

**Rutland City Police Commission**  
**April 13, 2026**

Present: Chairperson Pat Brougham, Commissioners, Luther Brown, Peg Flory, Melinda Humphrey and Tony Romeo

Also attending: Chief Prouty, Commanders Whitehead and Williams, Mayor Tom Donahue, Alderman Peter Franzoni, Pat Hunter, Daniel and Cecile LeBlanc, Christopher Cioffi, Matt Whitcomb

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

**Approval of the Minutes**

Commissioner Flory asked that the March 9 minutes be amended to reflect that she was not present and did not second to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Romeo moved to approve the minutes of March 9, 2026 with the amendment. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion was approved 4-0 with Commissioner Flory abstaining.

**Introduction/Recognition of Police Department Members**

Chief Prouty read a letter from Cpl. Rice recognizing Officer Kevin Rimmer for his exemplary pro-active efforts over the past two weeks that resulted in a residential narcotics search warrant for a known drug house, seizure of over 100 grams of narcotics resulting in two arrests, 10 grams of narcotics processed for sale along with cash and phone seizure yielding one arrest.

Chief Prouty also read a message from Gerry Florence, Loss Prevention at Ocean State Job Lots, thanking officers for their prompt response, professionalism and appearance at the store.

Appreciation was also received from the organizers of Winterfest for the work done for the Center Street sledding. Officer Stendardo and Sgt. Morgano spearheaded the response at the event.

**Public Comment**

Alderman Peter Franzoni, 87 Edgerton St. Rutland, spoke regarding Cornerstone's plans for the Annex and that while at these meetings the residents have spoken about increased confidence in the plan due to the stepped up police presence in the area and neighborhood over the past 6-8 months. He also mentioned how effective the police were in moving the homeless campsite out of the Calvary Cemetery.

Daniel and Cecile LeBlanc, 18 Curtis Avenue Rutland, discussed issues they were having with neighbors at 20 Curtis Ave. who were routinely parking on their property and ignoring property lines while also being threatened with robbery. They have supplied Officer Rimmer with photos and license plate numbers. The LeBlanc's have ordered a fence, but due to tariffs delivery has been delayed. They also have pictures of catalytic converters and coil being dropped off at the property and stripped down. Daniel added that they have been tracking, since Presidents' Day, new vehicles at the property. He added that the tenants living on the second floor of 20 Curtis

Avenue have been threatened physically more than once. Daniel said they are also frightened. They are asking what they should do to help the situation until the fence is installed. Daniel is worried about repercussions from the neighbors once the fence is installed considering how they have treated the property line markers installed in the past.

Christopher Cioffi, 19 Curtis Avenue Rutland also discussed issues he was having with the same neighbors. He said there have been numerous noise complaints made to the RPD with no relief. In April Chris was able to capture on camera a firearm being discharged at 20 Curtis Ave. There are children in the neighborhood. He said the neighbors, who have lived there for more than 20 years, need peace and sleep. Chris said he has seen high-gauge wire being stripped for the copper and new car parts being delivered at 4 am, he believes it is a chop shop. He also requested speed carts for the street because there are cars racing on the road at all hours of the night. Chief Prouty said due to snow plows, the speed carts won't be out until Spring.

Chairperson Brougham asked if the neighbors at 20 Curtis Avenue were renting. Cecile said yes and the landlord is in the process of evicting them. She asked if they should put up no trespass signs. Chief Prouty asked the neighbors to speak with Commander Whitehead outside of the meeting.

### **Communication from Union**

Union Rep Cpl. Rice said they were able to get 3 bills in the Senate and will be at the Statehouse Tuesday to testify before the State Judiciary Committee. There were 5 bills originally with 3 making it to crossover successfully. Two weeks ago, Cpl. Rice attended a Labor Leadership and Legal Summit in Vegas. He also recognized Commander Williams for doing a good job getting the policies updated.

