

# POLICE COMMISSION

January 27, 2010

**PRESENT:** Mayor Susan Feiszli, Commissioner Ralph Smith, Chief F. Michael Catalano, D/C Paul Sandy, and Secretary Diane Ferri.

**EXCUSED:** Chairman Thomas O'Mara.

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## **CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Police Commission was held on January 27, 2010 in the CPD Lounge at City Hall, 25 Court Street, Cortland New York. Commissioner Ralph Smith called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. Due to a lack of quorum, the minutes and reports were reviewed.

**A. MINUTES** – The Commission reviewed the minutes of the December 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**B. BILLS** – The Commission reviewed the bills in the amount of \$52,722.64 for the month of December.

**The following bills were highlighted:**

• Trombley Tire Service	\$ 1,451.92
• 2010 Impala purchased via proceeds from auctions	\$ 16,185.00
• Local, regional, long distance, cell phone package billing	\$ 1,592.09
• Basic Juvenile Officer Certification lodging	\$ 788.00

**C. REPORTS** – Reports were reviewed on an individual basis and discussed.

**The following reports were highlighted:**

1. **Budget Balance** – Chief Catalano reviewed the End of the Year Budget Balance with the Commission and noted that, although the final budget showed a deficit balance, funds were still being received into the General Fund for overtime details completed but not yet paid, the SRO December reimbursement from the Cortland Enlarged School District, and STEP Grant funds not yet received. These balances, if applied to the Department budget, would again place us as operating with an overall slightly surplus balance.

2. **Vehicle Repairs** –

Deputy Chief Sandy reported no unusual vehicle repairs for the month of December. He noted the Department bought out the leases on two vehicles with another one scheduled for buyout at the end of January 2010. Gasoline costs totaled \$2.0738581/gallon for 1,646.4 gallons of gas.

3. **Overtime** –

The Commission reviewed the overtime breakdown by category. Accumulated hours worked for the month of December totaled 772.00 hours, compared to 660.25 hours for the same time frame in 2008 and reflects a 111.75-hour increase for the month of December from 2008's figure, but a 2048.00-hour **decrease** for the annual total difference. Most notably were the decreases in the Court Security overtime line (due to the transfer of duties to the NYS 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court System) and the Short Shift overtime line.

**4. Fingerprinting Fees -**

The City of Cortland has received a total of \$12,505.00 in fees for "Fingerprinting Services" provided by the Police Department during the course of 2009. The Chief noted Background Investigation Requests processed by this office will have netted the City \$13,400 and are included in the Fingerprinting Services line item of the budget. The bulk of the fees to the Cortland Housing Authority has been on Criminal History Background checks.

***OLD BUSINESS***

**UPDATE ON VACANT COMMISSION POSITION** – Chief Catalano updated the Commission with regards to the vacant Commission seat. Mayor Feiszli and the Chief noted several names of people who have expressed an interest in serving on the Commission including Dick Menapace, Kathy Wilcox, and Don Colangeli. Mayor Feiszli noted she would forward other names to the Chief that have expressed an interest in the seat via a form on the City of Cortland webpage.

***NEW BUSINESS***

- A. NIEDERHOFER RETIREMENT** – The Chief apprised the Commission of the letter he received from Ptl. Charles Niederhofer, declaring his intention to retire from the Police Department effective February 5, 2010. He will commence employment with the Cornell University Police Department shortly thereafter. A Retirement Party has been scheduled for February 6<sup>th</sup> at Gators Restaurant at 5:00 p.m. Mayor Feiszli also apprised the Commission of her intention to read a Proclamation, honoring Ptl. Niederhofer's 20 years of service.
- B. LAWMAN OF THE YEAR** – Chief Catalano informed the Commission of his nomination of Sgt. Cheyenne Cute for the Cortland Elks Club annual Lawman of the Year Award, to be determined on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. As the Dinner has not yet occurred, the Chief opted to delay reading his nomination letter until after the Dinner, but he based his decision on the investigation and arrest of Patrick West in the assault and homicide of James Adams, which occurred on January 1, 2009.
- C. SEVEN VALLEYS CASA** – A late addition to the Agenda was the notification that Seven Valleys Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (CASA), with the assistance of CPD, received a grant totaling \$40,000.00 from the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), whereby the Department will receive a total of \$30,000.00 for overtime costs associated with underage alcohol enforcement. These funds are to be disbursed over a 2-year period.
- D. MAIN STREET ARSON CASE** – The Chief noted a guilty verdict had been handed down in the Main Street Arson case and Andrea Stevens. Although sentencing was not immediately available, the Chief and Deputy Chief noted the building could probably be saved.

