

# POLICE COMMISSION

April 25, 2021 Minutes

**PRESENT:** Chairman Jim Sponaugle, Commissioner Trish Hansen, Commissioner Liz Starr, Chief Paul Sandy, and Diane Ferri.

## ***CALL TO ORDER***

The regular meeting of the Police Commission was held on April 22, 2021 in the Mayor's Conference Room at City Hall. Chairman Sponaugle called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

- A. MINUTES** – On the motion of Comm. Starr, second by Comm. Sponaugle the Commission approved the minutes of the March meeting.
- B. BILLS** –The Commission reviewed the March bills totaling \$45,708.88 and were approved on the motion of Comm. Hansen, second by Comm. Starr.
- C. REPORTS** – **The commission voted unanimously to remove Report 1 from the report file. In addition, the reports as approved on the motion of Comm. Starr, second by Comm. Hansen, were highlighted as follows:**
- 1. Year-To-Date Budget** –  
The Chief reviewed the new budget figures with the Commission.
  - 2. Vehicle Maintenance** –  
The Commission reviewed the report with no major vehicle expenses reported.
  - 3. Sick Time Comparison** –  
The Commission reviewed this report, noting with satisfaction the changes to the format made, as requested.
  - 4. Overtime** –  
Various categories of overtime hours were reviewed, while the Chief noted the Court Overtime section has all been virtual. He further stated, with 6 openings on the roster at the present time, the Short Shift category will be increasing.
  - 5. Other Activities Report** –  
The Chief pointed out the continued low Service Request Calls with the exception being Domestic Incidents and Mental Health reports. The Commission requested 2 categories be removed from this report, namely “Property Stolen” and “Property Recovered”.
  - 6. SPCA Report** –  
The SPCA report was reviewed, noting 110 complaints year-to-date and 24 after-hours calls.
  - 7. Parking Tickets** – The Chief reported, that with Mr. Byrnes being reassigned to regular parking ticket duties, the tickets written has increased back to the 2017 levels.
  - 8. Detective Bureau Cases** –  
A variety of crimes investigated by the Detective Bureau for the month were reviewed by the Commission.

## ***OLD BUSINESS***

**A. PERSONNEL UPDATES –**

**1. New Hires –**

- A. The Chief updated the Commission on the current personnel status within the Department. Four of the five new employees began the Basic Police Academy on April 29. The fifth employee, Dylan Ryan, had unknown medical issues, which need to be resolved. Once his bloodwork returns to normal limits he will be reconsidered for the position.
- B. He further noted they will begin to canvass other departments for officers interested in a “lateral transfer”, with a suggestion made to approach Ithaca Police Department. Discussion was tabled until the meeting progressed to the appropriate subheading.

**2. Promotions –**

- A. The Chief reported on the current plan to promote from the Sergeants list, with the possibility of waiting for the new test results. He met with the 4 candidates to explain the current arrangement as agreed upon with the Mayor and Corporation Counsel.
- B. He also reported the promotion of Uniform Lieutenant David Guerrero to Deputy Chief, and of Sgt Cheyenne Cute to Uniform Lieutenant, effective April 26.

**B. SCHEDULE –** The Chief noted the PBA formed a committee representing all shifts to review how other departments operate their coverage of shift work.

**C. VEHICLES –** The Chief updated the Commission on the status of the purchase of new vehicles, the leasing arrangements to be made and the transfer of vehicles within the Detective Bureau and command staff.

**D. PROMOTIONS –** This agenda item was discussed concurrent with the Personnel Updates.

**E. HIRING –** The Chief commenced discussion regarding the practice of “lateral transfers” to fill the 2 spots on the roster, with the idea of adding a second K9 unit.

**F. DISCIPLINE –** The Chief updated the Commission on 3 recently held “Informal Resolution” meetings with patrol staff; namely Sgt. Seth Rowland and Ptl. Stephen White. Discussion ensued regarding the details of the disciplinary actions and the final outcomes of said meetings.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. EO 203 UPDATES –**

**1. Local Law–**

The Chief described changes to the City of Cortland Local Law requiring the number of Police Commissioners to be changed from 3 to 5; he further noted he will give his recommendations to the Common Council. Discussion ensued regarding changes to departmental qualifications to “serious felony” as well as discussion about the repeal of 50A.

**2. Outreach –**

The Chief apprised the Commission of Special Order 21-0001 Community Outreach with the requirement that *“all uniformed police officers assigned to the Patrol Division shall*

*continue to made concerted efforts to engage the community when call activity allows*". This order also provides a call label and directions on the proper protocol and procedure to be followed.

- 3. Training** – Per the EO 203 mandates, the Chief provided the 2021 Training Schedule for the Commissioners review. He noted all future packets will include Training Schedule updates. New employees attending Basic Academy follow a syllabus as prescribed by New York State, and as such, are not listed on this Schedule.

**B. NEW PERSONNEL ISSUES –**

1. The Chief apprised the Commission of two new grievances brought to his attention; the first one involving a recent Memorandum he issued regarding the proper assignment of overtime to patrols vs sergeants. The second grievance involved the DWI special detail and the appropriate officer assignment for said detail. He further noted the reinstatement of the “forced” OT list.
2. The Commission discussed the current PBA contract negotiation issues.

***OTHER BUSINESS***

**A. COMMENDATION, APPRECIATION, and CORRESPONDENCE REPORT –**

There were no questions or concerns.

**B. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS –**

There were no comments. Commissioner Starr had to leave at 12 noon.

***ADJOURNMENT***

With no further business to discuss, on the motion of Comm. Hansen, second by Chairman Sponaugle, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane L. Ferri  
Part Time Confidential Secretary