Comm. Peters – yes, Comm. Stevens – yes.

The non-public session closed at 8:15 P.M. on a MOTION by Comm. Stevens. Comm. Peters SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 2 – 0 with Comm. Peters – yes, Comm. Stevens – yes.

Comm. Stevens MOVED to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion was SECONDED by Comm. Peters SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 2 – 0 with Comm. Peters – yes, Comm. Stevens – yes.

9. MISCELLANEOUS:

Comm. Stevens MOVED to accept the evaluations of Officer Brinkman and Officer Garneau (top of grade) and to approve the merit track advancements as presented for Officer Andrew Jackson (3.65%), Officer Burrell (track 2), Officer Granatowski (track 2), Officer Lazzar (track 2), Officer Velasquez (track 2), Officer Rummo (track 3), Officer Slankard (track 4), Officer Seager (track 7), and Officer Danie (track 9). Comm. Peters SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED by roll call vote Comm. Peters – yes, Comm. Stevens – yes.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Comm. Stevens MOVED to adjourn. SECOND by Comm. Peters at 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca J. Warburton
Secretary

APPROVED BY COMMISSION: