POLICE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
10 SEPTEMBER 2012

CTO

Chairman Commissioner Chris Weldon called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. In attendance were Commissioner David Waters, Commissioner Don Sauvigne, Chief Michael Lombardo, Deputy Chief Robert Crosby and James Passeri (Wilton Bulletin).

MINUTES

Commissioner Sauvigne made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2012 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Waters. Motion carried 3-0.

DISCUSSION OF MONTHLY REPORTS

Monthly reports were reviewed and discussed. The Commissioners noted the relatively large number of people fingerprinted last month, which reflects required fingerprinting at the start of the school year and fingerprinting performed for a local employer. The number of MV Stops is consistent with that of the same period last year and is up from last month, which demonstrates a positive trend and is partly the result of an increase in available personnel who have returned from sick leave or vacation. Commissioner Sauvigne also noted the continued decreasing trend in domestic violence incidences.

The Activity Report was reviewed. The reported activities were stable to those of last year at this time.

The MAC Report was reviewed and discussed. The traffic issues that resulted from a significant number of trucks accessing a New York reservoir through Wilton streets seem to have been resolved; Chief Lombardo reported that he and the First Selectman have prevailed on the water district to use New York roads for the remainder of the project.

There have been a number of complaints with respect to a failure to stop for stopped school buses with flashing light and the school bus stop sign displayed. It appears that drivers are confused about whether they need to stop where a school bus displays its
signals on a road of two or more lanes like Route 7. The Chief made it clear that no matter how many lanes there are, if the school bus is stopped and flashing its signals all traffic must stop from either direction regardless of the number of lanes. The only exception arises where there is a median in the middle of the lanes going in opposite directions. In that case, traffic must only stop in all lanes on the side the median where the school bus stops with its signals and flashers displayed. The Commissioners noted that Chief Lombardo had published a reminder of these issues in the newspaper to alert drivers as to the law. The Commission also queried whether the newspapers in town would be willing to publish an eye catching public service advertisement reminder at the same time the Chief has his article published to lay out the bullet points of the law. The sobriety checkpoint scheduled for September 8 was canceled due to the threat of possibly severe weather and will be rescheduled.

OLD BUSINESS

The Commission scrambled the agenda to take up the consideration of a location for the third fixed location digital radar sign. Chief Lombardo reported that a Nu-Metrics study of speeds on Wolfpit Road in proximity to Miller-Driscoll School had been performed during the period of August 16-24, 2012. The study indicated that westbound there was a total of 18,068 vehicles with an average speed of 37 MPH and 61.46% of the vehicles exceeding the posted speed of 30 MPH; eastbound there was a total of 18,308 vehicles with an average speed of 36 MPH and 59.82% of the vehicles exceeded the posted speed limit. The Commissioners also noted a significant number of trucks and vans that were reported to travel in this location. Chief Lombardo reported that the Department had been told verbally by State DOT that installing the new sign on Wolfpit Road, a state highway, would not be a problem – this will be confirmed in writing to avoid any future misunderstanding if this location is selected. The Commissioners noted that the average speed is not alarming and discussed whether another location such as Sharp Hill Road or Hurlbutt Street would be a preferable location for the sign, but concluded that Wolfpit Road is a higher traffic and safety concern because of the school and the crosswalk to Hope Church. There was further discussion of the need to clear brush and foliage so that the existing signage is more visible, and Chief Lombardo said that he would make the request to DOT. The consensus of the Commissioners was to select westbound Wolfpit Avenue at a location between the two curb cuts serving Miller Driscoll School for the new sign, but action on this matter was tabled to the next meeting to permit the Department to recommend an exact location.

DISCUSSION OF MONTHLY REPORTS (CONTINUED)

The SRO Report was reviewed and discussed. The report did not reflect much activity due to the school summer vacation.

REPORT OF CHIEF LOMBARDO

Letters of thanks and jobs well done and other miscellaneous matters were reviewed.
• Letter from First Selectman Bill Brennan thanking Detective Scott Sear for the presentation he gave to Town Hall employees on security preparations and management of various incidents.
• Memo from Chief Lombardo thanking Detective Scott Sear for serving nearly three years with the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.
• Memo to Detective Kip Tarrant from Chief Lombardo thanking him for assuming the position of the Acting Supervisor in the Detective Bureau during Lt. Wakeman’s absence.
• Memo to Officer Robert Cipolla for filling the position of Acting Detective when the department was in need.
• Memo from Chief Lombardo to all department staff thanking and praising dispatchers, first responders and the detective bureau in pursuing and solving the Nick Parisot case.
• Email to Chief Lombardo from Jonathan Devens expressing gratitude for bringing closure to the Parisot case.
• Email to Chief Lombardo from Tony Gasper and the motorcycle community for solving the Parisot case.
• Email to Chief Lombardo, along with a letter from Richard Tuttle thanking Detective Scott Sear and members of the department for locating his missing elderly father.
• Letter from Chief Lombardo thanking Bob Baltuck and Joanne Steiner for their donation of a bed for K-9 Enzo.
• Letter to South Wilton Veterinary Group from Chief Lombardo thanking them for their donation of free medical services for K-9 Enzo.
• Letter from Chief Lombardo thanking Felix Escobar (Tom E Toes) for sandwich wraps that were brought to the department.

Chief Lombardo noted in particular the work of Detective Sear in the training of Town Hall employees in security concerns, and the great job Detective Tarrant and Acting Detective Cipolla did while Lt. Wakeman was away.

The Commission discussed a public service announcement by Charles Grodin that recently aired on WCBS 880 radio in which Mr. Grodin made the important point that parents need to talk with their children about how small actions can have significant consequences. Although no names or specifics were used, the circumstances of the Parisot case were readily apparent and the Commission was appreciative as to how the topic was handled.

The Commissioners commended Chief Lombardo on his handling of the Parisot press conference and noted that the press had reported accurately and sensitively. The Commissioners further commended the Department for the tremendous amount of time and effort involved in solving the case, and noted that there is sometimes frustration by the general public as to the apparent lack of progress on a case when in fact a great deal of work is going on behind the scenes.
OLD BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

Chief Lombardo noted that the Department, in conjunction with Parks and Recreation, appears to have curtailed unacceptable after-hours behavior at Merwin Meadows. The Commissioners noted that with the extension of the proposed bike trail from Norwalk as reported in the local papers it will be necessary to patrol this trail and it may require greater activity of the bike patrol.

NEW BUSINESS

The tour of the police facility in preparation for the FY '14 budget was tabled to a later date.

REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS

There were no reports of the Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:47 p.m., the meeting went into Executive Session to discuss ongoing Labor Issues No action was taken in the Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:25 p.m., the Commission came out of Executive Session and a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Weldon, seconded by Commissioner Waters and passed 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,
David F. Waters, Acting Recording Secretary