

WOODBIDGE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

March 7, 2017

The Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority was held on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Training Room of the Woodbridge Police Department.

PRESENT: Commissioner Robert Berke, Commissioner Matthew Gilbride, Commissioner Stephen Falcigno, Commissioner Deborah Desir

OTHERS: Chief Frank P. Cappiello, Lt. Jeffery Leiby, Administrative Assistant Janice Innocenzi

Chairman Berke called the regular meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority to order at 6:02 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE:

- Letter – Re: Left Turn from Bank Street onto Amity Road: Chief Cappiello notified the Board that a letter was received from Lina Alpert of Alpert Realty to request installation of a left-turn arrow or changing the timing on the light to give those trying to turn left out of Bank Street the opportunity to turn. The DOT District Supervisor informed the Chief that a complete overhaul is planned for the intersection, but that won't happen until 2021. The DOT Supervisor will send out a crew to reevaluate the timing on the light and will report their findings to the Chief. Chief Cappiello has spoken with Mrs. Alpert to inform her of the action being taken and he advised her about the Community Connectivity Program safety audit, which outlined some long-term conceptual ideas for what might be done to improve traffic in the business district, which includes the Bank Street area.

TRAFFIC MATTERS:

- Rimmon Road (Rte. 313) @ Johnson Road – DOT Traffic Study: In March 2016, the Board requested the State Traffic Commission conduct a second study at that intersection. In February 2017, Chief Cappiello, Deputy Chief Stuart and Public Works Director Warren Connors attended a meeting at the DOT in Newington to get the results of the new study. The prior study recommended lowering the grade on Rte. 313 to increase visibility traveling eastbound toward New Haven, but that was met with opposition by neighbors worried about encroachment on their properties and speeding concerns. The new study revealed that the intersection does not meet the criteria for a 4-way intersection, 4-way stop sign or traffic light. To improve safety at that intersection, they plan to install a Vehicle Actuated Warning System which is used in other states and would be the first one in Connecticut. There will be signage with flashing lights on both sides of Rimmon Road warning that there is a car in the intersection. There will be video cameras on both sides of Johnson Road and as a car approaches, warning lights will be activated and stay on while a vehicle is in the intersection and for another 3 or 4 seconds after the car leaves the intersection. This is a warning device, not a regulatory device, so it does not require action or a vote by the Board. The project is scheduled for the spring of 2018 and at the same time, all flashing lights at Rimmon /Johnson and Rimmon/Beecher will be upgraded.
- Community Connectivity Program (Update):
Chief Cappiello followed up on three topics from the road safety audit-
 1. Rte. 69 @ Bradley Road Intersection Pedestrian Facility Signalization Upgrade – There is an issue with the crossing button on the pole not working. The DOT advised the Chief that a signalization upgrade was scheduled for the future, but when the Woodbridge Village community did not come to be, they revised everything. They are going to take a look at that button to see if something can be done in the meantime.

2. Sharrow Pavement Markings for Bicyclists on Lucy Street –The DOT informed the Chief that this is regulated by the State, but the DOT does not actually provide or install the markings. The Town would have to petition the State for a permit and the Town would have to do the work themselves; it is somewhat expensive, markings would be required every 250 feet and would require maintenance and repainting. The information has been forwarded to Betsy Yagla, the coordinator for this project at Town Hall, and if the Town decides they want to move forward, she will let us know.
3. Bus Stop at Rte. 63 @ Bradley Road – Betsy Yagla has informed Chief Cappiello that the Economic Development Committee is conducting research at the businesses located down in that lower area to find out what the Town can possibly do to for them. One of them was the relocation and moving of bus stops. Betsy Yagla asked us to hold off until they get feedback from all the businesses.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Gilbride) to adjourn the regular meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority at 6:10 p.m. and move into the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners.

