



SEYMOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT

11 Franklin Street
Seymour, Connecticut 06483-2891

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REGULAR MEETING BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020 6:30 P.M. ZOOM teleconference

Members present: Robert Koskelowski, David Bitso, John Duke, Thomas Bennett and Kyle Kelley. Also in attendance: Chief Satkowski, Deputy Chief Rinaldi, Officer Oczkowski, Det. Ditria, Town Attorney LeClerc, Det. Matusovich, Cmdr. Fappiano, Union Attorney Bento, Rory Burke, Ann Marie Drugonis, Inspector DeNigris, First Selectman Kurt Miller, Officer Thomas, Sgt. Duda, Officer Pinto, Cmdr. Scharf, Sgt. Martin and the public.

1. **Meeting was called to order** at 6:31 p.m. by Chairman Koskelowski
2. **Pledge of allegiance:** was led by Commissioner Kelley
3. **Public comment:** None.
4. **Approval of regular meeting on February 19, 2020:**
Kyle Kelley/Thomas Bennett motion to accept the minutes. **Motion: 5:0**
5. **Management report: Chief Satkowski-**budget looks good-only necessary expenses being paid, overtime will need a transfer, cars were cut out of the current budget, however, finance will let us buy additional cars if money is left over, \$5,000 cut from line item 610, private duty is very slow, letter sent to DPW for speed limit signs on Mountain Road and letter sent to homeowner making the request, thank you to the community for all their support and donations, Nextgen project has begun, fatal motor vehicle accident, standoff with a suicidal male, these past several weeks have been a team effort with all EMS and Fire personnel, minor motor vehicle accidents with patrol cars and State Wide position going very well.

Commissioner Bennett: How does the Chief feel about the barricaded individual? How did you think the scene went with the officers? Do you think all the officers had the proper training to handle this individual? Are our people trained in negotiations? Would dynamic entry training be something to look into? Do we have enough proper entry equipment? Is there an after action report? I think we should always be ahead of the curve in training before we are faced with another situation like this. I am a big supporter of training.

Chief Satkowski-There was constant dialogue with the individual, there are officers who have gone to classes, some of the younger officers have never faced a situation like that before, everyone did a good job but always room for improvement, can never have enough training, both verbal and written after action reports have been done in the past.

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Commissioner Bitso-Did new officers have negotiations training-should we have brought someone in from another shift that had negotiation experience?

Deputy Chief Rinaldi-I did the negotiations, have been to some of the classes, our one officer who is a negotiator is out on long term disability, we have other officers that have gone to basic negotiations class, I think we did the best we could, we have been ahead of the curve in training.

6. Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Duke-Ballistic vest given to K-9 was good, commend the officers who worked the fatal motor vehicle and structure fire. Are there any trends in calls that have become the norm now with the current health situation? The new PPE issued to officers-how is that going?

Deputy Chief Rinaldi-Patrol has been good but domestic violence complaints have gone up. PPE has been issued to officers and they have been told to wear these items whenever going into a house and especially on medical calls. Detectives have been informed as well.

Commissioner Kelley-Times are different for all of us-commend everyone-great teamwork and our community loves the parades and shows the community we support them.

Commissioner Bitso-Thank you to the Chief for the updates on covid 19, however, there was no information coming from the department to the Board first few weeks and would like to be kept up to date more.

Chairman Koskelowski-Thank you to First Selectman's office for setting up the meetings. Also thank you to all first responders for an outstanding job as well as all others who have to work everyday.

Commissioner Bennett-Sounds like most of the department is healthy from covid 19, is the department prepared to do an after action report?

Chief Satkowski-We have been holding our own pretty well, one officer out for two weeks and a few other officers were out a few days as a precaution, custodians cleaning our building and officers cleaning their cars and work areas has worked out well to keep us healthy. We have been documenting to do an after action plan, supplies are in okay shape, public safety committee meets twice a week.

7. Old Business:

Evaluation Forms:

Chairman Koskelowski-My recommendation is that any changes need to be made by the Board, Chief, Deputy Chief and Union-discuss and take appropriate action at the next meeting.

Commissioner Bitso-We have worked on this for a number of months and I would like to move forward with the evaluation forms-I don't see any reason to delay this another month so the Chief and Deputy Chief can put this into motion.

Commissioner Kelley-As long as everyone is on board-that it what was in conjunction with the Union and the administration-I'm on board.

David Bitso/John Duke motion to move forward with the two evaluation forms. **Motion: 5:0**

One year plan:

Commissioner Bitso-Commissioner Duke and I met with the Chief, have agreed to extend the time line out a few months given all that is currently on going, First Selectman did review.

Chief Satkowski-Overseeing and implementing evaluation process not on sheet-will be added as number eight, gave a description of the items on the plan.

Commissioner Bennett-Can I have a brief description of the items on the one year plan so I can have an idea of what is expected.

David Bitso/John Duke motion to move forward with one year goal with Chief Satkowski with the addition of implementing and overseeing evaluations. **Motion: 5:0**

7a) Patrol reports: Board accepts the reports.

