

PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 17th, 2024, POLICE COMMISSION
MEETING

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

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

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

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chair Coyle.
- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Led collectively by the Commission.
- III. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** A moment of silence was held in memory of Portsmouth resident and Biddeford Police Officer Jason Wolterbeek, with condolences extended to his family, friends and colleagues.
- IV. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE 11/19/24 MEETING MINUTES:**
Action: Commissioner Fernald moved to accept the minutes of the above-noted Police Commission meeting.
Seconded by Commissioner Scherr.
On a Voice Vote: Unanimously approved (3-0).
- V. **AGENDA SUSPENSION:**
The Chair requested a motion to suspend the agenda to move to item #1, Swearing-In Ceremony, under the Chief's Report.
Action: Commissioner Fernald moved to suspend the agenda for the reason stated above.
Seconded by Commissioner Sherr.
On a Voice Vote: Unanimously approved (3-0).

Chief's Report, #1 – Swearing-In Ceremony:

Chief Newport officially swore in Officers Chloe Robidas and Jayson Page.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. POLICE COMMISSION:

1. Facilities Update

a. Restoration

Deputy Chief Maloney reported air sampling and quality testing for all police department floors scheduled for December 26 as a follow-up to testing six months prior.

b. Community Policing Facility (CPF) Planning

The Chair encouraged public interest and applications for the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee to assist with site plan development for the police facility.

2. Community Priorities

The City Council approved nearly \$500,000 in grant funding to support police department initiatives, alleviating taxpayer burdens.

Chief Newport updated on delays in software development for the new CAD/RMS system but emphasized continued progress with the vendor.

B. CHIEF OF POLICE:

1. Swearing-In Ceremony – see section

a. Officer Chloe Robidas

b. Officer Jayson Page

2. Grant & Donation

a. Grant: \$11,076 from the New Hampshire Department of Safety (Homeland Security Grant Program) for Seacoast Emergency Response Team night vision equipment.

Motion: Commissioner Fernald moved to accept and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Scherr.

On a Voice Vote: Unanimously approved (3-0).

b. Donation: \$1,000 from Paul Gormley and Kimi Iguchi for the Portsmouth Police Department.

Motion: Commissioner Fernald moved to accept and forward to the City Council for their action.

Seconded by Commissioner Scherr.

On a Voice Vote: Unanimously approved (3-0).

3. Crime Analyst Report

2023 and 2024 year-to-date comparison (January 1 – November 30):

- Calls for service: ↓11.8%
- Arrests: ↑4.4%
- DWI arrests: ↑20.5%
- Reports taken: ↓4.3%
- Reportable motor vehicle accidents: ↓1.7%
- Motor vehicle stops: ↓8.5%
- IEA: ↑19%
- Mental health calls: ↓17.7%
- Juvenile calls: ↓20.9%

A “reportable motor vehicle accident” was defined as an accident in which the damage to a vehicle is more than \$1,000.

Additional DWI patrols will continue through the year-end.

4. Monthly Traffic Stats

November 2024:

- Motor vehicle stops: 600
- Summonses issued: 24
- Reportable motor vehicle crashes: 33 (20 fewer than October).

5. Financial Report

FY25 budget is tracking 2.5% below the cap.

Preparing the FY26 budget framework.

a. Grant Applications Update

- No new applications.

b. Strategic Plan Update – Business Operations Manager Karen Senecal will finalize the strategic plan by the end of December.

VIII. PATROL DIVISION:

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

IX. COURT OFFICE REPORT:

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

X. MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. The 2025 Citizen’s Police Academy is accepting applications on the department’s website.

- b. A fundraiser dodgeball tournament (Police vs. Fire) is scheduled for Friday to support GATHER. Attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishable food donations.
- c. The Commission wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

XI. NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

Tentatively Wednesday, January 22nd, 2025, at 5:30 PM.

XII. MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Motion: Commissioner Fernald moved to adjourn at 5:53 PM.

Seconded by Commissioner Scherr.

On a Voice Vote: Unanimously approved (3-0).

END OF MEETING

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