

Rutland City Police Commission
January 13, 2025

Present: Chairperson Pat Brougham, Commissioners Peg Flory, Tony Romeo, Luther Brown and Alis Headlam

Also attending: Chief Kilcullen, Commanders Whitehead, Prouty and Delpha, Officer Rice, Staff Operations Support Specialist Brady, Mayor Doenges, Alderman Talbott, Dave Allaire

Chairperson Brougham called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes

Commissioner Flory moved to approve as amended the minutes of December 9, 2024 and remove “and he will take the oath at the next meeting” under Introduction/Recognition of Police Department Members. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.

Introduction/Recognition of Police Department Members

Officer Rice was recognized for the restraint and professionalism he showed while at the hospital with a very unruly subject that was in custody. Chairperson Brougham also thanked Officer Rice for introducing Probationary Officer Falco at one of her classes at the University adding that he did a wonderful job getting students interested in law enforcement including a request for a ride-along.

Communication from the Union

Officer Rice said contract negotiations are nearly done and the Union is very appreciative of the Commission’s support of the contract. He thanked the Chief for his support during negotiations and for working night shift recently. Officer Rice said he was elected vice president of the state lodge board.

Commanders’ Reports

Commander Delpha said there is one applicant in background who withdrew and went to another police department. The new BCI detective took the place of Officer Menjivar who returned to patrol. There were 6 applicants in 2024, four went to background, two withdrew making the hiring rate for 2024 at 16%. There are zero in background today and hopefully 2025 there will be more incoming applications.

Commander Whitehead said Officer Razanouski has started his ghost ride phase and will become a solo officer once that is completed. Patrol has participated in the Neighborhood Stabilization/Drug Complaint Initiative over the past few weeks. Several vehicles have been seized with many arrests resulting from finding drugs in the vehicles. BCI was also assisted with a residential search warrant.

Commander Prouty said December was slow for outreach operations due to the holiday and vacations. Noah Sweeney has been transferred full time and will be catching up with the animal

behavior complaints. Commander Prouty discussed a no cat policy after inundating the Humane Society. He has been working with Jim Baker's group, the Public Safety Enhancement Team (PSET) and discussed contracting with Operation to Save Lives to provide technical support in Rutland with training in March. The training is called the Situation Table and he suggested that someone from the Commission attend. He will provide the dates when the marketing materials are available.

Mapping Update

Chief Kilcullen said Nate has been deployed with the Air Guard and will be out of the country for the next couple months. The analytical capabilities will be limited during that time, but Nate will be able to identify 3peat locations for RUTSTAT meetings beginning next month.

Budget Report

Chief Kilcullen said at 6 months into the year, expenses are at 48.17%.

Chief's Report

Chief Kilcullen reported that Dec. 9 was the sector 3 meeting at the Godnick Center, Dec. 10 was Rutland County Treatment Court which has gotten a lot of recognition, Dec. 11 was the last sector meeting at Last Cup and the budget adoption meeting, Dec. 12 was the Project Vision meeting, Dec. 16 Board of Aldermen, Dec. 17 Dept Head meeting with the Mayor announcing the JCI kickoff to address infrastructure needs that have been neglected, Dec. 18 Public Safety Meeting to discuss Equipment Replacement Fund. Chief Kilcullen explained that there was a fund shared by the Police, Fire and Rec and DPW. The PD's share could fund two cars which is required every two years. The discussion was how to sustain the fund going forward and there was a recommendation made to Charter & Ordinance to increase the fund to \$180,000 every year as part of the general fund budget. The Mayor elaborated on how the fund works. Chief Kilcullen said another part of the discussion was to consider vehicle mileage despite the charter's requirement to replace every two years. Commissioner Flory asked how long ago was this charter requirement created. Commander Prouty discussed the history of purchasing police cars and why the requirement was instituted. Chief Kilcullen continued with his report saying 50 children participated in Shop With A Cop on Dec. 19, there are 7 more Concerning Canine Behavior meetings coming up.

Chief Kilcullen said Officer Jax was assigned to BCI on Jan. 5, Officer Menjivar bid back to patrol and Noah Sweeney was assigned to ACO on Jan. 5. Chief Kilcullen thanked everyone for stepping up in making this work over the past 6 months. The Chief will be away starting Jan. 15 to Jan. 27. Commander Delpha will be acting chief until the 21st and Commander Prouty will be acting chief from the 22nd to the 26th. In 2025, the Chief said there has been significant success in hiring with one Level 3 officer starting on Jan. 20, a level-two certified officer starting on Jan. 27 with plans to graduate from the Academy in May and on Feb. 3 two additional level 3 officers will be starting. These officers transferred having seen the level of support from City officials and the community as well.

