



**WATERTOWN POLICE COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

**WATERTOWN TOWN HALL  
61 ECHO LAKE ROAD  
WATERTOWN, CT  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 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  
Richard Rossi, Secretary  
Robert McCarthy

ABSENT: David Jannetty, V. Chairman  
Jamie Hobart Lambo

ALTERNATES

PRESENT: Carmine Verno

ALTERNATES

ABSENT: Ronald Russ

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

Motion: Robert McCarthy seconded by Richard Rossi to amend the March 13<sup>th</sup> agenda to include the election of Police Commissioner officers and renumber the remaining items accordingly.

Motion passed unanimously

3. Election of Commission Officers

Chairman

- a. Motion: Richard Rossi seconded by Robert McCarthy I would like to nominate Richard Antonetti for Chairman.

All those in favor say Aye.

Motion passed unanimously

Richard Antonetti is Chairman

Vice Chairman

- b. Carmine Verno seconded by Robert McCarthy I would like to nominate David Jannetty for Vice Chair.

All those in favor say aye.

Motion passed unanimously

David Jannetty is Vice Chair

Secretary

- c. Richard Rossi seconded by Robert McCarthy I would like to nominate Jamie Lambo for Secretary.

All those in favor say aye.

Motion passed unanimously

Jamie Lambo is Secretary.

Carmine Verno will sit in for David Jannetty

4. Public Participation

Katherine Camara, 31 Cottage Place talked about the sign on Echo Lake Road and stated its illegal to post signs on telephone poles. She noted there was a speed limit sign also on the pole. The realtor sign came down but the speed limit sign is still up there. Ms. Camara noted other areas in town, a utility pole on Porter Street has a reflective mirror, between Deland and the entrance here there is a no parking sign on a utility pole. Ms. Camara talked about her complaints made to the Police Commission.

5. Minutes Approval

a. Regular Meeting – February 14, 2024

Motion: Robert McCarthy seconded by Carine Verno to accept the meeting minutes of February 14, 2024.

Discussion:

Motion passed unanimously

6. Correspondence – Hawk Studio/Rose Closures

Joshua Bernegger stated the Police Department received correspondence from a movie film studio called Haw Studios putting a request in to close a small portion of Ice House Road on Sunday, March 17th from noon until 4:00 p.m. from the intersection of Echo Lake Road to the intersection of Saco Street for the purpose of shooting film on that small section of road. I did check with the Town Manager and all the other department heads in town, none expressed any objections to the request for any reason. Road closures do require the approval of the local traffic authority. I have no objection to it, they said they will be hiring a private duty police officer on each side of the road closure. It does not affect any resident getting to their homes. There are no homes on that stretch and anybody can come on to Ice House Road from the French Street side access.

Motion: Carmine Verno seconded by Richard Rossi make a motion for the proposed closure of a section of Ice House Road on March 17th from the hours of 12 noon to 4 p.m. for the purposes of filming.

Motion passed unanimously

7. New Business – Discussion of “School Zones”

Richard Antonetti asked do we need school zone signs, there are none in Watertown.

Joshua Bernegger answered that is correct, I was asked by the commission last month to prepare a report for the commission on our traffic situation in area of each of our public schools in the Town of Watertown. That would involve what the current speed limits are on

roads that are contiguous with the property as well as the accident history and enforcement history in those particular areas. The reports are included in the paperwork I just provided you. According to state law the local traffic authority can establish school zones on town-owned roads and authorize the installation of school zone, fines doubled in those particular zones. However, if the local traffic authority is requesting a speed limit alteration from what is already authorized by the DOT that request for a school zone speed limit change would have to be applied for through the State Office of the State Traffic Administration. To establish a school zone on a state-owned roadway that requires an application to the DOT Traffic Engineering Division not the State Traffic Administration. If they do authorize that and we are seeking a speed limit reduction in that school zone that would be a separate application to the Office of the State Traffic Administration. Often the state requires the installation of those flashing lights on a school zone speed limit sign where the speed limit is only reduced during school hours when those lights are flashing. The installation of those signs runs between about 12 to 15 thousand dollars per school zone for a pair to be installed at the town's expense.

Joshua Bernegger reviewed the accident and enforcement history with the schools. We could have possible action for school's zone creations put on next month's agenda if the commission would like to consider the proposal.

Mr. Bernegger will check into the law for signs on utility poles.

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 - no new updates. The state has done significant amount of tree trimming in the area.
  
9. Chairman's Report – Congratulations to Patrizia Guerrera on thirty years of service with the Watertown Police Department. The chairman offered in behalf of the commission congratulations to Patrizia.
  
10. Chief's Report
  - a. February 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 on April 7<sup>th</sup>. One additional** member is on maternity duty, and one member has been on injury leave for the last month.
    - 2) Our Youth Police Academy concluded a couple of weeks ago. All attendees received their diplomas and enjoyed their experience.

- 3) A Citizens Police Academy concludes next Tuesday (3/19/24), where 14 attendees will receive their diplomas.
- 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 6<sup>th</sup>. 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) Beginning this afternoon, Watertown PD personnel will be spending an hour every Wednesday afternoon with Swift Middle School students, engaging them in various physical activities.
- 6) The Watertown Police Department continues to participate in several traffic-related grants, including Rural Roads Speed Enforcement, Driving Under the Influence, MV Theft/Crime Suppression, Click-it or Ticket, and Distracted Driving.

11. Adjournment

Motion: Robert McCarthy seconded by Carmine Verno to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

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Richard Antonetti  
Chairman