Respectfully submitted:

Janice Innocenzi

Janice Innocenzi
Administrative Assistant

WOODBRIIDGE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

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PRESENT: Commissioner Robert Berke, Commissioner Matthew Gilbride, Commissioner Stephen Falcigno, Commissioner Deborah Desir

OTHERS: Chief Frank P. Cappiello, Lt. Jeffery Leiby, Administrative Assistant Janice Innocenzi

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- B.O.P.C. Regular Meeting – February 7, 2017

The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Falcigno) to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners/Woodbridge Traffic Authority held on February 7, 2017.

PERSONNEL MATTERS:

- Retired Officer Robert Crowther: Mr. Crowther addressed the Board and reading from a prepared statement, he asked the Board's consideration to rehire him; he expressed that he made a mistake by retiring and is requesting to return to the Police Department as a uniformed officer under reasonable terms and to be reinstated as a Woodbridge Police Officer.
- *Commissioner Desir joined the meeting at 6:13 p.m.*

Guests in attendance: Ronald Suraci, Director -UPSEU/COPS (police union); Lisa MacNamara, Special Agent - FBI, New Haven; Woodbridge Police Officers Brian Pedalino, Antonio DiMatteo, Richard Monaco, Joseph Kubik, Gerald Kubik, Michael Luzzi, Robert Scott, Mark Modine, Learco Capozzo, Kevin Prentice, John Calabrese and Woodbridge Police Dispatcher Donna Carr. Some spoke in favor of Officer Crowther's reinstatement; others spoke regarding understaffing and manpower shortages.

Ron Suraci spoke regarding understaffing as it relates to officer safety and asked that everything be done to fill the vacant police officer positions and he encouraged the Board to reinstate Officer Crowther to immediately fill one of the open positions. He said the union is in favor of Officer Crowther's reinstatement; he put the Police Commission on notice that there are some issues and said they will be compiling information as to how many times officers are on calls by themselves and the potential safety issues for officers.

Lisa MacNamara spoke regarding an accident that recently occurred in Woodbridge where she and her husband (who is the Police Chief in Fairfield) rendered assistance. Mr. MacNamara helped direct traffic and Mrs. MacNamara rendered first aid to the people involved in the accident. A Woodbridge Officer did respond, but it was a serious accident and it was a significant amount of time before someone else would arrive. Mrs. MacNamara also spoke on Officer Crowther's behalf and respectfully requested that he be brought back to the Department.

Officer Richard Monaco spoke in support of Officer Crowther; he asked the Board to be an advocate for the Department and to please seriously consider reinstatement.

Chairman Berke commented that this is a really tough financial time as far as the positions we have and the

money we are allotted to spend on the Department, so there are some considerations that are made that are beyond the actual person. As far as the openings we have, hiring a certified officer makes sense for a lot of reasons because they are trained and ready to go instantly without having to go through the academy. There was a suggestion that there are 4 spots; 2 of them were new hires and some idea that the other 2 would be certified officers, but unfortunately we are waiting for the budget process, we are not done with that process yet, but it will be very soon, so we will address it shortly and we appreciate all the comments that were said.

Officer Mark Modine spoke regarding the night of the accident that was previously mentioned by Mrs. MacNamara. He said that he was one of the officers working that night and had to make the decision whether to go to the motor vehicle accident, a larceny in progress or the report of gunshots heard at Sperry Park. There were only two officers on when those 3 calls came in and he was waiting for Dispatch to tell him which call to go to. When he responded to the larceny in progress, there were 6 males he had to deal with. He also spoke about Officer Crowther's wealth of experience and asked the Board to reinstate Officer Crowther.

Commissioner Falcigno said he agrees with everything that has been said about Officer Crowther; that he has known Bob for many years and he is one of the most honorable gentlemen there is.

Commissioner Gilbride assured everyone that the Board hears their concerns.

