

TOWN OF EAST LYME
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 21, 2020

MINUTES

This meeting was held via Zoom online meeting services and was available for the public to view, listen and participate via videoconference and dial-in options.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Price, Mark Powers, Joseph Perkins, Tony Buglione, Giancarlo D'Angelo and Lisa Pellegrini

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Stephen Rebelowski

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: First Selectman Mark Nickerson, Police Chief Mike Finkelstein, Administrative Sgt. Mike Macek, Animal Control Officer Robert Yuchniuk, and Deputy Director of Public Works Bill Scheer

FILED

Mr. Price called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Delegations
There were none.

3. Approval of Minutes
MOTION (1)

Motion by Ms. Pellegrini to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of February 13, 2020, as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Nickerson. Motion passed 6-0.

4a. Memorial Park Drive Relocation
MOTION (2)

DISCUSSION: Mr. Scheer addressed the Board and explained that the current intersection has been a problem for a while and that they have been working on a solution to make it safer. The proposed plan will allow for a clear sightline in both directions when pulling out of Oswegatchie Hill Road, as well as increase the radius for vehicles turning onto Oswegatchie Hill Road. A map showing the proposed re-alignment is attached hereto as Exhibit 1. Mr. Perkins inquired if there was an incident that brought this change about, and Mr. Scheer stated that the intersection was designed this way and it has always been a problem and a proactive move such as this re-alignment will fix the original design flaw. Mr. Powers inquired if the telephone poles that currently block the sightline will be moved, and Mr. Scheer responded that they will not need to be moved because re-aligning the intersection and adding the median forces drivers into a position that will now have a clear sightline in both directions. This project will have minimal impact on the overflow parking area for the park and will have minimal impact to the driveway of one property owner.

Motion by Mr. Powers to approve the recommendation of the Deputy Director of Public Works to relocate Memorial Park Drive where it intersects with Oswegatchie Hill Road.
Seconded by Mr. Buglione. Motion passed 6-0.

4b. ACO Policy
MOTION (3)

DISCUSSION: Animal Control Officer Robert Yuchniuk addressed the commission members and stated that although a Euthanasia Policy is necessary, that is not a decision that is made lightly, and he reported

June 1 2020 AT 2:12 AM/PM
(Signature)
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

that only three percent of the animals that they received were euthanized; the remainder were placed with families. He believes that the proposed policy and accompanying Temperament Evaluation Form will ensure that all animals are properly evaluated, and it requires that numerous individuals witness and sign off on the evaluation; including two separate ACOs, as well as a supervisor from both the East Lyme and Waterford Police Departments. Mr. Yuchniuk stated that no animal will ever be euthanized based solely on the amount of time that it has been at the shelter. Mr. Price thanked Mr. Yuchniuk for his hard work and care of these animals.

Motion by Mr. Buglione to approve the Domestic Animal Euthanasia Policy and Temperament Evaluation Form as presented by the East Lyme Animal Control Officer.

Seconded by Mr. Perkins. Motion passed 6-0.

4c. General Discussion / COVID Update

Mr. Nickerson reported that we all continue to hold business meetings via Zoom and other online services. He stated that most of the Town's employees are back to work, but that all Town buildings remain closed to the public, and no recreational activities have resumed yet. He reported that as of Saturday morning a beach pass will be required to park and visit the beach, and that passes are currently being sold only to East Lyme residents and that the beaches will operate with reduced capacity. Many local restaurants will be offering outside dining, so please everyone do their best to support our local businesses. He reported that Niantic Main Street is holding a virtual ribbon cutting to commemorate businesses starting to open up again. Mr. Nickerson stated that our Police Department has done an outstanding job of maintaining peace and safety, and he thanked each one of them for a job well done.

