

PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 22nd, 2024, POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

5:30 p.m. Public Session – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

Kate Coyle, Chair
Buzz Scherr, Commissioner
Francesca Fernald, Commissioner

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The October 22nd, 2024, monthly Police Commission meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers.

The following people were present for the public session: Commissioners Coyle, Scherr and Fernald, Chief Mark Newport, Deputy Chief Mike Maloney, Business Manager Karen Senecal, Executive Assistant Jackie Burnett and members of the police department and the public.

- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Coyle led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE 9/17/24 MEETING MINUTES:**

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the minutes of the above-noted Police Commission meeting.

Seconded by Commissioner Fernald.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Coyle: “Aye.”

Commissioner Scherr: “Aye.”

Commissioner Fernald: “Aye.”

- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

- V. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. POLICE COMMISSION:

1. Facilities Update

a. Restoration

Chief Newport discussed the police department facility's heating, cooling and ventilation system struggles and is nearing the final stages of the mold remediation project.

b. Community Policing Facility (CPF) Planning

The CPF Working Group met with the City Council on Monday, September 23rd for a presentation on the current building plans. The project falls within budget, maximizes sight-lines and utilizes existing police department building space. The City Council called for a staffing study to be conducted prior to progressing any further to ensure the working group is preparing for an appropriate sized space based on the police department's absolute needs. A 3-hour public input session has been scheduled with the City Council on Monday, November 7th, 2024, to bring the discussion back to square one so the group can share with the public how they arrived at the architectural plans presented to the public at the September 23rd City Council meeting.

2. Community Priorities

Chief Newport discussed the challenges experiences through the new CAD/RMS internal training process and explained why the "go live" date for the project has been postponed to May of 2025, which was out of the police department's hands. The new CAD/RMS software will interface with the future body-worn camera system that the agency is preparing to implement in the beginning of 2025. The new Taser 10 upgrade will begin in the winter of 2024 and will also be managed within the Central Square system.

3. Conference Update

The Command Staff and other members of the police department attended the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Conference in Boston to receive advanced law enforcement training.

B. CHIEF OF POLICE:

1. Donation

- a. An anonymous donation of a \$50 Visa Gift Card for School Resource Officer (SRO) Lynn Thomas is intended to be used to purchase food for students for when they visit her office at school (community policing).

The Chair asked for a motion to accept the above donation.

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the donation of a \$50 Visa Gift Card for SRO Lynn Thomas to use to purchase food for her office to share with student visitors and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Fernald.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Coyle:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Scherr:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Fernald:	“Aye.”

2. Accreditation Manager Update

A new accreditation manager, Kate Young, started last week and will receive extensive training over the next several months. The department’s Executive Assistant, Portsmouth’s first Accreditation Manager, has been assigned to train her.

3. Crime Analyst Report

2023-2024: Calls for service are down 11%, arrests are up 5%, DWI arrests are up 14%, total reports taken are down 4%, reportable accidents are down 4%, total motor vehicle stops are down 13%, Involuntary Emergency Admissions (IEAs) are up 25% (significant increase), mental health-related calls are down 10%, and juvenile-related calls are down 21%. The decrease in mental health-related calls depicts a direct correlation with the work of the department’s first social worker and the benefit of having access to the state’s mobile crisis unit(s).

4. Monthly Traffic Stats

September 2024: 737 motor vehicle stops (this breaks down to one motor vehicle stop per hour for the entire month), 28 summonses, and 38 reportable motor vehicle crashes (17 fewer than August, significant decrease). Officers’ use their discretion when faced with issuing a summons, as there are many variables to consider. The City of Portsmouth receives no money based on the number of speeding tickets that are issued each year and officers are not evaluated based on the number of speeding tickets they issue over a period of time.

5. Financial Report

FY25 Budget Update: The department is tracking 2% below the cap in quarter one, despite overtime costs. The FY26 budget season is gearing up. The department’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Rolling Stock drafts have been submitted to the City Manager’s office for feedback. The full FY26 budget process is expected to ramp-up in the coming months

a. Grant Applications Update

- Body Worn Camera Grant: anticipating \$200,000
- ICAC Federal Grant Supplement: anticipating \$1,000,000
- JAG Grant – To cover department-wide training (\$ unk.)
- SERT Grant: anticipating \$11,000 (in the beginning stages)

- b. **Strategic Plan Update** – Business Operations Manager Karen Senecal is working on finalizing the strategic plan. Her original plans to revamp of report has been postponed in order to prevent an unnecessary delay to its release. Stay tuned.

VI. PATROL DIVISION:

- a. This report was included in the commission meeting packet.

VII. COURT OFFICE REPORT:

- a. This confidential report was included in the meeting packet.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. Nov 7th, 2024: Public Input Session at City Council meeting to discuss the Community Policing Facility project.

IX. NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, November 19th, 2024, beginning at 5:30 pm.

X. MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Action: Commissioner Fernald moved to adjourn the October 22nd, 2024, Police Commission meeting at 6:03 PM.

Seconded by Commissioner Scherr.

On a Voice Vote: The motion passed 3-0.

END OF MEETING

Respectfully Submitted by Jacqueline Burnett, Executive Assistant
Commissioner Buzz Scherr, Recording Clerk of the Commission