

**Rutland City Police Commission**  
**Amended March 9, 2026**

Present: Chairperson Pat Brougham, Commissioners, Luther Brown, \*Melinda Humphrey and Tony Romeo

Also attending: Chief Prouty, Commanders Whitehead and Williams, Ryan Brady, Alderman Talbot, Mayor-elect Tom Donahue and Gayle Donahue, Alderman-elect Peter Franzoni, Pat Hunter, Larry Jensen, and many friends and family of Chief Prouty and Misty Jax.

Chairperson Brougham called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm following the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Commissioner Romeo moved to approve the minutes of February 9, 2026. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion was approved 3-0.

**Introduction/Recognition of Police Department Members**

Interim Chief Prouty introduced Probationary Officer Griffin Melen and Desarie Stone-Feliciano, Executive Assistant, who replaced Mary-Kaye who retired last week.

Former Probationary Officer Nicholas Stendardo was sworn in as police officer.

Officer Misty Jax was sworn in and promoted to Detective Cpl.

\*Commissioner Humphrey arrived.

Chairperson Brougham administered the oath of Chief of Police to Interim Chief Matthew A. Prouty. There was a 5-minute intermission.

Chief Prouty read a letter from Rutland High School in gratitude for the outstanding participation of Officers Coleman Shum, Stefano Falco, Ernest LaGuardia and Katrina Ducharme in their recent Driver's Education class.

Chief Prouty read a letter from Tom Garafano of DPW who was impressed by Officers Sean Olsen and Matthiew Razanouski who responded to a water leak at the intersection of Woodstock Avenue and North Main Street who went above and beyond to ensure the safety of the DPW crew while working in the road and assisted in creating the safest traffic pattern possible at the intersection. Tom also thanked Officer Rick Caravaggio who allowed the officers to work with the DPW crew.

Chief Prouty read a letter from former Chief Kilcullen to staff prior to his retirement, as well as a resignation letter from former Executive Assistant Mary-Kaye Zambon who also retired in early March. Chief Prouty thanked Desarie for accepting the position.

### **Commanders' Reports**

Commander Whitehead reported that in the last month the RPD has responded to 1,234 calls for service and the Patrol Finder software has been working tremendously with officers getting into neighborhoods multiple times a day. Upcoming trainings include Chrome Restraint Training and mandatory Domestic Violence Training which is online. The Less Than Lethal Weapons Instructor Course will be March 24-27 and the RPD is hosting with two spots being paid for that will help the Emergency Response Team. Commissioner Humphrey asked for more information on the restraint training. Commander Whitehead said he and Det. Stewart learned about the training at a conference back in December. Basically, it's science and physiology behind restraint deaths and the argument that if someone can talk, they can breathe is invalid. Commissioner Brown asked if the Domestic Violence training was for all officers. Commander Whitehead said it is for all sworn officers.

Commander Williams said he has a policy for the Commission to sign, but it has a typo so he will need to bring that back. He said negotiations for the program that manages the policies, Power DMS, has been finalized and the program should be operational April 1. The Commissioners will have access to the system, so instead of receiving policies via email with the policies attached for review, Commissioners can go into the system and review and leave comments in the software. Officers will also be able to call up policies while in the field if needed. They will also be able to review and acknowledge having reviewed policies electronically and an AI program that administers a short test based on the information in the policy. Commander Williams added that they are in the midst of a corporal promotion process with interviews tomorrow for those who have taken the written test. Chairperson Brougham said the meeting will continue while Commander Williams revises the policy for the Commission's consideration.

### **Budget Report**

Chief Prouty said at 68% into the FY26 budget is at 71.22% with overtime, investigations, vehicle maintenance, radio repairs, training and professional development over budget. He said he hopes that the line items that come in under budget will balance the budget at the end of the year. Chief Prouty said there has been a lot of overtime spent on the Downtown meter robberies. Chairperson Brougham asked why not just convert to the mobile app. Alderman Talbott asked for a ballpark figure on the cost involved in repairing and replacing the meters. Chief Prouty said he does not have that, it would come from DPW. He added that it is a huge hit to the RPD when the meters are damaged. Alderman Talbott said the Chief's voice advocating for switching to the app could be very persuasive to those resistant to the app.

