

**Rutland City Police Commission
December 13, 2021**

Present: Chairman Sean Sargeant, Commissioners Tony Romeo, Luther Brown and Jeanette Langston (via phone).

Also attending: Chief Kilcullen, Commanders Sam Delpha and Greg Sheldon, Crime Analyst Nathan Thibodeau, Pat Hunter and Sgt. Keith Lorman.

Call to order by Chairman Sargeant at 6 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Romeo moved to approve the minutes of November 8, 2021. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Introduction/Recognition of Police Department Members

Chief Kilcullen administered the oath for the promotion of Cpl. Elizha Heter and Cpl. Rick Caravaggio.

Public Comment

Pat Hunter asked if any thought had been given to allowing the public to watch the meeting. Chairman Sargeant said he would take it under advisement for the January meeting.

Chairman Sargeant said he had heard from Max Richard on Dec. 3 who owns Vermont Rental Cars. One of his vehicles was involved in an incident and he was billed \$1,200 from Carrara's for storage. It was suggested that Mr. Richard speak to the City Attorney. Chief Kilcullen said he believes this is being worked out.

Communication from the Union

Chairman Sargeant said he and Commissioner Langston met with Union Rep Caravaggio and Eric to discuss morale issues and recruitment strategies. The meeting was for discussion only.

Commanders' Report

Commander Delpha said that 20 applications have been received for the open dispatch position and they will be screened next week. He added that as a result of the bid process, the 2022 Assignment Roster has been completed and goes into effect January 2. Chief Kilcullen distributed copies of the roster.

Commander Sheldon said a monthly meeting was held upstairs last week and the Community Policing Subcommittee will meet this week. He said there are good things happening but he is learning that processes take time. The human trafficking case manager is back to work and doing well. The next Project VISION meeting will be January with a human trafficking presentation by Avaloy Haynes Lanning from NewStory Center.

Chief Kilcullen spoke on behalf of Commander LaChance saying that there are some experienced applicants for the open dispatch position, and he does not perceive any issues with

the background check. The award ceremony is Thursday and B.C.I. has had active arrests with regard to the commercial burglaries.

Chairman Sargeant discussed the upcoming Shop with a Cop saying additional times had to be added to accommodate more children. Commander Sheldon said Sgt. Plemmons is organizing the event and does a good job.

Mapping Update

Nate presented the Rutland City Police Department November 2021 YTD comparison. He reported the following: 3peat percent of call volume is 12% for November; the busiest days are Monday and Wednesday; the YTD call volume average is 10,427 and in November the amount is 9,944 (down 13% from 2020), directed patrols YTD average is 811 with 681 in November (down 44% from 2020). Chairman Sargeant asked why the directed patrols have fallen off. Commander Delpha said due to lack of manpower available for directed patrols outside the normal call rotation. Nate continued with Larceny All Other the 5-year average is 93 and the current number is 103, Shoplifting the average is 105 and current is 121, Aggravated Assault the average is 47 and 2021 at 39, Breaking Entering Force the average is 46 with 77 currently, Breaking Entering no force the average is 23 with 11 currently. Robbery the average is 5 with 19 currently, Larceny motor vehicle average is 62 with 116 currently; Larceny from building the average is 47 with 44 currently, Larceny building the average is 20 with 23 currently, Pickpocket the average is 2 with 3 currently; and purse snatching the average is 4 with 1 currently. Overdoses the 4-year average is 47 and there have been 66 in 2021 with 7 fatalities, the last one on 12/6. Chairman Sargeant asked if the batch of marijuana that came to Vermont cut with fentanyl is the source of the most recent overdose. Nate said James Downs reported that in other states there have been 13 fatal overdoses from marijuana laced with fentanyl but none in Vermont yet.

Larceny All Other arrests total cases 103 with 26 arrests, shoplifting 121 cases with 67 arrests, Aggravated Assaults cases 39 with 39 arrests, Breaking Entering Force 77 cases with 15 arrests, Breaking Entering no force 11 cases with 3 arrests, Robberies 19 cases with 5 arrests. Nate mentioned that one person can be responsible for multiple robberies. The YTD map shows thefts from motor vehicles mainly in sectors 1 and 3 and B&E in sectors 1 and 2.

Nate distributed copies of the initial Community Police Mediator (CPM) Overview. Chief Kilcullen said that during the budget presentation to the Mayor and Public Safety Committee it was explained that many of the calls are not criminal in nature and don't require a sworn officer to respond. Due to the difficulty in hiring police officers and the process takes a year and a half before they become a full-service officer, Nate was asked to do an analysis of the types of calls we are handling and quantify the number of calls that do not require a sworn officer to respond. The Mayor supports a CPM position and it was supported at the Public Safety Committee budget meeting last week and will go before the full Board next week.

