

PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 24TH, 2017 MONTHLY POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

5:30 p.m. Public Session – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

Brenna Cavanaugh, Chair
Joseph J. Onosko
Joe Plaia

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The October 24th, 2017 monthly Police Commission meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers. (An archived video of the meeting is available on the city’s website.)

The following people were present: Commissioners Cavanaugh, Onosko, and Plaia, Chief Robert Merner, Admin. Manager Karen Senecal, Exec. Assistant Kathleen Levesque, members of the public and the press.

- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Cavanaugh led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:**

The Chair asked for a motion to accept the minutes.

Action: Commissioner Plaia moved to accept the minutes of the September 26th, and October 2nd, 2017 meetings.

Seconded by Commissioner Onosko.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept the minutes of the September 26th, and October 2nd, 2017 meetings.

- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** : (The following is a brief summary of each person’s comments and represents the speaker’s personal opinion. The entire meeting can be viewed online by going to the city’s website and clicking “Channel 22”, and then clicking on “Archived 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017 meetings.”)

Mr. George Dempsey – 42 Dennett Street: Said he thought Ms. Jane Zill’s letter talking about partisan politics and how we are all different and to

celebrate the differences was important. He said he was here to thank Commissioner Cavanaugh for her work on the Commission. He also wished Commissioner Onosko the best in the upcoming election. Mr. Dempsey said his only regret was the Commission did not put anyone on the Laurie List. He spoke about past legal matters. He spoke about an incident on Dearborn Street, saying there have been multiple calls to the location over the years and he felt no one in the city is doing their jobs.

Mr. Charles Fleck – 39 Sagamore Avenue: Came to speak about motorcycle noise, in particular the motorcycle noise that comes through about 2 a.m. Mr. Fleck said he purchased his home fully cognizant he would be living on a busy street. He was requesting help with the middle-of-the-night noise, adding that the increase in the number of scooters on the road that have been somehow jacked up has added a new source of loud motorbike noise.

Chief Merner asked for consent from the Chair to address Mr. Fleck's issue now. The Chair called for a motion to suspend the agenda to address the issue of motorcycle noise at this point in the meeting.

Commissioner Onosko moved to suspend the rules and address motorcycle noise now.

Seconded by commissioner Plaia.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to suspend the rules and address motorcycle noise now.

Chief Merner thanked Mr. Fleck for bringing his concerns to the meeting. The Chief said the department is in the process of procuring equipment on motor cycle noise, and will be trained by New Hampshire State Police on its use. The Chief has put out a call for officers who want to get this specialized training and several officers have stepped up.

Chief Merner added that we will continue with our training even though the motorcycle presence will begin to diminish as the weather grows colder, so we will be positioned to hit this hard when the riding season returns in the spring. He said the department has heard from individuals on both sides of this issue, and the Portsmouth Police Department will be vigorously enforcing the laws already on the books. He assured Mr. Fleck the Department's Command Staff has heard the citizen's concerns about motorcycle noise and we are responding.

The Chair asked if there was anyone else in attendance who wished to comment. Mr. Dempsey asked if he could return to the podium. The Chair commented it was highly unusual, but consented.

George Dempsey returned to the podium to tell the Commission and the Chief when there is a lawful and peaceful assembly of protesters in Market Square, there are motorcyclists who pull up right in front of the protesters and deliberately open their pipes and rev up their engines to make an ear-splitting noise and drown out and harrass the assembled protesters.

The Chair closed the Public Comment session.

V. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.**

VI. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. **POLICE COMMISSION: None.**

B. **CHIEF OF POLICE:**

1. Accreditation Update – Approximately 15 to 16 months ago, we initiated the accreditation process through CALEA (**C**ommission on **A**ccreditation for **L**aw **E**nforcement **A**gencies). As of today, our policies are 86% compliant with CALEA standards, and we continue to chip away at the remaining 14%. We anticipate being ready for the first part of the official preparation for the on-site review process sometime in early summer. We are moving along at a rapid pace, and that represents a significant amount of work, research, and document preparation by our Professional Standards Lieutenant, Lt. Sargent, and our CALEA Accreditation Manager, Jackie Burnett.
2. Monthly Traffic Data – In the past 4 years, the average annual number of summonses was 200-350 summonses issued for moving violations. As of September. 20th, 2017, we've issued over 1700 moving violations summonses in 2017 alone. This exceeds the five prior years' annual totals combined.
3. Grants & Donations:
Action: Commissioner Onosko moved to accept the donation in the amount of \$2,663.47 from the Estate of Geraldine Webber and forward to the City council for their action.
Seconded by Commissioner Plaia.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept the donation in the amount of \$2,663.47 from the estate of Geraldine Webber and forward to the City Council for their action.

Action: Commissioner Onosko moved to accept a grant in the amount of \$264,256 from the US Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs for Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force funding, and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Plaia.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept a grant in the amount of \$264,256 from the US Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs for Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force funding and forward to the City Council for their action.

Action: Commissioner Plaia moved to accept a NH Highway Safety STEP grant in the amount of \$15,940.28 for traffic enforcement, and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Onosko .

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept a NH Highway Safety STEP grant in the amount of \$15,940.28 for traffic enforcement and forward to the City Council for their action.

Action: Commissioner Plaia moved to accept a NH Highway Safety DWI grant in the amount of \$14,547 for DWI Patrols, and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Onosko.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept a NH Highway Safety DWI grant in the amount of \$14,547 for DWI Patrols, and forward to the City Council for their action.

Action: Commissioner Plaia moved to accept a NH Highway Safety grant in the amount of \$6,157.20 for enforcement of the state's pedestrian/bicycle laws via directed patrols and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Onosko.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept a NH Highway Safety grant in the amount of \$6,157.20 and forward to the City Council for their action.

Action: Commissioner Plaia moved to accept a NH Highway Safety grant in the amount of \$7,426.56 for Sobriety Checkpoints and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Onosko.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept a NH Highway Safety grant in the amount of \$7,426.56 for Sobriety Checkpoints and forward to the City Council for their action.

Action: Commissioner Plaia moved to accept a NH Highway Safety grant in the amount of \$7,157.20 to address Distracted Driving and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Onosko.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to accept a NH Highway Safety grant in the amount of \$7,157.20 to address distracted Driving and forward to the City Council for their action.

Commissioner Plaia said he was feeling unwell, and excused himself from the meeting.

At the Commission's request, Chief Merner explained Portsmouth's role in administering the ICAC grant for the state of New Hampshire, and briefly updated the Commission on each of the Highway Safety Grants.

4. Financial Report & Facility Update – Karen Senecal

VII. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: None.

VIII. MOTION TO ADJOURN:

The Chair announced the next monthly Police Commission meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 28th, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers.

There being no further business before the Commission, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn.

Action: Commissioner Onosko moved the October 24th, 2017 Police Commission meeting be adjourned.

Seconded by Commissioner Onosko.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed to adjourn the October 24th Police Commission meeting at 6:09 p.m.

END OF MEETING