

PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 21st, 2021 POLICE COMMISSION
MEETING

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

Stefany Shaheen, Chair
Buzz Scherr, Commissioner
Kate Coyle, Commissioner

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The December 21st, 2021 monthly Police Commission meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m. in the Wm. Mortimer Conference Room of the police department for the purpose of going into non-public session.

The Chair called for a motion to go into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3-II (a).

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to enter non-public session for the purpose delineated above.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a Roll Call Vote: The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Scherr:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Coyle:	“Aye.”

The motion passed to go into non-public session at 4:06 p.m.

The public session was called back to order at 5:31 p.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers. (An archived video of the meeting is available on the city’s website and the city’s YouTube channel.)

The following people were present: Commissioners Shaheen, Scherr and Coyle, Chief Mark Newport, Business Ops. Manager Karen Senecal, Exec. Assistant Jackie Burnett, members of the Department and the public.

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

III. **MOTION TO SUSPEND THE AGENDA:**

The Chair asked for a motion to suspend the agenda, and move to items #1 & #2 under the Chief's Report and #3 under the Police Commission's Report.

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to suspend the agenda for the purpose noted above.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a Roll Call Vote: The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen:	"Aye."
Commissioner Scherr:	"Aye."
Commissioner Coyle:	"Aye."

#1 – Swearing-In Ceremony

Chief Newport administered the Sworn Officer Oath to the department's newest officer, Kelley Scholbe. Officer Scholbe is an experienced officer who transferred from the Orange County Sheriff's Office in Florida.

#2 – Award/Recognition Ceremony

Chief Newport recognized a number of officers for their heroic efforts in the line-of-duty during two specific calls for service that occurred earlier in the year. The Chief read a summary of the events that transpired and awarded each officer with a specific medal for their role in handling those incidents.

- Life Saving Medal Recipients
 - Sgt. Christopher Kiberd and Master Patrolman Aaron Stacy (not present)
- Honorable Service Medal Recipients
 - Sgt. Seth Tondreault, Master Patrolman Dean Outhouse (not present), and Officer Timothy Conroy
- Meritorious Service Medal Recipients
 - Officer Donald Denman and Officer Mark Dente
- Letter of Commendation Recipient
 - Sgt. Kuffer Kaltenborn
- Letter of Recognition Recipient
 - Officer Robert Meyer

#3 - Promotions

Chief Newport vested the following newly promoted officers with the authority and responsibilities of their new designation as Detectives with the Investigative Division:

- Detective Charley Raizes
- Detective Mathew Fredrickson

#2 – Award/Recognition Ceremony (Continued)

Chief Newport took a moment to recognize Records Manager, Nicole Pappaioanou, for 25 dedicated years of service as a civilian of the Portsmouth Police Department.

Chief also recognized a core group of dispatchers for their efforts to provide exemplary service during an extreme staffing shortage in the Emergency Communication Center in previous weeks/months. Their long hours and continued professionalism helped the department to provide seamless support to the Portsmouth Police Department and the community as a whole. The following dispatchers were recognized:

- Communications Supervisor Mathew Steer
- Aux. Lt./Evidence Technician/Dispatcher Alana Blais
- Dispatcher Jason Cullen
- Dispatcher Ed Walsh
- Dispatcher Tori Bemis

Following the ceremony, the Chair resumed to the standard agenda, as written.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD

ON: October 26th, 2021

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the minutes of the October 26th, 2021 Police Commission Meeting.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a Roll Call Vote: The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye”
Commissioner Scherr:	“Abstain”
Commissioner Coyle:	“Aye”

V. PUBLIC COMMENT: (The entire meeting can be viewed online by going to the City’s website and scrolling down the home page to “Recent Meeting Broadcast”, or “City YouTube Channel...” which is in the blue box just below it.)

Lisa Wilford, 111 New Castle Ave, NH – Ms. Wilford wanted to follow-up on the RGR reform items, stating that she would like to see a timeline be assigned to the recommendations set forth. Lisa expressed her hopes that data collection is a focus for the police department. Lisa commented on her feelings about traffic stops/monitoring, governmental bureaucracy, and the importance of transparency.

Bill Downey, 67 Bow Street, Portsmouth, NH – Mr. Downey commended Officer Jordan Wells for his service on election night. Mr. Downey felt Ofc. Wells represented the Portsmouth Police Department well and addressed a concern that evening in a way that left the public happy.

There being no further individuals wishing to speak, the public comment session has been closed.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. POLICE COMMISSION:

1. Introduction of New Commissioners

a. The Chair explained that due to former Commissioners Joe Onsoko and Tom Hart resigning their positions early, Commissioner Scherr and Commissioner Coyle have stepped into those vacant roles ahead of their 2022 terms, with the approval of the City Council. **Commissioner Scherr** gave an overview of his credentials and expressed his interest in working with the police department and commission. **Commissioner Coyle** reviewed her credentials, as well. She stated she is interested in using her experience to best serve the commission and community.

2. Appointment of Commission Clerk

a. The Chair explained that due to the resignation of Commissioner Hart, who served as Clerk of the Commission, a new Clerk will need to be appointed to serve-out the remainder of the 2021 term. **Action: The Chair moved** to nominate Commissioner Scherr as the Clerk of the Commission.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen: “Aye”

Commissioner Scherr: “Aye”

Commissioner Coyle: “Aye”

3. Promotions

a. See section III, #3, above.

4. Facilities Update

a. Chief Newport provided an overview of the current building projects.

The Chair explained why this continues to remain on the agenda each month. She mentioned that the police facility no longer serves the needs of the department and the community.

