

Wilton Police Commission



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**POLICE COMMISSION MEETING
15 December 2009**

CTO

Commissioner Matt Mason called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. In attendance were Commissioners Mark Ketley, Chris Weldon (via phone 7:15 p.m.), Chief Michael Lombardo, Kara O'Connor (*Villager*), Christian Camerota (*Patch*) and Claire Furano.

MINUTES

A motion made by Commissioner Ketley and seconded by Commissioner Mason to approve the Minutes of the November 9, 2009 Regular Meeting and the Special Meetings on November 19, 2009 and November 24, 2009 passed 2-0.

DISCUSSION OF MONTHLY REPORTS

The Commission reviewed, discussed and accepted the monthly reports.

Chief Lombardo noted that this is the fourth straight month motor vehicle stops are down. Compared to November 2008, the numbers are down 50%. This is attributable to being short staffed. The number of Motor Vehicle Stops is less than 300. In 2008, Motor Vehicle Stops (MVS) were over 600 and in 2007 that number was 700. Chief Lombardo stated this is a trend he does not wish to continue. Route 7 will be opening on Thursday and police presence is necessary to monitor four lanes of traffic flow and six lanes when taking the turning lanes into consideration.

Commissioner Mason pointed out that DUI arrests are down and this is also attributable to staffing issues. EMS assists set a record high at 10% over last year. He also noted that the number of domestic incidents has increased significantly. The number of calls is just about double over last year and is believed to be a consequence of the economic downturn. Chief Lombardo added that many of these are repeat calls and possibly related to economic stress. It was also noted that EMS calls and Burglaries have increased over 2008. The significant increase in the number of calls may be attributable to the lack of available manpower. Chief Lombardo emphasized that public safety is first and foremost

and a major concern. He stressed that we do not have the people to respond to all citizen calls effectively. Commissioner Ketley added that we have to find a way to get the manpower levels up. In trying to contain OT expenses and conserve town funds, we must be careful not to sacrifice public safety. A proper balance must be found.

Route 7 will be opening at an 11:00 am ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday, December 17th, by the Town Hall driveway. Chief Lombardo is concerned about sufficient manpower to ensure police presence to keep traffic moving at safe speeds, while servicing the public with medical, domestic assistance, crime prevention and overall good coverage to the Town. Commissioner Ketley said do what has to be done to be proactive. It would be irresponsible not to consider what may occur.

Commissioner Mason suggested speaking with the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance about the department's needs and requirements when discussing the upcoming budget.

REPORT OF CHIEF MICHAEL LOMBARDO

The Chief reported about the past month's activities as follows:

- Email to Chief Lombardo regarding a phone call from Junius Brown praising Officer Eva Zimnoch's and Officer Diane Papa's performance at the scene of an accident.
- Email to Chief Lombardo regarding a phone call from Jen Mincy expressing gratitude to Detective Trahan for checking well being.
- Letter to Chief Lombardo from William Schulhof expressing appreciation for Officer Steve Gelineau's assistance.
- Memo of congratulations from Chief Lombardo to Officer Shawn Frendt and Officer Eva Zimnoch for their completion of the Dive Training and conditional membership of the Wilton Dive Team.
- Email to Sgt. Tom Tunney for encouragement he had given to resident involving unpleasant family situation.
- Note to Chief Lombardo from Patricia Sidas thanking Officer Eva Zimnoch for her assistance, along with a \$30 donation to the Police Explorers.
- Christmas greetings and note of appreciation from Mr. & Mrs. Kristiansen, along with a \$50 donation to the Wilton Police Fund.

Commissioner Mason expressed his pleasure that residents take the time to acknowledge the support they receive from the department.

STP Report

In reviewing the STP Report, Commissioner Mason noted complaints that had been received in many areas (Sturges Ridge Road, Hurlbutt Street, West Church Street, Kellogg Drive, Cannon Road and Pimpewaug Road) and stated this is par for the course,

particularly with the lack of manpower. The biggest complaints are traffic, speed and volume on the side roads. Each complaint is addressed. A survey is done on each area and the speed trailer has been strategically placed to assist in slowing down speeding drivers. There are limitations in what can be done with the low manpower. In recapping an article in the local newspaper from a young man, Commissioner Weldon suggested following-up personally with a phone call to his parents.

Commissioner Weldon also suggested writing a weekly article in the local papers and on the web site to generate public awareness.

OLD BUSINESS

Installation of signage at the intersection of Wilridge Road and Old Town Road will be coordinated with Ridgefield Police Chief Roche and the Ridgefield Police Commission. Their next commission meeting will be held in January. The signs will be installed simultaneously.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Ketley motioned to send a letter, as the traffic authority for the Town of Wilton, to DOT supporting their recommendation for a crosswalk and pedestrian pushbutton at the Wolfpit Road/Route 7 junction. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weldon and so moved 3-0. Chief Lombardo will address this.

A motion to approve the 2010 meeting calendar, changing the June meeting to June 15th and the October meeting to October 12th, was made by Commissioner Ketley, seconded by Commissioner Mason and so moved 3-0.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT

There were no reports from the Commissioners.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:40 p.m., the meeting adjourned to the Executive Session. At 9:50 p.m., the Commission came out of Executive Session without any action having been taken by the Commission.

At 9:50 p.m., Commissioner Ketley motioned to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Mason and passed 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Furano
Recording Secretary