Chief Finkelstein reported that they have continued to operate on a fairly normal basis, with some special measure being taken in their response due to the pandemic. He reports that no officers have fallen ill, but that they are prepared and have coordinated with our neighboring communities should the need for mutual aid arise. He stated that they are receiving a lot of donations of masks and meals from the community, and he is very grateful for the community's support. We continue to receive weekly PPE supplies from the State, but it is unclear how long that will continue. As far as enforcement of social distancing non-compliance in the community he stated that so far, all incidents have been resolved by voluntary compliance. He stated that as the beaches open up, they will have one officer at each park to assist the Parks and Recreation staff, as well as an added patrol on Main Street. Ms. Pellegrini inquired as to anticipated traffic issues at Rocky Neck, and Chief Finkelstein responded that they have communicated with local areas where people historically park to walk onto the beach to communicate to them that there is no parking in these areas and no walk-ins allowed onto the beach. The Chief stated that he has been in communication with the State to make sure that they will be sending additional resources to police the area, as well. He reported that they have a plan in place where the DEEP will contact dispatch once the state park is full, and dispatch will then be able to communicate that to Parks and Recreation so that they are prepared.

5. Chief's Report

Chief Finkelstein gave his report, which is attached hereto as Exhibit 1. He announced that Officer Roland will be retiring on May 31, 2020, after 33 years. Officer Roland has been an instrumental force in outfitting and maintaining the police vehicles with in-car cameras and computers, which is one of the main reasons that he is working with Joe Bragaw to secure better IT coverage specifically for the police department. Chief Finkelstein stated that the overall budget process went well; and reported that they had asked for two additional officers this year, the Board of Selectmen cut that to one officer, and the Board of Finance did approve the one additional officer. He stated that they are currently scheduling a virtual academy for the upcoming class but that he has decided to wait and put in for a seat in the next in-person session. For the immediate replacement of Officer Roland, they will be hiring lateral. He anticipates that the Police

Commission will be interviewing applicants possibly sometime in July. Regarding the Oak Grove matter from a previous meeting, he reported that they met with the resident to really understand the issues, and that subsequently Mr. Bragaw installed the proper signage and it is hopeful that this will solve their traffic issues. There continues to be issues on Fairhaven Road even after putting up signage, as directed by the Police Commission; he will continue to monitor the situation and report back as needed. The Chief reported that they are putting extra patrols on Main Street to help to maintain a safe environment for the time being. He reported that the Marine Patrol will be out on the water but that due to the pandemic, each town will take a shift; historically there has been one Waterford officer and one East Lyme officer per shift. He reported that the work has begun on the Niantic River Bridge, but that the DOT has decided to work during the day as well as at night, so we should expect daily lane closures and one-way traffic. The two new police vehicles are fully equipped and on the road; and he stated that they will be seeking alternate outfitters to perform all outfitting of future police vehicles as MHQ remains behind on local municipality vehicles. Dispatch overtime continues to be the one area that they need to work on. All Board member commended the Chief and officers for a job well done and noted that there has been great visibility of officers around town, including the overnight shift where we have seen a lot of vehicle break-ins in our community.

7. Chairman's Report

There was none.

8. Public Comment

There was none.

9. Commission Response

There was none.

10. Adjournment

MOTION (4)

Mr. Buglione MOVED to adjourn the May 21, 2020, regular meeting of the Police Commission at 6:58 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Powers. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Anderson
Recording Secretary

Exhibit 1

EAST LYME POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief's Monthly Report – April 2020



CONTENTS

Section 1 : Noteworthy incidents/information

Section 2 : Community Outreach and Correspondence

Section 3 : Administrative

Section 4 : Statistical Activity Summary

Section 1: Noteworthy Incidents/Information

- Two Patrol Vehicles deployed May 4th on the road
- Budget presented and deliberations

Section 2: Staffing

Officer Matthew Roland has informed the Department that he will be retiring effective May 31, 2020.

The East Lyme Police Department has opened both entry and lateral level positions within Police App.

Section 3: Administrative

Accident Analysis

- 8 Accidents
- 2 Crashes on Flanders Rd
- 2 Crashes on Main St/W. Main St

East Lyme Dispatch Center

- 1,299 phone call volume for the month, which does not include Police phone line.
- Busiest hours –12 pm (90), 4pm (89), 2pm (86)

Animal Control Division Activity

- 16 Animal Incident Calls in East Lyme

Budgetary

- Total Budget – 81% (PD), 73% (ACO), 87% (Disp)
- Overtime – 88%
- Asset Forfeiture Balance - \$18,559

Emergency Committals

- 1 Emergency Committals
- 3 overdoses
- 1 Narcan use

Special Response Areas

- 2 Calls for service at Rocky Neck Park (5 YTD)
- 49 Calls for service at hotels (218 YTD)

