



**WATERTOWN POLICE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

**WATERTOWN TOWN HALL
61 ECHO LAKE ROAD
WATERTOWN, CT
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024 - 7:00 P.M.**

1. Convene Regular Meeting
Chairman Richard Antonetti called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT: Richard Antonetti, Chairman
David Jannetty, V. Chairman
Richard Rossi, Secretary
Robert McCarthy

ABSENT: Jamie Hobart Lambo

ALTERNATES

PRESENT: Carmine Verno

ALTERNATES

ABSENT: Ronald Russ

OTHERS PRESENT: Joshua Bernegger, Police Chief
Renee Dominguez, Deputy Chief

Carmine Verno sat in for Jamie Hobart Lambo

3. Public Participation
Katherine Camara, 31 Cottage Place talked about cars stopping their vehicles at stop signs waiting for their children from the school bus is a safety issue. Ms. Camara talked about her complaint to be discussed executive session.

4. Minutes Approval
 - a. Regular Meeting – January 10, 2024

Motion: Richard Rossi seconded by Robert McCarthy to approve the meeting minutes of January 10, 2024.

Discussion:

Aye: 4 McCarthy, Jannetty, Rossi, Verno

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 Antonetti

Motion passes

5. Correspondance – none.

6. Executive Session: Discussion of a civilian complains hand-delivered to commission on January 10, 2024.

Motion: David Jannetty seconded by Carmine Verno: to move into executive session to discuss the civilian complaint hand-delivered to the commission on January 10, 2024. We are inviting in the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief of Police and the Town Attorney Paul Jessell.

Motion passed unanimously

7. New Business
 - a. Discussion and possible action regarding a civilian complaint hand-delivered to commission on January 10, 2024.

Motion: David Jannetty seconded by Carmine Verno to dismiss the January 10, 2024 hand-delivered appeal for Chief Bernegger's decision in civilian complaint #IA23-05 finding the complaint to be unfounded.

Motion passed unanimously

8. Old Business
 - a. Update on DOT action regarding a flashing beacon sign on Woodbury Road, just prior to the intersection with Wolf Hill Road. – received an email from the DOT on January 30th stating the review is ongoing and they will conduct a field review in the following weeks as the weather permits.

Chair Richard Antonetti stated he had heard from one of the residents on Wolf Hill Road and the DOT cut down some of the brush and trees that were in the area.

b. Discussion and possible action regarding a request for a “Stop” sign at the intersection of Barnes Road and Bunker Hill Road. – the regional collective investigation team came out and did a site line study. The recommended site line distance for passenger vehicles on a grade in a 30 mile per hour zone which Bunker Hill in that area is 335 feet of site distance. If you are stopped at the end of Barnes Road at the stop sign and you look to the right there is 922 feet of site distance. That is significant site distance, there is no issue looking to the right. Looking to the left however the grade drops down quickly that the distance there is only 240 feet, well below the recommended distance of 355 feet. There is no question there is a site line issue looking to the left, the question is what is the appropriate measure for it. We recommend warning signs on the approach to Barnes Road on Bunker Hill would be in order, there is no signage currently saying there is an intersection ahead. We could put a sign “intersection ahead” and have the words “SLOW” painted in the travel lane. Our accident history in the past five years, there have been no accidents to that intersection and the study noted one accident a long time ago.

Motion: David Jannetty seconded by Robert McCarty: to install by recommendation a new intersection ahead sign on Bunker Hill Road on the west bound approach to Barnes Road and on the same westbound approach to Barnes Road paint the word “Slow” on the west bound.

Motion passed unanimously

9. Chairman’s Report:

Chairman Richard Antonetti asked about the signs on Commercial Street.

Joshua Bernegger, Police Chief answered I have spoken to our Public Works Director last week in regards to what the timeline is. It took them a while to procure the signs, I believe they have the signs and posts that they need now. When the weather clears it is on their agenda to have them installed.

Chairman Richard Antonetti asked about the 30-mph sign for Middlebury Road.

Joshua Bernegger, Police Chief answered I mentioned that to him and he is aware of that project, they have been so busy with projects, they have not gotten to that yet but they are aware of it.

Chairman Richard Antonetti asked about the school zones and doubling fines and asked if the cost factor was included in the budget.

Joshua Bernegger, Police Chief answered I did not include any funds for signage generally Public Works purchases all the signage for roadways. If the commission wants to change the

speed of the road in the school zone and put up a sign that would require an application to the DOT.

Vice Chair David Jannetty recommended to ask the Chief to do a traffic crash data during school hours to see if it is warranted, we may not have an issue.

Chair Richard Antonetti asked if that information could be done for the March meeting. Mr. Antonetti mentioned the Connecticut Safety Summit on March 30th and asked commissioners if they wanted to attend. The DOT has generated Traffic Enforcement Safety Guidelines for municipalities by going on the Connecticut DOT on how the law has been written up. He talked about a device that could record speed on traffic lights and asked the commission to review and consider what they wanted to do and to have it on the agenda for next month.

10. Chief's Report

Chief Bernegger gave a brief presentation on the police budget.

a. January 2024– Monthly Department Activity Report

Joshua Bernegger reported:

- 1) The Watertown Police Department's sworn ranks are fully staffed with 42 members. Of these 42 members, 1 is in the academy and will graduate in April. One additional member is on maternity duty.
- 2) Our Youth Police Academy has been progressing well, meeting every Monday night. A special thank you to Commissioners Jannetty and Verno for presenting.
- 3) A Citizens Police Academy has eleven (11) participants and has been meeting every Tuesday evening.
- 4) The Watertown Police Department is partnering with Southern Connecticut State University and our very own Sun, Moon & Stars autism group to host a "mock traffic stops" session at Watertown High School on Saturday, April 6th. Waterbury and Naugatuck Police Departments will be assisting with the event also. The intent of the event is to allow autistic drivers and/or family members to experience a traffic stop to help alleviate misunderstandings and anxieties.
- 5) The Watertown Police Department partnered with the Watertown High School principal's office and held a Youth Forum focused on the role of police in society. Panelists included police personnel, the superintendent of schools, juvenile probation, Watertown Youth Services, and a regional mental health professional.
- 6) The Chief and Deputy Chief will be presenting the police department's budget to Town Council next Tuesday evening (February 20th) at 7:00 pm.

11. Adjournment

Motion: David Jannetty seconded by Carmine Verno to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Police Commission
Regular Meeting
February 14, 2024
Page 5

Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Antonetti
Chairman