

RUTLAND POLICE COMMISSION
July 14, 2014

Present: Chairman Larry Jensen, Vice Chairman Thomas Calcagni, Commissioners Sean Sargeant and Dr. Luther Brown

Not Present: Commissioner Michelle Fairbrother

Others Present: Captain Scott Tucker, Lt. Kevin Geno and Commander David Covell

Meeting called to order at 6:00pm by Chairman Jensen

Motion made by Commissioner Sargeant and seconded by Commissioner Brown to accept the minutes of June 2, 2014. Motion passed.

Chief Baker makes the following recognitions: Russell Schauer as Dispatcher from Barre Police Department and welcomes him; Ernest LaGuardia who was hired about a year ago from Schenectady, who just came off probation and started as Police Officer on June 10, 2014 and is sworn in; Animal Control Officer, Tim Jones present with his dad, former Sheriff Lee D. Jones and is re-sworn in with his family present and Chief Baker indicates that Tim is an asset to the department as he deals with cases with professionalism and grace; Officer Jen Czachor and Canine Jaguar, who graduated from Canine Drug School and starting patrol school on Monday for 16 weeks are introduced to the Commission. Chief Baker indicates he is proud of the work that she has done with the dog.

Public comments

None

Communication from union

None

Sergeants Report

Sgt. Sheldon indicates that Officer Ryan Ashe is doing well since he has gotten off FTO last week and indicates he is a good fit to the department.

The SA position has been moved to his shift. Officer Jen Czachor has completed the Canine drug school. Officer Murphy is doing well, working on geographical problems. He indicates he is working closely with Alicia Armstrong with the Project Vision with the environmental safety issues with training local businesses. He indicates he is in charge of the Southwest District and things are doing pretty well.

Budget

The July 11 run of the end of fiscal year budget is at 94.63% of funds spent. There are some adjustments coming through, as last of the upgrade to the IT system was paid out of the forfeiture and will be moved back into the Police Department budget. There is a \$265,000 surplus in the budget, which the savings are in the vacancies and health insurance lines and we do not anticipate that surplus being there next year. Most of the surplus is in the health care cost savings.

Chairman Jensen adds that the budget is done based on budgeting for what you plan to do and sometimes your plans don't work out. The uniforms line is over by \$5,000, as equipment and uniforms had to be purchased to get the new hires geared up. The department is close to being fully staffed, as there are several people in the pipeline to hire. By September's meeting, the numbers will be put together to give Chief Baker guidance when he sits down with the mayor for Fiscal Year 2016. Discussions held.

Mapping

Dave Harrington begins by telling the board that the organization he works for has changed from the VT Center for Justice Research to Crime Research Group, a newly incorporated non-profit organization with the same staff effective July. David gives an overview of the police model, Intelligence Led/Data Led Policing, which is being used and explains it in detail. With this they are able to see where patterns are developing with the gathering of the intelligence, being information from the witnesses, citizens, offenders, etc.; the repeat address analysis and approaching the problems differently, which is important to the crime analysis piece; Visualizing problems within neighborhoods or properties with the heat mapping; Pattern analysis by percentage by monthly examples and times of day; Crime trends over time, showing examples by comparing data from year to year to be able to pin point areas to focus energies. It gives management ways know if they need to increase patrols in certain areas; and is the strategy working? It is to focus on analyzing, preventing and solving crimes. He gives examples and comparisons from previous years. Brain storming with the information, changing the environment and finding a solution, parking garage given as an example and for the first time, the parking garage is not on the repeat offender list. Chief Baker indicates he needs more time to talk to David to get another level of numbers for the key stake holder groups before he takes the information out to the public.

Early indicators of success: even though calls for service were up a modest 4.3% from 2012 to 2013, the decrease was evident in 3 of the 4 patrol sectors. Total calls for the first 6 months of 2014 show that they are down 25% as compared to the same period in 2013. With a proactive drug force effort, the drug crimes have increased by 28.5% as property crimes decreased. Drug crimes are increasing as more emphasis is being put on it Chairman Jensen indicates that the changes look great, but indicates that they are just numbers and inquires of what specific things were done to make them happen. Chief Baker responds and indicates it isn't any one thing it includes: relationships with the methadone clinic and with the department of corrections is one of the most important things they have done by lessening the sense of entitlement in the streets; there are a whole lot of strategies that are being deployed that are working. Discussions held. We are responding immediately to every call that is made. Discussions are held at the biweekly mapping meetings, and Sgts. are going to speak with the landlords of the problem locations about their tenants. Ordinance violations are being addressed. Dave Harrington indicates that the City is going in the right direction. Chief Baker indicates that each week they are trying to do something different. Captain Tuckers indicates that the intern program is going very well as what they have done for the department is priceless bringing in fresh ideas. He indicates Katelyn Robertello had an idea to hand out the burglary reduction pamphlets to all city residents and they are now looking into doing that with the DPW commissioner, once the pamphlets are upgraded.

