

PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 28TH, 2020 MONTHLY POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

5:30 p.m. Public Session – Via Zoom Meeting Platform

Joseph J. Onosko, Chair
Stefany Shaheen, Commissioner
Thomas P. Hart, Commissioner

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The April 28th 2020 Monthly Police Commission meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. via the City’s Zoom meeting platform.

The following people attended the Meeting: Commissioners Onosko, Shaheen, and Hart, Chief Robert Merner, Admin Manager Karen Senecal, Exec. Assistant Kathleen Levesque.

- II. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:**

April 7, 2020

Action: Commissioner Shaheen moved to accept the minutes of the April 7, 2020 Special Police Commission Meeting.

Seconded by Commissioner Hart.

On a Roll Call Vote: The motion passed unanimously to accept the minutes of the April 7, 2020 Special Police Commission Meeting. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Onosko:	“Aye”
Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye”
Commissioner Hart:	“Aye”

- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There being no one wishing to comment, the Chair closed the public comment session.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. POLICE COMMISSION:

There was no new business.

B. CHIEF OF POLICE:

- 1.) Before beginning his report, Chief Merner took a moment to extend his thanks to all Portsmouth citizens for their responsiveness and cooperation with the Federal and State Covid-19 mandates that are in place. Private citizens and businesses have made needed donations of PPE. The Chief also thanked both sworn and civilian personnel for continuing to work around-the-clock through all of this.
- 2.) Chief Merner read a letter into the record recognizing the work of Officer Todd Goodwin for his actions as a trained hostage negotiator on a call the night of January 29, 2020.
- 3.) Accreditation update:
 - a) The Annual web-based file review is scheduled to take place this month. The purpose of the file review is to confirm that all applicable CALEA standards are being followed. Chief Lou Moretti of Manalapan, NJ will do a remote review of 25% of our files.
 - b) We have identified and captured 200 of the 1000 proofs that will be required by the end of this year. Maintaining our CALEA certification requires that we produce 1000 proofs every year which demonstrate the Portsmouth Police are maintaining CALEA standards in all aspects of our police operations and policies.
 - c) The Response to Resistance and Bias-based Policing Reports will be out shortly. Both reports will be posted to the website. Chief Merner reviewed the Pursuit Report, which is a third report just released by Lt. Kinsman, Head of the Professional Standards Division. The Chief went on to explain the accountability and review process for all police pursuits by the Portsmouth Police Department. This report will also be put up on the city's webpage.
 - d) Financial Report:

1. Strategic Plan – The current plan is being updated for our budget presentation to the City Council on May 11th.
2. Grants Applications Update - COVID-19-based grants are being documented and completed for the May 29th deadline.
3. FY '21 Budget document is up on the website. Our work session with the City Council is on May 11th.
4. Facilities Report –
 - i. Mold abatement will begin in Detectives. The area has been sealed up.
 - ii. Duct cleaning will start on the city side of the bldg.
 - iii. The Police Department is losing a room to a generator project the City is undertaking; the project will begin shortly.
 - iv. Resurfacing of the front lot will begin next week.

4.) Donations:

Acceptance of in-kind donation of equipment from Dick's Sporting Goods.

Action: Commissioner Shaheen moved to accept the donation of in-kind equipment from the managers of Dick's Sporting Goods intended to support Community Policing efforts.

Seconded by Commissioner Hart.

On a Roll Call Vote: The motion passed unanimously to accept the in-kind donation of equipment from Dick's Sporting Goods intended to support Community Policing efforts.

V. **MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Shaheen requested an update on how the emergency staffing structure was working. Chief Merner explained the platoon structure currently in place. Officers are working 12-hour shifts. This model allows our platoons to continue to function even if 1 or more officers on the same platoon come in contact with someone who is

COVID positive and need to quarantine or become ill and need to be out for an extended period.

The Commissioner also asked how the officers are handling the 12-hour shifts. Chief Merner updated the Commissioners on the health of our officers. He thanked Portsmouth Hospital, the City's Health Dept. and the Fire Chief for all of their support and team work.

The Chief gave a shout out to Mrs. Julie Scott from one of our hotel corporations who has been very, very supportive in providing lodging for officers who have needed to be quarantined.

He said the Department was ahead of the curve in moving to a platoon staffing model early on. We started to order PPE and other necessary disinfecting and sanitizing supplies early on as well, before these items began to become scarce.

Commissioner Shaheen asked about staffing models going forward if we have to continue to maintain distance and limit contact to protect the officers and employees over a long-term period. Chief Merner said he has already started this discussion with his Command Staff regarding what things will look like when city hall re-opens. Chief Merner talked about each officer having his/her own N95 mask, and other appropriate pieces of equipment, as well as the challenge of facilitating long-term storage and supplies of other needed items.

V. MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Commission, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. He said the next regularly scheduled Police Commission meeting will be Tuesday, May 26, 2020 via the Zoom platform.

Action: Commission Hart moved to adjourn the April 28th, 2020 Monthly Police Commission Meeting.

Seconded by Commissioner Shaheen.

On a Roll Call Vote: The motion passed to adjourn the April 28th, 2020 Monthly Police Commission Meeting at 6:10 p.m. The roll call vote was as follows:

Commissioner Onosko:	“Aye”
Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye”
Commissioner Hart:	“Aye”

Kathe Levesque

*Respectfully Submitted By Kathleen Levesque, Executive Assistant to the Chief
Reviewed By Commissioner Hart, Clerk of the Commission*

TOM HART