Officer John Calabrese spoke about the importance of having that third person working with the two officers on busy Friday nights. Officer Brian Pedalino explained what it is like being an officer working the "unassigned shift" which saves money for the Town by not hiring overtime to cover those shifts.

- Workers' Compensation Injuries and Updates: Chief Cappiello reported that we have one officer who remains out of work after having surgery at the end of January. The officer is going for physical therapy and will be out of work for at least another three weeks.
- New Recruit Hiring Process Updates: Both recruits received their conditional offer of employment; they have complied with the stipulation that they must withdraw from consideration by other departments and they each provided us with copies of those withdrawal letters; both passed the required pre-employment physical exams. We have secured a seat at the POSTC academy on April 7th for Daniel Sanchez and Karl Rodriguez-Perez will be graduating from college in May and will attend the police academy which begins July 7th.
- Request to Carry Unused Vacation Days: Chief Cappiello asked the Board's consideration to allow Deputy Chief Raymond Stuart to carry over twenty-one (21) unused vacation days. The Deputy Chief was unable to use all of his vacation days due to workload, job responsibilities and his role serving as Acting Chief.

The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Desir) to approve the request for Deputy Chief Raymond Stuart to carry over twenty-one (21) unused vacation days.

- Organizational Chart / Responsibilities: Chief Cappiello provided copies of the Department organizational chart and job responsibilities for the Board's review. General discussion took place.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- There were no Public Comments.

REVIEW OF REPORTS:

Financial Report: Chief Cappiello reported that we are eight (8) months into the fiscal year and are at 63% of our budget used thus far; if we stay on track, we will finish up within budget. Overtime is in direct correlation with our manpower issues.

The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Desir) to accept the Financial Report.

Activity Report:

Chief Cappiello gave an overview of activity for the month of February:

- 2 winter storms (Feb. 9 & 13) –12 roads were blocked through rush hour and into the evening.
- 1 residential burglary (Feb. 10) – A sliding door was forced open; the bedroom and some other parts of the home were ransacked; several thousand dollars in cash was taken.
- On Feb. 10, Detectives assisted the Fulton County District Attorney’s Office in Atlanta, Georgia. Their white collar crime unit alerted our Department that they had arrest warrants for 2 suspects out of the State of Georgia involving a large Ponzi scheme involving diamonds. The husband and wife were renting a house in Woodbridge and our officers made the arrests and they were sent back to Georgia.
- During the snowstorm on Feb. 13, we had a report from South Bradley Road of a person struck by a motor vehicle who sustained a severe leg injury. When officers responded they found out there was a robbery that involved several people; most of the individuals were acquaintances and it appeared to be drug related.
- Car Fire: In January, a car was torched at the Country Club of Woodbridge; it was a stolen vehicle from New Haven and it was determined that the vehicle was used in multiple robberies and several shootings in the New Haven and North Haven areas. Detectives are working with the New Haven County Shooting Task Force and other Departments on this case.
- While conducting motor vehicle stops on three separate occasions during the month of February, officers located people wanted on outstanding arrest warrants.
- SRO: Investigated a sexual assault case which involved an incident that happened off campus.

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Desir) to accept the Activity Report.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

- Commendations to be Signed: The Board signed three commendations for two officers and one dispatcher, which will be presented at a future award ceremony.
- MOU (Beecher Road School): The MOU was modified as requested at last month’s meeting and given to the Board for their approval. The matter was tabled until the April meeting.
- Joint Meeting of JCC, FBI, CSP and WPD (Update): On February 16, the Chief, Deputy Chief Stuart, and representatives from the FBI and CSP met with JCC Directors and staff to discuss recent incidents, along with procedures and protocols for similar incidents, how to prepare for the future and to address any concerns they had. Lt. Leiby attended a similar meeting on February 7th involving JCC staff members. The first threat case was January 18th and the second threat was on January 31st. The FBI will be holding an upcoming training event in New Haven for Jewish institutions and we have been invited to attend. The FBI reported that as of last Friday, there were 120 threats nationwide during the last month.
- Speed Trailer (Update): The Speed Awareness Monitoring Trailer has been delivered and will be operational by mid-spring.
- Phone System (Update): The new phone system is in the works; equipment and parts have been received and technicians should have the system completely installed in the next few weeks.
- DEMHS Grant Award: We recently received two grant awards from the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security for a total of almost \$9,000. The Finance Director will allow us to use these funds to purchase equipment related to homeland security efforts.

