

Rutland City Police Commission
June 12 2023

Present: Chairman Sean Sargeant, Commissioners Tony Romeo, Luther Brown, Peg Flory and Alis Headlam.

Also attending: Chief Kilcullen, Commanders Sam Delpha and Charles Whitehead, Crime Analyst Nathan Thibodeau, Mayor Doenges, Alderman Talbott, Staff Operations Support Ryan Brady, Officers Billings, CO Ebbighausen, CO Arun Dungal and officers of the RPD.

Call to order by Chairman Sargeant at 6 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Romeo moved to approve the minutes of April 10, 2023. Commissioner Flory seconded. Motion carried 4-0 with Commissioner Headlam abstaining.

Commissioner Romeo moved to approve the minutes of May 8 with the correction of the date of the previous meeting minutes. Commissioner Headlam seconded. Motion carried.

Introduction/Recognition of Police Department Members

Chief Kilcullen administered the oath of probationary police officer to both Jessica Ebbighausen and Arun Dungal.

Public Comment

Mayor Doenges updated the Commission on the Housing Resource Days scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday June 14 and 15 from 10 am to 4 pm and 10 am to 2 pm, respectively, at the Royce Mandigo Area. He said flyers were distributed to those living at the hotels and a shuttle would be provided for transportation. The Mayor said approximately 25 agencies will be present to provide services to individuals transitioning out of the hotels. He also planned to provide hot dogs and hamburgers.

Communications from the Union

Officer Billings inquired about the status of the proposed replacement for Directive 305. Chairman Sargeant said the proposal is still with the City Attorney for review.

Commanders' Report

Commander Whitehead said there are two new hires and another that has passed for the full time class in August. Upcoming trainings will include active shooter and a refresher for officers on wellness. He also mentioned that Commissioner Headlam will be doing a ride-along.

Commander Delpha said there are six candidates in background, 1 for dispatch and 4 registered for the full time class in August. The Sgt. promotion testing results have

been posted and the five corporals scored well. The award ceremony went well and he thanked those who assisted with the ceremony.

Chief Kilcullen said that Commander Prouty is on military leave and will return on Monday. He gave an update on the 3 CRS officers Julie Fitzgibbons, Kyle Dawson and Bill Gaiotti, who was a former Level 3 officer 20 years ago.

Mapping Update

Nate Thibodeau presented the January – May 31, 2023 report. He said in May there have been no weapon thefts and a decrease in motor vehicle thefts. He added that in June retail theft is up, as well as, overdoses. May was forecasted at 1,147 calls and ended with 1,104. In June the forecast is 1,223 with an average of 40 cases per day. The year to date call volume comparison: 4,800 in 2023, an 11% increase from last year. The monthly call volume for January 928, February 776, March 1,005, April 988 and May 1,103. The heat map shows concentration in Sector 1, the shopping plaza, Grove Street and the hotels. Nate continued with actual case volume which is 25% higher than last year at 5,445. The monthly calls were in May - 1,241, April - 1,118 and March - 1,161. The initial call types are in 12 categories with the largest at NCI 25% and slight increases in non-violent crimes from 5% to 6% and property crime from 8% to 9%.

He continued with the Crime Comparison: Homicide 1 in 2021, 0 2022, 5 year avg. .2, 2023 is 1, Robbery 2021 10, 2022 – 4, five-year avg. 4.2, 2023 is 1, Aggravated Assault 2021 15, 2022 20, five-year avg. 18.4, 2023 - 30, Burglary 2021 28, 2022 21, five-year avg.- 24.8, 2023 17.

Larceny Comparison: Automobile 2021 8, 2022 38, five-year avg. 12.2, 2023 29, larceny from motor vehicle 2021 57, 2022 152, five-year avg. 51.8, 2023 83. Chairman Sargeant asked if the increase is due to the current housing and stability issue. Nate said there isn't a lot of identification available from larceny from motor vehicle. Chief Kilcullen said certain individuals who have been housed in the hotels are absolutely engaging in this activity. He discussed recent calls involving a person living at the Econo Lodge, but no criminal charges were made because nothing was taken. He said people need to be personally told or the residences have to be signed "no trespass." Chief Kilcullen said even those individuals being arrested, those cases are not being adjudicated and he discussed the frustration with people being charged multiple times with retail theft. Commissioner Headlam discussed her experience with seeing shoplifting at the grocery store and the store owner's frustration. Commissioner Flory asked about the responsibility of the court system. Mayor Doenges said that Rutland schedules 4-7 cases a month, the backlog is 1,800 cases. The State's Attorney's office is down two prosecutors and the Mayor has asked for additional judge.

Nate continued with the weapon thefts saying none have occurred in May or June, 25 were stolen in 2021, 25 in 2022 and 10 in 2023, and mainly the thefts are from vehicle.

The primary location is from residence followed by parking lot or garage with 55% not secured. Commissioner Headlam asked if these stolen weapons are then used in crimes. Commander Whitehead said one had been used in a homicide last year and primarily the stolen guns are used for trade for drugs and are typically untraceable. He said 80-90% end up in Springfield Mass or New York City.

Nate said there were no catalytic converter thefts in May, there were 19 in 2022 and 18 in 2023. They are mainly stolen from business followed by state property, church and hotels. Chairman Sargeant asked if we know who stopped buying them in March and encourage them to continue not to buy them.