Commissioner Kelley-Was the K-9 car involved in a crash last night is there much damage?

Chief Satkowski-Was told there is minor damage-haven't seen the car yet.

Deputy Chief Rinadli-All officers have had Hazmat and Blood borne training.

7b) Detective report: Board accepts the report.

Commissioner Kelley-I really liked the report format for the detective report.

7c) K-9 reports: Board accepts the reports.

Chief Satkowski-K-9 Zoar might get a new vest donated.

Officer Oczkowski-Officer Gallo did get his K-9 vest donated. I was approached by a Seymour resident about donating a vest to K-9 Zoar-each vest costs about \$ 1,200 dollars, the last set of vests were donated. Richard Kearns has reached out to donate some monies to a vest but we still need \$ 200.00 dollars.

Commissioner Bennett-How much does a vest cost? Has the department ever bought K-9 vests in the past? Can the department kick in the rest of the money for a K-9 vest? I think we should supply K-9 Zoar with a vest and fund the remainder of the money.

Chief Satkowski-Generally we leave it up to the K-9 officers to tell us what equipment they need, anything we can get donated to save the department and the town money we like to do but there is money in the K-9 account. K-9 Zoar has a current vest this would just be an upgrade.

Commissioner Duke-Agree we should fund the remaining money so both K-9's have the same vest.

Thomas Bennett/John Duke motion to fund the remaining \$ 200.00 dollars for a vest for K-9 Zoar. **Motion: 5:0**

7d) SRO reports: SRO's on dayshift as school is closed.

7e) Car Report: Board accepts the report. New vehicles have arrived-they will be outfitted as soon as they can.

8. New Business: Covid 19 plan

Chairman Koskelowski-How ready are we for covid 19 and any plans in place if covid 19 affected a number of the patrolmen? Officers that have beards-to sign off that a mask might not protect them-forget the liability it is all about protecting the officers and we should look into the detective bureau being split up.

Chief Satkowski-We are as ready as we are going to be, right now everyone is healthy, down one officer but he will be back next week, if we need to we can do emergency staffing, we have mutual aid compacts, we can reach out to other towns, we might have to cover for other towns, two supernumeraries are available to work. I have talked with HR regarding the officers with beards and wearing masks-does not limit the liability for the town. I have been given capabilities to work from home, maybe retirees are allowed to come back, the chain of command is: Chief, DC, Inspector, Commanders (done by seniority) that is why it is important to back fill administrative positions. We have had some discussion on staggering staffing-right now it is not a problem-not sure how much the department can work remotely from home-we can isolate the detectives more but employees need to practice good social distancing, this is the first I'm hearing about anyone having concerns but I understand.

Commissioner Kelley-Mask and face protection on all calls especially medical calls, put masks on prisoners, put directives on paper and post, those officers with beards-should they want to keep them-should sign off that they understand a mask does not protect them or they shave, everyone should be on the same page, PPE in short demand-make sure to take care of your equipment, I personally don't care what HR says regarding officers that have beards and wearing a mask-we need to have something in writing-it may not protect us in the long run but will help us cover the department-OSHA regulations state you need to be clean shaven, maybe the Chief and Deputy Chief can alternate days, maybe detective bureau can be split up so they are spread out.

Commissioner Bitso-Concerned about the detective bureau-would like to see them split up-no one has approached me on the detective bureau being split up-just going by what happened in Ansonia.

Town Attorney LeClerc-Legally advising a member of the department that they should wear a mask and have facial hair that it may not protect them-better practice is to warn officer for their own health and safety that they may not be protected.

Commissioner Bennett-Do we have a defined chain of command within the department and is it in writing?

Commissioner Duke-Any considerations on staggering staffing? Want to minimize the amount of personnel in the building to be preventative-no one has talked to me about not feeling safe just trying to minimize the exposure.

9. Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Bennett-Would we consider an emergency meeting of the Board especially with what is going on?

Town Attorney LeClerc-Emergency meeting not warranted would be a special meeting if necessary. Can request Chief to send a memo/letter but cannot start group chat, sending emails to all the commissioners or private zoom meeting-that would be an illegal meeting.

Commissioner Kelley-Would it be feasible for the Chief to send out a weekly update to the Board or get updates through the Chairman regarding covid 19?

Chairman Koskelowski-Will call a special meeting if anything comes up, Chief can give us an update every few days.

Chief Satkowski-It was my understanding when the Chairman came to see me that information was being passed on. Anybody ever has any comments or concerns please feel free to get in touch with me anytime.

Commissioner Kelley-How many pending internal affair cases are there? I have always seen an IA to not be good. I have faith in all officers in the department-if there is question on the integrity then I think that's another need for discussion-how many IA's were done last year that shouldn't have been, what constitutes an IA? Unless a supervisor deems it necessary there should be no IA for a simple motor vehicle accident involving members of the department.