### **Commanders' Reports**

Commander Williams said there are currently 10 applicants that need to get through the physical and written tests followed by interviews and starting the Assessment Center as presented by Sgt. Heter. There is one person in background. Commander Williams said he forwarded several policies to the Commissioners for review with most of them being updated with no major changes, just state-mandated changes. He also updated the cell phone use policy which the Union has some input. Chairperson Brougham asked the Commissioners if they noted anything during their review of the policies. Commissioner Brown had a question regarding Notifications Procedures, asking if there is a timeframe in respect to notifying officers. Commander Williams said it is immediate adding that if a shift supervisor encounters anything that is on the list the dispatcher is immediately called. He added that officers are aware of the procedure. Chairperson Brougham suggested, for the record, Commander Williams summarize each policy to be followed by a motion to have the Chairperson sign the policies. Commissioner Flory noted there is one policy that needs further discussion with Cpl. Rice.

Information Management Policy – no major changes just updated.

Allocation and Distribution of Personnel – no major changes just updated

Management of Anomalous Incidents, formerly Unusual Occurrences – not for public release, no change except for title

Planning & Research – no change

Evidence and Property Collection, Preservation & Management, formerly Collection & Preservation of Evidence – Bill Gaiotti, Evidence Tech, identified needs within the evidence room relating to general found property and evidence, also identified were issues in the policy regarding specific guidelines regarding set up and management, changed quite a bit

Notifications Procedures – updated format and language

Duty to Intervene – State-wide policy unchanged just reformatted

Domestic Violence Involving Law Enforcement – statewide policy unchanged, just reformatted

Commissioner Flory moved to approve the policies just discussed and authorize the Chair to sign. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Commissioner Humphrey said she did not receive copies of the policies discussed, only the cell phone policy. The vote was postponed while Commissioner Humphrey read through the policies.

Commander Williams said the he forwarded to the Commission the Union's response and proposal to the Cell Phone Policy regarding Section D which he read aloud. He said the current policy is broad and allows taking and extracting data from an officer's personal cell phone if a conduct violation has been committed while on duty and off-duty. Chairperson Brougham asked if the texts and calls would only be reviewed during the time-period of the violation. Commander Williams said yes and provided an example. He said the Union is requesting that the scope be narrowed that only the information related to the actual specific conduct violation be extracted. Chief Prouty said the important language is "no broader than necessary" and they would be required to articulate the specificity for reference. Commissioner Romeo asked if this relates to both work and personal cell phones. Commander Williams said there is full access to work phones, but a lot of officers use their personal cell phones at work and this policy gives permission to access that phone if a conduct violation is committed. Commissioner Flory asked if it is assumed that every officer brings their personal cell phone to work. Commander Williams said yes. Chairperson Brougham affirmed that only when there is an administrative investigation that access to the personal cell phone would be required. Commander Whitehead said a notice of investigation would precipitate an order to research the phone. Commissioner Flory asked how does anyone know that is all that is being reviewed and not scrolling through photos etc. Commander Williams said that is why the current broad policy is being revised. Cpl. Rice said the policy was written in 2000 when cell phones were just phones and now, they are super computers which is a large threshold to overcome for people's privacy. Cell phones are not issued to patrol officers and to do their job effectively in 2026 they need their personal cell phones. The Union's proposed policy comes from the Labor Services Division and is what is used nationally and the recommendation. Chairperson Brougham said she is concerned that evidence is being collected on a personal cell phone. Commander Williams said shift supervisors are issued a phone with all officers having the passcode to use it for taking photos. Chief Prouty said officers use the AXON app to upload photos that are filed into a secure app and there are usually two people per shift that have a work issued phone. Commissioner Flory clarified that the change to the policy allows access to personal cell phones when there is an administrative investigation and is limited in scope to the investigation. Cpl. Rice added that following the notice of investigation, the Union officer and employee see the complaint and scope before meeting with the Chief of Police to verify it is not a "fishing expedition" and is specific to the investigation. Chief Prouty said there are a lot of protections in the proposed language.