Nate said he went through 1800 cases from 2019 and 2021 of which 1,100 were citizen assists, 380 citizen disputes and 325 were family fights as those non-criminal calls that police officers are typically responding. The cases were broken down into 3 categories: non-criminal that could be handled by the CPM, police responses and medical responses with police assistance. Chief

Kilcullen said the official name of the position has not been determined so different acronyms may be used. The analysis determined that 59% of the calls were non-criminal and could have been handled by a CPM with the majority being citizen assists. The calls were broken down into 10 case generalizations to better understand what officers are responding to including: Verbal altercations, Non-criminal instance, Landlord/tenant squatting issues, Medical issues, Restraining/stalking/trespass/conditions order, Item dispute/missing/unknown/damage/pickup, Civil issue, Physical Altercation, Arrestable Offense and Theft. He went on to further discuss the amount of time it took to handle the cases, which totaled 656.5 hours. Adding a CPM may be able to cut that time in half with a police officer handling 288 hours, the CPM 306 hours and Medical with police assist 62 hours. Commander Sheldon added that there are additional calls the CPM could handle considering 85% of the call volume is non-criminal. He added that a CPM could not issue citations or paperwork, those are required to be done by a sworn officer.

Commissioner Romeo asked if dispatch would be the one to screen the calls and know based on tracking addresses whether sending the CPM instead of an officer would be safe. Nate said it would be based off the initial call so any severe risk would have an officer respond. Commissioner Romeo suggested the CPM have a radio to contact an officer if there is a problem. Commander Sheldon agreed. Commissioner Brown asked if the analysis could be broken down into incident rates for dispersion that might give a better sense of how this will be managed. Commander Sheldon said the CPM will be busy, but we don't want them to get burned out. He added that there will be a learning curve for dispatch and all of us. Commissioner Romeo asked what the CPM shift would look like, and does it make sense that their shift would be entirely different from the officers. Commander Sheldon said his choice would be two CPM positions working noon to midnight rotating shifts. Chief Kilcullen said in Nate's report there is talk about Monday through Friday from 11 am to 6 pm during which the position would have handled 302 cases. The best hours will be determined by the times those types of calls are concentrated.

Pat Hunter suggested that the CPM have strong connections with people who do conflict resolution, and this could build upon existing mediators in the community. Chief Kilcullen said a lot of calls require some sort of mediation and an officer is not going to engage in a mediation session, so this is a start to identifying resources and referring to those resources in the community.

Commissioner Langston said she is in favor of the CPM and asked if two positions are being created. Chief Kilcullen said the request was for two and the Mayor approved one to start. Commissioner Langston suggested the position should have a clear description of what is expected for safety reasons. She asked if the CPM would be allowed to carry pepper spray? Chief Kilcullen said potentially as he didn't see the harm in it, and it makes sense. She asked if there has been input from other departments in other places. Chief Kilcullen said Commander Sheldon has done much of the research and the agency the Chief came from had community service officers going back to the 80s. He added that a number of agencies are going this route. Commissioner Langston asked if there was a survey done of the results of going this route. Chief Kilcullen said he has not seen any specific studies on the successfulness of non-sworn program, but he will look. She asked if this position would require any trauma training. Chief Kilcullen said the specific training has not yet been identified. This job will spend more time researching the appropriate resources within the community. Commissioner Langston asked if there has been

feedback from Project VISION partners and has the salary for the position been determined. Chief Kilcullen said the plan was to include the Community Policing Subcommittee early in the process but because he wanted to get the position in this budget cycle that didn't happen. He added that the salary is budgeted at the records clerk scale effective July 1, 2022. The Chief said there is potential to fill the position sooner. Commissioner Langston asked whether there has been consideration given to create a civilian administrative position to help free up officers from admin duties. Chief Kilcullen said yes. She then asked if there is anyone trained in the community, other than police officers, to pick up needles and dispose of them. Chief Kilcullen said the request is that the calls for this come to the police in order to track where they are being picked up. She asked if other trained personnel could get that information to the police. The Chief said he would discuss it internally.