### **Chief's Report**

Chief Prouty reported that in March Chief Kilcullen retired, Desarie became the new executive assistant and Officer Griffin Melen was hired. Outside detail continues at Sheldon Towers with three search warrants executed. The extreme cold weather shelter was open one day last weekend and hopefully the -10 threshold won't be met again this season. There is a Human Resources Committee to rework the City's Employee Handbook. Chief Prouty has personal concerns with a significant change in the working status and practice regarding how benefits are paid to supervisory staff and non-union staff. He agrees a handbook is needed, but there is a lack of trust

among departments and City Hall due to this handbook. The last thing we want is an unintended consequence of putting together a document for the City that makes it difficult for talent to be promoted to management in the RPD. Chief Prouty said that, in public, he is speaking to three priorities, recruiting, analytical product and officer wellness. As for recruiting there is no one currently at the Academy. The remaining recruitment funds will be used for a commercial focused on recruiting. In respect to the analytical product, a recent training was conducted in Brattleboro PD to show Sgt. Morgano how to pull data out of the CAT RMS System which will be shared with Crime Research Group and there should be a product after this week. Critical Incident Response Peer Support, led by the contracted clinician, a standard operating procedure for debriefs and guidance, as well as, hosting the contracted therapist in the building are all ongoing for officer wellness. Chairperson Brougham asked if insurance covers therapy if officers seek out a private therapist. Chief Prouty said he would find out. He added that he doesn't think there is anyone better suited for a first responder than the contracted therapist. Chairperson Brougham questioned whether officers would doubt the confidentiality of a contracted therapist within the building.

### **Upcoming Trainings**

March - Compassion in Action, Humane Investigations for Officer Sweeney

April – Background Investigation for Det. Sgt. Dickerson, Det. Cpl. Tavares, Det. Stewart

Both Nathan Thibodeau and Officer Chad St. John are on military leave.

Commander Williams said a drone had been donated to the RPD to be used to enhance capability and a policy was drafted for Unmanned Area Aircraft Systems. Commissioner Romeo asked if there is an officer trained and certified. Commander Williams said there is an officer who is trained to pilot the drone and who also drafted the policy. Commissioner Humphrey asked if this was the same policy used by State Police Department. Commander Williams said it mirrors that policy except for the changes from "state" to Rutland City and revision of their rules to fit the City. He added that currently the City uses the state when ariel surveillance is needed, but now the RPD will be able to do it. Commissioner Romeo said it his understanding that it is a federal offense to shoot down a drone. Commissioner Humphrey asked how the drone would be used. Commander Williams said the drone can not be used without the policy, and it would be used in conjunction with a search warrant through a house, over a crash scene or lost child in the woods. Chairperson Brougham asked if the drone has heat sensors. Commander Williams said no, it is just a camera. Chief Prouty said the State Police have a thermal one. Commander Whitehead added that a drone is an extremely beneficial resource so that officers don't need to be put in unnecessary harm or risk. Commissioner Romeo moved to authorize the Chair to sign the policy. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion was approved 4-0.

### **Issues and Comments from the Commissioners**

Commissioner Romeo said he has heard good comments regarding cruisers in the neighborhoods and the response team.

Chairperson Brougham asked the Commissioners if they were prepared to make a motion on the resolution regarding I.C.E. as submitted by Alderman Tadio at the February 9 meeting. She discussed softening the language and replacing "demand" with "expect". Commissioner

Humphrey said the Aldermen recently approved a similar resolution and she asked Alderman Talbott to speak on the resolution. Alderman Talbott said all of the resolutions are symbolic and this one made clear that it was symbolic and encouraged. Chairperson Brougham suggested creating a smaller working group to come up with a version of the resolution the Police Commission might be willing to adopt. Commissioner Humphrey agreed this would be a good idea in light of recent events in the City. Alderman Talbott volunteered to send the Commission a copy of the Alderman's adopted resolution. Commissioner Romeo said if more than 3 Commissioners are in the working group, the meeting would need to be warned. Chairperson Brougham said once a date is set, she will let the City Clerk know so the meeting can be properly warned.

### **Executive Session**

At 6:54 pm Commissioner Romeo moved to go into Executive Session under 1 VSA §313(a)(4)[6] to discuss disciplinary or dismissal action against a public officer and invite the Chief and Commanders to participate. Commissioner Humphrey seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Commissioner Romeo moved to exit Executive Session. Commissioner Humphrey seconded. Motion passed 4-0. Executive Session ended at 7:39 pm. There was no actionable item.

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Brown moved to adjourn. Commissioner [Flory] Romeo seconded. Motion passed 4-0. Meeting called to close at 7:39 pm.

Submitted by Barbara Spaulding

CC: Chief Matt Prouty  
Mayor Tom Donahue  
Police Commission  
City Clerk Tracy Kapusta  
Board of Aldermen  
Union President