Commissioner Flory asked if a motion would be to approve the cell phone policy as amended. Commander Williams said he would rather amend the policy with the Union's language and bring it back to the Commission at their next meeting.

Chairperson Brougham returned to the motion and second made by the Commission to approve the policies discussed. Motion passed 5-0.

Commander Whitehead returned to the meeting and reported that a Distracted Driving Campaign is in process April 9-13. The campaign is grant-based and when participated in throughout the year yields funds for equipment like radar for the patrol cars. He added that he was running radar last Thursday and Friday on Curtis Avenue and highest speed was 38mph. There have been a lot of complaints in that area so speed carts will be placed there again. Officer Martin should be completing field training this week and taking a DUI course at the end of April at the Academy to be Level 3 certified full-service officer. Officer Ducharme, Det. Stewart and Commander Whitehead are taking taser instructor recertification to be able to train officers on the new tasers under the new contract with AXON.

### **Budget Report**

Chief Prouty said at 77.5% into the FY26 the budget is at 81.14%. He said Desarie, his Executive Assistant, has identified several line items in the budget where reimbursements have not been recorded and are instead considered revenue to pay down the tax rate. If the reimbursements were recorded in the PD budget, the budget would reflect that it was only 2% overbudget. Chief Prouty plans to track these amounts so that during the next budget discussions he can explain being overbudget and not penalized. Additionally, in May, he plans to request that the Aldermen direct funds billed for vehicles to outside job service be transferred into the PD's Equipment Replacement Fund. Chief Prouty said he is taking steps now to end the year as close to on budget as possible. Matt Whitcomb said the Finance Committee discussed this issue and it shouldn't be a foreign concept to the Aldermen and an easy fix. Chief Prouty is looking into ways to get more money into the RPD coffers much like other City Departments. Commissioner Humphreys said the net income is the same, so when reviewing the budget this needs to be addressed. Chief Prouty said it's difficult to anticipate in the budget what needs will arise in the community. Chairperson Brougham agreed that tracking the revenue needs to be acknowledged during budget discussions.

### **Chief's Report**

Chief Prouty reported that Corporal process has been completed. Commander Williams did a nice job running that. Outside work details continue for the Housing Authority, two security details at the Rutland Jewish Center and security detail for Sen. Balint. Two outside work details are scheduled for May 1 and June 5 for VeggieVanGo, as well as a prom. There is a human resources personnel manual task force and Desarie has been assigned representative of the RPD as she has a background in HR. The revised manual does not reflect past practice at the RPD and could potentially change work terms for command staff. The proposed handbook has very different guidelines making it difficult to ask someone to become part of management when comp time can't be banked. Chief Prouty doesn't want to end up in a position where no one wants to take the supervisor spot. He added that the proposed handbook does not account for the working conditions at the RPD and it might be in violation of the Affordable Care Act and other

statutes. It also has overreach into the Chief's job statutorily to run the department and the Police Commission that oversees the Chief. Chief Prouty has also been participating in the Regional Emergency Management meetings with Chief Lovitt, which the PD has not been active. Chief Prouty wants better connection with other emergency management directors and to think more globally within the county as an emergency operations center to be part of the solution. He noted that Commander Whitehead did a great job negotiating a new contract with AXON that saved \$86,000 a year by bundling existing contracts with AXON compiled over the years. The new contract includes four outpost cameras to be installed throughout the City to improve the closure rate on criminal cases. Commander Whitehead added that the contract adds more software upgrades to keep officers out of the station and in the community. Commissioner Romeo asked if the outpost cameras are fixed. Chief Prouty said the initial installation is free, but to move them would cost extra. There will be a meeting to determine where they will be strategically placed. Chief Prouty added that Probationary Officer Melen completed Phase 1 of his basic training course for Level 2 Law Enforcement officer on March 27 and he is going to the July Academy.