Chief Satkowski-There are currently six pending internal affair cases-there may be more forthcoming. Four are on hold and two working on-Anytime a cruiser involved in an incident they are looked into-that has been our practice and procedure, some of the issues over the years have been the investigation not being done fairly, an IA doesn't mean the officer did anything wrong-more for documentation purposes, if no accident to be investigated as an IA what will the criteria be?

Commissioner Bennett-Do you feel the two motor vehicle accidents need to be an IA or just investigated as a motor vehicle accident? Is this a good use of time? I feel it's unnecessary-I would just leave it up to the supervisor to decide who is at fault, motor vehicle accidents should be investigated no matter what-beyond that as long as the supervisor doesn't deem it necessary that there are extenuating circumstances-no need to for extra paperwork. I do understand the Chief's statement of maybe there was favoritism in the past-if people aren't doing the right thing we are never gonna stop that.

Chairman Koskelowski-Agree with Tom not all incidents have to be IA's-can just go through Chief's office or Deputy Chief's office-I don't think we should be wasting time and personnel on IA's such as that. I have enough faith in our promotions to do a fair job-an honest job-supervisors should be handling the situation.

Commissioner Bitso-Does that include IA's that were put on hold? Supports the Chief on criteria but the criteria should be severe to warrant an IA.

Kyle Kelley/John Duke motion to place on the agenda motor vehicle accidents being investigated as internal affairs and discuss. **Motion: 5:0**

Chief Satkowski-Without formality you may not get the truth and I don't think the decision should be left to the first line supervisor to determine if an employee gets investigated. I believe that I am responsible as if not done properly it will come back to me-we are going down a dangerous road-I can't support that.

Commissioner Bennett-I don't think that every motor vehicle accident should be investigated as an IA. No one is taking the Chief's right away if you think something is not right.

Kyle Kelley/John Duke motion that as far as IA's are concerned in the police department regarding officers in motor vehicle accidents that they are investigated by the supervisor and only initiated an IA should the supervisor deem it necessary. **Motion: 5:0**

10) Union Business:

Union President Officer Oczkowski-for 2019 there were 17 IA's- 11 still pending-no final outcome yet, some grievances coming, 4 IA's for 2020 still waiting on completion-would like final copy of IA's. We agree with the Commissioners as far as motor vehicle accidents go- there was an IA ticket punched today-does this IA still stand or can a supervisor take care of? The Town of Derby was contacted regarding the accident as was our supervisor.
Commissioner Bitso-How many IA's have not been completed? Chief Satkowski and Union President Officer Oczkowski need to sit down.

Chief Satkowski-If there was any discipline taken the officer would have a copy. If no action taken there would be something in the IA file-I'll research that-I can do the annual report-we have documentation-if cleared the officer would be told verbally or documented in file-will get this straightened out. There was an accident out of town that has no accident report on it-no supervisor went out and looked.

Deputy Chief Rinaldi-There are 3 IA's for 2020 that are open and 3 for 2019 that are open. Officers have been notified by being called into the Chief's office. The IA ticket punched today has nothing to do with the hit and run-has to do with an accident last week.

Commissioner Bennett-Is there an annual IA report done by the department? Page 37 of the duty manual-pretty clear that an annual report will be done. I would like to see this information. Are officers getting notified about the status of their IA's?

Chairman Koskelowski-17 IA's in one year? Chief look into annual report, please meet with the Union. Please give us an exact number at the next meeting. Chief will have to make that decision if the IA ticket punched today will stand or let the supervisor take care of. If an accident happened in another town-the other town should have taken care of it.

Inspector DeNigris-It is clear in the Union contract that management needs to notify the Union after first step.

11. Executive Session: Discussion of Internal Investigation of employee

Town Attorney LeClerc-Before going into executive session the employee must be consulted, this is not an actual hearing, the officer has the opportunity to request open or closed session, only item to discuss is the procedure that you will follow as a commission.

Chairman Koskelowski-Set a date for hearing and can the letter received today from the Chief be shared with the Board? Is Union willing to extend based on the current circumstances?

Inspector DeNigris-Would like executive session-has no problem with extension.

Union Attorney Bento-Just to be clear, the Union has not received any packet or letter.

Kyle Kelley/John Duke motion to go into executive session at 9:11 p.m. to discuss the Internal Investigation of employee. In attendance: Board, Town Attorney LeClerc, Inspector DeNigris, Union Attorney Bento, Union President Officer Oczkowski, First Selectman Kurt Miller, Chief Satkowski and Deputy Chief Rinaldi. **Motion: 5:0**

Kyle Kelley/Thomas Bennett motion to come out of executive session at 9:53 p.m. No votes or motions taken. **Motion: 5:0**

Kyle Kelley/David Bitso motion to set the preliminary hearing date for Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. for the Internal Investigation of Inspector DeNigris. **Motion: 5:0**

- 15. ADJOURNMENT:** Kyle Kelley/John Duke motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. **Motion: 5:0**

Respectfully submitted,



Caroline Spaulding
Recording Secretary