

Rutland City Police Commission
February 8, 2021

Present: Chairman Sean Sargeant, Commissioners Luther Brown, Tom Calcagni, Tony Romeo and Jeannette Langston.

Also attending: Chief Kilcullen, Commanders David LaChance, Matthew Prouty and Greg Sheldon, Sgt. Sam Delpha, Alderman Ryan, Crime Analyst Nathan Thibodeau and Atty. Bloomer.

Call to order by Chairman Sargeant at 6 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Calcagni moved to approve the minutes of January 11, 2021.

Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Commissioner Langston moved to approve the minutes of the special meeting on January 25, 2021. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Introduction/Recognition of Police Officers

Chief Kilcullen announced that Sgt. Sam Delpha will replace Commander Prouty upon his retirement. The Chief thanked Commissioners Sargent and Langston, Commanders and Mark Stockton and Aaron Hubble in helping to identify the promotion of Sgt. Delpha. Chairman Sargent asked if there is a list of sergeant candidates. Chief Kilcullen said that process is being established. He added that it is a testing process coordinated through the Office of Professional Standards with Commander LaChance. Commissioner Langston asked if the position would be advertised internally or externally as well. The Chief responded that it would be posted internally.

Commanders' Report

Commander LaChance said he is waiting for applicants to take the test this month at the VPA. Two assessment tests were conducted on Jan. 27th and Feb. 4th on several candidates with three applicants in background. The promotion process for a sergeant is being set up to include a written test and interview. The Policy Review Committee did not meet in January. The Committee will be reviewing all policies and updating the manual. Commander Delpha set up each officer with the most current policy manuals, these will updated following review. Commissioner Langston asked if the newly approved policies would be posted on the website for public access. The Chief said all of the policies tied to the use of force policy will be posted.

Commissioner Langston said she would like to discuss posting more information on the website for the public, the police commission and the department. Chief Kilcullen said currently Dispatchers Jason Williams and Emily have been updating the online information but it is not currently in anyone's job description. Ryan Brady has been updating the social media. He added that there needs to be a conversation with Staff Operations Sgt. to coordinate that effort because the need is there to be on top of the website and social media. Recently the volunteers have enhanced the site to increase recruitment and it resulted in several applications. Commissioner Langston said she will be in touch to set up a meeting.

Commander Prouty said Officer Blongy retired on Jan. 31st after serving 35 years. Until his position is filled the CRT will step up to collect the meters and kiosks. Sgt. Dickerson is away on vacation for two weeks. When he returns they will focus on working with the Department of Corrections at the request of Chief Kilcullen and Commissioner Baker. Commander Prouty met with the Department of Corrections officer that will work with Sgt. Dickerson and they have already been in communication. The Overdose Response Initiative will be reengaged. Due to COVID and sheltering there has been a significant spike in numbers and the hope is to get folks into long-term recovery and work on the police department's outreach piece. Commander Prouty said that Nate has been working to improve actionable data and working on a program that will have really good intelligence and actual data that patrolmen need all the time. He added that Megan Clark, human trafficking case manager, has picked up quite a few referrals over the last week. There is still another year on the grant covering her work and he hopes Vermont will apply for additional funding. Officer LaGuardia is doing a great job at the schools and Commander Prouty is concerned about Bill S.63 in the Legislature that has to do with banning SROs from schools. There is a VISION meeting on Thursday which will be his last meeting. Commander Sheldon and Mark Stockton will run the March meeting. The Community Policing Subcommittee has rescheduled the BIAS Training for the 16th due to technical issues. Commander Prouty said for an example of a nice website check out Project VISION's website done by an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer.

Commissioner Calcagni suggested reaching out to Blongy for assistance with the kiosks. Commander Prouty said most of the police department has collected before and there is a new person at DPW to help with the kiosks.

Commissioner Sargent said that Commissioner Romeo discussed a possible site in the City that needs to be looked at for human trafficking. Commissioner Romeo said he would follow up with Commander Prouty tomorrow. Commander Prouty said if it is an investigation that would be handled by the police side and Megan takes care of the victim service side.