### **Trainings Completed**

March 14 - Compassion in Action, Humane Investigations ACO Officer Sweeney  
Highway Safety DUI Refresher Commander Whitehead, Sgt. Morgano, Sgt. Rajda, Cpl. Blanchard, Officer Razanouski, Officer Beverly  
Less Lethal ICP Instructor Training Cpl. Maguire and Officer Dangal  
Prone Restraint Prevention Training all staff  
Canine Inservice Training Sgt. Rajda  
April 7 – Shield Our Children Det. Cpl. Misty Jax  
April 8-9 - Mid-level Narcotics Investigations Officer Rimmer and Officer Stendardo

### **Upcoming Trainings**

April 13-14 – Distracted Driving Commander Whitehead, Det. Stewart, Officer Ducharme  
April 23 – Highway Safety Data Masters Supervisor Training Officer Carapezza  
April 30 – May 1 - Background Investigation for Police Applicants Det. Sgt. Dickerson, Det. Cpl. Tavares, Det. Stewart

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

Chairperson Brougham thanked Commissioner Humphrey for her time on the Commission. She added that the Mayor nominated Matt Whitcomb to the Police Commission and the Aldermen will vote on the nomination April 20. Mayor Donahue said the Aldermen unanimously approved Pat Brougham and Peg Flory as Chair and Vice Chair of the Police Commission.

Chairperson Brougham asked the Commissioners to set a date and time to discuss the tabled resolution. Commissioner Flory asked if the Aldermen approved a resolution. Chairperson Brougham said yes and this Commission could either put a stamp of approval on that resolution or create a stand-alone resolution. Commissioner Romeo said he is not in favor of a resolution saying the Police Commission was formed to keep politics out of the Department and to oversee the Police Chief and Commanders. He added that resolutions do not belong at the Commission. Commissioner Brown said he has been asked by a member of the public when the resolution would be discussed so they could attend. Commissioner Flory said when originally presented, the resolution was to reassure the public when we have no control over I.C.E. and actually gives

a false sense of security to the public. She said she has absolute confidence that the RPD, in an event like Burlington, will protect the safety of everyone and keep things as orderly as possible. Both Commissioners Romeo and Flory stated, for the record, that they do not approve of what is happening with I.C.E., but do not agree on making a political statement through a resolution. Chairperson Brougham said she does not believe that making a statement about I.C.E. and their behavior is political, although it has been politicized. She said a resolution is a statement of what we think and does not say what our politics are, but is a statement to reassure our citizens. Commissioner Humphrey said she hopes she was voted on to serve this Commission based on her thoughts and statements and she thinks the public was told there would be a meeting to discuss this and that it should be held. Chairperson Brougham proposed warning a meeting for April 21 at 6 pm in the Community Room and she will let the City Clerk know. Chairperson Brougham said she will forward the resolution adopted by the Board of Alderman to the Commission. Commissioner Flory said she did revise the original resolution to reflect nonpolitical support of the local police. Alderman Franzoni said he wanted to acknowledge that the RPD is put in the worst possible position between a Federal agency and the public, the most dangerous place, and are sworn to take an oath. Other police departments did provide a letter to let the public know they are aware of the situation.

Commissioner Romeo said he received a complaint during the recent No Kings rally when the lane was not closed and flags were put in front of cars. He noted this was also being done during last Saturday's rally. Commander Whitehead said people complained when the lane was closed and when it wasn't. Commissioner Romeo added that people are happy to see cruisers in the neighborhoods.

### **Executive Session**

At 7:34 pm Commissioner Flory moved to go into Executive Session under 1 VSA §313 to discuss personnel issues and invited the Chief, Mayor and Commanders to participate. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Commissioner Flory moved to exit Executive Session. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed 5-0. Executive Session ended at 7:49 pm. There was no actionable item.

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Flory moved to adjourn. Commissioner Romeo seconded. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting called to close at 7:49 pm.

Submitted by Barbara Spaulding

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