

# POLICE COMMISSION

November 19, 2020 Minutes  
VIA ZOOM MEETING

**PRESENT:** Chairman Jim Sponaugle, Commissioner Trish Hansen Commissioner Liz Starr, Chief F. Michael Catalano, Deputy Chief Paul Sandy, and Secretary Diane Ferri.

## ***CALL TO ORDER***

The regular meeting of the Police Commission was held on November 19, 2020 via Zoom Meeting. Comm. Sponaugle called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

- A. MINUTES** – On the motion of Comm. Starr, second by Comm. Sponaugle, the Commission approved the minutes of the October meeting as written.
- B. BILLS** –The Commission reviewed the October bills totaling \$32,383.32 and were approved on the motion of Comm. Sponaugle, second by Comm. Starr.
- C. REPORTS** – **The reports as approved on the motion of Comm. Hansen, second by Comm. Starr, were highlighted as follows:**
- 1. Year-To-Date Budget** –  
The budget was reviewed by account with discussion regarding the transfers from the School Crossing Guard line and the Overtime line.
  - 2. Vehicle Maintenance** –  
Although there was no report due to delays with the gasoline invoice from the Cortland Enlarged School District, the Deputy Chief apprised the Commission there was no monthly maintenance for the vehicles due to the financial shortage.
  - 3. Sick Time** – Sick time hours, overtime used vs payment, accumulated compensatory time, and Workers’ Compensation hours were reviewed, with the Chief noting those officers and sergeants who work, and thus accrue, the most time. Ptl. Nathan Moran’s time balance was also discussed.
  - 4. Overtime** -  
Various categories of overtime hours were reviewed.
  - 5. SPCA Report** –  
The SPCA report was reviewed with note of 263 complaints handled year-to-date. The Chief noted the contract will continue with the SPCA; however the Police Department no longer oversees this budget line.
  - 6. Parking Tickets** -  
Number of tickets continue to be lower than last year’s monthly count. From this point forward a secondary report, breaking down totals per individual writing tickets will also be provided.
  - 7. Arrest Breakdown** -  
It was noted that all statistics are now decreased.

## ***OLD BUSINESS***

**A. EXECUTIVE ORDER 203** – Chief Catalano relayed to the Commission a recent initiative from the Mayor, who will be announcing 3 public forum meetings via Zoom. These forums will provide public input regarding subjects to be considered, in light of EO 203. He further noted reservations will be required for comment. The dates are:

- November 23, 2020 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- November 30, 2020 from 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.; and
- December 3, 2020 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Subjects for discussion will be listed in the public announcement. Complaints concerning officers or lengthy questions must be called in or emailed.

Additionally, the public Community Survey is now complete and will be mailed to 750 random residents. Responses to the survey may be completed online.

**B. RETIREMENTS** – The Chief reminded the Commission of the upcoming retirements as announced by the Confidential Secretary and the Administrative Aide and others as follows:

- Diane Ferri, Confidential Secretary, will be retiring effective January 23, 2021.
- Nancy Sutliff, Administrative Aide, will be retiring effective February 27, 2021.
- Chief Catalano has announced he will be retiring in March, between March 15 and March 31 dependent upon adjustments within the NYS Retirement System.

He further noted two patrol officers are considering retirement in January; specifically, Ptl. Bradley Becker and Ptl. William Bernheim, with a total of more than 6 officers and sergeants eligible for retirement in 2021, including the 3 Special Duty Officers; Ptl. Robert Reyngoudt, Ptl. Jesse Abbott, and Ptl. Chadd Hines.

**C. 2021 BUDGET** – The Chief noted the 2021 Budget is in the final approval stage, with no changes noted to date. There appear to be no positions deducted and one (1) new vehicle is included. A Budget Workshop is scheduled for this evening, with the Director of Finance/Administration, Mack Cook stating nothing has been cut from the budget.

## ***NEW BUSINESS***

**A. PERSONNEL UPDATES** – The Chief described the most recent personnel issues for the Commission as follows:

1. Ptl. Austin Fiske and Ptl. Kory Olson have completed their Field Training. Ptl. Joseph Saladino and Ptl. Kristyn Drake are currently undergoing their Field Training with an end date of January 2021.
2. Ptl. Derrick Edick transferred to the Camillus Police Department effective November 2, 2020. Due to his length of duty with the department of more than 3 years, no funds were able to be recouped from his final paycheck towards the cost of his Basic Police Academy expenses.
3. The Common Council approved lifting the hiring freeze to replace the positions being vacated by Ptl. Edick, Diane Ferri, and Pamela Barden. However, there has been no consideration of filling the position to be vacated by Nancy Sutliff. Mrs. Ferri and Mrs. Sutliff have also offered to continue in a part-time capacity to ensure a smooth transition with the new Chief of Police, but there has been no response to this request at this time.

4. The Confidential Secretary position title will also be withdrawn upon Mrs. Ferri's retirement and will be replaced with one in accordance with the SEIU Contract. Once hired, the new employees will both follow the SEIU contract or join that union.

Conversation ensued regarding the protocol and the timeline for a new Police Chief, with Comm. Hansen offering to discuss the hiring process for his position. Chief Catalano recommended the new Police Chief be a graduate from the FBINA.

**B. COMMUNITY SURVEY** – This agenda item was discussed during the “Old Business” segment of the meeting.

**C. COMMUNITY FORUMS** – This agenda item was also discussed during the “Old Business” segment of the meeting.

### ***OTHER BUSINESS***

#### **A. COMMENDATION, APPRECIATION, CORRESPONDENCE REPORT -**

1. Mrs. Diane Ferri and Mrs. Nancy Sutliff each submitted an “Intention to Retire” letter to Chief Catalano.
2. Mr. Jack Carr sent a letter to Chief Catalano “respectfully” urging him to make an “official public statement denouncing bullying and harassment of any kind in the City of Cortland.”
3. John Reagan sent a letter of appreciation to the Chief regarding Sgt. Daniel Mones and Ptl. Jesse Abbot for their quick response and actions during a recent incident behind his office.
4. D/C Paul Sandy received a Certificate of Training for his recent attendance at the Silver State Public Safety Academy presentation of *Crisis Response: De-Escalation Skills for Law Enforcement*.
5. Mr. & Mrs. Ted Rozelsky sent an email to D/C Paul Sandy thanking him and the entire department for the recent assistance in giving them with the vegetables/fruit in the Food Distribution..
6. Mr. Greg Hartz, President Tompkins Trust Company sent a thank you card with a gift certificate to purchase apples.
7. Ms. Marilee Murphy of the Cancer Resource Center of the Linger Lakes sent a thank you letter to the department for the donation of \$180.00 in the *Pink Ribbon Fundraiser*.
8. Ptl. Joseph Saladino and Ptl. Kristyn Drake each received their Certificate of Completion from the State of New York DCJS Municipal Police Training Council for graduation from the *Basic Course for Police Officers or Equivalent*.

#### **B. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS –**

1. Comm. Starr inquired about the Civil Service List for Police Officer positions. Discussion ensued including the time lapse between a potential hire dates and when the Basic Police Academy would commence.
2. Comm. Hansen thanked everyone for their participation or attendance at the fund raiser for her husband, Wayne. She also thanked the Deputy Chief for reaching out to her son, Paul, recently, with regard to the deer at the Water Works.

***ADJOURNMENT***

With no further business to discuss, on the motion of Comm. Hansen, Second by Comm. Starr, the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane L. Ferri  
Confidential Secretary