

PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 18th, 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 June 18th, 2024, monthly Police Commission meeting was called to order at 5:30 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:** Commissioner Fernald led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE 5/28/24 MEETING MINUTES:**

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

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 reported that the humidity within the building has returned. Dehumidifiers are running around the clock to help reduce humidity levels in the air during the summer months.

b. Community Policing Facility (CPF) Planning

The Chair reported that work is on-going. Following a work session with the City Council, the CPF Working Group is working diligently to utilize their feedback. Another working group meeting and future community meetings with the City Council are scheduled to allow for more public input. The Commission encourages members of the public to reach out to them with questions, comments and concerns. Chief Newport reiterated that the photo that was published was a conceptual massing image – not the actual design of the building. This will be developed later on in the process. Commissioner Scherr added that the topics of cost and location are not approached lightly.

2. Community Priorities

The Chair reported that the City Council approved financing for body worn cameras. Chief Newport stated that the department will sign a contract with Axon. The department should receive the equipment in the next 4-6 months and will begin to slowly roll out the program to officers. In the beginning of Spring 2025, officers will begin to wear them. Chief Newport extends his thanks to the City Council for providing funding for the police department to purchase equipment to help keep his officers and our community safe.

B. CHIEF OF POLICE:

1. Crime Analyst Report

Deputy Chief Maloney reported the traffic stats from May 2024 in comparison to 2023 (year-to-date): There has been a decrease in calls for service, reportable motor vehicle crashes, total reports taken, motor vehicle stops (by 13%), mental health calls (by 40%) and juvenile-related calls. There has been an increase in DWIs (by 40%), in-custody arrests (by 12.94%), while Involuntary Emergency Admission arrests remain consistent with 2023 totals.

2. Monthly Traffic Stats

For the month of May 2024: 549 motor vehicle stops, 17 summonses issued, and 54 reportable motor vehicle crashes. These statistics show an increase from the previous month. The Patrol Division is starting to schedule more Highway Safety grant funded patrols throughout the summer months. With school being out, drivers need to remain focused while driving as people will be out and about. The department will

deploy speed signs and conduct motorcycle noise testing when possible. The department is also working in conjunction with Liquor Enforcement to address excessive drinking at establishments.

3. Financial Report

Business Ops. Manager Karen Senecal briefed the Commission on the current state of the police department's budget. The police department is coming in 5.7% below the cap for FY24. The department is currently working on the fiscal year and grant closeouts. FY25 begins on July 1st.

a. Grant Applications Update

The department is researching funding through the Department of Justice for body worn cameras.

b. Strategic Plan Update

In progress, but will be completed soon.

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. The July 16th meeting has been cancelled due to scheduling challenges

b. August 6th: National Night Out

IX. NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, August 20th, 2024, starting at 5:30 pm. Please always check the municipal meetings calendar for any changes to the schedule leading up to the next meeting.

X. MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Action: Commissioner Scherr moved to adjourn the June 18th, 2024, Police Commission meeting at 5:47 PM.

Seconded by Commissioner Fernald.

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