Chief's report

Personnel

Chief Baker indicates that Sgt. Tarbell is ending his 40 year career in law enforcement as he has received his retirement notification effective August 31, 2014. Chief Baker says he is in the process of filing that slot and is going to be working with the active Sergeants' list and the goal is to have a new Sergeant named prior to Sgt. Tarbell leaving.

Probationary Police Officer Ryan Rooker has given his resignation two weeks ago in lieu of attending the police academy in August.

There are 3 vacancies at this time; total number is 37 sworn officers. There are 3 people out on background and Chief Baker is optimistic with this group of people. Recruiting efforts continue.

There is one out on background who is 911 certified and has accepted a conditional offer for the dispatcher vacancy and will make it full at 6 dispatchers.

The current Corporals list has been exhausted, therefore the Corporal testing was last week to come up with a new list. Chief Baker indicates he is happy with the process thus far.

Motion made by Commissioner Sargeant and seconded by Commissioner Calcagni to reimburse Cpl. Sousa for a pair of sunglasses that were broken on duty. Motion passed.

Chief Baker and Sgt. Sly will meet with Commander Covell for a midyear performance review.

Part time certified Police Officer, Nathan Harvey will be attending the VT Police Academy in August. Chief Baker will talk to Lt. Geno regarding the staffing during vacations.

Project Vision

There is a great importance in the strategy with the 1.25 million dollar grant for the Project Vision. 37 Pine St building has been taken down by Casella's and therefore have taken away one of the houses where they were dealing heroin. Another mental health crisis worker, specializing in school age children, has been added to the upstairs. Other agencies are asking for an overview of our project vision. Two outside agencies are sitting in on our Mapping meeting tomorrow. Captain Tucker is awaiting a status update from David Kennedy as to a date he will be coming. They are in the contractual process with the Crime Research Group to renew their relationship.

Chief Baker gives an open invitation to anyone interested to come in on Tuesday for a brown bag lunch with the staff upstairs.

Chief Baker indicates that Captain Tucker is doing a phenomenal job with the upstairs and indicates that they couldn't have expanded with the impact that they are having if Captain Tucker didn't move to the role upstairs.

The Department received a recognition plaque from Voc Rehab for working with them on a particular hire and were honored at a banquet.

Training issues

Cpl. Sam Delpha will attend/attended a child advocacy center of training in Dallas TX; Ryan Ashe will be attending the academy; Cpl. Lachance has attended the FBI Crisis Negotiation class in NH; Crime Analyst Brad Goodhale attended an Open Source Practitioner Training sponsored by NY State Police; looking into doing a Leadership Summit on Opiate Abuse in the fall; the Corporals are going through dispatcher training as one of their roles; Biased Free Policing is complete; Captain Tucker, Lt. Geno and Sgt. Stevens are off to the annual FBI National Academy Training Conference in PA.

A committee is working on the City's Website and almost ready to sign a contract with a vendor for the website.

Jody Breault facilitated a discussion with reference to updating the strategic plan and did a great job. They are hoping to have it finished by September 1. Discussions held.

An active shooter table top training was done last week with an excellent presentation by Brad GoodHale.

We continue to benefit from the knowledge of David Kennedy, professor from John J, as he continues with us with support from the RRMC and President Huebner. Chief Baker is working on bringing him to Rutland as a keynote speaker.

Commissioner Sargeant inquires of the CRS contract, if Brad is handling that, and what is the time frame in Chief's mind. Chief Baker he has no time frame and awaiting on the evolvement in software and to be able to pick that piece up along with the tactical piece that he does. Mapping locations of drug offenses that we need to do. He will need to do a transition to that, over time. Discussions held.

Discussions held with the problem calls from the mission with reference to complaints directed with the methadone clinic. Chief Baker indicates that there was a clear misunderstanding as there were no calls from the mission that she is having problems with the clinic. Discussions held. Chief Baker indicates the methadone clinic is working the way we thought it would be working as he and the Mayor had spent a lot of time talking with them.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Calcagni at 7:41pm to go into executive session. Motion passed.

Executive session

The executive session began, present are police commission members, Chief Baker, Captain Tucker, Lt. Geno and Commander Covell to discuss matters that if disclosed publicly at this time, could placed the City, the Department or an employee of the department at risk. Those matters include contract negotiations, pending litigations, criminal activity, budget issues and sensitive personnel issues.

Submitted by:

Nancy Manning

Cc: Rutland Police Commission
Chief James Baker
Captain Scott Tucker
Lt. Kevin E. Geno
Mayor Chris Louras
City Clerk Henry Heck
Board of Aldermen
Union President Lynn Gallipo