Commander Sheldon said he has been working with Sam to work on transitioning and going over payroll and other things. He has also met with Commander Prouty to discuss VISION. Commander Sheldon said he has been cleaning up things he has been working on in the patrol division as far as equipment in the hopes that it will be an easy transition when Sam takes over.

Mapping Update

Nate Thibodeau presented the Rutland City Police Department January Total Calls statistics. He said total calls are down 6% with directed patrols this year at 88 a decrease of 39%. Violent crimes this year has only been 1 so far, the 5-year average is 51. There have been two robberies this year and last year there were 7 total. Nate said he is tracking the shoplifting inclination to find out what people are stealing to see if services are needed for people not getting enough food or to feed another habit. Nate said under aggravated assaults there has only been 1 to date. Last year there were 45 overdoses and this year there have been 5. The aggravated assault was in the shopping plaza area and burglaries follow a line in sector 1. Thefts are concentrated in the shopping plaza and North Main St. Accidents cluster on Strongs Avenue and West Street and Woodstock Avenue. Nate has access to the OD mapping program that shows all the locations for all agencies.

Commissioner Langston asked if Nate has human trafficking statistics. Nate said he could add them. Commissioner Langston said this needs to be discussed transparently to help educate people. Commander Prouty said it is difficult to discuss in mapping so victims locations are not compromised. Commissioner Langston said just general information and status. Chief Kilcullen said he could report on any cases that result in an arrest and he would talk to Atty. Bloomer regarding what can be reported.

Budget Report

Chief Kilcullen reported that as of the first seven months of FY21 expenses are at 50% of the budget for 58% for the year.

Chief's Report

Chief Kilcullen discussed following up on the Jan. 25 meeting regarding certification of the Use of Force Policy. The Academy said there are no direct sanctions if the policy is not certified to be in compliance with all Vermont laws, but we would be identified as a department that is not in compliance. He also had a conversation regarding whether to prohibit chokeholds even when force is justifiable with Rep. William Notte, who is on the Judiciary Committee. There will be a meeting regarding H145 House Bill on Thursday at 10:15 am during which live judiciary testimony will be given by ACL members and Chiefs. Chief Kilcullen said he would follow up with Rep. Notte and listen to the meeting.

The Chief is finalizing details with Atty. Bloomer's office and Jody, HR, to fill the position left by Officer Blongy.

The Fire and Police Departments received a \$12,000 donation in PPE gear for first responders from Ocean State Job Lots last Tuesday. This was the second donation from them. The City Clerk, EOC Logistics Chief, is helping to distribute the gear throughout the City to other frontline workers. Commission Langston asked if this has been publicized. Chief Kilcullen said it will be.

Nikki Fuller conducted the BIAS Training for non-supervisory staff on Jan. 26. The second meeting on the 28th for supervisory sworn personnel was held in the training room. The third training will be held on Feb. 16th and will be worth struggling through the technology challenges if there are any. Commissioner Langston volunteered to help people ahead of time to get onto APPS and suggested including her contact information with the meeting information.

The Spring Firearms Training is scheduled for April 6-8. Last year Sgt. Delpha set up the Police One Academy catalog and a number of officers have identified various training topics in which they have been participating. Command Staff will go through the catalog to identify training they will require everyone to complete. The catalog is a good solution to accomplish the required annual 30 hours of training and makes sure no one is short at the end of year.

Executive Session

Chairman Sargent said the advice from counsel tonight relates to Rutland City Charter Provision 92213, Current Prohibition on Political Activities by Members of the Police Department. Commissioner Romeo moved to go into Executive Session under Title 1 Section 3.13, Paragraph 1 that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

At 6:46 pm Commissioner Brown moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of obtaining confidential attorney/client communications. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Members of the Commission received a second email with the link for the executive session.

7:50 pm Exit Executive Session.

Adjournment

Commissioner Calcagni moved to adjourn. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Meeting called to a close at 7:50 pm.

Submitted by: Barbara Spaulding

cc: Chief Brian Kilcullen
Mayor David Allaire
Police Commission
City Clerk Henry Heck
Board of Aldermen
Union President Elias Anderson