5. Community Engagement Update

- a. **The Chair echoed** Ms. Wilford's comments regarding the importance of transparency.

Chief Newport provided a status update on submitting an RFP for a new CAD/RMS system for the department. A discussion developed when Commissioner Scherr asked what type of functions we were looking for in a new CAD/RMS system. **Chief Newport explained** what the department is hoping to gain from a state-of-the-art records management system. **The Chair added** that this is a lengthy process to ensure the department gets exactly what they want and need. A rough timeline was discussed.

Commissioner Scherr was pleased to see the Portsmouth Police Department pushing to upgrade such a critical system for public safety. He emphasized the importance of selecting a system that will last 10/15/20 years.

The Chair commented on some of the large projects that are on-going. The commission will need to reprioritize projects. It will be necessary for the commission to divide and conquering in order to adequately juggle the current and future projects of the police department.

B. CHIEF OF POLICE:

1. **Swearing-In Ceremony** – See section III, #1, above.
2. **Awards & Recognition Ceremony** – See section III, #2, above.
3. **Grants & Donations**

- a.) **Federal ICAC Grant:**

A grant award from the US DOJ in the amount of \$418, 549 for the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force in New Hampshire.

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the ICAC grant from the US DOJ in the amount of \$418,549 and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a unanimous roll call vote 3-0, motion passed. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Scherr:	“Aye.”

Commissioner Coyle: “Aye.”

The Chair reminded the public that NH ICAC Task Force is run through Portsmouth Police Department.

b.) Donation #1:

A donation in the amount of \$300 from the Seidl family from Iowa for the Portsmouth Police Department.

Chief Newport read a letter sent from the Seidl family which gave an explanation for their generous donation.

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the \$300 donation from the Seidle family for the Portsmouth Police Department and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a unanimous roll call vote 3-0, motion passed. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen: “Aye.”

Commissioner Scherr: “Aye.”

Commissioner Coyle: “Aye.”

c.) Donation #2:

A donation in the form of a \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift card from the Rollins Family for the Portsmouth Police Department.

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift card for the Portsmouth Police Department and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a unanimous roll call vote 3-0, motion passed. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen: “Aye.”

Commissioner Scherr: “Aye.”

Commissioner Coyle: “Aye.”

d.) Donation #3:

A donation in the form of five \$10 Starbucks gift cards, five \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift cards, and six \$25 Kaffee Vonsolln gift cards from two anonymous citizens for the Portsmouth Police Department.

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the five \$10 Starbucks gift cards, five \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift cards, and six

\$25 Kaffee Vonsolln gift cards for the Portsmouth Police Department and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.

On a unanimous roll call vote 3-0, motion passed. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Scherr:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Coyle:	“Aye.”

4. Monthly Traffic Stats

Chief Newport reviewed the traffic statistics from the month of October and November 2021. There has been a significant uptick in traffic stops in the city. The number one request of officers by the citizens of Portsmouth is to increased traffic enforcement throughout the city.

Chief Newport described a DWI incident which occurred downtown Portsmouth around 3am, following the holiday parade. This was one example that would justify the number of officers that are assigned to certain events.

Buzz asked Chief Newport if off the top of his head he knew the numbers of traffic stops that were a result of mechanical violations vs. larger violations. How many were red light violations, how many were DWI-related, etc. **Chief offered** to pull those numbers for the commission.

5. Financial Report – Karen Senecal

Karen provided an update on where things stand with the police department’s budget. We’re currently tracking 2.5% below cap for the November period. Normally, we’re 4% below the cap this time of year; however, we’ve had staffing challenges this year – military deployments and retention difficulties in the dispatch center. Karen described some unexpected expenditures that have also impacted the police budget. **Karen also described** the process of developing the CAD/RMS RFP, strategic plan, and annual budget. The public hearing session pertaining to the budget typically occurs in mid-February (the beginning of the budget process); however, the 2022 date is not firm at this time.

Commissioner Scherr asked Karen what the commission’s role is in the budget process. She explained that the commission has a role throughout the entire budget process, from start to finish.

Grant Update:

Karen reports that there are currently no applications in. The City Manager typically forwards potential grant opportunities to the police department and Karen also searches for additional grants that may support the department's operational/administrative needs.

The Chair and Commissioner Coyle inquired about the police department's research into utilizing ARPA funds for future purchases.

Chief Newport explained that city officials have met with the City Manager to discuss this topic to determine where those funds could be allocated. This stretches across all city departments. The Chief is looking into the idea of using ARPA funds for parts of the CAD/RMS system.

VIII. PATROL DIVISION:

- a. This report was included in the commission meeting packet.

IX. COURT OFFICE REPORT:

- a. This confidential report was included in the commission meeting packet.

X. MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER BUSINESS: None

XI. NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

The next commission meeting date is Tuesday, January 18th, 2022. Chair wished everyone a happy and safe holiday season.

XII. MOTION TO ADJOURN:

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

Action: Commissioner Coyle moved the December 21st, 2021 monthly Police Commission Meeting be adjourned.

Seconded by Commissioner Scherr.

On a Roll Call Vote: The motion passed to adjourn the December 21st, 2021 monthly Police Commission Meeting at 6:35 pm. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen: "Aye"

Commissioner Scherr: "Aye"

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Commissioner Coyle: “Aye”

END OF MEETING

Jackie

Respectfully Submitted By Jacqueline Burnett, Executive Assistant

Reviewed By Commissioner Scherr, Clerk of the Commission

Buzz Scherr