Trainings Completed

Dec. 9 - CPR Training makeup

Dec. 19 – Field Training Officer Recertification for Sgt. Rose, Cpl. Heter, Officers Jax and Rice

Upcoming Trainings

Feb. 6-7 - ARIDE for Officers Carapezza and Dangal

March 27 - VIN Verification Training – CRS Dixon-Woodard

April 12-13 – Execution of Search Warrants – Cpl. Lucia

Commissioner Headlam suggested that future community meetings have better communication when they will be held so more people will attend. Chief Kilcullen agreed saying there will be discussion on how to better alert the public to these meetings so the community can bring issues to the police. He also said the Mayor announced the formalization of an initiative for City Department Heads to work with BCI to remediate locations of criminal activity. This was a result of the sector meetings. The success of this initiative has displaced problem activity outside of the City. Chief Kilcullen added that when criminal charges can be filed, they are, but it is not always the case. In the case of the Bellevue Avenue property, the U.S. Attorney's office has said that because it is owner-occupied it can only be seized through a criminal process and a criminal case has not been made.

Chairperson Brougham asked how many current officers are working. Chief Kilcullen said 30 as of today. He added that in lieu of any anticipated retirements, there will be 34 by Feb. 3. He added that there are also two Level 3 part-time officers.

Commissioner Headlam suggested adding a testimonial from the recently hired Level 3 officers regarding the support of the officials and community to the recruitment materials. Chief Kilcullen said he will discuss with Officer Rice.

Chairperson Brougham asked why the Chief has been working evening shifts. Chief Kilcullen said it has been out of necessity due to there being only 1 out of 4 patrol sgts for the past year. He added that it also helps him stay on top of things, but he gives the overtime to others and only covers when no one else is available. Chairperson Brougham asked how often officers are working overtime. Chief Kilcullen said daily, on every shift, there is opportunity for overtime. She asked how many officers should work each shift. Chief Kilcullen said ideally every shift should be staffed by 7 officers, including a Corporal and a Sergeant, but that is not possible now, but they are getting closer. Chairperson Brougham asked how many officers need to be hired to reduce the overtime budget. Chief Kilcullen said 39 positions. Commissioner Flory said vacations and leave also play a part in the calculation. Chief Kilcullen said yes, but two officers could be off at any given time and overtime would not be necessary provided all 39 positions are filled. Chairperson Brougham asked how many part-time officers could be hired. Chief Kilcullen said currently there are 3 part-time level 3 officers. Commissioner Headlam asked if the officers taking their vacation time. Commander Whitehead said no one is being denied leave or vacation time and they recognize the need for time off. He said other efforts will grow if 39 positions are filled. Chief Kilcullen said they try to minimize denying any time off and the officers work together to cover vacation for each other. Commissioner Romeo asked about tweaking the 12 hour shifts with a swing shift. Chief Kilcullen said he has tried that, but prefers the 12 hour shifts with adjustment, if necessary, for on-call hours, as allowed by the Union.

Outside Employment Requests

Ryan Brady - repeat request, part-time school bus driver with Betcha Transit. Commissioner Flory moved to approve. Commissioner Headlam seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Tim Cornell – repeat request, volunteer firefighter Pittsford Fire Department. Commissioner Flory moved to approve. Commissioner Headlam seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Sequoia Dixon-Woodard – repeat request, 10-20 hours as waitress at Echo Lake Inn.

Commissioner Headlam moved to approve. Commissioner Flory seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Julie Fitzgibbons – repeat request to continue medical health assessments with Rutland Mental Health Services. Commissioner Headlam moved to approve. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Sarah Karczmarczyk – repeat request, per diem switchboard at RRMC. Commissioner Flory moved to approve. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Keith Lorman – repeat request, snow removal weather dependent. Commissioner Flory moved to approve. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Commander Whitehead - repeat request, self-employed landscaping, snow removal.

Commissioner Flory moved to approve. Commissioner Headlam seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Issues and Comments from the Commissioners

Commissioner Romeo said he received complaints from downtown businesses who have had people banging on windows asking for money. He suggested they call the police department if they are feeling uncomfortable. Commissioner Romeo also reported people walking out in traffic. He said while visiting in NYC he talked to some officers and it would be helpful if the Commission had some kind of a card to give to out for recruitment. Chief Kilcullen said there are some new recruitment materials being made up that could be adapted to this request.

Commander Whitehead said something could be created. Chairperson Brougham suggested a QR code on such material and Commissioner Headlam suggested including the community and city official support.

Chairperson Brougham asked the Mayor to put the Commission on the City insurance so they are covered during a ride-along. She asked the Chief about the status of the background checks. Chief Kilcullen said Nora looked into it and there is a category the Commission would fall under. He would like to discuss the limitations.

Commissioner Headlam asked whether the Chief and Chairperson received her email regarding Medicaid for an officer's spouse in relation to unscheduled overtime and the burden placed on the spouse. Mayor Doenges said this has been discussed during Union negotiations and will be discussed in executive session.

Executive Session

Commissioner Flory moved to go into Executive Session under I VSA 313 to discuss contract negotiations that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the City at a substantial disadvantage and invited the Chief, Commanders, Mayor and Alderman Talbott to attend. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.

Commissioner Flory moved to exit Executive Session. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion was approved 5-0. Executive session ended at 7:48 pm with no action taken.

Adjournment

Commissioner Flory moved to adjourn. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion passed 5-0.
Meeting called to close at 7:48 pm.

Submitted by Barbara Spaulding

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