***OTHER BUSINESS***

**A. COMMENDATION AND APPRECIATION REPORT -**

1. Nick Wagner, from the 911 Center, sent a thank you email to the Chief, informing him of the professional way in which Ptl. Brad Becker handled an MVA involving his wife and daughter. The Chief responded to his email.
2. Mr. Jim McGraw sent a thank you letter to Ptl. Jared Aiken thanking him for his assistance, kind demeanor and professionalism when they got lost in the downtown area.
3. Chief Catalano got a thank you card from the Cortland Breakfast Rotary Club for his presentation at their meeting.
4. Ms. MaryLou Bordwell sent a thank you card to Chief Catalano to acknowledge the help she received recently from Ptl. Hines and Ptl. Green while dealing with the death of her brother. Chief Catalano responded to her note.
5. Lt. Jonathan Gesin and Lt. David Guerrero each received a Certificate of Attendance from the State of New York Division of Criminal Justice Services for the *Executive Training – Leadership and Ethics* seminar they attended
6. D/C Paul Sandy received a *Membership Certificate* from the NYS Association of Chiefs Of Police.

**B. CORRESPONDENCE -**

1. Chief Catalano sent a letter to the Cortland County Lawman Committee nominating Sgt. Cheyenne Cute for the 2009 Lawman of the Year Award.
2. Stacy Mertz, School Crossing Guard, sent a letter of resignation to Chief Catalano, effective end of business on February 3, 2010. Chief Catalano responded and regretfully accepted her resignation.
3. Ptl. Charles Niederhofer submitted a letter stating his intention to retire effective end of business on February 5, 2010 after 20 years of service and accept a position with Cornell University Police Department. Chief Catalano responded and regretfully accepted his letter.
4. Mr. Bryan Gazda, Director of Finance and Administration, sent an email to all department heads notifying them that all accounts payable billing will be reviewed by him in the future before authorizing payment.
5. Sgt. Michael Nichols sent an Administrative Report to Chief Catalano and Lt. Gesin notifying them of his desire to withdraw from the TRU.
6. Sgts. Cheyenne Cute, Seth Rowland, and Michael Nichols each received a letter from the Cortland County Personnel/Civil Service Office notifying them they had successfully completed their probationary period as Police Sergeant for the City of Cortland effective 12/22/09.
7. Commissioner Thomas O'Mara sent a letter to Monica Norris, Office of the Mayor, recommending Richard Menapace be considered as a replacement for Mr. Isaf for the Police Commission. He also noted Mr. Smith would like to continue in his position on the Commission.

**C. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS -**

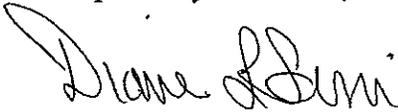
1. Commissioner Smith commended the members of the Department.
2. Chief Catalano noted future shortages with Ptl. Chadd Hines on leave for knee surgery, Ptl. Pym to be leaving shortly for maternity leave, 3 officers scheduled to leave for Basic

Academy in a few weeks, and Ptl. Charles Niederhofer preparing to retire. He noted Elmira PD is considering commencing a Police Academy later in the year and, if he is allowed to hire to replace Ptl. Niederhofer, he might send the new employee to this Academy.

3. Mayor Feiszli requested minutes of Commission meetings be forwarded to her office by email for dissemination to the Common Council members.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, 2010 at 3:15 p.m. in the CPD Lounge. With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane L. Ferri  
Confidential Secretary