The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Falcigno) to accept the Report of the Chief of Police.

BUDGET:

- Chief Cappiello reported that one of our vehicles needs to have a transmission replaced; it will cost \$5,200 and most of the money came from our vehicle parts line and the rest was transferred from equipment parts.

OLD BUSINESS:

- There was no Old Business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS:

- There was no New Business to discuss.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Desir) to move into Executive Session at 7:00 p.m. to discuss personnel and budget matters. (Board members were allowed to stay and all others were excused.)

- The Board moved out of Executive Session at 8:01 p.m.

ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- There were no motions made, no votes taken.
- Commissioner Berke addressed Officer Crowther advising him that as far as his application, because we are in a difficult budget time right now, we really don't know where we stand with our positions, so we can't make a decision on reinstatement until a month to a month and a half. It will have to be addressed at our next meeting.
- Commissioner Gilbride said the shortage is not a new issue to the Board and they have made different attempts to try to resolve it. You can't be put in positions that are not safe. He said it is one of his biggest concerns as a Commissioner that officers are not getting the backing that you need, or if you didn't have the equipment, or whatever it was; you've got to have it. The first approach will be to have the meeting on Monday about the assignments to get immediate coverage because that is first and foremost.
- Commissioner Desir said the biggest concern is to keep the officers safe because if they are not safe, then we are not safe.
- Chief Cappiello addressed the officers in attendance and said that everyone knows where he stands as far as getting back to full strength; we made a presentation to the Board of Selectmen, and so there's no doubt in your mind either, our Board is in favor and are looking out for everyone's safety and they don't want us to be shorthanded, but they also have to answer and their hands are tied sometimes, too. They don't want to see us shorthanded and don't want their families shortchanged and are doing the best they could. In this crazy climate we are in right now economically, nationwide and in the state, let it all play out and we will work together to get it done.
- Commissioner Falcigno said that as a Commission, we advocate for you and anybody that misleads you into thinking that we don't support you is, at best, not well informed. You have our full support and the Chief does; we advocate for you guys whether it is through the budget or at Commission meetings, but we are always advocating for you because we believe in what you do.
- Chairman Berke announced there will be a **Special Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners on Monday, March 13, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.** to address the issue of special assignments, which includes the two SRO positions and the Statewide Narcotics Task Force, based on the urgency of the Department and the safety of the officers and bring them back as patrol; he said it is the fastest way to fill the spots.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Falcigno) to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Janice Innocenzi
Janice Innocenzi
Administrative Assistant

WOODBRIIDGE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

MOTIONS

March 7, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE:

- There were no Public Comments.

TRAFFIC MATTERS:

- There were no motions made, no votes taken, during the discussion of Traffic matters.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Gilbride) to adjourn the regular meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority at 6:10 p.m. and move into the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners.

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WOODBIDGE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

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PERSONNEL MATTERS:

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The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Desir) to approve the request for Deputy Chief Raymond Stuart to carry over twenty-one (21) unused vacation days.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- There were no Public Comments.

REVIEW OF REPORTS:

Financial Report:

The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Desir) to accept the Financial Report.

Activity Report:

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Desir) to accept the Activity Report.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

The Board voted unanimously (Gilbride/Falcigno) to accept the Report of the Chief of Police.

BUDGET:

- There were no votes taken, during the Budget discussion.

OLD BUSINESS:

- There was no Old Business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS:

- There were no New Business items to discuss.

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