He continued with Retail theft saying in 2022 – 378 and 2023-171. The ID rate is 47% with repeat offenders at 41, 11 of whom are responsible for 3-10 cases, 86% are known narcotics users. Nate discussed cooperative vs. uncooperative reports with 42% cooperative, 16% uncooperative and late reporting and pending 29%. Commissioner Headlam asked how many retail thefts are not being reported. Nate said he suspects many of the stores are not reporting. The biggest reporters are from Dollar Generals and the shopping plaza.

Nate continued with narcotics related information: substance use overdose total for 2022 41 and 2023 at 53 of which there were 44 non-fatal and 8 fatal. The monthly overdoses are January - 11, February - 7, March - 14, April - 14, May - 7 and June - 8 with the age range 30-39, male 67%, Rutland residents 41 and 12 non-residents, 62% received Narcan and 22% of individuals accepted transportation to hospital. Commissioner Headlam asked if there is any data on whether the persons overdosing are in treatment or in drug court. Nate did not have the data. Commissioner Romeo discussed the safety kits that are being distributed and include Narcan, fentanyl test strips and something for breathing. Commissioner Headlam asked if the police are seeing Xylazine in Rutland. Commander Whitehead said yes. Nate showed the heat map of locations of overdoses with the hot spot on Grove Street.

Budget Report

Chief Kilcullen reported that at 92% through the year, expenses are at 86.72% of the budget. He said following the payout of vacation and comp time the surplus could be between \$250,000 - \$300,000. Commissioner Headlam asked what happens to the surplus. Chairman Sargeant said typically the Aldermen use it to buy down the tax rate.

Chief's Report

Commissioner Headlam asked about the contract with Wal-Mart. Chief Kilcullen said the City Attorney put together a contract that was sent to Summit Security Services who are looking to remove Wal-Mart from the contract. There hasn't been any movement on the contract in 5 months and at a recent check in he was told that research is being done to see how to remove Wal-Mart while still protecting the City. Wal-Mart is the client of Summit Security Services. Commissioner Headlam asked for clarification

regarding the liability of removing Wal-Mart. Chief Kilcullen said if Wal-Mart is removed the biggest concern is the potential to be sued by Wal-Mart.

Chief Kilcullen said on May 9 he attended a vicious dog hearing that was continued from April, May 11 Project VISION meeting, May 12 Mayor's Motel meeting, May 15 Department Head meeting, May 16 RUTSTAT and the awards ceremony at Mission City Church. The RUTSTAT meetings are scheduled every two weeks, but the rotation was changed to accommodate the Commanders whose shift ends at 6 am. The next RUTSTAT meeting will be June 20. Chief Kilcullen and Commanders Prouty and Whitehead attended the Chiefs' Association Conference with VT Homeland Security from May 30-June 1 in Killington. There will be a vicious dog hearing on June 20. Chief Kilcullen will be on vacation from June 15-26 and Commander Whitehead will be in charge. CRS Fitzgibbons started on half-time on May 14 and Sgt. Dickerson will be appointed to BCI Sgt., which was vacated by Commander Whitehead. On May 25, Jessica Ebbighausen started and went through the firearms training as a pre-requisition for the Level 2 Academy which started last Monday. The next opportunity for the Level 3 class is in August. Bill Gaiotti started as CRS on May 30 and Arun Dungal started on June 2. Chief Kilcullen said at least one Sgt. will be promoted following the results of the testing with another opportunity in the future.

Trainings

Completed – Officer Amber Hule Homicide and Death Investigation Training in Mich.
Officer Hule did submit her resignation to attend a doctorate program in Florida. Her last day will be July 14.

Completed – Officer Dumas attended a Patrol Rifle Instructor Course

Completed – Officer St. John completed ARIDE training

Completed – All sworn personnel completed firearms qualification course

Completed - Cpl. Tavares attended FBI LEEDA Supervisory Leadership Institute Training

Upcoming Trainings

June 19 – Sgt. Plemmons and Commander Whitehead will attend Police & Media Class

June 23-27 – Peer Support Team will attend a Wellness Resilience Conference in Maine

July 10-11 - Mechanical and Shotgun Breaching class

Upcoming - Commander Whitehead and Sgt. Dickerson will attend FBI Executive Leadership Class

Aug 1-3 – Trial training

Aug 29-31 – Annual Department Excessive Use of Force Training.

Outside Employment Request

CO Crystal Murray – server at Roots Restaurant, 10 hours weekly.

Commissioner Flory moved to authorize the Chair to sign the outside employment request from CO Crystal Murray. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Headlam asked how many officers are currently employed and how many positions are in the budget. Chief Kilcullen said currently there are 33 positions in the budget and as of June 19 there will be 30 officers. The hope is a total of 40.

Commissioner Brown asked about the body cameras. Chief Kilcullen said the AXON cameras are up and running with incredible quality. He hopes to convert the dash cameras from the current server to AXON as well.

Executive Session

At 7:07 pm Commissioner Flory moved to go into executive session under I VSA section 313(a)(4) [6] for the purpose of discussing disciplinary or dismissal action against a public officer or employee and invite the Mayor and Alderman Talbott. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.

Executive session exited at 7:31 pm.

Adjournment

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

Meeting called to a close at 7:31 pm.

Submitted by: Barbara Spaulding

cc: Chief Brian Kilcullen
Mayor Mike Doenges
Police Commission
City Clerk Tracy Kapusta
Board of Aldermen
Union President