

# POLICE COMMISSION

February 24, 2010

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Ralph Smith, Commissioner Donald Kline, Chief F. Michael Catalano, and Secretary Diane Ferri.

**EXCUSED:** Chairman Thomas O'Mara, D/C Paul Sandy.

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## **CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Police Commission was held on February 24, 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.

**A. MINUTES** – On the motion of Comm. Donald Kline, seconded by Comm. Ralph Smith, the Commission approved the minutes of the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**B. BILLS** – The Commission reviewed the bills in the amount of \$35,671.38 for the month of January.

**The following bills were highlighted:**

- Buyout of 2 leases / C-08, C-02 (mostly paid from Auctioned vehicles)      \$ 18,000.00
- Dictaphone maintenance contract      \$ 3,399.00

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

**The following reports were highlighted:**

**1. Vehicle Repairs** –

In Deputy Chief Sandy's absence, the Chief noted no unusual repairs for the month of January. Maintenance costs for the month totaled only \$676.18. As all gasoline was paid for in December there were no costs associated with the January billing cycle.

**2. Overtime** –

The Commission reviewed the overtime breakdown by category. Accumulated hours worked for the month of January totaled 791.00 hours, compared to 953.00 hours for the same time frame in 2009 and reflects a 162.00-hour decrease for the month of January from 2009's figure, reflecting also the same figure decrease for the annual total difference.

**3 Cortland Housing Authority Report** -

The City of Cortland has billed a total of \$850.00 in fees for criminal history inquiries provided by the Police Department during the course of 2010.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**A. HIRING FREEZE** – Chief Catalano updated the Commission with regards to the hiring freeze ordered by the Common Council. The freeze is still in place with the City of Cortland, which affects our ability to fill positions vacated by retirees and resignations

currently experienced by the department. The Chief noted he has requested this item be added to the agenda for the next Common Council meeting.

**B. PERSONNEL UPDATES** – The Chief informed the Commission of the recent spate of retirements/resignations experienced by the department as follows:

1. As of 2/4/10, Mrs. Stacy Mertz resigned from her duties as a School Crossing Guard, which provided opportunity for Mrs. Linda Cox to promote to the “full time” status of Crossing Guard, but reducing the number of substitute guards.
2. As of 2/6/10, Ptl. Charles Niederhofer retired from the department. This position has not been filled, which will create an overtime cost to maintain minimum staffing.
3. As of 2/19/10, Mrs. Frances Cobb resigned from her duties as a School Crossing Guard, which provided opportunity for Mrs. Phyllis Bennett to promote to the “full time” status of Crossing Guard, effectively reducing the number of substitute guards to only 1. At any point in time, if there are no substitute guards for a crossing, a police officer must be assigned to the position, creating another overtime cost.
4. Mrs. Cobb’s resignation uniquely affects the department in that she also held the part time position of Parking Enforcement Officer. Chief Catalano will address this with the Common Council next week during the discussion regarding the hiring freeze. Meanwhile, PEO Ryan Riese will adjust his work schedule to accommodate the need for parking enforcement during the timeframes Mrs. Cobb formerly worked.
5. Effective 2/23/10, Ptl. Eric Nilsson was granted Disability Retirement from the NYS and Local Retirement System for injuries sustained while on duty. Chief Catalano noted he had previously apprised the Common Council of this possibility and as part of the cost-cutting efforts, stated he would not fill this position.

Due to these retirements and resignations, the Chief expects the Overtime Line of the budget to increase exponentially.

***NEW BUSINESS***

**NEW COMMISSIONER** – Commissioner Donald R. Kline was sworn in at City Hall effective 2/18/10 and was welcomed by all to the position.

***OTHER BUSINESS***

**A. COMMENDATION AND APPRECIATION REPORT -**

1. Chief Catalano and D/C Sandy each received a Certificate of Attendance for participating in the *Police Psychological Examinations* Course by the State of New York Division of Criminal Justice Services.
2. Sgts. Cheyenne Cute, Seth Rowland, and Michael Nichols each received a *Certificate of Completion* from the State of New York Division of Criminal Justice Services for successfully completing the *Course in Police Supervision* as established by the Municipal Police Training Council.
3. Ptl. Jesse Abbott, Ptl. Kyle Green, and Ptl. Jared Aiken received a letter of commendation from Ms. Charlotte Kiehle of the NYS Dept of Taxation and Finance, Child Support Enforcement Office for their assistance in the seizure of a vehicle for child support arrears. The Chief responded to her letter.

4. Ptl. Debra Barber submitted documentation signifying successful completion of the requirements for *CPD/AED for the Professional Rescuer and Health Care Providers* conducted by the Cortland County Chapter of The American Red Cross.
5. The National Tactical Officers Association presented certificates to each of the following officers for their completion of the *Patrol Response to Active Shooter in Schools and Public buildings*” conducted at Cortland Junior-Senior High School:  
Lt. Jonathan Gesin, Lt. David Guerrero, Sgt. Richard Troyer, Sgt. Elizabeth Starr, Sgt. Michael Strangeway, Sgt. Cheyenne Cute, Ptl. Roger Stafford, Ptl. Joseph Slater, Ptl. Daniel Mones, Ptl. Kenneth Bush, Ptl. Benjamin Locke, and Ptl. Kimberly Gerdus.

The Chief noted all the members of the department will be participating in this class.

**B. CORRESPONDENCE -**

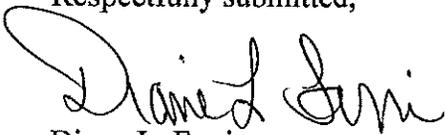
1. Frances Cobb submitted her letter of resignation to Chief Catalano effective 2/18/10. The Chief responded to her letter, accepting her resignation with regret.
2. Chief Catalano wrote a letter of support to the YWCA for their efforts to procure continued funding for their Child Advocacy Center.
3. The Central New York Association of Chiefs of Police sent a letter to chief Catalano requesting he submit a letter of nomination from the department for their annual awards presentation. The Chief submitted a letter nominating Sgt. Cheyenne Cute for the Law Enforcement Commendation Award.

**C. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS -**

Comments were made during the course of the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24, 2010 at 3:15 p.m. in the CPD Lounge. With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane L. Ferri  
Confidential Secretary