Chairman Sargeant discussed what would be worn by the CPE and what, if anything, would be on their duty belt. He said we need a vehicle and uniform presence that includes a badge that puts this person in the best position to be successful. Chief Kilcullen said it will be a uniform that will not say "police" and the car will have the City seal and not the police seal. Chairman Sargeant asked if the position will have the authority to write civil tickets. Chief Kilcullen said it is not anticipated as the position is more advisory, mediation, connecting with resources and not enforcement. Chairman Sargeant said the Chief did a good job arguing that the position is not a part of the city zoning office. Commissioner Langston suggested that when this position is brought to the Community Policing Subcommittee that the critical players who have valuable input are present and involved. Chairman Sargeant asked the Chief what he needs from the Commission within the next month to release the job description to the market. Chief Kilcullen said any desires the Commission would like to see included in the job description and to participate in a larger meeting with the Community Policing Subcommittee. Commissioner Langston asked if there is anything we can do to convince the Mayor for two positions and what was his primary reason for saying no. Chief Kilcullen said at this point the budget has been submitted and the Mayor said as a new position he wants to see how it goes. She is concerned that without a second person to cover the times needed it won't be successful. Chief Kilcullen said he doesn't believe that not having two will adversely impact the successfulness of one CPM. Chairman Sargeant said we will need to prove that this position adds value to the police department and the people of Rutland to get the second approved.

Commissioner Romeo asked if the dispatcher would make it known to the caller that response will be by the CPM and not a sworn officer after making that determination. Chief Kilcullen said it makes sense to make it clear to the caller who will be responding.

Budget Report

The Chief met with the Public Safety Budget Committee on Wednesday. There are five vacant positions funded in the FY23 budget with additional positions being deferred. The budget will go to full Board on Thursday. He also reported that as of 42% of the current fiscal year, expenses are at 39 % of the budget. Commissioner Langston asked about purchasing body cameras. Chief Kilcullen said there is a request in FY23 budget to help fund the body worn camera program. The Board was supportive of the program and he expects that appropriation to be paid out of the equipment line. She asked if there was a timeline. Chief Kilcullen said the appropriation would

be for July 1, so they are looking at cameras now to field test vendors and determine the best product.

Chief's Report

On Dec. 8 the Chief met with a body camera vendor who will provide 1-2 cameras to field test in January. Meetings regarding the motel housing are being held every two weeks on Thursday at 2 pm to avoid the issues from last year. Chairman Sargeant asked if the Quality Inn had cleared all of their issues with Building and Zoning. Commander Sheldon said he was told by Mike Brookman that some things had failed so they are not 100% open. Chairman Sargeant suggested that he should involve the Commission as much as needed to stay on top of the needs there. Commissioner Langston asked if a commissioner needs to be present at those meetings. Commander Sheldon said he would forward the link to the Commissioners. Chief Kilcullen continued with his report saying he met with Sharon Davis, Chair of the Public Safety Committee on Dec. 8 and on the 9th with the Public Safety Budget Committee. The Shop with a Cop event will be held Dec. 14 at 9 am at Wal-Mart and on Dec. 16 will be the police award ceremony. On Dec. 17 the state is hosting a dispatch discussion on the transfer to VALCOR, the new records system, and DCF will host Holiday with Heroes at Northeast School. Cpl. Rose returned to duty on the Nov. 29th. Chief Kilcullen had distributed the 2022 Assignment Roster and said retroactive pay for union employees will be paid on Friday.

Trainings

All members will be trained by Ryan Brady on the new records system, VALCOR, which will be switched over in January.

December 13 - DUI Certification Training for Officer Rice.

Commissioner Brown asked the Chief to summarize 2021. Chief Kilcullen said challenging with the reduction in staff resources, difficulties with fewer officers and COVID. Commissioner Brown asked if people were complaining about the motor vehicle larcenies. Chief Kilcullen said because those are in unlocked vehicles there are not many complaints. Commissioner Langston suggested that a marketing intern be hired for recruitment and social media needs for the community.

Sgt. Lorman discussed how he has been working with Kim Rupe at CEDRR and Police App.com to solicit candidates by combining the RCP Facebook, Rutland City Police.com, City.org and other resources. He discussed how the Police App.com platform works and where the recruitment video can be viewed. Chairman Sargeant asked to view the recruitment video. Chief Kilcullen said the video is to recruit interested candidates not currently in law enforcement. Commissioner Romeo suggested that people share the video to cast a wider net. Sgt. Lorman said he has also reached out to police unions in Chicago, NYC and Massachusetts. Commissioner Langston suggested reaching out to Colorado and the Rocky Mountain states. She also suggested highlighting Community Policing information, Project VISION, affordable house prices, outdoor recreation and the four seasons as assets to relocating to Vermont.

Adjournment

Commissioner Romeo moved to adjourn. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Meeting called to close at 7:35 pm.

Submitted by: Barbara Spaulding

cc: Chief Brian Kilcullen

Mayor David Allaire

Police Commission

City Clerk Henry Heck

Board of Aldermen

Union President Rick Caravaggio